

**PILGRIMAGE AS A CHALLENGE TO  
REFORMED LITURGICAL PRAXIS**

BY

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**Dedicated to**

the two most influential individuals in my life,  
who I regard as my only validation as a human being:

Sunica de Klerk (17/9/88)

Lize de Klerk (29/11/90)

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## Abstract

*Pilgrimage as a challenge to Reformed liturgical praxis*, is a dissertation done in Practical Theology and Liturgy, investigating the interest in pilgrimage as a ritual. The research was done from a Reformed tradition's perspective with Christian pilgrims from the Reformed tradition as co-researchers. Ethnographic methodological design and participatory observation as method enabled the researcher to reflect the reality of 'what is going on' (Klomp, 2011:69). The empirical research's focus was to gather information on the meaning Christian pilgrims from the Reformed tradition appropriate for themselves in doing a pilgrimage like the Camino de Santiago de Compostela in Spain. Data analysis was done using a coding system from which outcomes were determined and processed in a liturgical theory for praxis. The researcher applied triangulation and reflexivity several times during the research.

The research starts with an overview of the current interest in pilgrimage amongst Christians from the Reformed tradition globally and specifically from South Africa. Pilgrimage is situated in the academic field of Practical Theology, Liturgy and rituals, while emphasising the continuous process of redefining Practical Theology, based on the work of Browning (1995); Osmer (2008) and Miller-McLemore (2012), explaining Practical Theology as a context-orientated approach. With a description of the four tasks of Practical Theology, the descriptive-empirical, interpretive, normative and the pragmatic, the continuous redefining process is elaborated on further with the development of hermeneutics, the 'living human web', public theology, the relevance of a leadership model, the dynamics of change, the application within Liturgy and the relationship between worship and culture.

Liturgy's shift towards multi-disciplinary research, individualism, globalisation and technology is investigated with emphasis on rituals and symbols, within the context of individual interpretation and self-designed expression of faith. This trend indicates a change of landscape in the Reformed tradition within the framework of *liturgia condenda* / liturgy in the making. Social Scientific Biblical Interpretation is used for the purpose of knowledge of the social context in Biblical times and not as an exegetical method for the chosen passage from Scripture. The relevance of concepts from a multi-disciplinary perspective were analysed namely *liminality/liminoid* from anthropology, *heterotopia* from philosophy and

*liturgical-inculturation* from theology with accompanying concepts of liminality namely *communitas, societas and flow*.

The history and meaning of pilgrimage through the ages are described from the Old Testament through the New Testament, the early Church, the Middle Ages, Reformation and afterwards up to recent developments. The outcome of this research clearly indicates a difference in how pilgrimage is used as a spiritual tool in current times by incorporating the more personal needs with the spiritual, indicating continuities as well as discontinuities from traditional pilgrimage. The development of different forms of liturgy in the different traditions, East-Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Protestant Ecumenical and the Charismatic Churches elevates the presence of five basic elements of liturgy in all traditions. Based on Luke 24, the Emmaus narrative, the chosen passage from Scripture for the theological foundation of this research, the researcher concludes with a theology of pilgrimage.

## Key Terms

- 1) Pilgrimage and the Reformed tradition
- 2) Theology for pilgrimage
- 3) Liturgical theory for praxis
- 4) Liturgia condenda
- 5) Practical Theology redefined
- 6) Liminality / liminoid
- 7) Heterotopias
- 8) Liturgical-inculturation
- 9) Rituals and symbols
- 10) Camino de Santiago de Compostela

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## PREFACE

“I don’t know the name for it but I want to understand life”, was my answer on our first day of Sunday school in Grade 1, to the Sunday school teacher’s question of what we would like to be one day and the whole class laughed at me. I quit church then and only went back in Grade 5. In the meantime I tried to walk on water many times and one day it nearly worked.

I guess that is the story of my life, understanding life, and people, therefore this is not a study for me, pilgrimage is the story of my life. I became a minister but not for long, seven and a half years later I was done. I started my own business, worked in the corporate world as a consultant, people management, what else? Got trained in Emotional Intelligence, Change management, Kinesiology, BrainGym, Coaching, etc., all indicating towards people and to understand life.

In 2003 I got on a flight to India with Paolo Coelho’s book *Pilgrimage* in my bag. I came back with a new appreciation for the Reformed tradition, detached from any form of materialism and a new understanding of simplicity. In 2013 I had the privilege of discussing simplicity and communication with Professor Jürgen Habermas at his home in Starnberg, Germany. He made coffee several times during the whole afternoon. One conversation that changed my life and it still does, with “...the unfettered force of the best argument will prevail” and “...communication elevates knowledge”.

At NASA, with a bursary from the University of Pretoria, I got more into effective ways of communication and at Princeton Theological Seminary, Professor Bo Karen Lee (Spiritual Formation) told me: “...get your own voice”. I met several spiritual friends on my way but Professor Cas Wepener became my academic mentor and made all the difference. I won’t be able to thank this man in words.

This part of my journey comes to an end. The journey will continue, I don’t know where but I do know that my dear Lord will show me the way. I will continue to learn from Augustine how to “...marinate life experiences in Scripture” and will try to translate life into words. What do we call that? I still don’t know.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO PILGRIMAGE

#### 1.1 A GLOBAL, SOUTH AFRICAN AND REFORMED PERSPECTIVE

The interpretation of Browning by Ammerman (1998:16), that, ‘If we believe that God is actively working in the world, and is not only an afterthought to explain what is happening in the world, then the description of what is happening in the world is a theological task’, can be seen as the central conviction underlying this research. For the Reformed tradition to ignore a phenomenon like pilgrimage amongst Reformed Christians in current times, is to run the risk of becoming irrelevant, states Bartholomew (2004:202).

The researcher wants to explore pilgrimage by Christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition, to learn about the meaning pilgrims appropriate for themselves through pilgrimage to contribute a liturgical praxis to the Reformed tradition’s understanding and response<sup>1</sup>. Therefore the research theme is formulated as:

*Pilgrimage as a challenge to Reformed liturgical praxis.*

The approach of the researcher is captured in the words of Martin Buber that every journey has a secret destination, not known to the traveller. Pilgrimage with the specific style of the Camino de Santiago de Compostela is the focus of this research, as the researcher believes that there is a lot to learn for the Reformed tradition. Taking into account the mystical nature of origin, history and the fact that pilgrimage as a phenomenon has stood the test of time as well as the renewed interest in current times is the motivation behind this believe of the researcher in the relevance of this topic for research.

Of utmost importance is the point of departure that current spiritual behaviour should not be interpreted that people are turning their backs on the church but rather that the face of the Reformed tradition is changing and Practical Theology and Liturgical Studies could learn a lot by looking into this. Post (2006:115), with Post a professor at Tilburg School of Humanities and Department of Cultural Studies, made a profound statement in this regard,

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<sup>1</sup> Christian pilgrims from the Reformed tradition will be referred to as ‘Reformed tradition’, for the rest of this thesis.



that 'religion is in the process of changing hats'. This statement provides a new perspective of the spiritual behaviour of current times, about Christians leaving church which also led to a re-interpretation of secularism as reason for the decline of church numbers.

The tendency of Reformed Christians to explore alternative ways to worship, either inside or outside the church will be relevant for this research, especially with rituals such as pilgrimage. The 'Ancient-Future' paradigm may also contribute to a better understanding of current spiritual behaviour to determine if the origins of Liturgy are present (Webber & Webber, 1994; Wepener, 2011:262).

As change in the expression of worshipping takes place in current times, thresholds are being crossed and worship takes a variety of forms, which may indicate that current Reformed Liturgy does not fulfil spiritual needs for worshipping (Barnard, 2010:74-78; Wepener, 2009b). The change in worshipping culture may also indicate a shift in people's understanding of the immanence or transcendence in the experience of God's presence (Wepener, 2011). Fact is that a change in behaviour can be observed in current times and the task to find out exactly what is going on, falls within the field of Practical Theology (Osmer, 2008:4).

An interesting interpretation of pilgrimage's popularity is the slow down effect and travel speed according to the norm of human kind since the beginning of time (Bradley, 2010:21). Pilgrimage is described on the webpage of M&W News as a journey that: '...forces us into silence, makes us put down our books, abandon our computers, and may lead us to a disciplined re-imagining of the life and habits of another age' (Greenia, 2005). Pilgrimage is also described as one of the oldest physical-spiritual exercises of humanity and of the Christian tradition (Duncan, 2001:14). In contrast to the ancient roots of pilgrimage, a futuristic concept of pilgrimage is already foreseen in terms of e-pilgrimage and cyber-pilgrimage (Post, 2013:183-191).

## **1.2 A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE**

While church attendance is on the decline in the UK and Europe, Christian pilgrimage and religious tourism are booming, states Brierley (2000). The current renewed interest in pilgrimage and the Camino in Spain, is compared with the golden age of pilgrimage during the Middle Ages by Vuijsje (2001:141-142). In terms of the bigger picture of social

behaviour Geertz (2001:185) claims that ‘...massive, continental shifts in religious sensibility’ are taking place and that it would be ‘...a pity were we to be living in the midst of such a seismic event and not even know that is was occurring’. If the growing numbers in pilgrims reflect something then it is that pilgrimage is currently more than a revitalising of an old tradition, it is referred to as the ‘...pilgrimage boom’<sup>2</sup> Post (1998a:304). This phenomenon of the pilgrimage boom is also referred to by Lukken (2005:260).

Some extensive research was done on the pilgrimage phenomenon in Western Europe by Nolan and Nolan (1992:1-2, 8) and although this research was done twenty four years ago, it gives an excellent indication of pilgrimage presence as they indicate more than 6 000 pilgrimages centres in Western Europe, visited by more than 100 million per year of which 60% indicate a religious connection.

This current situation creates new situations of exposure, opening up the opportunities for new perspectives, questions and ministry for the Reformed tradition as religion and rituals cross the boundaries of the traditional into unknown territories with exposure to other religions, cultures and spiritualities (Post, 2011:129) & (Pieterse, 2013:1). This phenomenon is confirmed by recent Camino statistics for instance, in 2009 a total of 145 877 pilgrims did the Camino and 62 188 of them indicated that they were ‘religious’, 70 303 as ‘religious and other’ and 13 386 as ‘non-religious’ (Bradley, 2010:99).

The current growth in numbers of pilgrims indicates that since 1982 there were about 100 pilgrims per year. In 1984 it became 500, in 1987 an increase to 1500 per year and in 1989 the number of pilgrims were 22 501 (Post, 1998b:221).

Yet, another source, Bartholomew (2004b:xii) reflects the numbers as follow: ‘...1985, 2490 pilgrims were recorded. This has grown in 2001 to 61 420’. These numbers increased to 99 400 in 1993 and 154 600 in 1999. Although it is difficult to find exact numbers and to

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<sup>2</sup> A. De Jong, ‘Meegaan met pelgrims naar Santiago de Compostela. Verslag van een onderzoeksproject in wording’, in: Pieper a.o. (eds), *Bedevaart en pilgrimage*, 59-79; A. Mulder, ‘Op Zoek naar de ware pilgrim. Over pilgrimage en toerisme’, in: M. Van Uden a.o. (eds), *Oude sporen, nieuwe wegen*, 15-51; J. Pieper & M. Van Uden, ‘Op weg naar Santiago de Compostela. Ervaringen van pelgrim’, in: Van Uden a.o. (eds), *Oude sporen, nieuwe wegen*, 53-84; P. Post, ‘Pelgrimsverslagen: verkenning van een genre’, *Jaarboek voor Liturgie-onderzoek* 8 (1992) 285-331; P. Post, ‘Pelgrims tussen traditie en moderniteit. Een verkenning van hedendaagse pelgrimsverslagen’, in: J. Pieper, P. Post & M. Van Uden (eds), *Bedevaart en pilgrimage*, 7-37; P. Post, *The Modern Pilgrim. A Study of Contemporary Pilgrims Accounts*, *Ethnologia Europaea* 24 (1994 [1995] 85-100.

differentiate between the different traditions, the important factor here is to see the undisputable increase in numbers by different sources.

An organisation established recently by the European Commission, called Cammini d'Europa, based in Rome, specifically aimed at the promotion and development of Europe's historical routes, of which the Camino and Via Francigena are the most important with a socio-political objective behind this as pilgrimage is seen as one of the natural ways to build unity and synergy amongst the different cultures within the European Union.

Pilgrimage is also booming in the world of popular literature as well as in the academic world of Liturgy with titles like *The Modern Pilgrim*, *Rituals in Abundance*, *Researching pilgrimage: Continuity and transformations*, *Moderne pelgrims naar Santiago de Compostela* and *Pelgrim zonder god*.

### 1.3 PERSPECTIVE ON SOUTH AFRICA

A profound indicator of this alternative trend of ritual and the effect it has on the Reformed Christian community in South Africa is the recent publications by the previous moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church, Prof Nelus Niemandt. In these two books, he elaborates on the new style of leadership needed in the Church to accommodate current trends amongst Church members to cross boundaries and investigate new ways of worshipping, which are mostly just the renewal of ancient customs (Niemandt, 2007:137; Niemandt, 2013:43).

One of the church newspapers in South Africa, *Die Kerkbode* from the Dutch Reformed Church, publishes articles on pilgrimages on a regular basis<sup>3</sup>. In South Africa the growing interest in the concept of pilgrimage can be observed in many ways. The latest figures from the South African branch of the Confraternity of St James indicates growth in a way that for every 100 pilgrims per year to the Camino five years ago, a 1000 pilgrims will be going in 2016. The concept of pilgrimage has become part of culture and is used to name all sorts of projects aimed at reconciliation, nation building or with a spiritual nature<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> The Tankwa-Camino story of Felicia Lategan from the Moreleta congregation was published in August 2015, Dr Elsje Buchner from Lux Mundi congregation in October 2013 and an article by the researcher in September 2015.

<sup>4</sup> One example to illustrate this is an article with the title: 'Uniting Christian Students' Association's pilgrimage to overcome colonial racism: A Southern African postcolonial missiological dialogue', published in the e-journal *Verbum et ecclesia* Nel, R.W.R. 2015. Uniting Christian Students' Association's pilgrimage to

An official publication of the South African branch of Confraternity of St James, is called ‘Amigos’ and distributed three times a year to members. The publication presents articles of interest about all aspects of the Camino as well as information about local and international activities and events that will be of interest to South African pilgrims. A quarterly newsletter, ‘Hola’, provides a ‘Calendar of Events’ as well as information relating to travel, workshops and social functions<sup>5</sup>.

Pilgrimages are also becoming popular in South Africa and the following pilgrimages in South Africa are mentioned by Wepener (2011:265-267):

- In Cape Town a pilgrimage is advertised every year before Easter, from St Mark in the former District Six to the Anglican Cathedral of St George.
- The Tutu Institute for Prayer and Pilgrimage organises pilgrimages on a regular basis.
- The Institute for Peace and Reconciliation organises pilgrimages to places of atrocity which happened under the previous government with the purpose of healing.

Several other pilgrimages in South Africa came to the attention of the researcher: one organised by Dr. Frederick Marais from the University of Stellenbosch in the Western Cape with the end destination at Cape St Agulhas; the Tankwa-Camino which is organised twice a year in the Karoo. Reformed congregations are also beginning to organise their own pilgrimages, of which Prieska is an example (Kerkbode July/August 2015) and Sedgfield where local congregations all take part, visit each other’s churches and seven ‘prayer stations’ are prepared by each of the churches<sup>6</sup>.

The researcher attended a ‘lecture of celebration’ on the life of Chiara Lubich, a Roman Catholic who had a special calling for the notion of ‘all for one’ at the University of Pretoria in South Africa in 2013. It manifests in an organisation called ‘Focolare’ that has 2,5 million members in 182 countries. The purpose of attendance by the researcher was the guest speaker, a high-ranking official from the Dutch Reformed Church, Dr Kobus Gerber on the topic ‘Theology of Pilgrimage: metaphor as tool in our reflection’, in which he explains that

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overcome colonial racism: A southern African postcolonial missiological dialogue. *Verbum et Ecclesia*, 36(1):8..

<sup>5</sup> The website to South Africa’s branch of Confraternity of St James: [www.csjofsa.za.org](http://www.csjofsa.za.org)

<sup>6</sup> Churches in Sedgfield taking part in the local pilgrimage: Sedgfield Christian Church, St Anthony Catholic Church, Dutch Reformed Church, St Francis United Church, Southern Cape Christian Family, Anglican Church of the Resurrection and Efese Gemeente & Nehemia ministries

pilgrimage is a journey with a specific purpose and a specific destination, and a pilgrim should do this in the footsteps of Jesus. From Scripture Dr Gerber identified some principles for pilgrimage of which the researcher would like to mention a few namely, simplicity, togetherness in community, the importance of meals, that theology must be in a constant process of development, always contextual and that a theology of pilgrimage asks for the ability to let go, even it is a current theology, for the sake of ‘all to be one’.

#### **1.4 A WORD OF CAUTION**

A word of warning and concern is expressed by Bartholomew (2004b) in the foreword of the book: *Explorations in a Christian theology of pilgrimage*, because of the lack of response from churches and the lack of a coherent theology of pilgrimage, although various historical and descriptive accounts for pilgrimage exist. With not enough theological guidance in terms of pilgrimage, this creates a situation for pilgrims to explore without any boundaries from Christianity, which may lead to ‘...syncretism of the worst sort’ (Bartholomew, 2004b:202). These spaces of worship outside the church are also referred to by Barnard (2010) and Wepener (2009b:74-78) while Geertz (2001:177) states: “It is not easy any longer to avoid encountering people with other sorts of beliefs than those who grew up with you”.

Taking into account how much emphasis is on the individual in the broader society, human rights, freedom of speech, and so forth, a responsible approach is of the utmost importance in this research as people become pilgrims for various own personal reasons and agendas (Post, 2011:129). Therefore the researcher had to be sensitive to the fact that many things are called religious in current times while what is actually happening is more a self-centred process in dealing with personal identity issues but then presented to the outside world as a religious struggle (Geertz, 2001:169).

The dangers with the current emphasis on individuality and even the notion of solitude, which may lead to many ‘truths’ and the presence of many disorders in current reality, should create an awareness in research (Geertz, 2001:171).

The challenge to this research is captured in the words of Geertz (2001:172): ‘Reading this sign, unpacking its meaning, or otherwise accounting for it, determining why it is so and how it has become so, what it tells us about how things stand with us these days, is, of course, a different thing altogether’.

## 1.5 TO APPROPRIATE MEANING

An individualistic approach is changing the face of worship in the South African Reformed tradition according to Wepener (2011:259) and the same is happening on a global level according to Post (2003:78), in the book *Disaster ritual: explorations of an emerging ritual repertoire*, as both authors state that the tendency is for individuals to give expression to their faith in personal orientated rituals and personalised content. Vuijsje (2001:141-142) says about the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, that this pilgrimage has become more personal and individual orientated, in how pilgrims are doing it, than ever before.

The Reformed tradition needs a clear understanding of the current spiritual behaviour in order to position itself for the future. The work of Clifford Geertz (2001), inspired by John Dewey, can also provide some valuable information about present realities as he considers ‘thinking’ as a moral act, subject to ethics and evaluation (Geertz, 2001:21). Thinking is therefore a social act for which responsibility has to be taken as it is in ‘...the long run the most consequential of all social acts’ (Geertz, 2001:21). This certainly applies to the Reformed tradition as well.

At the same time the question can be raised whether this is not what is happening with Christians in current times as they start to think for themselves, take responsibility for themselves and are no longer willing to be prescribed to by the church in terms of right and wrong. No Hegemonic approach from the Reformed tradition will be successful in current times, as it was during the Early Middle Ages (Stringer, 2005:116-119). If this line of thought can be followed through and turned out to be an explanation of what is actually going on, it implies massive changes for the Reformed tradition. It will be the objective of this research to investigate this and integrate this line of thought in a liturgical praxis for the Reformed tradition.

Current spiritual behaviour as it manifests in ritual interest, such as pilgrimage may also be some reaction after many disappointments in the church or Reformed tradition, where history as it unfolds, reveals the misleading or wrong interpretation by those who were supposed to know and who were trusted. These possible explanations for human behaviour which need to be understood by the Reformed tradition, must be considered if the concept of thinking is approached through the lens of Geertz (2001).

Geertz (2001:175-185) has a peculiar contribution on identity, in reaction to the work of William James (1929), as identity has a major role in the development of spiritual behaviour and this is of relevance for current times. People are searching for identity, experiencing an identity crisis or working on the growth of identity and therefore identity as a concept can also be abused. The relationship between individualism, solitude and faith has to be re-investigated as to what part social interaction plays in the pilgrimage phenomenon, as faith is in the first place not made in solitude (Geertz, 2001:184). The Inter-subjective theory of Malony (1984) is of relevance and should make a contribution in this research.

Pilgrimage was the answer to a life of uncertainties in the Middle Ages and in current times it seems to be the answer towards freedom from a complex life with too many choices and too much to think about, in other words the reclaiming of simplicity (Vuijsje, 2001:142)

There may be different ways in how people will appropriate for themselves the meaning they find in a pilgrimage but there certainly must be some common ground. The words of Stringer about worship and the mind must be kept in mind ‘...that not everything that happens within the human mind can be articulated in words’(Stringer, 1999:215).

The objective of this research is to learn more about the meaning Christians find in doing pilgrimage or labyrinth and to develop a ritual-liturgical theory for praxis by means of a multi-disciplinary scientific investigation.

It has become clear that no similar research has been undertaken by anyone about the South African context but as can be seen in the quotes above a great deal of research was done in especially Europe and much information is available referring to the European and global context where pilgrimage has been a well-established phenomenon over many centuries. It is only recently that a growing South African interest can be observed, where individuals from the Reformed tradition choose this kind of option.

A description of pilgrimage from a South African perspective is essential to understand the phenomenon and how it is positioned currently in the Dutch Reformed Church. Pilgrimage has no formal standing in the liturgical praxis of the Reformed tradition at this point and time although there is a lot of interest amongst ordinary church members and individual pilgrims and ministers of the Reformed tradition to undertake the pilgrimage route, Camino de Santiago de Compostela in Spain, with these numbers constantly increasing.

Recently pilgrims have organised themselves into regional branches of the Confraternity of St. James, which is functioning globally. The researcher was invited to the local branch in Pretoria as a speaker and there were about 35 individuals on this Sunday morning, gathered in the Botanical Gardens. The researcher also met with the two organisers of the Cape Town branch of which the one lady of 74 had completed the Camino a fourth time.

Pilgrimage is a way of expression, expressing the need for change, a spiritual hunger or spiritual need, for experience, for healing, cleansing, conversion, celebration, seeking God's presence, for Divine communication, creating meaning, mostly driven by an unknown force or pre-knowledge or intuition, a journey with an end destination, a journey filled with miracles, a journey filled with new spaces where pain and gratefulness can surface sometimes separately and sometimes together, new insights, clarity, renewal, sensitivity for the work and presence of the Spirit, silence, simplicity, a conversation with God, a dance with God, with transparency never experienced before, without any logical order, start or finishing point, sometimes a struggle but mostly joy, peace and harmony.

## 1.6 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH STRUCTURE

The summary of the chapters to follow explains the structural of this academic exploration of pilgrimage with the literature study, theories, relevant concepts, methodology and interviews, to facilitate an understanding of meaning pilgrims from the Reformed tradition appropriate for themselves to this ritual-liturgical activity.

**Chapter two** of this research addresses Practical Theology, Liturgy and rituals. This study is within the domain of Practical Theology with an understanding of Practical Theology as point of departure, with Liturgy the more specific area of concern. Within Liturgy one way of worshipping is through rituals and symbols, which may differ in different time periods or have different meanings, functions or dimensions at the same time because of the dominance of individualism, according to Barnard (2014:6,11,12). Symbols create the space for individual interpretation and has the ability of bridging differences in interpretation into one space of synergy for worshipping according to Lukken (1999:20). This is important for this study seeing that the Reformed liturgical tradition is traditionally a Word-centred tradition with a very strong focus on auditory communication.



The role of individual interpretation of ritual and symbol and the meaning of this for the future of Liturgy, is strongly emphasised by Barnard, Cilliers & Wepener, (2014:5,12), who explains this tendency as empowered by the “network culture”. The network culture indicates that there is no longer a certain structure, starting point or logical flow in the field of liturgical ritual and all relevant themes, topics, arguments or identities are part of a network and the starting point, structural order, combination of themes and end result are unpredictable and are individually determined according to Barnard, Cilliers & Wepener, (2014:6) in: *Worship in the Network Culture*, to which this research project fully resonates with.

The methodology used for this research project is closely linked with that of Cultural Anthropology as the human being is central in the way that religion is expressed and experienced and this opens the door to multi-disciplinary research within social sciences (Barnard, 1998:95). Lukken (1994a:17) also states the importance of research into symbols, symbolic language and symbolic acts, with a multi-disciplinary approach. Klomp (2011:7) is also in favour of a multi-disciplinary approach to include “...social, psychological, ethnic and ritual dimensions of worship”.

Various methods within Liturgy are distinguished by Barnard (1998) like the anthropological approach, systematic, historical and Biblical-theological approach. Post (2001c:18) elaborates on the dual character of Liturgy, as it has to be differentiated from other disciplines, with its own character as a discipline but at the same time to be multi-disciplinary in its approach. Lukken (1994a:22) agrees with Post (2001c) that Christian Liturgy, as object of study, demands an independent discipline with its own themes and tradition.

This explanation is necessary to put the context of this research in perspective as reference is made to various other disciplines like Anthropology, sociology, philosophy and any other relevant discipline to the study of human behaviour within social sciences.

The Practical Theology framework of Richard Osmer (2008) will guide this research project with the views of Browning (1995) and Miller-McLemore (2012). The logical sequence of Osmer (2008:4) structure provides clarity in a situation with a lot of information, different interpretations and motivations with four questions namely: ‘What is going on? Why is this going on? What ought to be going on? How might we respond?’. The task to answer these questions from an academic perspective is described as a ‘descriptive-empirical task,

interpretative task, normative task and a pragmatic task” (Osmer, 2008:4). In these tasks the current trends are studied, followed by possible answers from a multi-disciplinary perspective, then brought into the field of theology and ethics to discern the most appropriate way to respond, says Osmer (2008).

**Chapter three** addresses Social Scientific Biblical Interpretation, ethnography as the research design or methodology and participant observation as method. An understanding of the current social context of worshipping is necessary for interpretation in the same way as the role and influence of social context and interpretation of Scripture through the ages. Social Scientific Biblical Interpretation emerged as Social-scientific criticism during the last thirty to forty years as an independent Biblical exegetical approach amongst other options for Biblical exegesis, which are indicated in chapter three. This approach emerged because of criticism that meaning is always influenced by context, and how differences of context from Biblical times to current day, must be taken into account (Du Toit, 2009:424).

Ethnography was chosen as the research design with participant observation as the method. It seems that current behaviour of Christians indicates that Reformed tradition lack something and has to go to people to listen what is going on (Osmer, 2008; Stringer, 1999; Stringer, 2008). Ethnography serves this study as the most appropriate research design in demonstrating respect and integrity for study subjects, in contrast to any form of paternalism (Klomp, 2011:69).

Participant observation as methodological tool of ethnography provides flexibility to research enhancing an understanding of behaviour without influencing the outcome of the research while at the same time acknowledge the presence of reciprocity and respect in the relationship as equals (Atkinson, 1994:256).

**Chapter four** addresses relevant concepts like liminality and liminoid, heterotopia and liturgical-inculturation. Rituals within Liturgy and the meaning people appropriate to it, is essential to how an individual will experience spiritual life, and this took the research to the concepts of liminality and liminoid, describing the process of transformation, with liminoid the term used to describe the process for individuals and liminality for groups or in a collective form, as in a Church, a congregation or a group (Albers, 2007:67; Turner, 1982:159).

As Christian worshippers attach meaning to symbolic acts, they have something in mind, which may differ from what others have in mind at the same worshipping event, leading the researcher to the heterotopia concept as explained by Foucault (1984a), Johnson (2006) and Post (1998b:238) with the latter who states this change with modern pilgrims as an essential discontinuity with history caused by differentiated interpretations according personal needs and circumstances, which may or may not include the spiritual. Barnard (2014:6,11,12) explains the same idea by referring to the differences in meaning and function within a culture of individualism while Miller-McLemore (2012:101) believes that God reveals to people in different ways. A simplified way of looking at heterotopia, is to describe it as an effort to get into the spiritual mindset of the Christian pilgrim from the Reformed tradition and to learn about the way in which they appropriate meaning.

Emerging spiritual phenomenon, new understandings, perceptions and behaviour become integrated in acts of worship and this process is captured with the term liturgical-inculturation, to be explained in the last part of chapter four. This study may contribute to the challenge and request for renewal of the Reformed tradition frequently heard from church leaders, as relevancy for modern Christians has become important in a time of individualised faith design.

**Chapter five** describes pilgrimage through the ages, through different phases in history starting with the Old and New Testament, the Early Church and centuries, the Middle Age, Reformation and the late Ages until current times.

It is no secret that the Reformers, Luther and Calvin had not much positive to say about pilgrimage and staunchly rejected the practice (Stephenson 2010:171). This is how the relationship can be described between the Reformed tradition and pilgrimage until recent years but the history and meaning attached to pilgrimage, are much more than just one specific period of time and the researcher will clearly indicate why the Reformers were not against the ritual of pilgrimage but just against how it was abused by the Roman Catholic church in their time.

Pilgrimage has the ritual meaning of the human being on a journey that does not actually belong to this world, and can be used in multiple contexts, such as a metaphor for peace and reconciliation as stated by Wepener (2003:202).

It is clear that Pilgrimage had different contextual meanings through the ages as Post (1998b) indicates. The physical effect of pilgrimage and similar rituals also draws attention from the field of Neuro-science and this new academic field of Neuro-theology is a dynamic field also investigated in chapter five.

The labyrinth forms part of this chapter as the labyrinth is a mini-pilgrimage with the similar same principles and purpose as the sequence or process experience is described in similar ways like a search for ‘...ever-deepening sense of union with the Divine’ (Artress, 1996:28) or rituals like pilgrimage and labyrinth enable sensory thinking which precedes all cognitive perception (Lukken, 2005:53).

**Chapter six** describes a theological foundation of pilgrimage based on Luke 24:13-35, the Emmaus narrative, containing the five basic elements of Liturgy which will be explored in chapter six. A theology of pilgrimage is important for various reasons and a must in current times where the experience of Christians is that faith falls short in many circumstances (Bartholomew, 2004b:202; Chance, 2011:369; Gadamer, 2004:279; Osmer, 2008:41-46). With the growing interest and the lack of Reformed experience over five centuries, a theology of pilgrimage is essential. The value of pilgrimage as a spiritual discipline is also a growing concept and supported by many theologians (Bartholomew, 2004b:206). Spiritual maturity and growth towards maturity is captured in the pilgrimage analogy by Schwanda (2000:196-211).

Research indicates that the journey concept is appealing to Reformed Christians says Bradley (2010:20). A theology of pilgrimage is demanded by the complexities of contextualisation and the open space in which pilgrims from the Reformed tradition should appropriate the practice and meaning (Bartholomew, 2004b:206).

The pilgrimage metaphor is further explored by Wepener (2010:24-25) saying that Christians has the opportunity to create an experience paradigm of faith with Jerusalem and Emmaus, for interpreting faith experiences of God’s presence or absence, when answered or when to go without an answer.

Theology of space (place) for the Reformed tradition to make the shift from physical “holy places” or physical destinations to the internal relationship with God, is another facet that needs attention as explained by Caspers and Post (2008:29).

**Chapter seven** is about the empirical research, containing interviews and code-analysis of the interviews with pilgrims or co-researchers from the Reformed tradition who completed the Camino pilgrimage. Triangulation is important and throughout the research, triangulation is used to verify progress and direction of the research of which account is given in chapter seven.

**Chapter eight** reflects on the outcome of the empirical research, integrated with the content of all other chapters, with a liturgical theory for praxis for the Reformed tradition as a final outcome. The research structure is based on investigating the conceptual framework of the meaning Christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition find in pilgrimages, gathering as much as possible information<sup>7</sup>.

The researcher's intention is to determine what can be learned for the future of the Reformed tradition based on the current expression of faith with rituals such as pilgrimage and labyrinth. Barnard (2000:6,11) argues that a shift took place in Liturgy as the emphasis shifts from Church and clergy orientated experience of faith to that of an individualised faith experience, where the individual appropriate self meaning.

Klomp (2011:8) states that Liturgical Studies always focused on the classical theological concepts, not taking the cultural-anthropological world into consideration, which this research intends to do, as pilgrimage and other rituals may come from the cultural-anthropology. An integration of a theological and cultural-anthropological approach certainly has to accept that there is tension from time to time, in defining boundaries with liturgical concepts and a shift in authority as the knowledge base shifts. This is the approach to be found with Barnard (2014:2) who state that these ambivalences will be acknowledged but: "Exploring this field requires for a broad view, open concepts and unconventional methods". Liminality is a central theme in this work of Barnard (2014:3,67-114) with characteristics like: "...flow, instability, transgression, transformation and metaphors...", also closely related to the concept of bricolage, which describes liturgical ritual as "...a flow of meanings, as a

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<sup>7</sup> The researcher took many groups to different destinations over a period of twenty-five years although in an informal way, applying the principles of pilgrimage and this provides an advantage especially with the empirical chapter. Unintentionally this provided the researcher with dialectic exposure to participant observation by covering two of the four possible ways of participant observation namely, observer as participant and participant as observer. as distinguished by Nieuwenhuis, J. & Maree, K. 2007. Qualitative research designs and data gathering techniques. *First steps in research*:69-97.

story and as imagination, that in a specific local and temporal context has been activated and actualised”.

## 1.7 CONCLUSION

Chapter one is a summary of the current situation globally, in South Africa and with the Reformed tradition in South Africa, that necessitates a research like this on pilgrimage to determine, discern and learn from Christian pilgrims from the Reformed tradition, why do they do what they do, crossing several thresholds of the Reformed tradition, what do they find in doing it and most of all what meaning do they get or do they appropriate for themselves with their exposure to pilgrimage.

The central question to this research is in what way the study of current day pilgrimage can enrich the existing Reformed liturgical praxis in South Africa. In order to answer this central question, the following sub-questions must also be explored:

Chapter two: In what way will knowledge about the meaning pilgrims appropriate with a ritual such as pilgrimage contribute to the liturgical development and therefore Practical Theology?

Chapter three: Will ethnography and participation observation be the appropriate methodological design to unlock the potential knowledge from pilgrims of the Reformed tradition?

Chapter four: How can relevant concepts such as liminality, heterotopia and liturgical-inculturation contribute to the understanding of current spiritual behaviour and in managing future possibilities for liturgical-praxis?

Chapter five: Is there value in studying the history and meaning of pilgrimage through the ages, in determining the current meaning of the pilgrimage phenomenon for a future orientated liturgical praxis? What will become clear from the history and meaning of pilgrimage through the ages, in terms of what is continued and what is discontinued in the current way of expressing faith by Christian pilgrims from the Reformed tradition?



Chapter six: Is there a possibility for a theology of pilgrimage and in what way can that enrich the liturgical praxis?

Chapter seven: Will this research be able to tap into the motivations driving this current global spiritual behaviour and process this information into a presentable format to enrich Reformed Liturgy in South Africa?

The researcher trusts that the outcome of this exploration of pilgrimage within the Reformed tradition will materialise in a liturgical praxis that will serve the research theme:

*Pilgrimage as a challenge for the Reformed liturgical praxis.*

## CHAPTER 2

### THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

#### 2.1 METHODOLOGY EXPLAINED

A professor once told a student, “thank you, for once I did not need wipers for the windscreen to see the argument”. The researcher trust that this chapter will get that kind of response, as the methodological design and methodology come from the latest developments in the research field and is only used in a couple of dissertations up to date.

Some introductory comments to explain the strategy and approach to the research statement of pilgrimage and the challenge it presents to Reformed liturgical praxis. Why was pilgrimage chosen as a research topic and what contribution can this research offer to the Reformed tradition? What makes pilgrimage an explanatory variable in comparison to other spiritual phenomenon? Is the increasing popularity of pilgrimage indicating a new era in human thinking, with implications for religion, faith, worshipping and therefore Practical Theology? Are we entering a new paradigm of thought and spiritual behaviour? These are the questions behind this research project and which all serve the central research question, as to what meaning do pilgrims from the Reformed tradition appropriate for themselves and what message does this have for the liturgical praxis of the Reformed tradition.

The focus of the research project is more on the kind of Christian pilgrim doing the El Camino de Santiago de Compostela in Spain, which differs from the also popular pilgrimages to Israel, its nature and the way in which pilgrims are doing it. Pilgrims to Israel will usually do it in groups under leadership of a minister or spiritual leader from their local denomination or the same denominational background, according to Bar (2003:139). The Israel pilgrims seem to be more conventional in their approach, expectation and interpretation of pilgrimage.

Christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition to Jerusalem and Israel, will normally go on an organised tour or sometimes advertised as a pilgrimage in the spirit of faith confirmation according to Bar (2003:137-138), who also state that the tendency is to do it as part of organised groups, consisting mostly of people from the same religious conviction, strengthening each other’s faith.



In Scripture, pilgrimage appears in a collective and individual way, in the Old Testament and New Testament, as explained by Yeary (2010) in his book *Pilgrim People: a Scriptural Commentary*, and an in-depth account of his contribution is to be found in chapter 5 under the heading Biblical perspective on pilgrimage. Pilgrims on their own as individuals and in groups are present everywhere, to Jerusalem, to Santiago and all other pilgrim routes. However it seems that the tendency is that Jerusalem is more group orientated and Santiago more individual orientated.

Pilgrims to the El Camino de Santiago, are “usually single and non-affiliated pilgrims”, in other words they are on their own as individuals (Post, 1998b:222). The motivation, intention or agenda of these pilgrims is described by Post (1998b:224) as “...an oasis, a blank space, in a world permeated by modernity even within the framework of church communities”, as he elaborates on this as a new expression of faith.

The variety in motivations amongst pilgrims for doing the Camino pilgrimage, makes it nearly impossible to predict the reasons why they are doing the pilgrimage and therefore it can be done only in broad categories (Post, 1998b:238). The individual appropriation by pilgrims is however one feature that can be identified, although it can be completely divergent in meaning according to Post (1998b:238) and he describes this as a “vessel-ritual” to illustrate the process where the individual pilgrim decides according to personal needs what the content of the vessel should be.

Christian pilgrims from the Reformed tradition on the Camino, will do it on their own, in most cases and will usually have a more extended agenda including personal or spiritual needs. Faith issues such as reconciliation, forgiveness, salvation, personal relationship with God or on a more secondary level personal growth, emotional healing, health issues, fun and adventure or just being a tourist, breakaway from normal life, seeking community, connecting with nature or just recreational reasons, to name but a few of the possible motivations mentioned by Post (1998b:22).

The shift in interest in human behaviour lean more towards the Camino style than that of Jerusalem. From this combination of spiritual development with personal development, the researcher believes the Reformed tradition will learn more about future spiritual needs from

the individual Camino pilgrims. Therefore the aim of this research will be more directed towards the Camino pilgrims.

Different facets will be investigated to explore the possible meaning and contribution of the pilgrimage phenomenon to Christian worshipping in this research to learn and formulate some indicators for the Reformed tradition's liturgical praxis. Post (1998b:20) emphasises the shift in understanding religious people's behaviour for what was previously understood as secularisation, when people leave the Church, is now redefined in terms of still being religious, just exercising faith in different ways, with rituals like pilgrimages. With also this background in mind a particular methodology was chosen in order to explore the central research question of this study. Firstly the overarching approach of Practical Theology will be discussed and thereafter Liturgical Studies as well as Ritual Studies as the theological platform in the academic field for a study on new expressions of faith, in order to determine the meaning pilgrims appropriate for themselves.

## **2.2 PRACTICAL THEOLOGY**

Within Practical Theology and to be more specific Liturgical Studies, this research is conducted with the focus on rituals. Schleiermacher is acknowledged for structuring Practical Theology within Reformed Theology, with Liturgy part of Practical Theology as the way in which expression is given to religious life, states Barnard (1998:91). Practical Theology is understood to be the study of all communicative acts of the religious community in modern society in service of the Gospel (Heitink, 1993:154; Pieterse, 1993:2).

### **2.2.1 Practical Theology redefined**

As Practical Theology forms the foundation, liturgical studies is chosen from the next line of subjects and so the objective and purpose of the study should be well defined within these boundaries. Practical Theology is in a process of renewal, the last couple of years (Miller-McLemore, 2012:102). The revival of Practical Philosophies led to the rebirth of Practical Theology according to Browning (1995:3). This renewal process reflects from the initial stages when Practical Theology is defined more in terms of questions than statements (Osmer, 2008:4). This was not the case in the past when authority was centred around clergy and the Church, because then Practical Theology and Liturgy were more statement orientated and this shift communicates already something about a renewed definition.

Several developments brought Miller-McLemore (2012:102) to the conclusion that Practical Theology is in the process of redefining itself, referring to developments such as reference from other disciplines to theological themes or the study of religious experiences by social science, ethnography as a research design method, material practices, culture analysis and the personal and social context of scholarship to be taken into account in research.

Practical Theology as understood by Richard Osmer (2008), Don S. Browning (1995) and Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore (2012) will guide this research project to get clarity from information, different interpretations, motivations and many ways in which one could understand and make sense of the current movement in spiritual experience and worshipping.

Osmer (2008:4) states that four questions can guide the process of research, to better understand a situation in the spiritual world of worshipping and the necessary response asked from the Reformed Theology for a particular situation. These questions are:

- What is going on?
- Why is this going on?
- What ought to be going on?
- How might we respond?

Practical Theology's purpose and aim is for Miller-McLemore (2012:101) more than just a discipline as it is the way in which faith is shaped in this world, with more than just one interpretation<sup>8</sup>. Four different ways is distinguished by Miller-McLemore (2012:101-109) namely: "...a discipline among scholars...to sustain..." the following: "...an activity of faith among believers...seeking to sustain a life of reflective faith in the everyday...a method for studying theology in practice for theological educators and ministers...and a curricular area of sub-disciplines in the seminary...".

Miller-McLemore (2012:105) explains her view of Practical Theology as an understanding of faith or theology in practice and how it manifests in daily life with an eschatological dimension of the life hereafter. Therefore rituals and practices in worshipping are of interest

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<sup>8</sup> Miller-McLemore, B.J. 2012. *Christian theology in practice: Discovering a discipline*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, cites Martin Luther from his commentary on the First Twenty-Two Psalms: "It is living, no rather dying, suffering and facing damnation, not thinking, reading and speculating that makes a theologian".

in how it reflects in theology. In this regard, Miller-McLemore (2012:106) cites Boisen and Hiltner arguing for the study of “the living human document” as complimentary to the study of the written text, as theology is about the integration of these two. The territory of Practical Theology is in a constant process of expanding due to “...developments in the study of practice, empirical methods, the analysis of power and social location, religious pluralism and globalisation”, states Miller-McLemore (2012:106).

This research project is aimed at the experience of Christian pilgrims in the context of pluralism and globalisation as these pilgrims experience different cultures and even religions while being on a pilgrimage. The context differs totally from what Christians are used to in a more closed and protected environment. Technology and social media are two other forces to be taken into account and this reflects in chapter seven with the interviews.

Miller-McLemore (2012:1) argues for the redefinition of Practical Theology based on three foundations which is in the first place the “living web”, a way of acknowledging the many ways in which humans can understand their faith or the many ways in which God can make Himself known to man, secondly practical wisdom as expressed in theology is always dependent on man’s insight and understanding limited by external factors like social, cultural and political frameworks, and thirdly the important role of gender in understanding human behaviour.

The context for this research in current times is influenced by factors such as individualism, feminism, influence of Gadamer (2004) on positivism, technology’s influence on communication, to name a few but it is implicit that the paradigm of understanding is changing constantly and this is the world where Practical Theology should make sense to Christian’s faith and worshipping. Although Practical Theology can be defined in many ways because of its diversity, it could be described as theologians: “...preoccupied with everyday concerns that evade and disrupt traditional categories, doctrines and loci in theological and religious study” (Miller-McLemore, 2012:18).

Browning (1995:8) argues that all of theology is actually fundamental Practical Theology and he discerns four tasks for theology, descriptive theology, historical theology, systematic theology and strategic Practical Theology. From this Browning (1995:55) formulated four

questions “...that will drive us to strategic practical theological thinking”, and these questions are important for the purpose of this research:

- How do we understand this concrete situation in which we must act?
- What should be our praxis in this concrete situation?
- How do we critically defend the norms of our praxis in this concrete situation?
- What means, strategies and rhetoric’s should we use in this concrete situation?

Current times can indeed be described as a time of social reconstruction and it is therefore a common feature for people to revisit Phronesis or practical wisdom, associated through the ages with names like Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Hume, Kant, William James, John Dewey, Richard Rorty, Richard Bernstein, Gadamer, Habermas and MacIntyre but important is that this has now become an individual thing, where people would like to explore and discover on their own (Browning, 1995:2).

Jürgen Habermas (1985b:274-275); Habermas (1993:133-141) with his Communicative Action Theory and Malony (1984:188-189) with his Inter-subjective Theory of Truth, supported by Browning (1995:292), emphasise the importance of effective communication to lead to knowledge and wisdom. Browning (1995:4) states that in the past we relied too much on theoretical and technical reasoning which relates to the Platonian influence, with reason as the highest order of existence.

Customs and traditions also have a major influence but in current times Christian behaviour indicates that they want to get rid of all control issues. This also relates to the theory of Habermas (1993:145) describing the open dialogue domain without any power structures, so that communication can take place in an open and free space. It relates with the heterotopia concept of Foucault and his concept of power language sensitivity. Christians demonstrate the spiritual need that they want to explore practical wisdom in their own lives, with their own discretion, without tradition. This synchronise with the “interpretive dimension” of Gadamer (2004), which is addressed in this section. The important question coming out of this, is if pilgrimage as a ritual, is actually confirming this understanding. Is it part of modern man’s intention to explore and discover practical wisdom, free from past structures and control when power was in the hands of elite, a few clergy, politicians, or the church. This

movement in religious behaviour, specifically the Reformed tradition asks for a spiritual mature Christian, therefore spiritual maturity is investigated in chapter six.

In his Social Critical Theory, Habermas (1993:145) refers to practical knowledge in the Practical domain which identifies human social interaction or 'communicative action'. Social knowledge is governed by binding consensual norms, which define reciprocal expectations about behaviour between individuals. Social norms can be related to empirical or analytical propositions, but their validity is grounded only in a mutual, reciprocal agreement of intentions. The criterion of clarification of conditions for communication and intersubjectivity, the mutual understanding of meaning rather than causality, is used to determine what appropriate action is. Much of the historical-hermeneutic disciplines - descriptive social science, history, aesthetics, legal, ethnographic literary etc. - are classified by Habermas (1993:145) as belonging to the domain of the Practical.

The four tasks for Practical Theology as formulated by Browning (1995:8) can also be understood as a more context-orientated approach in Practical Theology. This approach is evident in all sub-disciplines, to be seen in the role of leaders and in the interconnectedness of everything as Osmer (2008:12) states and the researcher elaborates on this in the Interpretive task of Practical Theology.

Before going into more depth with the four questions or tasks for Practical Theology as identified by Osmer (2008) and Browning (1995), a broader context for this is necessary to provide the platform for understanding the redefinition of Practical Theology, by looking at the development of hermeneutics, the "living human web", public theology, the relevance of a proposed leadership model and the dynamics of change, the application within Liturgy and the relationship between worship and culture.

### **2.2.2 Development of Hermeneutics**

Hermeneutics went through several stages of development through the ages as human abilities progress. It is just becoming more and more accessible to the ordinary person in our day. The spiritual maturity of Christians today with access to all the knowledge they want, independent study of the Bible with all sources available, disappointment in the Church as institution because of global media coverage, must have an impact on the spiritual environment, worshipping, rituals and Liturgy.

Martin Heidegger (1962: 182–195) refers to the human being as hermeneutical by nature and now has to find his or her way in a world already well-defined. Although the world is well-defined, human beings still want to interpret and make sense of their own experience<sup>9</sup>.

These interpretations are sometimes initiated by an incident that “puncture our taken-for-granted world and make us aware of the interpretive activity in which we are already engaged” says Osmer (2008:21). This may lead to the insight that a new understanding is necessary, that sets Christians on a new road of discovery in a hermeneutical sense and with some new understandings. This description is very common to what pilgrims of the Reformed tradition experience during pilgrimage and then they have to make sense of it with their own frame of reference, based on a pre-knowledge of pilgrimage which was detached from the Reformed tradition for the last five hundred years.

A valuable contribution was made by Hans-Georg Gadamer (2004) with his interpretation of the hermeneutic challenge. It was due to the work of Gadamer (2004) that hermeneutics broke through the paradigm of positivism with the implication that texts from Scripture could be understood and interpreted in more than just one way, states Pieterse (2001:81). Gadamer (2004:309) indicates that the interaction between the reader and the text leads to the hermeneutical circle, described as the hermeneutical experience, to illustrate the interaction between the different contexts, for instance, a Biblical context to that of a current situation.

This contribution of Gadamer (2004:309) is of extreme importance for this research of pilgrimage as the Reformed tradition relies on individual interpretations of Scripture and divine experiences, whereas the interaction of the hermeneutic circle leads to an understanding of text in the here and now for pilgrims of the Reformed tradition. Gadamer (2004:279) elaborates on the hermeneutical experience and describes it as a circle influenced by five components namely, pre-understanding, experience of being brought up short, dialogical interplay (dispute), fusion of horizons (new insights) and application (new thinking).

Pre-understanding comes from the past and may influence the pilgrim in the same way as research traditions can shape a researchers way of research, but pre-understanding may

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<sup>9</sup> This can be said is one of the main features of modern day religion and how it plays out in the transformation of worshipping.

restrict the formulation of a new understanding which necessitates a thorough understanding of the personal context, meaning appropriated and insights of the original context and this must also include personal prejudices (Gadamer, 2004:255-279).

The text is communication from God, therefore meaning of the text must also be explored independently from context and human factors according to Gadamer (2004:311-314). Criticism on Gadamer (2004) is expressed by Habermas and Ricoeur on his acceptance of the authority of the text without taking the possibility of ideological influences or the abuse of power in consideration as both text and the reader should be submitted to analysis to ensure the essence of the message (Pieterse, 2001:83).

Ricoeur (1995:12-15) elaborates on Gadamer (2004) by indicating the importance of language and that the original message gets transformed once it gets into written form. The important thing is the difference and detachment between the intention of the speaker and the message on paper with the implication that the message gets detached from its original context and this scenario opens the possibility for application in a current context, according to Ricoeur (1995:16-36).

Ricoeur and Thompson (1981:184-193) state that this new possibility is aimed at the applicability of the written text and this is actually a pre-requisite to find the actual meaning for a current context. This implies a personal shift to become accessible for the message as originally intended, to be applied in the here and now in personal circumstances, as this could ask for a release of personal and previous convictions with the purpose of changing behaviour, transformation and growth (Ricoeur & Thompson, 1981:191).

The contribution of Gadamer and Ricoeur has huge implications for the experiences and interpretation of pilgrims, embracing the presence of God in a special space and time of their lives. Co-researchers experienced Divine communication in extraordinary ways and this can be accepted to people who declare themselves willing to set aside time to seek His presence in their lives for whatever personal situation they have to deal with or for the yearning to a deeper level of connection with Him. Many times out of the ordinary experiences form part of pilgrims' narratives and in the context of all His promises in Scripture, this can be expected.



The unpredictable ways in which pilgrim's appropriate meaning for themselves from these experiences must also be anchored in the written text namely the Word of God. Personal interpretation integrated with the Word must make sense in the moment for the Reformed tradition according to Ricoeur (1995) and Gadamer (2004)<sup>10</sup>.

### 2.2.3 The “living human web”

The “living human web” as a term was coined by Miller-McLemore (2012:26), capturing new developments since Boisen's “living human document” and capturing the main message of her work that Practical Theology's working field expanded to be everywhere, covering life with a wider political, social, religious and cultural context than ever before with the intention of investigating, interpreting and transforming. On a practical level this means for instance, expansion of pastoral care within a congregation from a one-man-show to that of a communal responsibility. Practical Theology is now accountable to the congregation, the academy and society.

Browning (1995:59) refers to Boisen's “human document” in his motivation for the inclusion of personal experience in the task of Practical Theology. The personal experience was neglected by Practical Theology for too long and ways should be found to get it to the same level of study as Biblical and theological studies (Browning, 1995:59; Miller-McLemore, 2012:42).

For the purpose of this study, the researcher made personal experiences a priority during the empirical phase during interviews. Christians of the Reformed tradition find it difficult enough to talk about personal experiences as the theological frame of reference is that it will be evaluated as right or wrong in the context of Scripture or rather the interpretation of Scripture by someone else.

A shift took place in the scope of Pastoral Theology from focusing on the individual to that of a much wider context, to include the cultural, social and religious context. This influence can

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<sup>10</sup> This process is well illustrated by Miller-McLemore, B.J. 2012. *Christian theology in practice: Discovering a discipline*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. as a reflection of her personal relationship of living faith, which is not just an academic argument, as she states that she loves going on a pilgrimage to the big trees, believes that God can make Himself known anywhere and that children and trees have a special place with God.

be ascribed to the impact of liberation and feminism perspectives as well as globalisation (Miller-McLemore, 2012:34-35).

With the intention of a better understanding of a specific context, as is the case with a new phenomenon in spirituality like pilgrimage to the Reformed tradition, it is necessary to elaborate on the “living human web”. According to Miller-McLemore (2012:42) the “living human web” provides for the acknowledgement of an author’s identity and cultural context while a personal understanding of text and situation must be respected<sup>11</sup>. Those without voices, the marginalised, the outcast, etc., must be granted the opportunity to voice their position.

The original intention with “living human web” was to capture the expanded need for Practical Theology in dealing with the new understanding and responsibilities regarding culture, power and individualism, in relation to God.

Miller-McLemore (2012:46) states about the strengths and weaknesses of “living human web” that first and foremost the boundaries for Practical Theology within this new understanding is a challenge because one could go anywhere in the search to understand religious experience. She emphasised the importance of the focus on “...human document within the web” as the well-being of anyone involved is of the utmost importance<sup>12</sup>.

The outcome of this shift towards the web, meaning the interconnectedness, is fourfold and Miller-McLemore (2012:50) indicates this to be teaching, religious diversity, seminary relations and historical understanding. These four issues need to adjust and redefine themselves given the new expanded context. This development within Practical Theology must be seen against the background of a gap that opened up between theology and the plain normal daily lives of Christians. This made Practical Theology something exclusively for scholars within their own space while those outside turned other ways to get guidance and inspiration. Insight and Biblical wisdom were once again saved for clergy. Turning to the

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<sup>11</sup> In this context *ibid.* invented a course with: “...emphasis on good listening skills, empathy, and moral and religious guidance, it adds an investigation of the network of care in religious institutions, and it includes a study of diverse perspectives and of the interconnections between intra-psychic understandings, social analysis, and theological reflection”.

<sup>12</sup> This shift in Practical Theology had major implications for Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).

“living human document” of Boisen, was an effort to bridge this gap, taken further by the “living human web” of Miller-McLemore (2012:54-55)<sup>13</sup>.

Practical Theology found some attributes with sciences and specifically psychology and medicine were named, that could assist in closing this gap between theology and the normal daily lives of Christians, for they translate “sophisticated theories...into concrete and understandable terms”, proved the value of “close observation of people’s lives and the intelligence that directly evolves out of this”, emphasised the “centrality of personal formation” and then proposed a “method of case study” in order to bring all of this together, states Miller-McLemore (2012:57).

This whole process brought an insight to the table, in alignment with that of Gadamer (2004) that the pre-understanding of people is as important as the incident or situation as object of study. It is only with insight into the hidden dynamics of an individual or a group that we can understand the outward reaction or opinion. Browning (1995:59) agrees with Miller-McLemore (2012:58) by emphasising the importance of personal history and how that relates to judgement in a specific situation.

#### **2.2.4 Public Theology**

Public Theology is still a relatively new concept from pastoral care in Practical Theology although it can be attributed to Browning (1983b:15-17,53-71) back in 1983, who describes this responsibility as participation in the world and it is still in the process of unfolding. A new awareness of the role of pastoral care led to a broader vision for the role of pastoral care to be more community orientated and less individualistic, therefore a new role is identified to respond to current culture and social ethic leadership for the whole of society (Browning, 1983a:17-21). As pastoral care for individuals and for systems within society requires different skills, this implicates a new set of skills for pastoral care.

Another challenge for pastoral care is to determine norms which will be applicable in the broader context of serving the whole of society, which includes non-Christians, as these

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<sup>13</sup> The pastoral care movement’s origin can be traced back to the influence of the liberal theology, as they were confronted by a society treating humans unfair, leaving them marginalised. This social concern thinking was influenced by the Social-Criticism Theory of Jürgen Habermas from the Frankfurt School of Philosophy according to Miller-McLemore, B.J. 2012. *Christian theology in practice: Discovering a discipline*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

norms will be based on Scripture, with the intention of serving the whole community, to everybody's interest and benefit (Browning, 1983a:21). The future of Practical Theology's pastoral counselling or pastoral theology should be a development towards learning skills for interventions on congregational, societal and cultural level and obviously it will demand additional skills such as: "...active confrontation of unjust situations, public education, public networking, community action in congregations, support groups, preaching on hard biblical passages and creative use of ritual and Liturgy" (Miller-McLemore, 2012:63).

This has some implications as other disciplines are required like Sociology, Social Ethics, Anthropology and Philosophy. This implies a change in profile of the pastoral counsellor as well as the training institutions with the emphasis not only on: "...healing, sustaining, guiding and reconciling..." but now in the public arena of "...resisting, empowering and liberating" according to Miller-McLemore (2012:64). The shift is then towards an understanding not only of the human being and relationship but now also about social systems, cultural systems and religious systems, accommodating diversity.

Miller-McLemore (2012:77-99) builds a case for Public Theology, advancing from Practical Theology, answering to the call of how people with cultural differences and serious religious differences can live together in an integrated world, which can be also described as the small village because of globalisation amongst other reasons. Public Theology can be described as: "...attempts to analyse and influence the wider social order" says Miller-McLemore (2012:74). She elaborates on this by stating that the public silence from mainstream Christianity on important social issues raised concern while realising that pastoral care's focus is only on individuals and that it is nothing else than to ignore the social context according to Miller-McLemore (2012:86).

More than one reason exist for this development of theology towards a Public Theology, as the need for Christianity's presence and input in policy formation in the public domain, is a growing need in a society that is becoming more diverse every day. Some political demands and adjustments led to a culture open for the possibility of social services delivery by so-called faith-based organisations. The need is also there for guidance on national moral issues and the expectation of both services and values to be provided by the Church (Miller-McLemore, 2012:76).

An important aspect of Browning (1983a; 1983b; 1987) and Miller-McLemore (2012) for this research is the emphasis that Practical Theology is accountable in a much bigger context than ever before. What is said here regarding Pastoral Care is also relevant for Liturgical Studies as a sub-discipline in Practical Theology. This is not an isolated phenomenon as the practical situation with pilgrimage also implicates a much bigger context, in depth exposure to other religions, cultures and practical situations because of the “global village” effect of the world to become smaller, with easier travel, communication and technology, which implicate an effect on faith, worshipping and witnessing by the Reformed tradition. In practical terms as the world becomes smaller in one sense, it grows bigger in another sense, demanding flexibility from the Reformed tradition to adjust to changing environment<sup>14</sup>. In the South African context this is well demonstrated by two books, *Bliksem* and *Kookpunt* from Cas Wepener, recently published, addressing the issue of Public Theology in the South African context.

### 2.2.5 Communication model of leadership and the dynamics of change

Osmer (2008:26) addresses a communication model of leadership for spiritual leaders moving into the future. For this he relies on the communication theory of leadership as developed by Michael Hackman and Craig Johnson (1996). Osmer (2008:26) says: “They define leadership as human (symbolic) communication, which modifies the attitudes and behaviour of others in order to meet shared group goals and needs”. Three focus areas are important:

- Leadership is the exercise of influence
- Leadership is the exercise of influence through many different forms of communication
- Leadership is collaborative

This leadership model of Michael Hackman and Craig Johnson, *Leadership: a Communication Perspective* (1996) and reprinted in 2013 cited by Osmer (2008:26) has a strong correlation with a leadership model to be found in the world of physics, especially engineering as investigated at the one institution the researcher considered to be the most

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<sup>14</sup> This situation recalls the words of the journalist-philosopher G.K. Chesterton, G.K. 1925. *Heretics*. Champaign, Ill: Project Gutenberg.: ‘Before long the world will be cloven with a war between the telescopists and the microscopists’.

practical in the world, as they are absolutely forced into an environment of effective communication, where they have to transcend all sorts of differences in terms of culture, religion, personalities, personal convictions, assumptions, etc., and that is at NASA.

With this growing awareness of the importance of communication and to be more specific, spiritual communication, the researcher explored some alternatives during the research period in identifying Jürgen Habermas's work on communication in his Communicative Action Theory, as former lecturer at the Frankfurt School of Philosophy in Germany and former director of the Max Planck Institute (Habermas, 1985b:308). And from the world of natural sciences, the work of Charlie Pellerin, former head of the Hubble Telescope Programme at NASA in the USA (Pellerin, 2009).

The researcher managed to get a private appointment with Prof Habermas in Germany (2013) and became part of Dr Pellerin's international team at NASA as from 2012, as well as attending two NASA staff workshops of Dr Pellerin at the JPL centre in Pasadena, California with a bursary from the University of Pretoria.

Valuable lessons were learned during these exposures and principles applicable were identified by the researcher for the purpose of spiritual communication regarding research on the pilgrimage ritual. From Prof Habermas with his Communicative Action Theory and Social-Critical Theory the following principles were identified (Habermas, 1993:131).

#### **2.2.5.1 'communication elevates knowledge'**

The right context for effective communication is to allow the conversation to take its own momentum without the normal social behaviour where all sorts of excuses not to carry on would apply, and to stay focused until the necessary outcome is achieved. Once the sensitivity of how easily a person can stop the communication is there, because of the slightest form of an excuse like 'my time is up' or 'next meeting' etc., just because the conversation becomes uncomfortable, the insight grows in terms of the responsibility to create the context to keep the conversation on track until the necessary outcome is achieved. Applied to the researcher's study on pilgrimage this was a crucial insight during interviews.

### **2.2.5.2 ‘the unfettered force of the best argument will prevail’**

The researcher became aware of how easily communication stops at crucial points which can also be described by the term critical juncture (Habermas, 1993:145). It could be just that moment of silence that creates a context for a breakthrough for a pilgrim to continue the line of thought. Sensitivity on the part of the researcher not to interrupt the line of thought but just use a necessary probe at the right time usually in the form of a question rather than a comment, created outcomes. This is respectful priestly listening to the opinion of the researcher. In other words not a usual type of conversation but one totally focused on the process of the pilgrim. It is this kind of ministry that Reformed Churches should provide for the pioneers in faith, the pilgrims. At the same time the argument goes both ways in the domain of open communication, therefore the pilgrims should also be prepared to listen to the voice of the Reformed tradition in a reciprocal relationship.

### **2.2.5.3 ‘simplicity in communication’**

Simplicity in communication is usually a big challenge because human behaviour tends to complicate communication. The intention of all parties involved in communication should be at the correct steering and it may be necessary to take a step back from time to time and reflect on the intention. The use of power language is also a major issue in simplifying communication (Habermas, 1985a:94-95).

In NASA’s practical environment of engineers and scientists the standard of communication is under constant pressure for performance and lack of effective communication is the culprit for disasters 90% of the time, according to investigations afterwards (Pellerin, 2009:11). The researcher wants to use the metaphor from nature of a diamond being formed under intense pressure over time, to describe the environment of NASA, a natural science environment confronted by the application of principles from social sciences as a living laboratory. During this exposure the researcher identified the following principles of value for the development of a liturgical praxis within the Reformed tradition:

### **2.2.5.4 ‘leadership creates the context for necessary performance’**

These are the contents of two-day workshops according to the 4-D model which creates the context for a shift with the focus on effective communication (Pellerin, 2009:119-121). According to this model positive and negative cultural patterns and four personality types are

distinguished with the most common behavioural patterns of each personality type, including what needs to be known and what needs to be done, to achieve a measurable outcome (Pellerin, 2009:9-16).

This is relevant for the research on pilgrimage for the Reformed tradition, as leadership needs to develop skills in how to create a context with the purpose of serving, based on the principle of effective communication. It has already been said many times that Reformed Churches need a change in ministering for the future. This has become clear from current social-spiritual behavioural patterns already identified. In other words a context shift from a current situation to a desired outcome, is what this is about.

#### **2.2.5.5 ‘rationalise deviance’**

“With the evidence available, how on earth could you launch” were the words of Dianne Vaughan at the investigation after the Challenger disaster at NASA (Pellerin, 2009:11). It seems to be an undeniable feature of human behaviour to ignore or rationalise quite obvious facts and realities available, even in the world of natural sciences (Pellerin, 2009:11). There seems to be so much truth in the words: ‘Human kind cannot bear reality’ by T.S. Eliot (1959:14).

Effective communication strategies elevate realities to surface and not to be rationalised away from reality, once this is acknowledged as typical human behaviour for which a system or relationship should compensate. It is like safety nets being built into communication, especially for awareness’s or insights gained during rituals like pilgrimage. It happened more than once during interviews that co-researchers made comments in this regard when they remembered something important that they had not yet addressed or had forgotten about. Communication repeatedly elevates this knowledge.

#### **2.2.5.6 “power of perceptions”**

At NASA they work with the slogan that 90% of all perceptions are wrong (Pellerin, 2009:11). The percentage may be debatable but it surely pays off to double-check any understanding and a principle from which effective communication could only benefit. In the field of Emotional Intelligence only 7% of communication is allocated to verbal communication with 93% going to non-verbal communication.



Norms and dynamics of change should be integrated as a fundamental contribution from Practical Theology (Browning, 1995:279). Accountability for a transformational process ensure that the end result serves the purpose and accountability is the implication of the warning from Bartholomew (2004b:202) about pilgrimage: “To embrace pilgrimage and religious tourism uncritically is to risk syncretism of the worst sort”. Therefore to apply the concept or principles of pilgrimage, labyrinth or any other symbols in other people’s lives, ask for effective, clear communication, to bring about envisioned change, growth and insights, in a responsible way, accountable to God, self and others.

The implication for the Reformed tradition may be a new platform or public domain of communication which should be negotiated in the context of open dialogue and “freely speech”, to use the thoughts of Habermas (1985a:94-95) where “...discourse which transcends the specific order...” takes place from a position of externalised participants, in order to “agree upon changed habits of action and restatement of values”. He refers to a rational context for thoughts, inclusive of any possible role-player, including all parties, no matter how far they differ from each other

As the research strategy for this project is discourse-analysis oriented, far removed from the big systems approach of Habermas, principles can be used from his Communicative Action Theory to apply in an open-dialogue-free-of-power-language scenario for the Reformed tradition. In a practical way this means effective communication elevates knowledge or the unfettered force of the best argument will prevail as well as intolerance of power structures. The importance of communication is realised by Practical theologians as Browning (1995) and Pieterse (1993) as both emphasise the importance of Jürgen Habermas (1985a); Habermas (1985b) and his Communicative Action Theory from the discipline of philosophy.

The research done on intentional communication with graphic symbols may produce a valuable contribution for the development of communication. Stephenson (1996:147) cites Warren & Reichle, (1992) that the theory of pragmatics is the driving force behind research on alternative symbol systems for communication within psycholinguistic models of language and according to the theory of pragmatics, behaviour is the motivational basis for communicative intent. Interpretation and appropriate function of observed behaviour is dependent on authentic intent in psycho-linguistics (Bates, 1979:43).

The work of (Bates, 1976; Bates, 1979) presents a coherent theoretical description of the development of symbol use within a framework of pragmatics, indicating that both communication intent and symbol are slow working processes. Bates et al. (1979:43) defined symbol as a sign with a meaningful relationship with a referent in such a way that it can substitute the referent in a variety of contexts, inside or outside communicative situations while at the same time maintaining its identity as separate from the referent.

What is relevant for the Reformed tradition is the determination of this space of communication about spirituality where authority is in the hands of the individual, which implicates a challenge to cross the threshold and liminality for the Reformed tradition.

The challenge for this research will be to see if more is to be learned about the internal processing of information, self-expression, the value of the self-help shelve in contrast to the traditional discourse of the Reformed tradition. The quest is if pilgrimage will provide an alternative mechanism for answering the questions to Practical Theology, “what is going on” and “why is this going on” (Osmer, 2008:4).

Two ways of theological communication can be distinguished. The primary mode is the one less discussed and more difficult whenever it takes place, if at all, as it is about understanding the Word of God (Kavanagh, 1992:88-90). The primary mode is about what happened that changed how realities were perceived. This is what liturgy is about while the primary mode provides the material and purpose for theological studies in the secondary mode, which is discussed much more as it represents how theological thinking takes place with language and concept while these two should always be as close to each other as possible (Kavanagh, 1992:88-90). Miller-McLemore (2012:42) describes the primary mode of theological communication as something to be understood from the inside and not to be read or treated as a document. Communication in the primary mode seems to have one important feature to be reckoned with and that is that the unexpected will emerge (Stringer, 2008:20-22).

### **2.2.6 Relationship between worship and culture**

In chapter three, Browning (1995:55-74) integrates his four movements of theology as it materialised in his four questions, into seven practical steps which is of relevance as this can be transformed into a similar structure, applicable for the Reformed tradition as part of the answer to the research statement and the formulation of a Reformed ritual-liturgical praxis:

- Give a preliminary definition to an issue (personal, social, religious) that means a great deal to you and may have led you to come to divinity school.
- Discuss briefly why this issue is important to you and what your pre-understanding of it was before you began research on the paper.
- Interview someone who is also concerned with this issue. Describe how this person thinks religiously and ethically about this issue.
- Choose two theological resources (guides to the Christian classics) that address this issue. Summarize the way they define and normatively address the issue.
- Compare and critically assess these two guides to the Christian classics.
- Imagine communicating these two perspectives back to your interviewee, entering into his/her worldview and preferred metaphysics and narrative
- Record ways in which your own pre-understanding of the issue has changed because of this exercise.

As the intention of the research is to come up with an inculturated ritual-liturgical theory for praxis, it is necessary to look at the relationship between worship and culture as worship forms part of culture, states Barnard (2014).

To enlighten this relationship, it may help to look at the statement of The Lutheran World Federation's Study Team on Worship and Culture who came up with the following statement in Nairobi, January 1996 with four principles about this relationship and describe it as follows:

- 1) Worship is trans-cultural (Worship has certain dynamics that are beyond culture)
- 2) Worship is contextual (Worship reflects local patterns of speech, dress, and other cultural characteristics)
- 3) Worship is counter-cultural (Worship resists the idolatries of a given culture)
- 4) Worship is cross-cultural (Worship reflects the fact that the body of Christ transcends time and space).

An inculturated, ritual-liturgical theory for praxis should accommodate these four dimensions namely: trans-cultural, contextual, counter-cultural and cross-cultural. Pilgrimage as a ritual takes place in this context, including all four principles of the Nairobi statement, in contrast to the normal ways of worshipping in South Africa. Pilgrimage can be regarded as

progressive and serving the Reformed tradition as a forerunner, gathering as much as possible information from the frontiers of worshipping, enabling the Reformed tradition to become pro-active in modern day culture and open up a new ritual-liturgical space as longed for by some members of this tradition.

With these perspectives on hermeneutical developments, the living human web, public theology, leadership and change and the relationship between worship and culture, it could be said in conclusion that Practical Theology has a much wider scope than ever before. Pilgrimage is indeed fulfilling a huge role on behalf of the Reformed tradition, if personalised pilgrimage is regarded as a pioneer for that part of the Reformed praxis not addressed by the current liturgical praxis.

The focus can now shift back to the redefined understanding of Practical Theology with the four distinctions made by Osmer (2008) and Browning (1995) to serve as guidelines. These four tasks of Practical Theology in summary are:

“The descriptive-empirical task is a form of priestly listening, grounded in a spirituality of presence: attending to others in their particularity within the presence of God. The interpretative task is a form of wise judgement, grounded in a spirituality of sagely wisdom: guiding others in how to live within God’s royal rule. The normative task is a form of prophetic discernment, grounded in a spirituality of discernment: helping others hear and heed God’s Word in the particular circumstances of their lives and world. The pragmatic task is a form of transforming leadership, grounded in a spirituality of servant leadership: taking risks on behalf of the congregation to help it better embody its mission as a sign and witness of God’s self-giving love” (Osmer, 2008:28-29).

### **2.3 DESCRIPTIVE-EMPIRICAL TASK OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY**

The descriptive-empirical, means to look at current trends in spiritual life, asking the question ‘what is going on’ and answering that with a full description with as much detail as possible in a way that the most dominating behaviour tends to show itself (Osmer, 2008:4). This strategy reflects in chapter seven, the empirical research. Browning (1995:55) formulates this by asking ‘How do we understand this concrete situation in which we must act’, to add to the strategic thinking practice of Practical Theology.

This section is very important for the research project as the researcher's empirical research was conducted according to the descriptive-empirical, also described by the term "thick description", coined by Geertz (1973:10), which means a comprehensive data gathering process, implying the gathering of any relevant information by listening attentively and thoroughly, reflecting about it with the principle of communication elevates knowledge (Habermas, 1993:131). In persisting, eventually patterns, concepts and certain relationships of relevance, start to emerge (Osmer, 2008:6). This process already indicates the redefinition of Practical Theology, reflecting a non-prescriptive, non-authoritative approach, in response to 'what is going on', which indicates a shift in power language.

The descriptive-empirical task of Practical Theology is relevant for this research as every pilgrim has a personal story of why they became a pilgrim and in these stories of spiritual need, emotional need, time to reflect, seeking guidance, etc., the researcher could pick up the patterns valuable for a Reformed liturgical praxis which could contribute to a pro-active attitude and adjustments in ministry. Each pilgrim could be regarded as a source of knowledge as they are exponents of "what is going on" in current times.

Certain relevant topics of the descriptive-empirical task of Practical Theology are identified by Browning (2000); Long (2005); Miller-McLemore (2012), Osmer (2008) and Tisdale (1997) and these are:

### **2.3.1 Spirituality of presence**

"Spirituality of presence...is attending, relating to others with openness, attentiveness and prayerfulness" (Osmer, 2008:34). To give meaning to a spirituality of presence is a challenge for Christians and spiritual leaders and so much more where Christians want to explore their spiritual lives, as with pilgrimage. This could be seen as the crux of the descriptive-empirical task of practical theological interpretation, to be present heart and soul in knowing and getting to know what is going on in the lives of others. The researcher is convinced that this element of the descriptive-empirical research task can reveal information that will otherwise not surface in any other way, as people respond to the sense they get if their opinion, interpretation, their understanding of personal or spiritual experiences will be treated with respect and dignity.

Long (2005:55) says about priestly listening that preachers rely on the Word of God, but they must also pay attention and listen to the context in which people have to live on a daily basis. To associate with the identity of the person and establish a mutual identity, should be the objective of priestly listening (Osmer, 2008:35). Priestly listening increases the knowledge and insights into the reality people have to deal with in their daily lives and this is important in any field of service of the Reformed tradition. Tisdale (1997) states that ministers should go further than guessing, imagining or using intuition about the spiritual needs of their congregation.

The interpretation of Tisdale (1997), Long (2005) and Osmer (2008) is important, for this research on pilgrimage as listening with openness enable the individual to discover hidden messages. Tisdale (1997:25) and Osmer (2008:37-38) continues to distinguish between informal, semiformal and formal attending. Informal attending refers to listening in everyday life, semiformal attending, a more structured way of listening, using strategy or methods to improve attending while formal attending is to investigate a specific incident, or a specific situation in context, with empirical research. While the latter may seem the most insensitive way, the rationale behind it is a more in depth understanding of a certain situation.

Spiritual attending has many challenges for the interpreter, facilitator, guide or leader, with no easy solutions. It is a process to be guided by the Holy Spirit, personalised by every individual's uniqueness. The process starts with the level of accessibility and there are many ways in which to accomplish growth in spiritual attendance (Osmer, 2008:40). Certainly the spiritual life of the listener or researcher is of the utmost importance if spiritual attending is the preferred strategy, as it is a gift to hear the unsaid, to hear that what is actually been said. Many times it will happen where the interviewee will only recognise internal messages, once it is externalised with effective communication or with guidance from the interviewer.

The focus is on guiding people to new perspectives who are: "... brought up short" with "the resources of the Christian faith" (Osmer, 2008:41). For pilgrims and a conversation about pilgrimage this is a very important line of thought as it is this experience of being without answers, or the experience where the existent faith does not comply, which creates a situation of disappointment in the Divine or the Reformed liturgical praxis not complying with the spiritual need of current times.

### **2.3.2 Empirical research and spiritual attending**

Osmer (2008:41) explores the concept of improving attending guidance by looking critically at some empirical researchers. As an example Osmer (2008:42) refers to Christian Smith's book on "Soul Searching" where Smith gets to some very interesting findings about teenagers and their concept of religion by saying they: "...have an extremely limited grasp of the beliefs and values of their faith traditions. Most hold what Smith calls 'moralistic therapeutic deism': God created and orders the world: God wants people to be good, nice and fair but is not particularly involved in the world except when a problem arises; the central goal of life is to be happy and feel good about oneself: good people go to heaven when they die".

Another example is that of Roof (2001) and Wuthnow (2000) who also contribute some very interesting research results, important for this research as it reflects the spirit of pilgrims. Some trends were identified emerging since the 1950's in the American religious society. Roof (2001) describes this as a spirituality of quest which obviously means an approach where Christians want to enquire about what is bothering them, expecting answers from the Church, clergy and the faith community in contrast to the spirit of being told and unconditional acceptance of that, and this is called a quest spirituality. Wuthnow (2000) calls this seeker spirituality. Both of them state that this approach has implications for the Church as institution. Another outcome indicates loyalty to a certain denomination can become relevant only to the extent of the value a certain congregation can add to an individual's life.

Other findings from Roof (2001) and Wuthnow (2000) are how the individual will get to his or her personal knowledge as this provide indicators about sources like self-help literature, talk shows, recovery groups and para-church organisations, to name but a few. This shift also has a number of other implications like commitment, acceptance of norms and about authority. This research adds up to that of Barnard (2000:12) and Post (1998b:238) as both emphasise the shift towards individual interpretation of faith related issues.

Again the words "...of being brought up short..." by Osmer (2008:41) feature here, as the Reformed tradition has to deal with it. Gadamer (2004) refers to this concept as one of his five elements of the hermeneutic circle. Browning (2000) did some work in this regard to illustrate how a certain situation where Christians were "...brought up short..." can be turned

around. It may well be that the Reformed tradition is also “...brought up short...” for a specific situation that they never had to deal with before.

Osmer (2008:46) refers to where this was successfully achieved by Browning, as they successfully demonstrate the effectiveness of applying all four tasks of Practical Theology. This is of extreme importance for this study on pilgrimage as pilgrims consciously or intuitively reacts to “...being brought up short...” in one way or another, most of times in an unpredictable way. The importance and relevance of Browning success, referred to by Osmer (2008:46) for this research project lies in the fact that it demonstrates the power and impact of spiritual attendance, priestly listening, good listening skills as well as the complete turn-around of current perceptions, interpretations and current knowledge. This is exactly what this research is about and this will be important during interviews as many pilgrims don’t hesitate to tell that they experience the opposite of what they expected and after a while decided to stay quiet about their pilgrimage experiences. As Christian pilgrims don’t experience “priestly listening”, they learn to keep quiet and this response sometimes asks for only one appropriate response, confronting the Reformed tradition with spiritual maturity with all parties involved.

Three elements of spiritual presence, worth to take note of and important for qualitative research are named *describing*, *observing* and *interviewing* by Osmer (2008:58-64). *Describing* asks from the researcher, to listen without a judgmental or interpretive attitude, always in the role of an outsider, to get rid of preconceived ideas – capturing the exact words and thoughts of others, including all relevant information, as well as to reflect on the researcher’s own subjectivity. *Observing* asks first-hand experience, discovering things that others might overlook or not willing to share. Osmer (2008:60) cites Patton’s description of six characteristics of good observers: “learning to pay attention, writing descriptively, recording field notes in a disciplined way, knowing how to spate detail from trivia, triangulating observations, recognizing the strengths and limitations of one’s own perspective”. *Interviewing* is a purposeful conversation between two people where one is seeking information from the other (Gillham, 2000:61; Osmer, 2008:60; Patton, 2005). Good listening is guidance without controlling, not talking too much, comfortable with silence from time to time, open-ended questions, clarifying, staying relevant, asking for examples, ordering information for clarity, as explained by Gillham (2000:46-50).



### 2.3.3 Research Plan on ground level

A research design plan is important for the evaluation or planning of a program for an improved understanding of a group or someone's life, culture, context, potential, opportunities and effective communication (Osmer, 2008:47).

Osmer (2008:48) made reference to Creswell (2003) in identifying four steps in this regard, bringing Mixed Methods Approaches into the equation and the researcher will include some information about Mixed Methods Approach at the end of this section:

- 1) Clarity about the purpose of the project
- 2) Choice of a strategy of inquiry
- 3) Formation of a research plan and execution of it
- 4) Reflection on the assumptions informing a particular project

The researcher finds this to be an effective process to gain clarity in an overwhelming field of information. Pilgrimage is about life in its totality and pilgrimage involves every facet of a pilgrim's life, therefore this research has to be in the arena of the multi-disciplinary, as was stated earlier. The process of defining the purpose for this research project took some time and went through many phases and formulations. The researcher experienced a mysterious attraction to the concept of pilgrimage for many years and had the urge to understand what pilgrimage is all about, intuitively aware that there must be more to this than meets the eye.

Two questions from literature study played a major role in the formulation of what the researcher would like to achieve and that is: 'Why do you want to carry out this project?' and 'What questions do you want to be able to answer at the end of the project?' as stated by Osmer (2008:48-50). The researcher had the opportunity of attending some of Richard Osmer's classes during a visit to Princeton Theological Seminary, was invited to participate more than once and had the opportunity of a personal session with Osmer about the researcher's focus of study. These are all major factors contributing to the process of clarity where the researcher ended up with an objective of contributing an end product that may be of value to the Reformed tradition, namely, a thorough investigation to ritual phenomenon like pilgrimage, including labyrinth, a theological framework of understanding, the meaning

of this for the Reformed tradition and a ritual-liturgical theory for praxis that may enrich the Reformed liturgical ministry.

Qualitative research strategy as chosen method for this research and the approach to interviews and data collection with the intention of identifying variables and the relationships between them, with the intention of understanding why Christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition do what they do and why they are doing it and what their understanding is of what they do with the objective to see what can be learned from this for future Reformed ministry. In this regard another relatively new approach integrating qualitative and quantitative, called Mixed Methods were also investigated, directly flowing from the researcher's interaction with Richard Osmer.

Osmer (2008:50) distinguishes between six different approaches within Practical Theology and they are all more towards the qualitative, intensive end of the continuum, like narrative research, case study research, ethnographic research, grounded theory research, phenomenological research and advocacy research. The choice was made for ethnographic research as methodological design, described in the next chapter. Six methods to gather information, mentioned by Osmer (2008:53-54) are, interviews, participant observation, artefact analysis, spatial analysis, demographic analysis and focus groups. From this participant observation as the tool or method of data gathering was chosen.

### **2.3.4 Reflexivity in research**

Scientific research today has to be done differently than before as cross-disciplinary criticism raise valid questions to each other's methodology. Reflexivity is a positive development for research in general, as it creates external validation, which can sometimes counteract the researcher's own observation or interpretation. Reflexivity should therefore be an integral part of research in Social Sciences and also in Practical Theology.

The researcher also refers to the concept of triangulation which is elaborated on in the empirical study in Chapter 7. The responsibility of a researcher is to build in as many ways as possible to get external input in the researcher's own way of observing and reflecting behaviour, data gathering strategies, theory and interpretation of data, incorporate multiple criteria mechanisms, in order to counteract subjectivity and to be accountable for the research process (Osmer, 2008:57).

It was already said that with research on pilgrimage, research must take into account that every single pilgrim has something different in mind and appropriate anything for themselves in a unique and personal way and this is the reason why reflexivity and triangulation (Chapter 7) will just grow in stature as research processes develop (Barnard, 2000:11; Post, 2001b; Wepener & Van der Merwe, 2009:22).

Reflexivity has the implication that social scientists, including scholars in the field of Practical Theology, are now accountable to other disciplines and have to reflect and articulate to other disciplines from a meta-theoretical perspective on an ontological, epistemological and philosophical basis, answering to questions like: “What is the nature of reality (ontology)? How is it known (epistemology)? What is the nature of science (philosophy of science)? What sort of claims can science make and how are they justified? What social values does science serve?” (Osmer, 2008:57).

It is therefore necessary for this research on pilgrimage, studying human behaviour in the form of Christian pilgrims from the Reformed tradition, to include a short description of these meta-theoretical perspectives as Practical Theory accounts for philosophical theories as part of its praxis and as previously mentioned philosophers like Hans-Georg Gadamer (2004), Jürgen Habermas (1985b; 1993) and Paul Ricoeur (1995), who all contributed to the field of Practical Theology, with theories embedded in meta-theoretical philosophy (Pieterse, 2001:16).

### **2.3.5 Meta-theoretical perspectives in Empirical Research**

It is clear as the meta-theories unfolds that each and every one of them relates to the dynamic world of Liturgy, rituals, worshipping and the case of this study, pilgrimage. Given the non-verbal element of rituals, pilgrimage might as well be regarded as a physical expression of meta-theoretical theories. Pilgrimage and the context of pilgrims from the Reformed tradition may relate to one of the meta-theories at one stage and the following day to another, depending the situation. Therefore it may be necessary to include a short description of each one.

#### **2.3.5.1 Critical Realism**

The world is in many ways totally different from what we believe, see or understand. Any person’s reality may have no relation to what reality is. The human being has a certain

understanding of the world that makes sense, according to context, background, exposure, etc., and that becomes the daily language. Empirical research interacts with theory, testing, revising, and elaborating its perspectives” according to Osmer (2008:74). Questioning the reality as perceived may lead to new insights at any time including the input from Scripture altering perception and a balanced perspective.

### **2.3.5.2 Post-structuralism**

Reality is formed by language, culture, customs and understanding of it, as it developed out of culture, with history playing a role and the current value system’s influence. Post-structuralists want to challenge the perception of reality, question assumptions, do not accept power language from individuals or institutions and look for different ways of understanding (Osmer, 2008:74).

### **2.3.5.3 Pragmatism**

The human being is always part of a context, most of the time well structured. Pragmatism describes the process of change for such a context, challenged with a new scenario, to convince whoever is involved that the current context needs to be replaced or renewed with a complete new or an adjusted context (Osmer, 2008:75).

### **2.3.5.4 Interpretive Social Science**

Interpretive social science developed with Weber and Dilthey, cited by Osmer (2008:76) makes a distinction between natural science and human science with natural science focusing on “abstract explanation” and human science on “empathetic understanding”, a description from sociology for understanding the purpose in social action. Interpretive Social Science is addressed in depth in the section on ethnography in chapter three.

### **2.3.5.5 Critical Social Theory**

From the Frankfurt School of Philosophy where the critical social theory has its origin, this theory emphasises the protection of society from any form of oppression, enhancing emancipation and liberation of the individual, criticising any form of domination and promoting resistance to that (Osmer, 2008:77).

### **2.3.5.6 Post-positivism**

In positivism the only true knowledge about human behaviour is scientific knowledge based on observations of the world. Post-positivism accepts that knowledge, theories and hypothesis regarding human behaviour cannot be “proved” according to Osmer (2008:77). This is the case with the study of humans and human behaviour or when meaning has to be determined as the case is with this study on pilgrimage. Social science therefore has a more open goal today as it is generally accepted that any study of human behaviour can be turned upside down with a follow-up research. Post-positivism reflects in modern day worshipping the acceptance of various interpretations to one concept or verse from the Bible, in contrast to only one interpretation as understood by positivism, and this view is in alignment with the contribution of Gadamer (2004:309) and Pieterse (2001:81).

Meta-theories, therefore is an integral part of Practical Theology and forms part of the holistic context in which this research takes place. Any meta-theory may play a role at different stages of a human behaviour research project like this, in how pilgrims appropriate meaning or how the information is perceived and processed by the Reformed tradition’s response to new ways of faith expression.

## **2.4 INTERPRETIVE TASK OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY**

“What should be our praxis in this concrete situation?”, is how Browning (1995:55) simplifies the challenge of proper thinking about the situation been studied, observed or analysed as part of the task of Practical Theology. This is to be compared with Osmer (2008:4) question of “why is this going on”.

The interpretative task, as the second task of Practical Theology, can be applied to any theory or multi-disciplinary context, in the study of human behaviour and the effort to make sense in any particular situation. Gerkin (1997:113-114) contributes to the contextual approach by suggesting a change in the role of the pastoral leader to that of an interpretive guide. This is motivated as trends in society shift, such as the growth and development of education, change in values for accountability, cultural pluralism and secularization. These trends may also implicate a relationship of openness, honesty and freedom to explore, with the role of the pastor changing to that of interpreter.

Wisdom is asked from the spiritual guide or leader with one important aspect to remember, that the map is not the territory because no theory fits all situations. Therefore the guide or interpreter should approach the complexities and specific situations of people and events with an open mind and withhold from matching them to any theory (Osmer, 2008:80).

### **2.4.1 Spirituality of sagely Wisdom**

Some indicators for spiritual growth to be present in the life of a spiritual leader are reading, studying and “...loving God with the mind” says Osmer (2008:82-84) going with “...thoughtfulness, theoretical interpretation and wise judgement”.

Thoughtfulness can be described as openness and willingness to think, asking for consideration in interaction, insightful in daily matters, counteracting impatience and being irritated (Osmer, 2008:82). Theoretical interpretation brings multi-theoretical perspectives alive to help understand the complexities of life which provides knowledge to handle grey areas of uncertainty and appreciation of who God is (Osmer, 2008:83).

Wise judgement entails identifying relevant particulars in any situation, discernment of the moral essence and the commitment to get to the most effective outcome with both constraints and possibilities in balance with each other. Aristotle has a major influence on Christianity with his concept of ‘Phronesis’, meaning practical wisdom or prudence, practical reasoning about action and change as well as the right decision at any given moment, depending the circumstances with a proper understanding and a realistic way of working towards a desired outcome says (Osmer, 2008:84).

### **2.4.2 Israel’s Wisdom Tradition**

Wisdom is an integral part of pilgrimage and wise decisions is not only part of the journey itself but also in terms of life-changing decisions that may either be one of the motivators for doing a pilgrimage or that may be flowing out of the process of journeying. The development of wisdom can be seen as one of the foundations of pilgrimage, taking on many different forms, to develop a balanced perspective on life, enabling a Christian pilgrim from the Reformed tradition to live a life to the honour of God.

The wisdom tradition is a complex theme running through the Old Testament, in particular three books, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Job. Osmer (2008:88) discerns five dimensions of the wisdom literature as applicable to the interpretive task of Practical Theology:

**The Goal of Wisdom:** This implicates a never ending story of learning, tapping into wisdom and then flowing into the “art of guidance” as described by Osmer (2008:88). “Learning the ropes” is a well-known expression and this metaphor is used by McKenzie (2002:21), who explains the origin coming from steering a boat down the Nile with ropes , reflecting on finding one’s way through life.

**Method of Wisdom:** Wisdom comes from reflecting on the meaning of discerned patterns of nature and human life, as it presents itself with careful observation and reflection, which may lead to insights and wisdom (Farmer, 1998:129-130). The three books of wisdom from the Old Testament, Job, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, carry the message of patterns in life in a powerful way and pilgrimage as such lends itself to a wonderful opportunity to reflect on this on a personal level, creating a need to talk, discuss or debrief about this during or after the completion of the pilgrimage.

**Pedagogy of Wisdom:** Powerful words like: “...teasing thought into being”, come from Melchert (1998:54) who elaborates on thinking as the process of expanding character and wisdom. Moral character asks for “hard work, self-control, integrity, courage and humility”, while the contrast of this will be “lazy, lacking self-control, destructive attitudes, envy, dishonesty and cruelty” as described by McKenzie (2002:105-107).

**Framework of Wisdom:** Openness to the world in a theology of creation, is described by Murphy (2002) as an attitude of openness towards an active communication through experiences and values to be found in that. This process is described as: “...a thinking faith willing to learn from the intellectual resources of contemporary culture...”, by Osmer (2008:93) who elaborates on the three principles of Theology of Creation:

- God is the source of wisdom, and whenever wisdom is gained by studying patterns in nature and life, it was placed there by God, integrated in creation, for it to be found by those wise enough to listen to creation.

- The most repeated principle in Proverbs is: “...the fear of the Lord is beginning of wisdom”, which should be immediately distinguished from being afraid of the Lord towards respect and honouring Him.
- Ignorance of wisdom has its own end result and that is devastating in nature.

**The Diversity of Wisdom:** The three books, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Job exhibit diversity in their conclusions of what is learned by observation of nature and man and this is a metaphor for the interpretive task, says Osmer (2008:96). One perspective cannot be applied to all circumstances as the context is always important, creating a situation that wisdom in one situation, could be stupidity in another (Gadamer, 2004:309; Osmer, 2008:96).

### 2.4.3 Jesus Christ: God’s hidden Wisdom Revealed

With the Interpretive task of Practical Theology, and the focus on the application and development of wisdom, the role of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, could not be over-emphasised, especially in a research project on pilgrimage. Jesus Christ opened up a new kind of wisdom, the eschatological, with a new perspective on God’s wisdom, reframing convictions and perceptions, which are addressed in chapter six in depth with the Emmaus narrative in Luke 24:13-35.

The wisdom of Jesus is most of the time confrontational and transformational and He was misunderstood many times, indicating that His wisdom is asking for a new paradigm of thinking and for this, the eschatological understanding in wisdom holds the key (Osmer, 2008:96-100). Witherington III (2000:155-156) has an interesting analysis of the sayings of Jesus in that seventy percent is wisdom related. The New Testament goes even further in it “....portrays Him as God’s Wisdom in person...” (Osmer, 2008:98).

### 2.4.4 Validation of theories

As stated social scientific research is in current times accountable in the much broader context of multi-disciplines and any specific research should be accountable in any of the other disciplines, even if it is done in a specific field like Practical Theology.

A summary of the Communicative Action Theory of Jürgen Habermas:

As medium for reaching understanding, speech acts serve: a) to establish and renew interpersonal relations, whereby the speaker takes up a relation to



something in the world of legitimate social orders; b) to represent states and events, whereby the speaker takes up a relation to something in the world of existing states of affairs; c) to manifest experiences that is, to represent oneself- whereby the speaker takes up a relation to something in the subjective world to which he has privileged access” (Habermas, 1985b:308).

Osmer (2008:100) argues that leaders will be in a better position if they use a communicative model to discern between theories, based on three elements, reason, the perspective from which the reason is formulated and the openness in which it can be discussed to get to the best possible outcome.

Theories should be analysed and assessed in the interpretive task, as there will always be some discretion needed from one situation to the next. Osmer (2008:114) indicates three ways in which theories can be evaluated in terms of relevance by firstly to assess the model of a theory and its conceptual framework, secondly to name the specific discipline of a theory in order to determine the identity and restrictions within a multi-disciplinary context and the dialogue to follow as well as criticism and thirdly to identify and evaluate the central arguments.

Osmer (2008:122) discerns elements of an argument in order to evaluate arguments for a specific theory. The elements distinguished are: claims, grounds, qualifiers, warrants, backing and rhetorical strategies and the explanation of the model claims to be a strong statement of public opinion, grounds to be substantial facts, evidence and reasons, qualifiers are about the power of an argument and the necessity for it, warrants are the link or relationship between claims and grounds and rhetorical strategies are about convincing communicative strategies.

In conclusion the beliefs and practices of the relevant church community should also be taken into account; therefore the normative task of Practical Theology must be taken into account.

## **2.5 NORMATIVE TASK OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY**

“How do we critically defend the norms of our praxis in this concrete situation” is the question from Browning (1995:55) on the third task of Practical Theology, the normative, where gathered information is processed and valued in the context of God’s Word. This evaluation involves ethics according to the relevant theological concepts to guide appropriate

action within the context of past and present meaning and traditions (Osmer, 2008:131). The normative task of Practical Theology can be approached in three ways as stated by Osmer (2008:132-137):

### **2.5.1 Prophetic Discernment**

Prophets were God's messengers to Israel for judgement or hope. Prophets were directly addressed by God in the Old Testament and tasked for what they had to do. This task is still applicable today for His followers, with Jesus the Prophet as the guide to God's Word. With His words as criteria for prophetic discernment this research project on pilgrimage has the task of listening to the Word, interpreting it in ways that address the culture in which pilgrimage takes place. Keeping in mind that this research is within the Reformed tradition, where pilgrimage was neglected for almost 500 years until recently, certainly the Reformed tradition, Practical Theology and Liturgical Studies have a huge role to play in terms of the normative.

Prophetic discernment has to find the balance between an understanding of the perspective and context of the pilgrim and a theological and ethical interpretation on the other hand. Osmer (2008:137) states: "Discernment is the activity of seeking God's guidance amid the circumstances, events and decisions of life". As an example the work and life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer can be used as prophetic discernment is clearly visible in his life.

"The first move of discernment for Bonhoeffer, is simply the admission that, in reality, we don't know and the second movement is actively seeking God's will" according to Dahill (2002:42-49). Bonhoeffer believed in three practices of discernment, in the first place:

"...scriptural listening: attending daily to the living Word, which comes to us through the study and prayerful reading of Scripture, secondly, confession and radical truth-telling: opening our hearts to trusted friends, who may save us from self-deception and help us distinguish God's guiding voice from other voices, and thirdly, loving and being loved: discipleship as loving others in personal relationships and communities is a grounding point and focus of discernment, it is here that we learn to recognize Christ in the concrete other, especially those who

suffer present-day crucifixions of poverty, violence and oppression”, according to Dahill (2002:28).

## **2.5.2 Theological and Ethical Interpretations.**

### **2.5.2.1 Theological Interpretation**

Theological reflection plays a huge part in the normative task of Practical Theology and theological interpretation use theological concepts to interpret particular episodes, situations and contexts, informed by a theory. This must happen with human intervention in Divine presence.

Niebuhr (1999:60-63) who influenced others like James Fowler and Charles Gerkin, elaborates on theological interpretation as to what Christians should do in daily life situations and in global events that may bring the choice of ethical responsibility and says it is about good Christian judgement which is nothing else than responsibility. Niebuhr (1999:63) explains responsibility as:

- “All our actions are responses to action upon us
- Our responses are shaped by our interpretation of these actions, which place particular episodes, situations and contexts in larger wholes
- Our responses are temporal in nature, stretching backward to the history of prior interaction and anticipating responses to our present action in the future, responsibility as such, involves accountability to others for the consequences of our actions within a context of ongoing interaction
- Our responses are shaped by the community of interpretation with which we identify, this community provides us with schemas of interpretation and ongoing dialogue with other moral selves”.

Responses should be appropriate to the situation, even within a situation of no understanding, as trust should always be present. Theological interpretation should never include a judgemental attitude or any vengeance in God’s acts, always carrying the message of hope, always expecting the good to come out of evil, to find self value in Him and reflect respect and justice, acknowledging His control (Osmer, 2008:142-145).

### 2.5.2.2 Ethical Interpretation

Don Browning (1995) and Gadamer (2004) elaborate on ethical norms and interpretation as part of theological interpretation, which forms part of this section on prophetic discernment in the context of this research on pilgrimage. Browning (1995:39) emphasises the importance of applying interpretation as on-going from the beginning throughout the whole process, which would be in this case, a pilgrimage, meaning immediate attendance to a conflict, problem, concern, etc., according to values or norms.

Paul Ricoeur (1995) also contributes to the presence of ethical norms and interpretations in daily life as it defines the identity in practices, discourses and relationships, constantly evaluating the current model of ethical principles in the bigger context and in the application of phronesis or practical wisdom in a specific situation.

The importance of ethical interpretation cannot be emphasised enough. The Reformed tradition is confronted by many situations, not exposed to before and it is easy to imagine in how many situations there are no frame of reference or background in terms of a set of norms or principles to guide the process. The implication for the Reformed tradition, Practical Theology and Liturgy speak for itself, therefore a space should be created for guidance, reflection and debriefing, as part of the Reformed tradition's responsibility, taking into account that Reformed pilgrims are a given and is growing in numbers sporadically.

The challenge for a pilgrim from the Reformed tradition is to learn and integrate the new, once it passed the test of the normative by reforming past knowledge and integrating the new. A process like this may sometimes pave the way to a new understanding and new expectations of God. The sociologists Max Weber, Shils and Finch (1949) theory of integrating the old and the new can be of great value in this regard.

This is the time for the re-evaluation of values and this is critical for the Reformed tradition. Elaine Graham (2002) makes a valuable contribution in the field of re-evaluating values and norms. In her work *Transforming Practice*, she states that Practical Theology has a challenge in postmodern times with "pluralism, fragmentation and scepticism" (Graham, 2002:6-7). The church has to move away from patriarchy and should become reflexive, open for dialogue, away from being prescriptive in its normative task, according to Graham (2002:6-7)

who elaborates on three focus areas in her book about transforming practice in a newly structured world:

- It is the only way to generate new knowledge and values
- It works towards freedom and love and against domination
- It discloses God and provides a framework for transcendence in a postmodern world

She elaborates on the latter's effect on the process of transforming practice that it elevates knowledge and understanding of God and this becomes available and serves as a "medium, sign and witness" of His presence (Graham, 2002:202). Transcendence takes the Christian "...beyond the situated and concrete in the encounter with the Other... and authentic faith at the very point of loss of certainty and self-possession..." turns into "... divine activity and presence are encountered in the mystery of alterity" according to Graham (2002:206-207).

This is about one of the most powerful principles of Christianity, what seems to be a loss, has the potential of blessing in it. At the moment of loss, failure or disappointment, the opportunity opens up for the unexpected and the new, part of the contradictions that Christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition, experience in a totally new context, that of pilgrimage.

### **2.5.3 Multi-Disciplinary, Inter, Intra and Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue**

The multi-disciplinary framework with regards to the exploration of pilgrimage meaning for a liturgical praxis will serve this research but cross-disciplinary will also be part of the research as a whole. Multi-disciplinary research could be understood as the need for a more broad approach to answer complex questions is experienced and one single discipline is not able to answer these (Holma, 2012). Although seen as ambitious by Post *et al.* (2003:29) and described by Janssen and Goldsworthy (1996) in the field of Natural Sciences in a sceptical way, as to what multi-disciplinary research means and how it is put to practice, is not always clear, the researcher believes the eclectic and pragmatic value of a multi-disciplinary approach will serve this research the best way. Inter-disciplinary and intra-disciplinary as described by Pieterse (1993:36-40), could also be used as an approach but the belief is that contributions from a multi-disciplinary approach could open up a holistic processing of information on pilgrimage.

Osmer (2008:161-164) indicates the importance of cross-disciplinary dialogue between different approaches, theories, art, science, etc., in saying: “Cross-disciplinary dialogue is a special form of rational communication in which the perspectives of two or more fields are brought into conversation”. The dialogue between theology and other fields of mutual interest is captured in the correlation model and the work of Paul Tillich, where arts and science will ask questions to theology to answer from a normative perspective. Osmer (2008:166-172) describes two models of Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue, namely the transformational model describing the conversation between people from totally different worldviews, languages and cultures, with difficulties to translate meaning between them. The transversal model is person and perspective specific as it explores areas of overlap and divergence (Osmer, 2008:170).

In conclusion, the normative theological task of Practical Theology is to determine the norms and then what to do. How this is to be done, as set by the normative, is the task of the last section called the pragmatic task, to ensure spiritual experience to be aligned with serving and honouring God.

## **2.6 PRAGMATIC TASK OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY**

“What means, strategies and rhetoric’s should we use in this concrete situation?” (Browning, 1995:55) is an apt description of what the pragmatic task involves. The fourth task, the pragmatic task, will determine the way in which the empirical-descriptive, the interpretative and the normative, will be brought together or integrated. This task will shape the way in which Practical Theological interpretation will approach a situation with action steps to have a positive influence towards the desired outcome.

In the pragmatic task of Practical Theology and for the purpose of this study for what is foreseen to happen within the Reformed tradition, leadership has become an important area for development. To reflect on leadership enable the researcher and pilgrims from the Reformed tradition to recognise some of the processes for what it is, as some of the situations may seem to be out of line, not making sense but in the mean time, it could be part of what is happening on the edge, where leaders are breaking new ground.

In order to bring about change and reframe identify, it may also ask for leadership and Osmer (2008:176-178) distinguished amongst three models in leadership in consultation with

leadership theories, namely task competent leadership, transactional leadership and transforming leadership.

### **2.6.1 Three models of leadership**

Task leadership entails the ability to do with competence what is required from an organisational leader while transactional leadership is about contracting people for a certain performance which is then expected from them and transforming leadership focuses on a deeper level of change (Osmer, 2008:176-178). The latter is the more difficult one, asking more of leadership because the identity, culture and procedures are all affected by change. This entails a process of “vision...mobilizing...commitment...discerning...values...alter behaviour...costly...risky...encounters...resistance...lose power and control ...feels chaotic ...conflict, failure and dissatisfaction...new vitality and experimentation” (Osmer, 2008:178).

### **2.6.2 Spirituality of Servant Leadership**

Servant leadership can be seen as the most appropriate style for the Reformed tradition and this style could be shaped on a couple of questions put forward by Osmer (2008:183) as this style is the most appropriate for change processes within the church. The questions are: what is the mission of a congregation, how is the mission accomplished in a present context, what role do leaders play in this and what kind of changes need to take place for this to happen? These same questions and process can be applied in the case of pilgrimage; for the purpose of this study as well as the challenge pilgrimage has for the Reformed tradition. These questions can be transformed into the context of pilgrimage by asking what is the mission of pilgrimage, how is the mission accomplished in what is happening in the daily context, what control does the pilgrim have to take and what changes need to happen for the pilgrim to take control to achieve the mission. These questions only indicate the pilgrim’s responsibilities, still to be balanced with Divine intervention.

Jesus is the role-model for the church as God’s servant with reference to Mark 10:42-45 where Jesus reacts to a question of His disciples indicating that they were wrong if they think about themselves as in power positions by saying “For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many”. The norm of discipleship is defined by the cross, in obedience to God’s will and this is applicable for the Christian pilgrim, theology and Christianity (Osmer, 2008:186).

Pilgrimage and its relationship with leadership and servant leadership in particular, as the identified leadership style in the Reformed tradition, could be understood as a way in which pilgrims of the Reformed tradition could be leaders, servant leaders, exploring new territory, breaking new ground as pioneers of the Reformed tradition, providing the Reformed tradition with necessary information and experiences to adjust ministry according to a clearly demonstrated spiritual need, as expressed by the increasing numbers of pilgrims from the Reformed tradition. The emphasis on leadership could also reframe the experience of marginalisation for some pilgrims.

### **2.6.3 Pilgrims as Reformed pioneers**

The researcher elaborates further on this in the final chapter but pilgrimage should be combined with servant leadership in that the Christian pilgrims from the Reformed tradition are pioneers, discovering new ground for the Reformed tradition and the pilgrims should be treated as such and not marginalised as is often the experience of pilgrims. If these pilgrims could hear and see that they are actually servant leaders, serving the Reformed tradition, it could reframe the whole concept of pilgrimage and other rituals as well, creating a context for spiritual development where Christians of the Reformed tradition do not experiment in isolation but could positively influence each other, working towards growth and development in the best possible way.

With this scenario pilgrims should also accept their own role within the Reformed tradition in the context of the paradox, following the servant leadership of Christ. As Jesus ministry was usually confrontational to the perceptions and perspectives of His followers, this exploration of rituals like pilgrimage asks for spiritual maturity (to be discussed in Chapter six), with the attitude of serving the Church and other Christians and an attitude of denying self-centredness. The researcher proposes a reframing of marginalisation and isolation to that of the centre of spiritual growth. Pilgrims should see themselves as explorers, leaders, pioneers, serving their fellow Christians and the Reformed tradition and should understand that by following the example of Christ, they should also be prepared emotionally and spiritually for this calling.

The same principle of leadership development, awareness of that and the implications also on a personal level, applies to the leadership of churches of the Reformed tradition, as well as



academici involved with training of students in preparing them for ministry, in the process of changing. The researcher would like to build a case for more attention to the development of human skills such as leadership and communication in theological education.

#### **2.6.4 Leadership in the pragmatic task**

The practical application of the three leadership models in Reformed tradition needs more attention and Osmer (2008:193-196) elaborates on this in saying that this must be in the spirit of humility, caring for the needs of others, acquiring new skills and a good knowledge of the leaders own strengths and limitations. Task competence will require hard work, commitment and practice while transactional leadership entails a path of discipleship where needs of others become as important as personal needs, especially for the stranger. Transforming leadership is about change at the deepest level where changes happen to identity, mission, culture and procedures. This is perhaps the more challenging one of the three. Osmer (2008:196) elevates some key issues here:

- You will find your way only by getting lost
- You will gain power by empowering others
- Less attachment to the congregation, leads to deeper relationships

Looking at organisational change from an open system model, Osmer (2008:199) says that open systems theory forms part of a new “synthesis” between life sciences based on the interconnectedness of everything, the so-called “web of life” (Osmer, 2008:200). When internal and external alignment is in place, it is called homeostasis or equilibrium. When this goes out of alignment, it creates a need for change.

The combination of leadership and change management with theology or servant leadership with pilgrimage leads the way to a broader theological perspective than before, as with the multi-disciplinary context for research, therefore the presence of a previously unthinkable approach for research made an entrance, called Mixed Methods.

In conclusion of this chapter a summary of Mixed Methods Approaches is included but it must be categorically stated that qualitative research is the only method of research for this research project.

## 2.7 MIXED METHOD APPROACH

The reason for describing Mixed Methods here, is to clearly draw a distinction between qualitative research, the approach for this research and Mixed Methods, a new upcoming approach with its main feature a combination between quantitative and qualitative research methods. This distinction became important as the researcher analysed the empirical data with categories, percentages and a grid, which may create the impression of a combination of quantitative and qualitative and therefore this needs to be addressed.

## 2.8 LITURGY RENEWED

### 2.8.1 Worship within boundaries

Liturgy as a sub-division of Practical Theology attracts attention in current times as rituals and symbols form part of Liturgical Studies and became extremely popular in recent times (Wepener, 2009c:195).

van Tongeren (2008:135) states that liturgical research features prominently in multi-disciplinary research on rituals, with religious studies and Anthropology, in collaboration with any subject from humanities and social sciences. Studies within the field of Liturgy have become more multi- and inter-disciplinary during past decades (Post, 1995:1-30). The close relationship with Social and Cultural Anthropology and Ritual Studies is also emphasised by Wepener and Meyer (2012:298).

We certainly live in a time where Practical Theology has to provide the context for worshipping with the assumption that: “...authentic worship genuinely meets people’s needs because..... people need to worship” (Long, 2001:17).

The foundation of Liturgy is based on human needs to worship and part of this is a mystery in relation to God. Long (2001:19) elaborates on this: “...we need to be in communion with God, to belong to God, to be in right and loving relationship with God”. The Heidelberg Catechism states this relationship as follows:

Question: “What is your only comfort, in life and in death? Answer: That I belong – body and soul, in life and in death – not to myself but to my faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ. Second, because we belong to God, we need to join ourselves in community with others to give ourselves away to God, to offer our lives to something larger than ourselves, something that

provides meaning and lets us know that our lives count for something of ultimate value” (Long, 2001:19).

At the same time a worshipper must realise the position in the world but not from this world, described by Lathrop (1999:44) as : “...a tension, between strangeness and welcome”, and Long (2001:23) states: “We must not feel so at home that we lose the awareness that we are pilgrims and strangers travelling in a land of wonderment, not of our own making”.

Liturgy is therefore defined in terms of the relationship with God. This is also applicable in the case of pilgrimage as pilgrims have the privilege and challenge of moving towards the periphery, experimenting, exposed to influences not always directed by the relationship with God. What is important here is the point of departure for the Reformed tradition in contrast with an attitude of “anything goes”.

### **2.8.2 Liturgy’s turn towards multi-disciplinary**

The multi-disciplinary framework with regards to the exploration of pilgrimage meaning for a liturgical praxis will serve this research but cross-disciplinary will also be part of the research as a whole.

A major shift took place in Liturgical Studies, over the last years from a theological one-dimensional understanding, to include the cultural-anthropological dimension, as many other disciplines are also included into Liturgical Studies. This is the message of recently published book used in this research and that is the work of Barnard, Cilliers & Wepener, (2014) with the title: *Worship in the network culture : liturgical ritual studies : fields and methods, concepts and metaphors*.

Any research in Liturgical Studies in current times will do well to go the route of multi-disciplinary approach, enriching the process of gaining knowledge by combining contributions from different academic disciplines. This shift in Liturgical Studies, opened up the understanding of worshipping as well, giving it a multi-disciplinary character to include “...social, psychological, ethnic and ritual dimensions...” Klomp (2011:7). This emphasis on Liturgy has implications for theory and method is the view of Paul Post, in how to develop research practices for liturgical-inculturation, accountable to theology and practical research of social behaviour in the multi-disciplinary field of Social Sciences (Post, 2001c:18)

Worship is embedded in culture and therefore the two concepts are closely related and a change in culture will have an effect on worship (Barnard, 2000:5-9). In the past the Reformed tradition, based on the principle of the Word alone, paid more attention to text and formal presentation than trends, the broader context, rituals and symbols and these have changed in culture. Besides these reasons, rituals and symbols are more validated in current times because of their communication value in a culture of information overload (Barnard, 2000:5-9).

Multi-disciplinary research could be understood as the need for a more broad approach to answer complex questions is experienced and one single discipline is not able to answer these (Holma, 2012). Although seen as ambitious by Post *et al.* (2003:29) and described by Janssen and Goldsworthy (1996) in the field of Natural Sciences in a sceptical way, as to what multi-disciplinary research means and how it is put to practice, is not always clear, the researcher believes the eclectic and pragmatic value of a multi-disciplinary approach will serve this research the best way. Inter-disciplinary and intra-disciplinary as described by Pieterse (1993:36-40), could also be used as an approach but the belief is that contributions from a multi-disciplinary approach could open up a holistic processing of information on pilgrimage.

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In summary, the world has become bigger in terms of the so-called network culture with an effect on worship, with more exposure, knowledge and information than ever before or it can be said at the same time that the world has become smaller with technology, communication tools, and accessible travel around the globe, as also elaborated on in 2.2.4. In the same sense,

scientific research has become bigger and smaller at the same time and therefore the multi-disciplinary context for research could be further developed with research.

### **2.8.3 Liturgical shift towards the individual**

Until recently Liturgical Studies was dominated by a historical approach, but that changed as well as the method and object of study. Method in Liturgical Studies used to be literature-orientated but has now become people orientated (Barnard, 2000:12; Post, 1998b:20). Four areas of transformation can be distinguished namely, methodological expansion, other sources than just literature, change in the way questions are asked and the identification of object of study (van Tongeren, 2008:139-145). These changes materialise in how the focus of study has become the human being as participant, how people create meaning in what they do in rituals or appropriate rituals for themselves (Klomp, 2011:7; Post, 2001b; Wepener & Van der Merwe, 2009:22).

This exploration of individual faith interpretation which seems to be a driving force behind the popularity of rituals like pilgrimage, recalls Plato's World of Ideas and his Cave Theory (Plato & Cornford, 1945:227-235). What needs to be determined is if the increasing popularity of pilgrimage means that Christians from Reformed tradition are no longer prepared to look at the shadows against the wall in the Cave, that they want to make sense in their worshipping and therefore they are actually moving out of the Cave into the open space, prepared to experiment with their own interpretations. It is only when one leaves the cave that you start discovering reality outside, says Plato.

A contribution in this regard, taking the line of thought from Plato's Cave theory further comes from Nijk, cited by Lukken (2005:42-43) and Wepener (2011:269) in an effort to explain the origin of rituals coming from an awareness that something has to be done but with no idea what it is that should be done. The urge is then to explore and do something without logic or any rational behind it and whenever the feeling is experienced, "this is it", then such a ritual will be repeated. This could be an explanation for Christian pilgrims from the Reformed tradition to embark on a ritual traditionally associated with the Roman Catholic tradition, which implies crossing a threshold for the Reformed tradition. It could also be that Christians experience this urge to explore because the liturgical praxis of the Reformed tradition lacks something that is needed for current culture. It could also be as a reaction in

the post-Apartheid phase where Christians lost trust in their faith community and are willing to explore outside the traditional boundaries, some to the Camino, other's to the Charismatic tradition. With other words, the chains came loose for those in the Cave of Plato and some have seen what is available outside the Cave. This obviously appeals to the Reformed tradition to re-investigate Richard Osmer (2008) question of 'what is going on'.

The philosophy of Jürgen Habermas (1985b:308) as explained in his Communicative Action Theory and the Social Criticism Theory of Habermas (1985a:94-95) with emphasis on the principles of the public sphere could be important in the formulation of words in this latest trend in worshipping namely ritual in the form of pilgrimage. This may ask for the design or development of alternative communication skills.

#### **2.8.4 Liturgy, globalisation and technology**

A major influence on how Christians perceived their faith, with a huge effect on spirituality is globalisation with a substantial impact on the spiritual experience and worshipping: "...people are now dealing with ritual in their own individual way" and this is greatly due to globalisation (Klomp, 2011:7). The effect of globalisation on spirituality can be described as individuals now create their own meaning and understanding with access to information, technology, networking and communication. This phenomenon is described by Barnard as: "...we are all like a spider in a unique web" (Barnard, 2000:11).

In terms of globalisation, Klomp (2011:3) indicates the osmotic process of how easy it has become for different cultures to influence each other with the help of modern technology. The same principle applies for the pilgrimage concept as globalisation led to easy travelling, sharing of information and then different interpretations according to the spiritual background of the pilgrim. This phenomenon is confirmed by one comment from a co-researcher in chapter seven, who did four Camino pilgrimages over the time span of a couple of years, stating that during the last one in 2013 she became aware of the presence of technology with iPads, cell phones and the rest, witnessing the impact it had on pilgrims behaviour and time management.

According to Sample (1998:17) in his book with the relevant title of *The spectacle of worship in a wired world*, many changes are awaiting but the effect of technology is already to be seen in human behaviour. As a Methodist theologian, (Sample, 1998:17) describe technology

as an extension of the human body and the central nervous system in particular, changing the human being's relation to space and time.

This global context facilitates the formulation of a new definition for spiritual experience, because of the availability of information, modern technology and social media, exposure to other ways of worshipping as well as the emphasis on individuality. This confirms the different ways in which Christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition will appropriate meaning from what they are doing and how they are doing it during a pilgrimage with all these influences and tools available.

With this information in mind, a liturgist may have to deal with the feeling of always behind as these influences are overwhelming and the situation is not going to get better. Surely the Reformed tradition should investigate and invest in the usage of technology, social media and the rest but most important is for Liturgy not to become part of this never-ending race but to focus on its calling, to create the space for worshippers to worship God, in silence.

The effect Sample (1998) describes, also as a sociologist, may in fact have the effect of an increase in demand to spiritual tools like pilgrimage and labyrinth. Liturgists should have a clear vision of what they have to do in current times and the answer is not to compete in the competitive world of technology but to recognise the increasing need for an appropriate worshipping space, which could be developed along the lines of concepts like 'flow' and the role of liminality as proposed in the book: 'Worship in a Network Culture' by Barnard, Cilliers & Wepener, (2014).

The holistic picture in which the Reformed tradition has to find its way forward, is one of liminality in a state of permanency or it could be said that liminality has moved to the centre and changed positions with the stability or structure of *societas* (Barnard, Cillier & Wepener, 2014:71). The flow concept, also referred to as 'panta rhei', is indeed a description of the global society, as culture has become: '...move...migrating...travelling', and if this is the culture, it may present the Reformed tradition with a paradigm in which spiritual behaviour could be understood (Barnard, Cilliers & Wepener, 2014:72)<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> 'Panta rhei' is the concept attributed to the Greek philosopher, Heraclitus in the fourth century BC.

### **2.8.5 Relationship between Liturgy and Anthropology**

Martin D. Stringer is a lecturer in Sociology and Anthropology of Religion in the Department of Theology, University of Birmingham, UK. Stringer (1989) wrote about the relationship between Liturgy and Anthropology and says that a social scientist could focus on Christian worship much more today than ever before and that the different disciplines have much to offer to each other. Anthropologists focused on rituals amongst foreign tribes for years but overlooked the rituals within their own societies. This situation has changed a lot since then and today it became the main focus of research as part of the shift mentioned earlier in this section. It can be said that the cultural-anthropological nature of any kind of ritual is an integral part of the expression of worship.

Stringer (1989:508) do make some interesting comments by saying that the three prominent names in Anthropology, Turner, Douglas and Geertz do not actually say a lot about rituals in their books, although their titles refer to rituals. As the interest in Ritual Theory becomes more popular today, there is a tendency of mutual interest in each other's work and Liturgy and Anthropology is showing cross-references more and more.

### **2.8.6 Relationship between worship and culture**

In chapter three, Browning (1995:55-74) integrates his four movements of theology as it materialised in his four questions, into seven practical steps which is of relevance as this can be transformed into a similar structure for the Reformed tradition as part of the liturgical praxis to be proposed in the final chapter:

- 1) Give a preliminary definition to an issue (personal, social, religious) that means a great deal to you and may have led you to come to divinity school.
- 2) Discuss briefly why this issue is important to you and what your pre-understanding of it was before you began research on the paper.
- 3) Interview someone who is also concerned with this issue. Describe how this person thinks religiously and ethically about this issue.
- 4) Choose two theological resources (guides to the Christian classics) that address this issue. Summarize the way they define and normatively address the issue.
- 5) Compare and critically assess these two guides to the Christian classics.



- 6) Imagine communicating these two perspectives back to your interviewee, entering into his/her worldview and preferred metaphysics and narrative
- 7) Record ways in which your own pre-understanding of the issue has changed because of this exercise.

Liturgical Studies in Practical Theology needs to be part of this study, especially when it comes to a ritual-liturgical approach. What theological liturgists say about worshipping and what boundaries are drawn, will be addressed at in chapter 6.

According to Barnard (1998:94-98) different approaches to Liturgical Studies can be followed like anthropological, systemic, historical and Biblical-theological. Of these the anthropological or ritual-liturgical seems to be the most applicable because pilgrimage as such is much more of an act than written text although pilgrimage reports is becoming more popular and accessible due to technology and the Internet. Lukken (1994a:14-17) describes the ritual-liturgical approach as an investigation into symbols, language and acts related to the symbols, feasts, national religion and art, which are all related to Anthropology and current culture.

To further the argument for an anthropological or ritual-liturgical methodology it became clear that within Liturgical Studies, a major shift took place over the last years, from a theological dimension to include the cultural-anthropological, with other words, other disciplines were included into liturgical studies for an improved understanding of worshipping, giving it a multi-disciplinary character to include “social, psychological, ethnic and ritual dimensions of worship” (Klomp, 2011:7). Cultural transformation has a visible impact on worshipping and therefore on Liturgical Studies and current cultural transformation surely indicates towards blooming ritual activities with creativity, infiltrating secular life in many ways, influencing culture, showing variety in general religious rituals, such as marriages, death, birth and celebrations, investigated by Barnard and Post (2001:22-23) who indicate inter-religious rituals due to immigration and tolerance between cultures coming from exposure, leading towards a growing reciprocal relationship and the establishment of a new symbolic order. This situation as it develops, goes with the loss of monolithic authority by the church as an institution says Barnard, Cilliers & Wepener, (2014:22-23) creating a postmodern context for Christian rituals, incorporating ancient rituals.

### **2.8.7 Abuse of Liturgy**

A strong word of warning against Liturgy that can actually work counter-active comes from Long (2001:21) who says that worshipping will always be vulnerable to man's ability to "...sabotage people's perception of God's presence. God is present in worship, our job is to clear the clutter and get out of the way of people's sight lines". He continues to describe some forms of liturgical input as "...liturgical vandalism, subverting the capacity of worship to serve as a meeting place with God?" Without going into practical examples that will distract the focus of the research, the researcher just want to emphasise that not everything going on today in the field of ritual and worshipping is acceptable and discernment is necessary.

Liturgy has to deal with the same threats as any other territory of life against the influence of mankind, with self-interest as a priority and no vision of the Kingdom of God. Therefore we have to approach Liturgy and rituals as holy ground and not as Long (2001:23) describes worshipping being conducted by a: "...worship leader who handles the Bible like a magician's handkerchief". Unfortunately the Reformed tradition in South Africa has a history to deal with regarding the support to Apartheid and how this effected the exclusion of Christians from demonstrating the Body of Christ, specifically in liturgy. The positive from this history is sensitivity for the abuse of liturgy.

### **2.8.8 Future of Liturgy**

All indications are that Liturgy has to constantly renew itself, generating alternative ways of worshipping within the specific area of the researcher's own background namely the Dutch Reformed tradition in South Africa. This is called a "third way of worshipping" by Long (2001:13) who distinguishes some elements for future worshipping as it will be to create space for the experience of mystery, implement concerted efforts for hospitality to the stranger, express the sense of drama inherent in Christian worship, have music that is both excellent and eclectic in style and genre, adjust the space worship with creativity, establish an integrated worship and local mission ministry, maintain stability and variety of worship styles, make joy and celebration part of the service and will have strong, charismatic pastors as worship leaders.

It is clear that a major shift took place in human behaviour which will have a major impact on how Christians will react in their worshipping or are already reacting. Time is running out for

the type of ministry where the minister performs all the rituals and the audience has to experience their participation through association with the pastor by witnessing and observing as on-lookers. “The influence of late modernity on these fields of study is evident: principles and ideas are moving from unity, sameness and singularity to plurality, difference and diversity” Klomp (2011:39). Christians of the Reformed tradition are busy to develop their own faith design where they participate and have choices.

Within the context of individuality and emancipation of the individual, Christians are already part of a culture of searching for spiritual fulfilment and experience. With the emphasis on individuality and easy access to global developments, Christians in general will explore, express themselves more openly, become more critical, reject any form of paternalism, want to experience and participate much more actively with much more awareness than ever before.

In this regard Habermas (1993:145) makes a relevant comment in his Social Critical Theory that the emancipatory domain identifies 'self-knowledge' or self-reflection. This involves:

'...interest in the way one's history and biography has expressed itself in the way one sees oneself, one's roles and social expectations. Emancipation is from libidinal, institutional or environmental forces which limit our options and rational control over our lives but have been taken for granted as beyond human control. Insights gained through critical self-awareness are emancipatory in the sense that at least one can recognize the correct reasons for his or her problems.'

Knowledge is gained by self-emancipation through reflection leading to a transformed consciousness or perspective transformation. Examples of critical sciences include feminist theory, psychoanalysis and the critique of ideology.

It is clear that Christians are just in the beginning of a new exciting future. The exploration of own interpretation is just in a beginning phase. Rites and symbols as a way to participate and experience in worship, will become more important. Ministers should adapt to a new role of being more of a facilitator than performing all religious acts. An article from Wepener (2011) studying the development of new tendencies of Liturgy and worship outside the Reformed tradition in South Africa demonstrates exactly what is stated by the researcher in this regard. Although there are numerous other examples in South Africa of this, two of them can be

mentioned here to illustrate the principle, namely a huge Cross outside almost every town in South Africa, visible to all passersby, and smaller Crosses next to any road in South Africa where a beloved one died in an accident and lately also a Cross for every farmer that died in a farm attack at a site north of Polokwane (Wepener, 2011:258). This phenomenon only became part of culture in recent years. Much can be said about the emotions, implications for faith and the difference it made to physically participate in the ceremony of planting crosses or even visits from time to time.

There is also proof that these are not once-off rituals but repetitive in nature as some of these Crosses have at its foot, stones with messages on, to be compared with a message book in a prayer room at any Church (Wepener, 2011:264). As for the Crosses next to any road, fresh flowers indicate that the site is visited on a regular basis.

Another phenomenon in cultural behaviour, also reflecting on the change in behaviour with implications for Liturgy, is the culture of community feasts, as nearly every community has their own annual feast in current times which was also not the case a couple of years ago (Wepener & Van der Merwe, 2009:296). A good indication of current developments of liturgy within the Reformed tradition, specifically aimed at the Dutch Reformed tradition is summarised by van der Merwe (2009:250:253).

For the purposes of this study, the research won't go further into these phenomena besides stating that Liturgy has developed from the Sunday service in recent years, to a twenty four hour, seven days a week, liturgical cultural phenomenon, outside the church into the streets.

Although rituals and symbols form part of liturgical studies, it is presented separately for the reason that rituals and symbols are also part of inter-disciplinary research, studied in various disciplines within social sciences, such as Anthropology, sociology and cultural studies but it is also to be mentioned that a current tendency exist for Liturgy and ritual to move closer to each other for the reason that ritual is seen as one of the future development possibilities for Liturgy (Klomp, 2011:6-9,69-71).

## **2.9 RITUALS AND SYMBOLS**

### **2.9.1 Introduction**

“The meaning of ritual is deep indeed

He who tries to enter it with the kind of perception that distinguishes hard and white, same and different, will drown there

The meaning of ritual is great indeed

He who tries to enter it with the uncouth and insane theories of the system-makers will perish there

The meaning of rituals is lofty indeed

He who tries to enter with the violent and arrogant ways of those who despise common customs and consider themselves to be above other men will meet his downfall there”

This quote is from the preface of Bell (1997) who cites Xunzi (3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E.) and they elaborate on this that Xunzi warns against simplifying the ritual process or to define it in categories as this will be misleading. They also interpret Xunzi’s words that ritual will always be mysterious, not to be fully understand and not to be approached from a position of intellectual superiority. These words reflect the intent of the researcher and that the study of ritual, which also includes symbol, is done with an open mind, with the realisation that ritual will always be more than any effort in words to explain its nature.

The focus on rituals re-emerged in mid-1980’s and was preceded by a period that showed a lack of interest in rituals, from the Reformed tradition. During the 90’s a “ritual explosion” took place according to Lukken (2005:3), Wepener (2005:110) and Wepener and Van der Merwe (2009:195-197). Lukken lean more towards an anthropological approach. The *Journal of Ritual studies* appeared in 1985 and Ritual Studies as an independent domain and became a focus area in many different disciplines<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> Disciplines like “psychology, sociology, cultural Anthropology, European ethnology, dramaturgy, musicology, phenomenology, semiotics, religious studies and liturgical studies” Lukken, G. 2005. *Rituals in abundance: critical reflections on the place, form, and identity of Christian ritual in our culture*. Leuven: Peeters..

### **2.9.2 How ritual originates**

Pilgrimage, the object of study in this research, is a ritual in itself. Christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition will develop their own small rituals within the context of the macro-ritual, pilgrimage. Therefore an understanding of the process of how a ritual originates is of value.

Nijk (1968:256-339) presents a hypothesis on how a ritual originates. The hypothesis states that ritual originates from a realisation or a feeling of “having-to-act-without-knowing-how”. This will be followed by experimenting to create meaning, which can only be confirmed as the appropriate act with another realisation or feeling, communicating “this is it”. This enables human beings to address their deepest need on a personal or spiritual level and will lead to repetitive behaviour with devotion. This is one hypothesis on how rituals originate.

### **2.9.3 Rituals**

The understanding of Practical Theology and how it materialise in faith on a daily basis, can be hugely influenced by rituals and symbols says Miller-McLemore (2012:19-20), using the metaphor of a tree and indicating the role it plays in understanding diversity to be found in theology as it is a symbol of life in religion, also representing wholeness, integrity and wisdom with a grounding effect. Scripture also uses a tree as metaphor in various instances, with creation in Gen 2:9, wisdom in Prov 3:13-18, calmness in Prov 15:4 and healing in Rev 22:2.

Another powerful analogy to understand ritual, is to compare it with a collage. Meaning should be only derived from the collage as a whole. Just one part of the collage won't explain the meaning, states Harris (1992:17).

Anthropologist Victor Turner (1976:506) provides us with a definition to better understand the concept of ritual as: “...ritual is part of a society's communication code for transmitting messages to one another about matters of ultimate concern and about those entities believed to have enunciated, clarified and mediated a culture's bonding axioms to its present members”. The contribution of other academic disciplines understanding of ritual is important to take into account the meaning rituals may have in Christian worshipping as explored in this chapter.

Lukken (2005:38) states that rituals are symbolic actions but can also play a role in the social environment. First and foremost it is important to understand that ritual can only be understood from within the specific culture it takes place and in a reciprocal relationship with theory. Rituals reflect on human communication and therefore the concept of symbolization and semiotics becomes relevant. Rituals in relation to space and time, ritual as feast, its elements, strengths and weaknesses and rituals within a Christian context are all relevant in a study about rituals and are addressed in this chapter.

Lukken (2005) provides a structure used by the researcher for the content of this chapter with the approach of Ineke Albers (2007) in her article “Men maakt de weg al lopend”. “The pilgrim is a cursor that shifts from problem to answer, in the hope of working a mediation and resolution between the imperfection he knows and the ideal he seeks” (Post, 2001d:143).

Stringer (1999:218) views Christian ritual as: “... the act of worship itself, with its actions and its words, is best understood as being a space without meaning in its linguistic sense, and that the individuals who come to worship have no need or imperative to fill that space with meaning in any but an experiential, significance kind of way”.

Stringer (1999) explains further that there are two kinds of reality involved in worship which are beyond empirical study, applicable in the case of ritual and pilgrimage as the study object for this research. First there is the reality within the mind of other people, which is not possible to put in words as it is made up of experience, not possible to define or to describe, but it is there. Story is the ideal way of trying to capture the essence of experience and story is probably the only way to communicate experience. The researcher is committed to combine these two realities during the empirical phase of research, while realising that a complete description is impossible. This is only a preliminary investigation of ritual and more to follow as the research progress.

#### **2.9.4 Ritual investigation and methodology**

Ritual-liturgical research will require a full documentation of the ritual, explaining concepts or words used during the ritual, also bringing in all senses in the observation process (Lukken, 1999; Lukken, 1990). This was further elaborated on by Post (2001c) referring to primary and secondary sources; cult and culture; continuity and change; appropriation and designation, as parameters in the study of rituals.

Stringer (1989) also refers to an in-depth account of the ritual, investigating every segment of the ritual, meaning attached to it, exploring the ritual with participating, observing, documenting, and so uncover all possible angles in order to understand what is actually happening. A crucial part of this process is to get to the way in which the participants create their own meaning in what they are doing. This in many cases is quite different from what authorities had in mind or from the original intention where the ritual originates from. In all of this the researcher should be sensitive and aware of a couple of factors that Lukken (1999:145) call “tamed intuition”, meaning self-discipline and self-control with co-researchers, the interviews, assumptions, own personal filters and many other factors.

The chosen research methodology for this research is that of participant observation research which could be described as a method that breaks through a modernist-positivist epistemology (Wepener, 2005:4). Some methods like categorising, thick description and interviews are mentioned by Wepener (2005) applicable and used during this research.

#### **2.9.4.1 Categorising**

As for categorising Ronald Grimes (2013a) is providing an excellent structure for research. Besides elements and headings, a recommended starting point is with questions and Grimes (2013a:231) mentions the following:

- Participants: Who is coming?
- Sensorily engaged: what actions do they perform that might keep their attention?
- Congregate: What groups form? Who is related to whom?
- Selected places: Where does the event take place? What is possible in the available space?
- Biding time: In what time period is the event set? How long does it last?
- Artfully cultivating attitudes: What is the tone of the event? Which arts contribute to the event? What kind of food, and how much?
- Conducive to enacting: What do the figures on the cover expect to happen? What are the main activities? Who does what? Who says what?
- Core values: What matters most in this event? What ritual work needs doing here? What’s peripheral, and what’s “to die for”



Ritual elements are listed as “Ritual actions, ritual actors, ritual places, ritual times, ritual objects, ritual languages, ritual groups (Grimes, 2013a:237-241). These headings are well-established in both Anthropology and Liturgy and serve the research design of ethnography well, according to Swinkels (2003:224) and Wepener (2005:6).

This goes along with headings to provide a structure for information that can be otherwise very confusing during the time of data-gathering. These headings are called: ritual activity, ritual acts (gestures/postures), primary ritual acts (core), secondary ritual acts (tributary), ritual action, ritual processes, ritual changes and ritual functions (Grimes, 2013a:295).

#### **2.9.4.2 Thick descriptions**

Geertz (1973:3-30) presents a method in researching rituals with the concept of “thick descriptions”. It is actually self-explanatory as it means a thorough and detailed description of a ritual, incident, interaction or a story during the ritual but described in detail, in all manners, covering all angles.

To further the understanding of the concept, Geertz (1973:6) also distinguish between “thick” and ‘thin” descriptions by using an example of “thin” as in a boy who has twitched his eye, a “thick” description will explain it as a boy “...practicing a burlesque of a friend faking a wink to deceive an innocent into thinking a conspiracy is in motion”. He then also refers to “mental notes” and “jotted notes”, personal reflections from the researcher in terms of observations and emotions. This can also be compared with what the participants as objects really meant by performing the ritual, etc. All of this must be written down as soon as possible to the discretion of the researcher. Recordings of what happened during the ritual can be of great value. Of interest here, is also the contribution from Performance Theory, the style of verbalisation and other linguistic aspects that can be taken into account.

#### **2.9.4.3 Interviews**

Interviews form an important part of participant observation research as a method, in that a voice is given to those who really matter, namely the participants as objects of study and this contributes to the authenticity of the research. Turner (1995) referred to this as the difficult part, to understand what the participants understanding is of what they are doing and what it means to them.

Babbie (2015) and Wepener (2005) refer to another very important factor which is non-negotiable in our day and that is the power issue. Participants as objects of research should have the same authority as the researcher and this is obviously for the researcher to acknowledge this in the research. Grimes (1990:214) indicates how relevant this issue of power is and that it can easily happen that the researcher can create his own version of what is actually happening amongst the objects of research. This is further reflected on in the next chapter under the inculturation heading.

Preference is given to more informal and unstructured interviews as well as semi-structured interviews, exactly for this reason of equality, in that enough space is given to the participants to give direction to the content of the interview. When a whole congregation takes part in a ritual, some other principles will be applicable such as focus groups but it is highly unlikely for this research that a whole congregation will take part in a ritual like the pilgrimage.

Lastly another responsibility for the researcher is to see to it that the participants in the research project should be representative of the larger group, whether the group be a congregation or a specific denomination (Stringer, 1999; Wepener, 2005).

Participants will be treated with respect and agreements will be honoured as part of the ethical side of the research, as data collection can become personal with a topic like pilgrimage. Therefore a written consent from participants is of the utmost importance. Safety and confidentiality are two matters that also need attention and must be communicated with the subjects of observation in such a way that there will be no misunderstandings in terms of safety and confidentiality. There is no room here for lack of communication.

The work on interviews by Yin (2013) were also consulted in preparation for the interviews part of this research.

## **2.10 RITUAL, THEORY AND THEOLOGY**

Arnold van Gennep (1873 – 1957) a french ethnologist, who based his work on Durkheim, developed the first approach with structure and in 1909 it was published in the classical work *Les Rites de Passage*. Albers (2007) elaborates more on the theoretical approach of van Gennep as she argues that rituals are playing a very important role in facilitating society's transition from one state to the next, avoiding the chaos and disintegration that can so easily

become dominant. Van Gennep emphasised the structure build into rituals and opened up a whole new approach to research of rituals as he indicates that the same ritual can have different meanings or on the other hand may have an universal meaning and this links with how a ritual becomes inculturated as a ritual with meaning.

Turner (1979) took this further by connecting rites, symbols and meaning. He made a shift from symbols to meaning and developed concepts like social drama, liminality and performance within rites. Stringer (1999:200-209) shows how the mind can be understood and therefore how it creates meaning<sup>17</sup>.

It is in this creation of meaning that we can learn something about ritual, as a formal definition is impossible, therefore it could rather be called ritualisation, which includes activities and the way it is been done, states Humphrey (1994). This is the preferred way instead of identifying elements of ritual says Stringer (1999:201-205), who continues to say it is for the individual to fill that gap with own content, meaning or experience, transforming it then to ritualisation.

Klomp (2011:36) elaborates on the symbolic act of ritual, very much applicable in the case of pilgrimage, stating that it facilitates two processes in one. With reference to Lukken (1990) in this regard Klomp (2011:36) states firstly that an alternative reality finds a way of expression with the ritual bringing this alternative reality into consciousness and secondly this alternative reality becomes clear for the performer of the symbolic act. This implies a flow of meaning both ways, from the ritual performer as well as to the performer or pilgrim. But acts like these only accomplish full meaning when the participant is fully present in heart, mind and body, with Klomp (2011:36) emphasising the necessity of full body participation.

Understanding and utilising the ritual like the description above is a sensitive matter in Western European cultures because the participation with the body in worshipping is not part

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<sup>17</sup> Stringer, M.D. 1999. *On the perception of worship*. Birmingham: University of Birmingham Press. says about the mind's working with regards to ritual and worshipping:

The mind cannot process all information during rituals and articulate it into words. Consciousness in this regard should be further investigated. That may enable us to put experience in worship into words. This space or gap in the feedback process of putting it into words reflects a sense of incompleteness within the human mind.

If the human mind contains within itself a sense of incompleteness, then clearly the human person possesses within themselves the desire for completion.

of the Reformed tradition and therefore it is experienced as a difficulty in contrast with African worshipping where full participation of the body is the norm.

Worship is dependent on symbolic acting which is the performance part of ritual according to Klomp (2011:36). The Reformed tradition has to acknowledge the resistance from active participation in ritual activities in Western orientated worshipping but this is also a huge advantage of pilgrimage as a ritual because walking is a completely acceptable ritual act in the Reformed tradition, meaning no energy is spent on resistance or for being uncomfortable with anything new, therefore pilgrimage as ritual is more culturally acceptable in terms of bodily participation.

### **2.10.1 Liturgical theorists and theologians**

Stringer (1989:510) argues: "...we should be looking for the underlying structures of the rites that we are studying and, by implication, comparing them with each other so that we can distinguish the 'surface structure', the superficial differences, from the basic, common, 'deep structure.'" This captures the intention of the researcher in the execution of empirical research methodology in chapter seven. The challenge to get to this "deep structure" or the message behind the pilgrimage phenomenon, asks for creative communication and Kavanagh (1992) elaborates on this.

Liturgical theorist Aidan Kavanagh states that Liturgy is more experience than text and theology, to be understood through symbol and ritual, in his book *On Liturgical Theology*, with the potential to shape people who participate, transforming them beyond recognition (Kavanagh, 1992:73-74). "Like poetry, art and music, Liturgy provides us a means of knowing that kind of thing that can only be known as transrationality, that cannot be analyzed, taken apart, spelled out and reassembled..." (Kavanagh, 1992:169). The outcome is difficult to describe other than the Biblical term of "a new person" as mind and heart become so transformed that a different reality is experienced (Kavanagh, 1992:170).

When these experiences are difficult to communicate, the ethnographer has to find creative ways to put it into words or to recreate the experience itself in the most practical way possible and in this regard Stringer (1989:519) recommend instruments from other disciplines or poetry, but anything to re-communicate the experience.

Liturgy can literally take worshippers to what seems to be the chaotic, to the “blinding light”, bringing forth a total transformation, therefore Liturgy can be the connection between Church, world and reality (Kavanagh, 1992:176).

Liturgy is the space that can bring worshippers into the Presence of God, transcending reality and the here and now with the eschatological dimension. Therefore Liturgy should be regarded the same as the Sabbath, it “...is for us rather than we for it” (Kavanagh, 1992:153).

The ideas of Grimes (2000:49) resonates with the ‘transrationality’ concept of Kavanagh (1992:169) in saying: "Lifting a rite out of the past with the hope that it will grow in the present usually fails. Nevertheless, our sense of what is ritually possible can be enhanced by momentarily suspending our own practical questions for the sake immersing ourselves in the ritual sensibility of another time"<sup>18</sup>. This looks like the same idea called by Dan Sperber (1975) “equation” instead of exact meaning.

Dan Sperber (1975) presents Liturgy with a challenge in his book *Rethinking Symbolism*, based in psychology and linguistics. He asks if there is any meaning to symbols and with that poses a challenge to a basic assumption in Liturgy. A symbol says something about the relationship which can't be explained rationally. Therefore there is no exact meaning but rather what Sperber (1975) calls an “equation”, which could be translated to a creative energy field created by symbols for instance between wine and the blood of Christ, bread and body of Christ, communion and table, baptism water and the Covenant. To understand this, asks for a different mode of thinking. A symbol is not just representing something else but calls for a different dimension of understanding or meaning as known to the Christian faith and this meaning creates energy which could be called “equation”.

Lukken and Post get more attention in the next section. Lukken (2005:16) emphasises the fact that literature on symbol will not deliver clarity on the exact meaning of symbol and that could actually lead to confusion. Symbols should not be explained as that will only prevent the possibilities of meaning according to Lukken (2005:19), also stating that reflection should also not be necessary, as the participant functions on intuition, feelings and senses. Goethe also contributed to the difficulty of defining symbols by saying: “the symbol is the thing without being the thing, and yet is the thing”, cited by Lukken (2005:19).

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<sup>18</sup> This notion also resonates with Foucault's idea of heterotopia in chapter four.

Symbol is a sign with multiple meaning options determined by three dimensions, participation, accepted in culture and faith conventions and the status of an icon (Post, 2001a:134-135; Vos, 2014a:130). The purpose of symbols is to support people in a confusing world, where right and wrong is not a given, where multiple meaning complicates decisions and truth has a poly-semantic nature in an ever-changing world (Vos, 2014a:132).

Worshipping and the experience surrounding it will always be a mystery, not to be explained fully or verbalised or to be controlled by man but when this is accepted, it does not mean that there is no worth in studying worshipping or that Liturgy will happen out of itself, it actually strengthen our notion to study every single element in Liturgy and to study social behaviour, to take full ownership and responsibility.

The researcher states again his personal understanding of the meaning Christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition is from a Western paradigm and to be more specific from a South African, Dutch Reformed perspective. Therefore the meaning people generate in other cultures, such as the East, Europe, North and South American and other African contexts, may differ from this specific South African context of this research.

In the quest for determining how people make sense or give meaning to what they do, in this case, the pilgrimage, it is of the utmost importance that we should learn more about the content of worship with rituals and symbols and specifically the different ways of understanding. To get to an answer of value for the Reformed tradition in terms of the research topic, first an understanding is necessary in why rituals and symbols have become so popular within the Reformed tradition and then a comprehensive understanding is necessary of rituals and symbols and therefore the researcher did it from two perspectives, liturgical theorists and liturgical theologians, also recognising the multi-disciplinary context with that.

More than one reason can be given for this growing interest in ritual in recent years and to be specific pilgrimage as a ritual and symbol. Postmodernism has an impact on how individuals think about life in current times and this obviously effects the spiritual life in that people are more inclined to investigate the mysterious and non-rational (Wepener, 2009c:196). Another reason is the exploration of alternative ways of communication between the Christian and God, almost a yearning to a more personal relationship with Him, as one way of dealing with modern day realities where discernment between right and wrong in a postmodern society

needs alternative tools while others are of opinion that the value of symbols and rituals were overlooked since the Reformation five centuries ago and this needs to be rectified (Wepener, 2009c:196-197).

Rituals and symbols are multi-dimensional and multi-functional and have the ability to facilitate integration and orientation in a society, to strengthen a certain discourse and facilitate the space to appropriate meaning (Barnard, 2000:7). Liturgical theologians in support of this view are Barnard and Post (2001); Bell (1997); Grimes (1982); Grimes (2013b); Lukken (2005).

The existence of a turnaround in Liturgy from the verbal, cerebral, rational to that of all senses, the non-verbal, non-rational with more emphasis on individuality and personal meaning is widely accepted amongst liturgical theologians (Barnard, 2000:10). The views of different liturgical-theologians on worshipping, the role and meaning of rituals and symbols will shed light on this phenomenon.

For the purposes of this research, the theses of Mirella Klomp on *The Sound of Worship*, is important as the research methodology of this project is very much the same as that of Mirella Klomp, ethnography in liturgical research. As Klomp (2011:2) uses sound and the difference in sound during worship, the researcher investigates the meaning pilgrims of the Reformed tradition find in doing a pilgrimage, their individual interpretation and the formulation of a liturgical praxis for Reformed tradition. For Klomp worship means since her childhood “...the celebration of a mystery” Klomp (2011:4). Klomp (2011:170) describes worship as a symbolic and ritual order.

From the study of rituals and symbols and the determination of meaning pilgrims find in pilgrimage, the researcher finds it necessary to state the macro picture of understanding from the Western paradigm and in this regard to clarify some features of the Western paradigm, Klomp (2011:5) states the influence by modernism in terms of growth and development, reason, a scientific approach, emancipation of the human being and the influence of ideologies. Klomp (2011:5) emphasises that Western understanding of academic research, may be understood differently in other cultures, but from a Western point of view academic research should be “critical, traceable and verifiable”.

As an emerging Liturgical theologian Klomp (2011), based her view on ritual and symbol on Victor Turner, an anthropologist. Worship is performance and performance is difficult to describe in words as every person will use different words to describe performance and ultimately worship (Turner, 1982:4). Performance is based on processing experience in order to understand life itself is the view of Turner (1982:13-24), who distinguishes five phases, (1) positive or negative perception of the experience, (2) recall past experiences into current reality, (3) experience same feelings as in the past, (4) integration of past and present leads to a new meaning, (5) expression of past experience in present complete the full circle towards closure.

The theological term “anamnesis” is explained by Klomp (2011:25) as remembering God’s deeds of the past and expectation for the future. The “living through and thinking back” part of experience is important in worship, with liturgical elements like prayer, Scripture, sermon and Eucharist, are all acts with meaning attached to them, directing towards anamnesis in worship as performance, according to Klomp (2011:25) and in the physical expression of the remembrance and future expectation, worship happens. “Anamnesis” could have a major presence in pilgrimage as a ritual, as pilgrims will often talk about healing of some sort that took place during their pilgrimage. The researcher speculates at this stage that the space of pilgrimage with elements like silence and simplicity, creates the context for the “anamnesis” process.

This relationship between performance and worship can be described as symbolic behaviour taking the worshipper to become a witness of joy and victory, with worship integrated into the worshippers daily life (Klomp, 2011:26; Turner, 1982:122). “Worship is, as a ritual, a process of ongoing appropriation of meaning, it is a meaning network that relates to and interferes with other meaning networks” according to Klomp (2011:26).

Rituals and symbols are highly in demand in popular culture today but neglected in Reformed Liturgy and this situation asks for “aggiornamento”, which means modernising the ritual, states Barnard (2000:9). What is the implication for liturgical research methodology? Barnard (2000:12) mentions the presence of rituals in abundance in the Church and in culture today as well as the tendency of appropriation and interpretation by the individual and this must be acknowledged in liturgical research methodology. Therefore the principle of



borrowing methods from cultural Anthropology and ritual studies is supported by liturgist like Barnard and Post (2001); Bell (1997); Grimes (1982); Grimes (2013b); Lukken (2005).

Barnard (2000:15) says Liturgy is symbolic acts and can only be determined by theology and not by other disciplines. The relationship with other disciplines such as Anthropology is defined by theology and not the other way round. The differentiating factor is the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the process is based on faith alone and this is the work of God alone while Anthropology focuses exclusively on the human dimension of behaviour. Theology will have to show the road forward based on the Word of God while Liturgy is not just about the expression of faith but also receiving grace from the Hand of God.

The Reformed tradition made the Word the central focus in Liturgy as the instrument of grace and therefore the Word became the symbol of God with preaching the ritual states Barnard (2000:17). According to Kavanagh (1993) also mentioned by Barnard (2000:17) this led to the situation in the Reformed tradition where salvation and faith experience became focused on the verbal and rational and this led to de-ritualisation.

Reformed Christians should become comfortable and skilled with symbols and rituals in a non-verbal way (Barnard, 2000:17-18). Participation in rituals stimulates a dynamic process of renewed meanings and because of the individual appropriation by individuals, this forms a network of meaning according to Barnard (2000:19) referring back to Schleiermacher.

Schleiermacher saw the synergy or combination of the different individual networks of meaning, as important to Liturgy, as this creates a symbolic order and so a context for individual expression, which is not what happens in the virtual reality of the internet according to Barnard (2000:19) as virtual reality reduce humanity in an artificial world which could be called, Docetism. A congregation asks for physical or bodily presence, a physical community and this asks for “aggiornamento” or renewal. With the methodological consequence that methods can be used from theology, Anthropology and culture, complimenting each other, Liturgy is in a dynamic relationship with the other disciplines. Therefore individuals become permanent providers of meaning, confirming the Luther-Schleiermacher relevance.

According to Barnard and Post (2001:189) Schleiermacher’s view on worship and art is that both of them reflect affection, which is pretty much in line with Turner’s view, as worship

originates “from human activity in which inwardness enters into an outward manifestation” “Relating Schleiermacher’s theory to the notion of performance, it becomes clear that the religious feeling to being dependent on God is in fact worthless if it is not expressed, represented and manifested. Performing worship is a form of representative activity. The performance of the ritual is an expression of a (religious) feeling, which comes from a heightening of consciousness that leads to this manifestation” (Klomp, 2011:27).

Edward Schillebeeckx, a Roman-Catholic theologian, mentions performance as expression of faith with regards to the ritual accompanying the sacraments. This sacramental ritual has its own identity and rational but within the boundaries of faith, with the purpose of worshipping God. (Schillebeeckx: 2000:186). However, the religious ritual expressed in performance is about “worship, gratitude and tribute, brotherly and sisterly love and contemporary ethos or ethic acting” Klomp (2011:29).

Lukken (1994b:11,22) describes symbol as an act or an object that speaks for itself in a way that is non-rational and non-verbal and the meaning does not require thought processes. Lukken (1996:134) focused on two similarities between performance of worship and theatre performances. First, the audience in theatre and the audience in church work with a narrative program and secondly both work with a textbook or script, providing directions for the performance.

Lukken (2005:321-325) and Lukken (1996:145) also indicate the differences between worship and theatre. Worship refers to future realisation, the eschatological aspect. Roles will differ in the two performances as with a role in a play an actor will take on a different identity, sometimes in contrast with his own identity while the complete opposite is true in worship, as the intensity of expression and experience is completely embedded within the person himself. Another important difference between worship and theatre is that of different, sometime confronting roles between actors and audience in theatre while in worship the purpose of performance is unity between actors and participants or audience.

According to Lukken (1990:11) the dualistic view of spirit and body also changed since the middle of the last century and this was due to the shift to the cultural-anthropological side of Liturgy. The human person, as a whole, became more important, such as touch, sight, smell,

taste and sound. The body with its senses became the vehicle for participating in any worship ritual.

Post (2001b) identifies three characteristics of how Westerners observe or participate in rituals. Some may participate and others will observe. The ritual loses some of its mythical character because of a lot of explanation, verification and talking is happening during the ritual and then much of the meaning is left for the ritual or play to bring it forth.

Grimes (1982; 1992; 1996; 2013b) and Swinkels (2003) is at the forefront in the field of Ritual Studies. His focus is about asking questions to determine the meaning of the performance as an expression of worshipping. His work is dealt with under the heading “Ritual investigation”, a bit further in this section.

Klomp (2011:8) states: “Rites and symbols are increasingly becoming an expression of the unique person we are...become expressions of our own identity”. From here it makes logical sense that rituals are then given meaning by the person or group on a much bigger individual level than in the past obviously with much more meanings around, it forms a network which then relates to other networks which is the focus of Barnard (2010) in an article: *Flows of worship in the network society* and of Barnard, Cilliers & Wepener (2014) in the book: *Worship in a Network Culture*.

This research approach is within a multi-disciplinary context, as Liturgy has to take note of any discipline where rituals and symbols are an object of study, in order to be accountable within the field of social scientific research. This view is supported by Barnard (2000) and Wepener (2005:2) while the latter refers to “*liturgia condenda*” or “liturgy in the making”. A symbol should not be explained in the logical sense of the word as its inherent power is in the space occupied by the worshipper, which is personal, individual and may differ from person to person (Vos, 2014b:120). The paradox here is that logic and sense will be disempowering to symbol and ritual.

A contribution is made by Wepener (2005:2) in saying that the *liturgia condenda* or liturgy in the making is actually taking place within the domain of Practical Theology and therefore the pragmatic task is involved.

Paul Post (2008a:100) defines the context of Liturgy and ritual, with the Ritual Theory of Ronald Grimes in mind, saying that ritual is repetitive or a sequence of acts, transforming a normal act into the context of a symbol in a certain time frame and space. With this an individual or a group give expression to their ideas, ideals, identity and mentality while Liturgy is nothing else than the expression of faith with rituals by an individual or group (Post, 2008a:100).

Another perspective on ritual which closely corresponds to the work of Post and builds on it is: “Rituals are often repeated, self-evident, symbolic actions, that are always interactive and corporeal, sometimes accompanied by texts and formulas, aimed at the transfer of values in the individual or the group, and of which the form and content are always culture, context and time bound, so that the involvement in the reality which is presented in the ritual remains a dynamic given” (Wepener, 2005:2).

## **2.11 RITUAL AND SYMBOL IN REFORMED TRADITION**

From a Roman Catholic perspective, Post (2001b:40) states on this phenomenon of ritual in Western worship culture by saying we are more comfortable to talk about ritual, explaining the meaning than actually doing it. Klomp (2011:37) from the Lutheran tradition, states that “Rituals are often weakened because we do not surrender to the play”.

Post (1999:136) continues to explain the trends in current ritual dynamics by describing three patterns, ritual is still performed by few with many spectators, not actively participating, secondly, the ritual is explained verbally, clarified in detail with not much left for the mythical and thirdly a justification for the ritual to counter the perception of uselessness. What becomes clear is a very rational approach to a spiritual tool which is not given freedom to move as it wants.

Rituals in a Christian context, according to Scripture, have actually a very simple principle namely the sincere intention. As rituals will always have a certain level of vagueness, the test and value of ritual can only be determined between the participant and God.

Numerous texts from Scripture address this issue. Texts with a warning against rituals without sincerity are Amos 5:21-26, Hosea 6:1-6, Micah 6:5-8, Isaiah 1:10-16, 29:13-15, 58:1-8, Jeremiah 6:20, 7:1-15, Mark 11:15-17.

Christian rituals must always be subjected to evaluation and renewal, states Lukken (2005), also from the Roman Catholic tradition while Smit (2009:95) from the Reformed tradition, emphasises the principle *liturgia semper reformanda*, to stay true to the Christian intention of honouring God. From a Reformed perspective this means anything can change in contextual worshipping with the principle of honouring God as the foundation.

Renewal of Reformed worshipping asks for a thorough process to accommodate the different needs of Reformed Christians with many different agendas. Some of the motivations for renewal may come from self-centredness, some from an approach of following the flavour of the month, or from others with a sincere intention, etc., and therefore it is necessary to have a clear understanding of Reformed worship as a frame of reference to evaluate renewal, acknowledging the necessity for renewal from time to time as culture changes (Smit, 2009:87-88). This frame of reference is also applicable on developing the pilgrimage concept as the approach for this research is that pilgrimage is a spiritual tool with one of many purposes to accommodate diversity in Reformed worshipping.

Not all elements of current Reformed worship could be regarded as Reformed tradition and there is no such thing as one Reformed way of worshipping, for Liturgy developed with many different approaches without one that can be used today to say how it should be (Smit, 2009:90-92). Some elements just became habits in worshipping, then grounded in Scripture, therefore it implies an openness for dialogue based on Scripture and not habits for any future developments in Liturgy (Smit, 2009:88-90).

If future dialogue on renewal of Reformed worshipping is based on Scripture then the only condition should be God's honour, through His Word, with the Sacraments, communion, prayer and the fruit of the Spirit as the way in which His presence reflects (Smit, 2009:99-107). The renewal conversation should not focus on experiencing the not physical Presence of God, feelings, moods, symbols, music, art, singing, silence and the mystical for modern man has to be careful for man-made images of God of which prosperity theology could be mentioned as an example to illustrate, technology and many other ways in which the focus could become distracted from God alone (Smit, 2009:99-107).

To acknowledge the rational approach embedded in the Reformed tradition, the work of Otto (1958:1-2) and Harris (1992:87) should be mentioned, proposing a more balanced perspective

of moving away from rationality in the faith experience. It opens up the space where faith and experiences cannot always be explained in terms of the rational and that it will be a mistake to try and explain the Divine in a rational way.

Otto (1964) came up with the term numinous, from the Latin word “numen”, meaning divine power. Something not to be known, going along with feelings of overwhelming love, not part of everyday life, “... privileged moments when we move out of profane existence, out of our usual non-religious world” says Harris (1992:88).

These moments are described by Otto (1964) in the following way: “The feeling of it may at times come sweeping like a gentle tide, pervading the mind with a tranquil mood of deepest worship. It may pass over into a more set and lasting attitude of the soul, continuing, as it were, thrillingly vibrant and resonant, until at last it dies away and the soul resumes its “profane” nonreligious mood of everyday experience” (Otto, 1964:12).

This approach is very much part of the work of The Religious Experience Research Unit at Oxford with the notion that not enough attention is paid to the numinous while it is estimated roughly that a third of any given group, experience this.

John Shea (1982) also reflects on this experience which Reformed pilgrims can't put to words and are described by co-researchers as “wonderful” but reminds a lot of Augustine's approach in terms of how much we understand of God's communication with us on a daily basis. For Shea (1982) religious identity is to be found in the telling and re-telling of one's story, closely related to the Narrative approach where an individual's life story is on centre stage, demonstrating his approach with the words: “God speaks to me first in the events of daily living, in the words and challenges which friends and enemies direct at me and in the moods and questions which seem to drift into my days”.

To think and experience God's presence in this way can be life changing. The experience of God's direct presence is then not seen as just in special moments, but it becomes a constant presence and the norm. The challenge is to see, to recognise, to interpret each and every situation with what God actually wants to share with His children. It is this possibility of faith experience that Christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition become aware of during pilgrimage that they describe to the best of their abilities as “wonderful”.

The intention of the researcher in this section was to reflect on the current stance, the criteria for transformation and the possibilities for Reformed tradition, as brought to the attention by this research on pilgrimage, rituals and symbols in the context of Reformed Christianity. From this platform of the Reformed tradition, rituals and symbols will now be looked at from a multi-disciplinary perspective.

## **2.12 RITUAL AND SYMBOL IN AFRICAN CONTEXT**

The African perspective on rituals and symbols deserves a research project on its own and this topic is most probably the most neglected part of this research. Therefore it would also be an ideal focus for any follow-up research proposal. Although the African worshipping culture is close to heart for the researcher, it was decided to focus on pilgrimage in the Camino tradition, therefore even the pilgrimage culture to Israel did not get much attention. The Camino de Santiago de Compostela has not entered the spiritual sphere of African tradition yet and many reasons can be given for this situation but least of all because of a lack of interest as pilgrimage is very much part of the African worshipping but as said, it deserves an independent research project. The researcher is also well aware the research of African pilgrimage done by Müller (2013) who is from the same specific segment of Reformed tradition in South Africa as the researcher, but this was done in a limited environment of the Zionist Christian Church in South Africa.

In order to understand more about the character and meaning of the pilgrimage and the way in which people worship will always reflect something about the rest of their culture and because cultures differ, people's ideas for worshipping through and during a pilgrimage, will also reflect differences. Although this research is from a Western paradigm, it is also embedded in Africa and the African cultures have a different notion.

It was stated earlier that this research is done from a personal background which is more Western orientated in terms of personal theological training and experience in the Dutch Reformed Church, which is in many ways in contrast with the African perspective but on the other hand the researcher can associate easily with the African way of worship, born in Africa and experienced the African way of worshipping by dancing and singing with Africans around a fire, experiencing a "spiritual trance" many times. The researcher recalls the learning of cultural songs and then it turned out to be another spiritual song. Because of the

African worldview of *ubuntu*, with the emphasis on unity, there is no distinction between spiritual and cultural songs.

Exposure to African worship and rituals certainly provides a better understanding in how Klomp (2011:20) elaborates on the differences between the African and Western ways of worshipping. African countries have a lot in common regarding their world view, like seeing everything in life as a unity. The self, mentally and physically and the complex world are in harmony in a holistic way.

Uzukwu (1997:10) says: “The rhythm of interaction in this universe is discovered, re-created and expressed bodily by humans”. The human being is seen as a microcosm part of the universe. Therefore body and spirit are equal in value, a unity, with no dichotomy. This unity goes further to include the community, and it is only in relation with the community that one becomes a person and part of the universe.

Klomp (2011:20) explains her understanding of African worshipping, that there is no distinction between sacred and secular, no distinction between religion and other areas in life, so God is present in daily life in all incidents and events while interaction with the material universe is communion with the divine. The human is part of the sacred, seen as the figure of the divine, therefore religion and culture for Africans is also a unity. Following this, worship requires the whole body, all the senses, sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste and thus any symbol or ritual must include life in totality.

In contrast with the African view, Klomp (2011:21) describe Western / European thought on the role of the body as almost completely the opposite as it is predominantly dualistic. The individual consist of spirit and body of unequal value where the spirit prevails over the body. This dualistic concept of body and spirit originates from the Classical World of Plato and Aristotle, described by an African theologian, Lumbala (1998:2), as the ideal state of being is thought and reason of the highest order.

Uzukwu (1997:7) has an understanding of Western culture’s dualism of soul and body as: “...the body became a problem to the spirit, a burden to the self, a prison to the soul”. This belief became part of religion and the Church as body was submitted to soul and associated with the “fallen flesh”. Augustine strengthened this perception. This opened up a never ending exploration of the self in Western thought and from this follows the distinction



between sacred and secular. It manifested in rituals to be performed at appointed times and in designated spaces and the notion that religion is a private matter.

## 2.13 SYMBOLS

### 2.13.1 Presentative and discursive symbolism

One object can represent a whole life. The terminology “presentative symbolism” from Lukken (2005:29) describes this term where an object gives meaning without a verbal contribution, a visible, tangible something, communicating a message without words in the form of: “...space, light, colour, gesture, movement, mime, dance, decoration, clothing, objects, images, sounds, intonation, music, aroma, silence...”. The way of communication also differs from the verbal as the message is all in one, in one moment, with no time needed for explanations, one moment in which more information could be shared than in a thousand words. Perception and understanding happen in one moment, the moment one set eyes on the symbol or even just by giving thought to a specific symbol.

Discursive symbolism, as another form, is where perception happens sequentially and Lukken (2005:32) elaborates on this by saying that language as such belongs to discursive symbolism, although some forms of presentative symbolism can also be part of language as with poetry and myth. A poem is read line by line, and thus one can say there is successive perception (syntax) but at the same time it is true that there is a large degree of simultaneity (paradigm). Therefore in poetry, syntax and paradigm coincide states Lukken (2005:33).

Symbolic language also has presentative traits. Both presentative and discursive symbolism are important in the development of personal identity and in some instances the one will make sense and in another situation, the other depending on the individual but the important connection here is between either form of symbolism and identity (Lukken, 2005:33).

There is a good reason why the territory and space in which this research happens, is powerful in every sense of the way. Presentative and discursive symbolism has the potential to link the conscious and the sub-conscious abilities of a human being or the Christian pilgrim of the Reformed tradition or in other words to bring an individual’s intuition right into reality. For many people this is a frightening experience and too much to deal with. People or pilgrims are searching yes, but also uncertain or afraid to find that something or

that one thing. This is one of the most important reasons why the researcher finds pilgrims of the Reformed tradition fascinating, specifically the one's doing the Camino.

### **2.13.2 Symbolization**

Although we have ways and means to communicate better than ever, the counter effect is actually the truth and isolation is a huge result of improved technology according to Lukken (2005:14-16). This leaves us with a challenge of how to tap into the inner being. Lukken (2005:14-16) poses two possibilities to this challenge namely to reflect and symbolization. The focus is on symbolization for the purpose of this section.

To create a situation where people can relate to the desired outcome, the usage of symbols can play a huge role and these symbols can be in the form of "...things, words and acts" Lukken (2005:16).

### **2.13.3 Symbol**

Symbol and ritual have the ability to unlock different perceptions and experiences into a mutual experience, bind people together, opening up a much bigger world that people can share, moving into the world of imagination and can make unlimited people focused on one idea or historical fact, according to Lukken (2005:18). A symbol can unite people in the present about something from the past or future.

Culture plays a major role in what objects or phenomenon will be accepted as symbolic. Lukken (2005:22) states that two factors are present in modern culture to counteract a culture where we rely heavily on facts and data, where we have become a society orientated towards profitability and science is limited to the factual. It is in this regard that spirituality has to develop a certain level of imagination and simplicity, if not wanting to drift along with the mainstream.

Bates et al. (1979:43) defined symbol as a sign with a meaningful relationship with a referent in such a way that it can substitute the referent in a variety of contexts, inside or outside communicative situations while at the same time maintaining its identity as being separate from the referent.

Obviously there is also a darker side to the value of symbols. It could be accepted that evil will also make use of the power of symbols. The following is from a website: <http://vigilantcitizen.com> where the slogan is used “Symbols rule the world, not words nor laws”. Two quotes from the website indicating that symbols are present everywhere. It is not the purpose of this study to go into depth regarding that, but the researcher believe the point needs to be made that symbols are also used by evil powers in the world.



<<http://vigilantcitizen.com>>

*“In symbolism, an inverted figure always signifies a perverted power. The average person does not even suspect the occult properties of emblematic pentacles.”*

-Manly P. Hall, Secret Teachings of All Ages

<<http://vigilantcitizen.com/sinistersites/sinister-sites-temple-square-utah/>>

The following words also come from this website: “The article openly admits that masonic cathedrals represent the best legacy of the Brotherhood and the symbolism is prominently showcased. The masses are however too ignorant to recognize the meanings behind the art, so they just stare at them, thinking ‘it’s pretty nice’”. The researcher only wants to demonstrate with this that the value of symbols are realised and utilised in a variety of contexts and not just in Christianity.

#### 2.13.4 Signs

Signs should be differentiated from symbols states Lukken (2005:18) elaborating on signs as something rational, accepted by mutual agreement to what exactly its meaning will be in society and the role it has to play. Signs fulfil a need and are meaningful in that it creates order in relationships or society. Various authors are using the analogy of a traffic light. That is a sign, making people to react to the particular colour of the light, without questioning it, fulfilling a role in society in terms of order and not necessarily an object of emotions. This is different from symbols, which also make people to react but because of the meaning of the

symbol on a different level as it addresses emotions, feelings and spirituality, with other words its purpose is much more than just functional.

### **2.13.5 Symbolic act**

Symbolic act is a sign but with more content than a deed according to Lukken (2005:23). It actually refers to something else, loaded with meaning and it may have multiple meanings as well. Symbolic act also establish direct links between different experiences, creating a simplified concept or perception.

### **2.13.6 Symbolic language**

One word with a symbolic meaning can call up a whole world of content, creating a bigger reality, establishing a connection between many things and thus providing many alternative options as described by Lukken (2005:25). There is also the act which is a sign but may have the meaning of a symbol, symbolic act or symbolic language. Narrative theology is very much applicable here.

## **2.14 CHARACTERISTICS OF RITUAL**

Ritual is symbolic behaviour with or without religion and has the same meaning as rite. Grimes (1982:35) is in favour of the term ritualisation describing it as an “act of deliberately cultivating, inventing or constructing a new rite”. The act could be still in process phase of creative development. Bell (1992:89) refers to how the term ‘ritual’ has become popular in studies within the technological sphere, opening up just more and more function and utility.

For Lukken (2005) the ritual domain is about two fundamental aspects namely:

### **2.14.1 Repetition**

As a certain ritual becomes accepted by culture, it becomes a repeated action depending the nature of the ritual and the meaning it has within the context. The beginning phase will always be a much more intensified situation than at a later stage when people doing it, were not directly involved with the origin and the circumstances why the specific ritual came into existence. Some dangers then kick in as it may happen that people start doing it then in a mechanistic way, discussing some irrelevant issues, thinking about something else, in short, not being present and obviously then the ritual can lose it meaning, contribution and purpose.

On the other hand, just by being there, we will never know how much value or information merge with the sub consciousness or what the value is of just being in that space and radius of influence of the ritual.

### **2.14.2 Relation between rite and myth**

We must never underestimate the inherent power of ritual and myth. They both transcend human or scientific boundaries as both are based in the imagination of a human being (Harris, 1992). Societies have many ways to convey values but myth and rituals are part of those strategies and they are close related. Myths usually get more attention than rituals. Both appeal to emotions (Harris, 1992).

Lukken (2005:51) cites Nijk (1957) in saying myth is telling the story where a human got in contact with the supernatural and from there rituals developed as remembrance. Rituals can be easily seen as deriving from myths and therefore subject to it. But there is more to it and it is crucial for rituals to be open to current knowledge, to maintain a practical application.

Bell (1992:93) says ritual is giving meaning to pre-cognitive knowledge, mainly situated in the body, whilst emphasising the role of opposites. Grimes (1993:20) sees rituals similar to symbols, as a sensory (smelling) process, relying on intuition, somatic knowledge and the six sense.

Rituals is “thinking” outside of intellectual systematic thinking process and therefore “sensory basis precedes all cognitive perception of differences” says Lukken (2005:53). In recent times emphasis is on the bodily experience and knowledge and this is a good thing according to Lukken (2005:53) as to much emphasis on the myth, easily leads to intellectualism.

During the origin of the Reformation in the Middle Ages and after the Council of Trent (1545-1563) of the Roman Catholic Church where the ritual became central in worshipping, the Reformation took a stand against ritualism, with the focus on Word alone. This obviously led to where we are today in the Reformed tradition regarding ritual and symbol, literally in our baby shoes. Lukken (2005:54-73) then elaborates on some more features of rituals presented here as other dimensions of ritual.

## **2.15 DIMENSIONS OF RITUAL**

### **2.15.1 Brings past and future into the present**

Ritual can present us with the bigger picture of the present. Rituals can anchor us in the past and at the same time open up new possibilities for the future (Lukken, 2005:54). Integrating the future and the past have an empowering influence on the individual, church or society. History shows that rituals have a power far above man's perception. Rituals can play a positive role to address resistance against renewal and can bring about an experience of comfort if known says Wepener and Van der Merwe (2009:207). Ritual has the ability to take on a renewed symbolic value.

### **2.15.2 Less words, more meaning**

Wepener (2014:120-121) states this principle of rituals with a story that a joke that needs an explanation, is no joke anymore, illustrating the principle that ritual needs no explanation. As rituals are repeated so many times, many elements become shortened in one way or another, with less words, no words and no gesture. At some stages, a verbal contribution will actually take away some of the meaning. Lukken (2005:56) speaks of this as a limited code.

### **2.15.3 Intensified reality**

Ritual and symbol can change perspective or experience to serve the purpose (Lukken, 2005:56). The ritual experience in space becomes intensified but that can mean that it becomes smaller or bigger, whatever serves the purpose, This may mean a different experience of reality according to Lukken (2005:56) who says "Ritual condenses reality".

### **2.15.4 Relief and channelling**

To channel emotions, joy or grief with rituals to relief stress or a burden, brings wisdom and insight, less dependent on others, in touch with the self, channelling strong emotions in a healthy way, organise disrupted emotions or identify them, not ignoring emotions, enabling one to cross a threshold, are some of positive effects of ritual, states Lukken (2005:57). A ritual provides a safe space and structure to manage disrupted emotions (Wepener, 2014:206).

### **2.15.5 Therapeutic dimension**

Lukken (2005:58-64) elaborates on the therapeutic characteristics of rituals by saying that it enhance the ability to let go of personal issues, improved self-reliance, building on faith and hope, in contrast with power and control. Rituals heal and mend individuals.

You get in touch with something mysterious through ritual only if you partake with devotion (Wepener, 2014:208). Lukken (2005:61) refers to research on rituals of feast, indicating the positive effects like “openness, renewal of consciousness, presence of spirit and self-awareness”, whereas the absence of rituals of feast causes apathy, a reduction of experience and emotionality and limitation of vision.

Mental health’s relation to rituals is also a object of study, even since early childhood before speech and it stays important says Lukken (2005:59). The research of d’Aquili & Laughlin’s (1975, 1990) is cited by Lukken (2005:62):

“The biophysical determinants of religious ritual behaviour” and “Brain, symbol and experience” opens up another interesting perspective as Neurophysiology confirms the importance of ritual. It seems that ritual blocks the “dominance of the cerebral hemisphere” and neutralise the function of the analytic conceptual mode. The non-dominant right hemisphere, the locus of holistic comprehension, becomes predominant over left hemisphere, in which speech and analytical thought are located.

The ritual’s biological side effects the heart rate in a positive way, creating synergy on biological level as well as spiritual level, as it creates unity with creation, the self and God, as the whole brain integration is stimulated by ritual (Lukken, 2005:62).

### **2.15.6 Expressive dimension**

Rituals reflect an expression of self-knowledge and what pre-occupy an individual and this is to be seen in everyday rituals, reflecting in relationships and worldview and this may enlighten the individual in relation to the future and the past (Lukken, 2005:65)

### **2.15.7 Higher power dimension**

Calling on God's powers in any situation, good or bad, is to redefine any situation to the positive and not leaving evil to have the last word. Ritual can play a huge role in establishing this spiritual environment (Lukken, 2005:67-68).

### **2.15.8 Ethical dimension**

With rituals, a Christian invites another dimension of reality into his life. This has certain positive consequences as the symbology of ritual is then allowed to enter one's life if this is done with authenticity and devotion (Lukken, 2005:68). This is described as shaping the individual's character by Wepener (2014:207).

### **2.15.9 Social dimension**

Rituals always affect others and has social implications as it invite others into communication with a collective nature (Lukken, 2005:70). Ritual constitutes community and individuals become part of community or change position within community through rituals. We are also linked to the past and future in our social context with rituals.

### **2.15.10 Political dimension**

The presence of ritual in the political arena is probably one of the best ways to indicate the massive role ritual is playing in the social context. Change in leadership of monarchies, presidents, judges, professors, military parades, opening of parliament and appearances of royalties, are all manifested in rituals, as well as expression of opposition will also be demonstrated with rituals like burning of flags or destruction of symbols (Lukken, 2005:72-73).

## **2.16 RITUALS, SPACE AND TIME**

Space and time are two major elements of ritual as it is bounded by space where it takes place, indoor, as in the case with labyrinths in cathedrals or outdoor as in pilgrimages. The latter is usually clearly marked but a pilgrimage can also be done not following a historical route as it can also be a self-invented one, in either case attention to space should always be a focus to compliment the mission.



Lukken (2005:119) even compare the powerful impact of space with that of the written script. In this space the ritual movement takes place but in a different way than in normal life as one can imagine the pilgrims with their backpacks and sore feet in comparison to a scene from normal life. The same with someone's movement while walking the labyrinth in deep meditation which can also be described as a high level of concentration. Reference is also made about dancing and a quote from Van Amsterdam in Barnard and Post (2001) on dance refers to "...the oldest ritual language of man"<sup>19</sup>.

Rituals are always time related as well as it is to celebrate or to commemorate something that happened recently or in the past, giving meaning to it. Rituals also relate to time with healing or closure or acknowledging people but it could also be future-oriented in the process of establishing meaning. Time can be a different concept in rituals from daily life and can become relative to the process. For most it is the complete opposite of 'time well spent' in terms of production. The approach to time is from a different dimension where value is validated, not in worldly standards. One can behave as if you have all the time in the world or where time is to be considered as a gift, as described by Heimbrock and cited by Lukken (2005:122), who then comments about an alternative approach to celebrate time for its uniqueness in contrast to the ordinary concept.

## **2.17 OTHER CLASSIFICATIONS OF RITUAL**

Lukken (2005:124-130) also distinguish crisis ritual, cyclic ritual and rites de passage. The first then to give people the opportunity to process emotions and to get closure or minimise the effect of a crisis of some sort. This may be the case with a national disaster because of terrorism, floods, earthquakes, war, etc.

Cyclic rituals purpose is to create events on a cyclic basis to celebrate for instance the harvest, or to commemorate some event that usually becomes part of the cultural calendar. This is an effort in the social context "...introducing order to time and the cosmos and giving these meaning in a particular way" Lukken (2005:126).

Rites de passage has to do with transition phases in life, moving from one to another and is addressed under the topic of liminality in chapter four.

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<sup>19</sup> The researcher is aware of scholars who are of opinion that dance is not a ritual.

### **2.17.1 Ritual as feast**

Feasts have become extremely popular in the South African culture during the last couple of years. Cultural feasts, art festivals, harvest festivals seem to be in every small town, linked to something that the area or the town is known for. As an example a small town in the Southern part of the Free State, Zastron, has an annual feast with the name “Gat fees”, named to a big hole in a rock just next to the town and visible to all in town.

Authors like Post (2001c) as well as Barnard and Post (2001) are in agreement that the feast concept has become popular globally and academically, and has become a study focus in various disciplines. Lukken (2005:131) states that joy and celebration are the outstanding features of feast and say: “By feast we refer to the moment in which, or the occasion on which people, in the structuring of time and the course of an individual’s life cycle, as groups or as society, give special ritual form to occurrences that mark personal and social existence, doing so from faith, a religious, philosophical or ideological orientation which makes sense of life” according to Post (1996b:35).

### **2.17.2 Strengths and weaknesses**

Ironically rituals biggest strength can also be its weakness (Lukken, 2005:132-147). Rituals put us in contact with reality in a way that is not possible in any other way. Otherwise reality can stay hidden and one has to live deprived of the fullness that life can offer.

Ritual can be abused because of lack of integrity and it lends itself to dishonesty, hypocritical behaviour and to manipulate people. Grimes (1993:158) refer to this characteristic as the “pandora’s box” of rituals.

As ritual has a repetitive character it can easily become a boring routine with no creativity or devotion. Ritual can easily become a hiding place from reality. The healing nature can be transformed to the magical. The expressive dimension can enhance narcissistic behaviour. Intensified behaviour can isolate people from normal life. Rituals do have a connection with the past but can also get stuck in that connection when it is time to move on. Rituals can then also enhance practices of superstition.

Besides all of the above, rituals can be abused for the sake of myth and ideology as proved by the Nazi's, communism, nationalism and apartheid, to name a few. This is the same with ecclesiastical institutions.

The ritual "...is never speculative or purely dogmatic, but is characterised by the elusiveness of the symbol, symbolic language and symbolic act" Lukken (2005:139). This leaves a gap for the unethical use of ritual in the lives of others. Therefore the paradox is also applicable within the social and political dimension or ritual.

Grimes (2000:293) reflects on the vulnerability of ritual and the importance of criticism because rituals are subject to "...human flaws and manipulations". Lukken (2005:146) warns about the unnecessary complicating of ritual called "hypertrophy" as well as doing something that will prevent the true nature of ritual to show itself like an over-explanation and this is called "atrophy".

Grimes (2000) reflects on the power issue as a possible weakness for ritual as follows:

"Effective ritual knowledge lodges in the bone, in its very marrow. This metaphor first struck me with force while in a discussion with an archaeologist. He was explaining how certain values and social practices can be inferred from ancient bone matter. An archaeologist can deduct from bone composition that the men of a particular society consumed more protein than the women. On the basis of bone size and shape, it may be evident that in some cultures women habitually carried heavier loads than men. Certain social practices are literally inscribed in the bones. Even though we imagine bone as private, and deeply interior to the individual body, it is also socially formed. Of course ritual is not really a something that dwells in a literal somewhere. Rites are choreographed actions, they exist in the moments of their enactment and then disappear. When effective, their traces remain in the heart, in the memory, in the mind, in texts, in photographs, in descriptions, in social values and in the marrow, the source of our lifeblood" Grimes (2000).

## 2.18 CRITICAL EVALUATION OF RITUALS

A critical evaluation of rituals within the parameters of Reformed tradition is of the utmost importance. Numerous times have authors expressed their concern for an attitude of “anything goes”. The reason for this has to do with what was discussed under the heading “How ritual originates”, as it is clear that creativity, innovation and a spontaneous process leads to the birth and growth of rituals to address a certain need in any given period of time. The Reformed tradition has to be sensitive for the nature of any kind of rituals. Rituals as such, are always more towards the periphery of faith and a spiritual tool to strengthen the pilgrim and the worshipper, always on the edge, where a lot of experimenting takes place. The relationship with God, is the foundation and directive in everything a pilgrim does and certainly it is with pilgrimage.

Exponents in this regard is Ronald Grimes (2013b), Gerard Lukken (2005); Post (2001b), Wepener and Van der Merwe (2009). Post (2001b) states the determination of the core of the reason for ritual should first happen. Six steps to follow are then suggested by Wepener and Van der Merwe (2009) which builds on Post’s approach regarding the critical evaluation of a ritual:

- To search for archetype symbols for the specific ritual
- History in which the specific ritual is grounded
- To determine the myth behind the specific ritual
- To investigate the real motivation behind the specific ritual

Is it individual or communal, is there active participation, role of the liturgist, role of intuition, role of space, time, objects, etc?

- To determine the level of ownership by the participants
- To determine the balance between the rational and emotional experience of faith

With these steps, some questions are also suggested by Wepener and Van der Merwe (2009) to ask as part of the process of critical evaluation of rituals from a Reformed perspective:

- Is participants there on a voluntarily basis?
- What events are involved from past or future?

- What emotions are present?
- What is the objective of the ritual?
- What is the function or purpose of the ritual?
- Which symbols are part of the ritual?
- Which symbols are dominant and which is secondary?
- Which symbols are public and which are private?
- Is the ritual an extension of the Christian tradition?
- The nature of transition from the ritual back to normal life?
- Is there a defined place and time for the ritual?
- Is there clarity in terms of personal involvement?
- Is the ritual a once-off or repetitive?
- Is the ritual simple enough?

It must be kept in mind that every Sunday service exists of rituals and symbols in the Reformed tradition. It is not the case that rituals are now coming to the Reformed liturgical scene after five hundred years of absence. This perception is wrong. The Reformed Sunday service is filled with rituals and symbols but not seen by worshippers for what it is. What is new on the liturgical scene is the development of rituals outside the Church and Sunday service of which pilgrimage and labyrinth are two. The spiritual demand for guidance from the Reformed tradition, comes from the outside.

## 2.19 CONCLUSION

Sub-question: In what way will knowledge about the meaning pilgrims appropriate with a ritual such as pilgrimage contribute to the liturgical development and therefore Practical Theology?

The theological framework for the research to take place, was done in chapter two with the parameters as set by Practical Theology, Liturgical Studies and rituals with an investigation into relevant concepts, theories and approaches from a broader context than just the Reformed tradition, in order to create a holistic picture and determine the boundaries for research.



In answer to the sub-question it became clear that *liturgia condenda* / liturgy in the making, provides the space to accommodate cultural changes and new ways of expressing faith by Christians. Practical Theology is also in a process of redefining itself.

In chapter three the research methodology or design and method will be discussed to further explanation of the research strategy in finding the meaning Christian pilgrims from the Reformed tradition appropriate in doing a pilgrimage.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

#### 3.1 ETHNOGRAPHY

##### 3.1.1 Ethnography explained

The research design of ethnography sets the framework for methodology with participatory observation as the specific method. The relevance of Victor Turner's concepts of liminality and liminoid will be explained as well as the relevance of the heterotopia concept from Foucault. The relevance of liturgical-inculturation will also be explained, including the latest theoretical contributions on the subject.

The challenge for research in social behaviour is how to make sense and meaning of it, how data can be interpreted and understood and in the case of this research, to enable the church to stay relevant in modern times and to learn from Christian people's behaviour. Ethnography is known as a research design with participant observation, the specific method or technique.

In order to understand the concept of ethnography and the contribution it makes to researching Liturgy, the researcher relies on the work of Atkinson (2001); Atkinson (1994); Geertz (1973); Klomp (2011); Osmer (2008); Stringer (1989); Stringer (1999); Stringer (2005); Stringer (2008); Wepener (2012).

In the foreword of the book *Contemporary western ethnography and the definition of religion*, (Stringer, 2008) argues that there is always a presence of 'religious sensibility', sometimes hidden depending on the dominant culture and sometimes more visible as in current times and when this happens. The Reformed tradition has to admit that something was misunderstood, meaning the Reformed tradition has to turn back to the point of departure, the 'first principles'. The best that can come out of the situation is for the Reformed tradition to become open for new ways of worshipping, new ways of expressing faith, allowing creativity and that there are more than one interpretation. Energy should rather be spent on developing synergy between new ways of expressing faith, creating common ground than to cling to old ways. Hopefully not too much time will be spent on what went wrong as it is also a normal thing for the old to be replaced by the new. The Reformed tradition should also take into consideration that culture and many other factors in the whole

world are in a process of change. This situation should be looked at as an opportunity. The researcher sees this metaphorically, that Reformed tradition is a boat on a river. The river is the world, culture, social behaviour and for the boat to be a boat it has to stay in the river, going through the bends, otherwise it will land up on dry ground and a boat does not fulfil its purpose on dry ground. The lesson from this is for the Reformed tradition not to lose touch with its environment.

To understand ethnography's role, religion needs to be understood and there is no such thing as only one authoritative definition for religion (Stringer, 2008:3). Although one may find many definitions or interpretations and efforts trying to explain what it is or even finds as many definitions of religion as one will find people trying to define it (Smith, 1998). Most definitions are put in the way Geertz (1966:4) describes: '...religion as a system of symbols which acts...' From this Stringer (2008:5) continues to propose three common features identified in all contemporary definitions of Protestant Theology namely, religion as a '...unified object... associated with the transcendent... fundamentally transformative for the individual and/or society'.

Pilgrimage and Christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition certainly present the Reformed tradition with a challenge, to take a step back in terms of the question whether the Reformed tradition is still a boat on the river or did it get stuck somewhere, going with the question of what religion really is. Therefore, the starting point is to determine from pilgrims from the Reformed tradition what meaning do they appropriate for themselves when doing a pilgrimage and ethnography and participant observation are the tools to achieve this.

The origin of ethnography lies in Anthropology. Ethnography's origin is in two Greek concepts namely *ethnos*, meaning people, and *graphein*, meaning to write, and the combination then, to write about people or '...the description of a community or group that focuses on social systems and cultural heritage' (Nieuwenhuis & Maree, 2007:76).

Ethnographers will spend enough time amongst the subjects of the study, gather information in various ways but in the most natural way possible, with the purpose of understanding the culture and to understand the inherent meaning of '...gestures, displays, symbols, songs, sayings and everything else that has some implicit or tacit meaning in that culture' (Nieuwenhuis & Maree, 2007:76).



Ethnographic studies are based on the belief that human behaviour can be understood once the meaning behind behaviour is understood and therefore behaviour should be observed with the intention to learn and understand (Nieuwenhuis & Maree, 2007). For this to happen the ethnographer should become part of the situation to be studied in a natural way, trusted by the objects of study, not to be experienced as intrusive or patriarchal in any way. This is the reason for the researcher's effort to include the Communicative Action Theory of Jürgen Habermas (1985a); Habermas (1985b) into this research project whenever applicable, specifically the principle that communication elevates knowledge.

Wepener (2012:2) regards ethnography as a method of data gathering attached to anthropology and sociology, aimed at studying a certain cultural group. The ethnographer's responsibility is to get the data, report about it and to evaluate it. The gathering process entails interviews and participatory observation. The objectivity of the ethnographer is always a challenge, as being completely objective or neutral is impossible. Developments in anthropological studies brought a shift from studying cultures in remote places to studying local cultures, including those in the researcher's world and frame of reference (Wepener, 2012).

No direct relation exists between ethnography and any other theoretical perspective or epistemological method (Geertz, 1973). Characteristics of ethnography have been applied in different disciplines in a pragmatic way, always dealing with the challenge of credibility to academic standards.

(Osmer, 2008) elaborates on ethnography referring to the concept of Geertz (1973), 'thick descriptions', explaining that it means observation of the identified group in every possible way over a period of time, by participation, interviews, studying symbols, all described by '...the creation of a cultural portrait'. A community is studied from all angles in a holistic way, all events, practices, relationships including 'tensions and fissures' (Osmer, 2008:51).

The term 'thick description', coined by Geertz (1973:3-30) is used by many authors in the field of ethnography as it is probably the most powerful way to describe what ethnography is. It is described in Chapter two (2.9.4.2) and therefore just mentioned here as it is present throughout this research project.

When it comes to ethnography one of the researchers who has used this approach within the field of liturgical studies, Mirella Klomp (2011:74) declares her perception of this approach as non-judgemental, inquisitive and transparent, where new meanings to old concepts are generated and even replaced with renewed definitions. Ethnography is ‘cyclical and reflexive’ as data collection can become analysis at the same time and reflexive because the researcher is concurrently observer and participant, with an ever present expectation of the unexpected (Klomp, 2011:75).

The researcher was drawn to ethnography because of these characteristics of being respectful towards the objects of study, participants and the observed situation in totality as respect in this regard is giving full recognition to each participant’s interpretation, beliefs and individuality. This creates a context for self-investigation, report and self-discipline for the researcher and not to impose a personal view onto others.

### **3.1.2 Ethnography as research methodology**

Before ethnography there were just four different ways of research methodology namely theologians who made use of information from anthropological and sociological field to get to their conclusion of what happens in worship, secondly the understanding of worship was limited to remarks from anthropologists and sociologists, thirdly the anthropological study of the ritual and fourthly what was to be found in the sociological field’s interpretations about religious perceptions according to Stringer (1999:4).

Stringer (1999:43) uses three assumptions crucial for an ethnographic study, it relates to time, breadth and trying to understand from the other person’s point of view. Time means an extended period of observation, rather years than months. Breadth refers to a holistic understanding and the third assumption refers to understanding from others’ point of view.

Ethnography can be seen as different from other research methodologies in the way questions are asked, listening skills used and how data can be analysed as it relates to the research topic (Stringer, 1999:62). Ethnography addresses the diversity and complexity of real life when current answers fall short, says Stringer (1999:49).

The implication of an ethnographical approach is that it reveals the hidden knowledge according to Stringer (1999:50) for, ‘....what a person says they should be doing, what they

say they are doing and what they are actually doing’, differs and only ethnography and participant observation, can provide an answer. These words of Martin Stringer became important for the researcher and in chapter seven it is included as one of the categories, the only one that the researcher chose from the literature study. These are the discrepancies and counter-factual that ethnography can bring to the surface, providing the researcher with knowledge about the hidden stream. This level of insight is gained if the ethnographer is prepared to focus with real interest, congruent in attitude, as the necessary information may only show itself in what is said, how, in what context and/or the influence it has on others (Stringer, 1999:3). This relates directly to the concept of ‘priestly listening’ of Long (2005:55); Osmer (2008:34), addressed in 2.3.1 in Chapter two.

In his final chapter Stringer (1999:199) came to the conclusion that if an individual generates meaning from worshipping, then this meaning is unpredictable for the ethnographer because it is determined by the individual.

The time has finally come to enrich our way of research within Liturgy, with ethnography, where full respect is shown to the individual, group, congregation and church and where full ownership can be taken by the religious community for determining the content of worship (Stringer, 1999:15).

The researcher realises that he is using a research methodology with not many guidelines and will probably have to find some guidelines on his own.

### **3.1.3 History of ethnography**

From the nineteenth century scholars from different disciplines explored the field of nature of society. They mainly had to work with data gathered by explorers and missionaries and had to interpret textual data. Using this methodology immediately raises the question of how the information was interpreted by the scholars with their own paradigm as their only known paradigm (Stringer, 1999).

Ethnography is about understanding alternative cultures, taking into account that the research is done by a researcher with his own culture (Atkinson, 1994). Ethnography in its current form, developed at the turn of the previous century with the way anthropologists did field research with Malinowski in the 1920’s, as a prominent exponent. Elements of ethnographic

orientation were traced back to “...eighteenth- and nineteenth-century in German philosophy (Hammersley, 1989), to the Renaissance (Rowe, 1965), and even to the writings of the ancients, for example, Herodotus” (Wax, 1971)’ (Atkinson, 1994:249).

### **3.1.4 Characteristics of ethnography**

Many characteristics have already been mentioned in the previous part of this chapter and will not be repeated. Ethnography could probably be best described by the different characteristics which researchers attach to the concept. Atkinson (1994:248) indicate why ethnography, as a research model, is different from the traditional concept of scientific research, in saying that ethnography is not aimed at the right or wrong of a hypotheses but rather to try to understand certain social behaviour. Further explanation indicates the element of unstructured data collection, again very much in contrast with the perception that data should be collected at the research site, sealed and labelled, like in most sciences with another feature of ethnography that the whole research could be aimed at just one case study instead of a number of cases to prove a point. They also emphasise the fact that an interpretation of gathered data, does not need to happen or rather has no need to indicate some truths about human behaviour (Atkinson, 1994:248).

#### **3.1.4.1 Subjectivity**

Questions arose around subjectivity in Anthropology as researchers were going out into the field of research themselves, and the background of the ethnographer played such a big role in what was observed that the question was asked of how objective this kind of research could have been (Hammersley, 1992:69). The process of questioning the objectivity of the ethnographer was taken further by Clifford and Marcus (1986).

Geertz (1988) states that the authentic ethnographer will evaluate his or her observations in the framework of a wider theoretical context. Then Strauss and Corbin (1998:268) introduced the concept of triangulation, where the observations of the ethnographer can be evaluated against all other sources, to confirm or decline or add information to that of the ethnographer. Thus it became important for the ethnographer to declare his or her own point of departure in terms of cultural, ethnicity and all other relevant factors that may have an influence on the objectivity of observation.

In this research the concept of triangulation gained some prominence in answering the question of subjectivity and the researcher elaborated about this in Chapter two (2.3.4) and more on triangulation in Chapter seven.

#### **3.1.4.2 Textual ethnography**

Ethnography has to find ways to tap into realities that ordinary man creates for himself to bring meaning to his world. Therefore it will sometimes ask for the integration of text and observed behaviour. In ethnography the textual metaphor of culture has found its major proponent in Geertz (1973:3-30), whose formulation of ‘thick description’ stresses the interpretation of cultural meaning. This interpretive perspective in cultural Anthropology contrasts clearly with more formal methodologies such as structuralism or ethno-science. The interpretive approach implies a relativism and in many cases this depends on the skills and abilities of the ethnographer to interpret cultures and their local manifestations in social life, therefore it requires a heightened awareness towards textual orientation from ethnography.

Geertz (1983:160) goes to great lengths to explain why ethnography has a huge role to play to redefine research and he puts great emphasis on how language restricts communication and how any field of research can be compared to a small village with the same dynamics and interactions going on. Geertz (1983:160) urges ethnography to ‘...device ways to gain access to one another’s vocational lives’. “The hallmark of modern consciousness ... is its enormous multiplicity” says Geertz (1983:161). He continues in saying that certain steps are necessary to address this situation like acknowledging and accepting the differences, then to understand these differences and then to start building a mutual vocabulary, in order to understand each other and be accountable to each other. Again this view of Geertz (1983:161) resonates with the Communicative Action Theory of Habermas (1985b:330).

The researcher gained a lot of sensitivity for the communication process and the importance of that based on communication through interviews with co-researchers and therefore ‘subjectivity’, ‘reflexivity’ and ‘triangulation’ reflect throughout this research in Chapter two, three and seven.

### 3.1.5 Collective ethnography

What Stringer (2008:20-21) learned from his long-term involvement with people, is how people deal differently with topics and issues in their personal capacity than at Church or in the presence of their minister. The only way of building a viability into this process of differentiated, personalised agendas that differ from that at Church or even from each other, was to get many individualistic studies and then to compare them. Stringer (2008:20-21) refers to this method as collective ethnography, where different, individual research outcomes, can be put together, to learn what message will be supported by all. As an example, his students did research on different topics and shared only the ethnographic methodology. What they became aware of, are that what they thought was going on, had to be adjusted, after listening to people to what was really going on. They were all confronted by what they did not expect and what they could not foresee. The ethnographer must therefore always be willing to evaluate own perceptions with the feedback from people during the research period.

As the content of collective ethnography reflects on effective communication, the researcher would like to add some personal observations in alignment with that of Stringer (2008:20-21). The first of these is the experience that people usually communicate something else at first when they have an urgent matter to discuss as if they first want to find the courage or first want to see if they are comfortable with the situation, secondly people in general will respond to a context of trust and only then take the next step, thirdly there is unforeseen information in any situation which may be totally unexpected and a researcher should be constantly aware of it, fourthly you only get to know what is really going on if you are patient enough to wait for the second order communication, fifthly it is always easier to live in denial and behaviour is sometimes aimed at preventing uncomfortable alternative realities, leading to the sixth point the researcher learned at NASA where they work with the slogan that 90% of all perceptions are wrong. If a researcher lives by that rule and adjusts communication to verify perceptions, it usually turns out to be a totally different world.

In conclusion to this section of what ethnography is, emphasis on the role of the researcher just became more important and therefore it is necessary to have a section focused on the ethnographer. The previous paragraph could have been part of 3.1.6 as well.

### **3.1.6 About the ethnographer**

The role of the researcher within ethnography and how this affects data collection and other factors that may have an affect like clothes, accent, behaviour, depending which culture is being studied and from which culture the researcher comes, the level of reciprocity involved or the interpersonal relationship of trust, are issues addressed by Coffey (1996). Many factors can have an influence on the outcome of research done in the field of ethnography, just confirming the fact that this frame of mind for research is very much in contrast to that of the natural sciences and will therefore always have to answer the critical questions coming from the natural sciences.

The intention of the ethnographer should be authentic and this should reflect in any contact with research objects. Intentional communication, referred to is also of relevance here. Intentional communication is another research area of concern from which the Reformed tradition can learn a lot, as the research on intentional communication with graphic symbols may produce a valuable contribution for the development of communication as an identified outcome of the empirical research. Stephenson (1996:147) cites Warren & Reichle, (1992) in saying that the theory of pragmatics is the driving force behind research on alternative symbol systems for communication within psycholinguistic models of language and according the theory of pragmatic behaviour is the motivational basis for communicative intent. Interpretation and appropriate function of observed behaviour is dependent on authentic intent in psycho-linguistics (Bates, 1979:43).

### **3.1.7 In relation to natural science**

Going further into the historical development of ethnography which led to the current stance, it is helpful to look at three of the most important exponents of this research design.

Boas, Malinowski, and Radcliffe-Brown were in agreement that Anthropology as a science with ethnography as methodology of gathering information through the descriptive method of anthropologists was indeed more scientific than to evaluate in terms of the researchers own frame of reference (Atkinson, 1994). Empirical research in this field is based on the model of natural sciences but with its own character because of the uniqueness of human behaviour in contrast with research in the field of natural

studies. This distinction is an ongoing debate and tension between research in humanities and that of natural sciences (Atkinson, 1994:250).

The diversity within ethnography that developed over the last couple of years did not make the debate with natural sciences easier. Although closely related one gets an idea of the complexity of diversified ethnography with different approaches accepted in different areas of research, guided by different interests and therefore different forms of ethnographic research could be identified, such as: ‘...traditional, long-term, in-depth investigation sometimes being abandoned for condensed fieldwork or primary reliance on unstructured interviews, or for consultancy work or participation in political struggles’ according to Atkinson (1994:251).

A good example to illustrate the huge challenge of ethnography to be recognised as a scientific method is the question of objectivity. To demonstrate this, Atkinson (1994) refer to feminism in terms of how objective the observation of a male anthropologist can be with a culture group including women, with the limited frame of reference of a male? How objective can one be from a perspective of not-knowing? This principle can be applied in every other situation where human behaviour research takes place and certainly this ensures that scientific research in the field of ethnography, is to be distinguished from that of natural sciences.

From a poststructuralist point of view, Clifford (2011), recognises that ethnography is always caught up in the creation and is therefore not just a representation of cultures, while the researcher can never be neutral with the craft of writing central to ethnographic work. ‘Cultures do not hold still for their portraits’ says Clifford (2011) and attempts to make them do, always involve ‘...simplification and exclusion, selection of a temporal focus, the construction of a particular self-other relationship, and the imposition or negotiation of a power relationship.

‘It is not against a body of un-interpreted data, radically thinned descriptions, that we must measure the cogency of our explications, but against the power of the scientific imagination to bring us in touch with the lives of strangers’ is the view of Geertz (1973:16). Because of this approach, it poses a challenge to the traditional concept of research and although



ethnography is subject to criticism from traditional scientific research methodologies, it is just growing in presence as the chosen research design, according to Atkinson (1994).

The criticism from natural sciences is positive, as it creates the context where accountability for the use of ethnography, is stimulated and it forces every researcher to put in extra effort to be accountable.

### **3.1.8 Ethics and exploitation**

With this growing awareness and sensitivity about subjectivity in ethnography, the advantages and disadvantages of this method were reflected on in research literature and obviously from the critical input from natural sciences. This eventually led to ethical accountability and ethical implications for ethnography.

Some questions and issues are raised by Stringer (2008:27) like the treatment of people being studied and observed, as he indicates from Malinowski's diaries that his treatment of people would not have been accepted today. The ethical question is about the abuse of power and Stringer (2008:27) states this will be found anywhere where people are in contact, experience interaction and are in relationships. For quite some time it was acceptable not to tell people that they are actually being observed or to give them a misleading theme of what was studied. Today it must be thoroughly motivated, if by any chance accepted, that any kind of research on people can be done without them knowing that it is happening.

Many other issues are relevant to the abuse of power when it comes to interpersonal relationships like gifts, money, sexual relations, having recording material of some nature. Stringer (2008:28) says further that exploitation is a given when research is being done amongst people. It can come from either the ethnographer towards others or from people or an individual towards the ethnographer for some reasons totally unknown to the ethnographer.

The researcher realised that certain situations during interviews with co-researchers could easily be seen as exploitation by the researcher or co-researcher and the researcher finds it necessary to reflect upon these situations in Chapter seven, as part of the empirical research reflection by the researcher.

The second issue raised by Stringer (2008:29) is about the right of the ethnographer to represent others, reflect about them and even come to conclusions about their cultural, religious behaviour, as an outsider, as this creates a lot for ethnography to take accountability for, and confronts ethnography with the bottom-line question of how ethnography answers to the question of its academic contribution. This can be answered in more than one way as the research is sometimes requested by a certain part of society that needs to understand their own behaviour, in order to serve their own community better. Another way of answering the question is that ethnography is all about knowledge and insight into behaviour with the purpose of understanding human behaviour in line with the continued search for more knowledge about man. Obviously this knowledge can also be used for wrong purposes like controlling people or to manipulate them into a certain direction for the benefit of a small group or even an individual.

Stringer (2008:29) emphasises the possibility that the ethnographer can also find ways of cooperating with the group or community being studied, and see to it that they benefit to the maximum from the outcome of his or her research.

### **3.1.9 Overlap between Ethnography and Participant Observation:**

Recent years have seen an enormous growth in academic reflection on ethnography and participant observation in all disciplines of social sciences, associated with any theory and methodology, going with the general acceptance of no ‘...transparent or neutral way’ in both natural and social science (Atkinson, 1994:254). This awareness of ethnographic text is taken further by the work of Clifford and Marcus (1986) with an important contribution called ‘Writing Culture’ where they indicate the complexity of influences on ethnography.

The work of Clifford and Marcus (1986) is closely related to that of Geertz (1973), who regards certain ethnographic writing as ‘fiction’, to demonstrate the impact of outside influences. This development poses a challenge to the writing skills in the research methodology of ethnography and participant observation as new ways have to be developed in which to account for ethnographic and participant observation research (Atkinson, 1994:255).

An important distinction is made by Van Maanen (2011) as he wrote on different styles of ethnographic writing. Most important is the distinction between ‘realist’ and ‘confessional’ ethnographic writing style, with the former the more popular one, where the ethnographer will minimise own voice to reflect the voice of the subjects of study, while with ‘confessional’, the voice of the ethnographer is the dominant one (Van Maanen, 2011:45,73). These two approaches form the extreme opposites of each other as confessional ethnographic writing will include a lot about the ethnographer self, personal experiences, stories, adversities and effects of the fieldwork on the ethnographer. A third ethnographic writing style is described and is called ‘impressionist’ by Van Maanen (2011:101-124). This style is based on the Impressionist art style, with exponents like van Gogh, Monet, Seurat and Renoir, reflecting in an artistic way a personal observation of a specific moment in time and space. The impressionist ethnographer will use artistic writing, poetic style, metaphors and story-telling in the first person, elaborates Van Maanen (2011:102). This research project is orientated towards the realist ethnographic writing, according the structure of Van Maanen (2011).

Atkinson (1994:256) indicate an internal conflict for the ethnographer between his inner and outer world, his observations against his social environment, a combination of a duality referring to a process of ‘surrender’ to other. Atkinson (1994:256) add that a reciprocal relationship must exist in the epistemology of participant observation with the responsibility on the ethnographer to make the voice of the subjects of study heard. This sees to a combination of text, method and commitment.

### **3.1.10 Ethnography and postmodernism**

Ethnography also has a close association with the postmodern approach as its intention is to explore and to open up in order to gain knowledge, to understand differences or similarities, create options, starting dialogue with no assumptions, defining or labelling of whatever is observed (Atkinson, 1994:256).

Although ethnography and participant observation are used and recognised by various academic disciplines, the constant lack of a theoretical foundation and explanation of the rationale behind the specific choice of research, creates a situation of vulnerability for criticism (Atkinson, 1994:257).

Atkinson (1994:258) refer to the relationship of ethnography with postmodernism as exploring ‘...discontinuities, paradoxes, and inconsistencies of culture and action’, not necessarily to resolve the situation but for dialogue, showing the cooperative and collaborative nature of the ethnographic situation.

This led to a variety of styles in ethnography and obviously also the extreme and unacceptable in the name of postmodernism. About this situation Atkinson (1994:258) is clear in saying: “This emphasis on textuality is, however, in danger of privileging the rhetorical over the ‘scientific’ or rational”. Hammersley (1991, 1993) suggests that we need to ‘pay attention to strategies of reading and writing ethnography, but primarily in order to evaluate the quality of arguments and the use of evidence’, leaving no doubt that ethnography should comply to certain standards of science.

### **3.1.11 Conclusion**

The researcher’s intention with this part on ethnography is to provide a thorough perspective of what it is, as ethnography is relatively new in terms of a methodology in South Africa and is still in the process of development on international level within a multi-disciplinary context with contributions and interpretations from different disciplines. It is also the case that there are a limited number of doctoral theses research projects being done with ethnography as methodology.

The researcher is convinced that there is no better research methodology than ethnography to gain information and knowledge about how pilgrims from the Reformed tradition appropriate meaning through rituals to be accountable to the research topic of pilgrimage as a challenge for Reformed liturgical praxis.

## **3.2 PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION RESEARCH**

### **3.2.1 Introduction**

The reason for participation observation as chosen method can be summarised in the word of Stephenson (2010:180) who states: “The sites, practices, artwork, and symbols of pilgrimage locales are polysemous, their meanings and uses are multiple and at times conflictual”. Both ethnography as research design and participant observation create space for research in social behaviour where differences in meaning are more the norm than the exception.

The challenge for research is how to make sense of this meaning, how data can be interpreted, to get to an understanding and simultaneously enable the church to stay relevant in modern times where people's behaviour clearly indicate that the Reformed Churches of the Reformed tradition has an opportunity at hand.

Flowing out of ethnography the chosen method is that of participant observation. The research starts with a historical overview before defining what participant observation is. In the process some prominent features of this method are identified with the strengths and weaknesses of it. Some critical comments of participant observation are included in some of the sections.

### **3.2.2 Historical overview**

A lot of similarities are to be found amongst anthropologists when they write about ethnography. According to Atkinson (1994:248) the term participant observation became popular at the turn of the nineteenth century. Various authors were cited by Atkinson (1994) as they described participant observation, also considering all social research as in fact participant observation, as being part of it and the only way of doing social research. This view is also supported by Ackroyd (1992:98) who describes it as a natural methodology which has been with us since the beginning of time.

Features of participant observation and ethnography are also to be found in the eighteenth and nineteenth-century German philosophy says Hammersly (1992) as well as during the Renaissance according to Rowe (1965), both cited by Atkinson (1994) while there is also a reference made to the ancient Herodotus.

The names of Boas, Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown are mentioned by most scholars writing about the origin of ethnography as they were the first to follow the strategy of gathering material amongst alternative cultures by living amongst them and then reflecting about that in writing and according to Atkinson (1994:248), Malinowski was the most prominent and first amongst these three.

An important contributor in terms of participant observation came from the Chicago School of Sociology in the years prior to the depression when this School at Chicago did the most comprehensive research in the field ever to be done at that stage, as Chicago became the

destination for economic growth and development in those years with many people from different cultures streaming there, and a couple of authors have referred to this as a changing point in history for participant observation (Ackroyd, 1992; Adler & Adler, 2002; Atkinson, 1994).

A variety of strategies were followed by this School to obtain information and in that way explored the different ways of ethnographic research. Adler and Adler (2002:9) refers to this as the first combination of qualitative and quantitative research, which is today becoming more popular under the name of Mixed Methods approach, which is explained in Chapter two. This strategy entailed any form of observation, through conversations, formal and informal, interviews, documents and records and newspaper articles.

Denzin (2011) indicate the correlation between participation observation and symbolic interactionism, as the first was developed on the concepts from the latter leading to concepts like epistemology (accountable ways to access knowledge), ontology (what is going on in reality), methodology (scientific acceptable approach and strategy) and the influence of the researcher.

Researchers in the field of participant observation's epistemology regard the observation of social behaviour as something positive and believe that they can understand the behaviour of others by participating observation and that this kind of research will improve the outcome. Researchers will not try to influence the setting and at the same time acknowledge that just their presence may have an influence on a group of subjects with the commitment to adjust to the role to be played in the research.

### **3.2.3 Participant Observation explained**

'The epistemology of participant observation rests on the principle of interaction and the 'reciprocity of perspectives' between social actors. The rhetoric is thus egalitarian: observer and observed as inhabitants of a shared social and cultural field, their respective cultures different but equal, and capable of mutual recognition by virtue of a shared humanity' according to Atkinson (1994:256).

Until recently there were just four different ways of research methodology according to Stringer (1999:4) namely theologians who made use of information from the

anthropological and sociological field to get to their conclusion of what happens in worship, secondly the understanding of worship was limited to remarks from anthropologists and sociologists, thirdly the anthropological study of the ritual and fourthly what was to be found in the sociological field's interpretations about religious perceptions.

It is difficult to find a formal definition for participant observation and it even differs more today, as stated by different scholars, to that of Lindeman (1924) who is seen as the creator of the concept. Therefore the researcher indicates more than one of the existent interpretations of the concept as used by different scholars. In that way it is possible to identify some features and characteristics of participant observation.

About participation observation as methodology Osmer (2008:54) says: "Gathering verbal and visual data by observing practices and events while participating in the setting in which they occur". The objective is to discover patterns of interactions amongst people and communities and the meaning of events, activities, and symbols to them.

Atkinson (1994:248) refers to participant observation as a unique interpretive approach to human behaviour, in opposition to positivism as in the natural sciences. Bogdan (1972:3) refers to participant observation as a lengthy time of observation through interaction with the research subjects, in their natural environment and during which time information is gathered, captured and structured. 'Participant observation, as the name suggests, involves the researcher becoming part of a community in order to study that community' (Morison 1986:44).

Lofland & Lofland (1984:12) state '...participant observation refers to the process in which an investigator establishes and sustains a many-sided and relatively long-term relationship with a human association in its natural setting for the purpose of developing a scientific understanding of that setting'

'In participant observation, the researcher interacts with the people that he or she is studying and makes observations in the course of these exchanges. The researcher records the days' events, social activities and the people met. This is done as part of other activities such as interviewing and using informants.' (Kellehear 1993:115).

Seven features of participant observation are identified by Jorgensen (1989:13-14), (1) the understanding of ‘meaning and interaction’ of the subjects of study as part of a closed group, (2) placement in the present moment of daily life as basis of study, (3) a way of theoretical approach to the frame of reference of ‘human existence’, (4) process of research that is ‘open-ended, flexible, opportunistic’, redefining challenges based on data, (5) ‘an in-depth, qualitative, case study approach and design’, (6) establish and sustain trust relationships with subjects of study, (7) using any method to obtain data including ‘direct observation’.

Participant observation asks for the investigation of a social context in person and as a participant to also take a role as well as ‘role making’, which will affect the research, relationships and gathering of data (Burgess 1984:98).

Typical of ethnographic methods, participant observation interlinks theory with data and ‘...while it is conceptually possible to distinguish between data collection, analysis and interpretation, in reality this is often not possible’. With no formal procedure to follow reports written by the researcher to describe and reflect, should be done according to the standard guidelines as applicable to the appropriate context of study to provide the credibility for the research process (Jupp 1989:59).

Basic to participant observation is that it flows from ethnography, studying human social behaviour by observing and with an applicable way of recording what is observed. The researcher’s role is not always clear and it may vary as the process continues, moving between full participant and full observer. Research within ethnography and participant observation may focus on a topic which may or may not become a research question. It may also just be a reflection of what is going on, about a certain topic by gaining insight through structured, semi-, and/or unstructured interviews.

A researcher can only reflect what is being observed for a period of time and this may not look the same in two years’ time or after a while. ‘Cultures do not hold still for their portraits. Attempts to make them do so always involve simplification and exclusion, selection of a temporal focus, the construction of a particular self-other relationship, and the imposition or negotiation of a power relationship’ Clifford and Marcus (1986:10).

Many comments about participant observation were made in Chapter two, additional to this section in particular as it is not possible to address the elements of the research methodology



and methods in isolation from each other. This is a characteristic of the research methodology of this project that clear definitions on any of the elements are not available. This was the case right at the beginning when it was stated that religion does not have a clear cut definition and this applies for the whole of this research project. It is not in the field of natural sciences and therefore the researcher reflects a couple of ‘definitions’ on every topic in order to address a good understanding of each.

### 3.2.4 Features of participant observation

From these definitions or interpretations of participant observation, some characteristics can be identified, which is probably a better way to present an understanding of what participant observation entails. Before a discussion on each characteristic, firstly a summary: participants frame of reference, natural environment, subjectivity, time and duration of involvement, a holistic approach, open-ended research, overlapping, process of redefining or new understanding, space of empathy, different roles for the researcher, data collection, informants, a formal strategy for analysis and team approach. The researcher will now reflect on each identified characteristic.

The **frame of reference of the participant** is important as this study focused on how people appropriate meaning for themselves in their own world with their own frame of reference. This can sometimes make no sense to anyone outside that particular culture. The strategy to access this inner world of the participant should be scientifically accountable by the researcher with balance between objectivity and subjectivity and this is only possible with the researcher participating and observing as it must become a personal experience (Ackroyd, 1992).

The interpretive approach is very much applicable but as has already been indicated, this approach lends itself to different ways of application as well. This also raises some ethical issues, as the subjects of study are fellow human beings. Something that became clear to the researcher during this research can be described as covert observation and is more rapidly becoming less of an option. There seems to be consensus that it is only acceptable in exceptional cases which have to be highly motivated. Any form of study should be to the benefit of the subjects involved and all measures must be taken to achieve that. Consent to

the researcher's participation as observer is extremely important for trust relationships which are the foundation of this type of research.

Although Stacey (1988) mentioned exploitation in the context of ethnography, this is also applicable for participant observation. This kind of research lends itself more towards the exploitation of participants as people can become intimate during a research process. To invite people to become co-researchers and co-authors, can change the dynamics of relationships. Moments of spontaneity or impulsive behaviour can have quite an impact on the whole process of research.

A strong case is to be made for the research to be in **the natural environment** of those whom are studied as stated by Jorgensen (1989:15), to observe '...the ordinary, usual, typical, routine, or natural environment of human existence'" and there is just no substitute for this.

The criticism of **subjectivity** is relevant but it is just another factor to be reckoned with and to be neutralised in any possible way with the methodology of ethnography and method of participant observation, the best strategy for research today that we have for a study of this nature.

The concept of how much **time** is **needed**, is also relative to the specific type of research. It can be years in certain instances. The one thing all authors agreed upon is that there should be no rush, the longer the better.

Researchers using the participation observation methodology will always be more interested in the full picture than just one segment, expressing the **holistic approach**. They are therefore more '...concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products' says Bogdan and Biklen (1997:28) and for this same reason a study will sometimes be undertaken with just one case study according to Jorgensen (1989:19) still with a reference to contextual studies.

The **open-ended character** of participant observation research is the highest form of respect and ethical approach towards people and for what they constructed in their own reality. Therefore study in this regard is much more about finding ideas than to initiate ideas or a hypotheses and for those ideas to flow and '...emerge...from the bottom up...the process of data analysis is like a funnel; things are open at the beginning (or top), and more directed and specific at the bottom' according to Bogdan and Biklen (1997:29).

A unique character of participation observation is that of information **overlapping** with another segment. Information does not always flow in a logical way from one point to the other but sometimes it is hence and forth, especially visible in the empirical material in Chapter seven.

Very often **researchers have to adjust their way** from current or old definitions to new definitions or interpretations, or if a new understanding emerges, the researcher has to be prepared to formulate their findings more than once, stay detached from initial understandings and concepts so that it can easily be rectified with new information according to Burgess (2002:8).

The ability to show authentic **empathy** is crucial in any situation for a researcher as this ensures the best possible stance towards objectivity instead of being judgemental from the researcher's own paradigm. This illustrates respect for others even if the researcher differs in worldview, interpretation or ethics.

As there are **different ways and roles** in which to execute participation observation, the researcher must be flexible between different roles as they are needed in particular situations. The difference in being part of a discussion to that of being invited to observe a ritual, illustrates this element. Atkinson (1994:248) distinguishes at least four roles that can be played by participant observers, namely complete observer, observer as participant, participant as observer and complete participant.

Something more needs to be said about the distinguished roles for the researcher. Nieuwenhuis and Maree (2007:85) describe the roles in a comprehensive way by explaining the **complete observer** as a non-participant, observing from a distance and this is also known as an etic or outsider perspective. This approach is the least obtrusive but also has limitations to really immerse and to fully understand what is observed. **Observer as participant** entails participating in the scenario but staying focused on the role as observer, not giving any input or guidance, just trying to understand the sense behind assumptions, values and beliefs or patterns of behaviour, **Participant as observer**, also known as the emic or insider perspective, is a setting where the observer becomes fully part in order to understand with full ownership of the situation and even to alter direction or influence the dynamics. **Complete participant** is the one role least in use as it is a covert exercise where the participants are not

aware that they are the subjects of observation and study. Because of ethical reasons, regarding the consent of participants, this approach must be motivated with very special circumstances before it can be accepted.

Authors like Sherman (1994) emphasise the **dual role of the researcher**, as researchers have to be on the inside of the subjects paradigm as well as outsiders to be able to reflect as objectively as possible. This particular element can be a huge pitfall in research as researchers are human beings and feelings can become attached or detached depending on emotional stance towards a ritual, another human being, sentiment, a cause or just by becoming so accepted by those who are the participants in the research.

Adler and Adler (2002) raise some criticism against this kind of research in criticising the distinction between **subjectivity and objectivity**, because they say this is applicable to all knowledge in the humanities, secondly that the influence on the environment is always relative and that researchers themselves are always subject to influence and can also take on different membership roles, same as with the participants.

To further the emphasis on the researcher as a person, Coffey (1999), elaborates on the importance of self-presentation, image, clothes, language skills and accent, social skills, interpersonal relationships, etc.

**Data collection** can basically include any ways or means relevant to the study and may include interview transcriptions, field-notes, diaries, letters, photographs, videos, tapes, newspaper articles, files, minutes, other official documents, unstructured or structured interviewing and document analysis as described by Jorgensen (1989:22).

From these mentioned methods the researcher would like to focus on the interview as one of the approaches in this research. Literature distinguishes three types of interview styles. Nieuwenhuis and Maree (2007:87) list them as the unstructured or open-ended, then the semi-structured and thirdly the structured interview, before elaborating on each of them. The unstructured or open-ended interview has the intention to open up the participants understanding, views, experience, beliefs and attitudes about the topic of study and is mainly focused on the particular individual's perceptions. Therefore the researcher must have something in place to verify this information. The process can also consist of more than one interview or even a series. The semi-structured interview can be based on information from

other sources which needs to be verified and tested. Therefore the interview may be structured around questions aimed at this information. But the researcher must and can be open to new information that may change the course of study or for interviews, as this approach is flexible with the main focus being getting to the bottom-line of what is being studied. Structured interviews are built on specific questions and are very close to surveys with not much space for any deviance.

Nieuwenhuis and Maree (2007:88) gave some useful advice regarding the **researcher's presence** during the interview. This advice consists of finding the right person or persons representing the topic, event or phenomenon of study, to saturate the data, avoid questions that will just receive a yes or no, focus on developing questions of experience, opinion and value, feelings, knowledge, sensory and then develop some active listening skills and basic knowledge on non-verbal communication.

The **concept of triangulation** as explained in the ethnography section is also applicable here, with the three role-players, observation, literature and interviews. Field data can also be analysed using qualitative thematic analysis, narrative analysis, discourse analysis, conversation analysis.

**Informants** can be crucial in the research field as informants may have the ability to unlock the understanding of a certain setting, or may have access to a source which may be a person, a group or a place that may enable the researcher to gain insight.

The purpose of bringing in a formal **strategy for analysis** enables the researcher to provide a form of record from which to formulate ideas and theories or as stated by Atkinson (2001) and Atkinson (1994) to indicate the development process of the research design, also showing how themes emerged and then obviously to show how the data was collected. Studies of this nature usually bring forward some conclusions to be made and one must be able to show the track followed to be scientifically accountable and able to explain a theory or conclusion.

**Team research** is becoming more popular within participation observation. Bogdan and Biklen (1997) elaborate on this, of which time economy is probably the most important as it enables multisite research at the same time. It obviously brings more skills and expertise to the research. Working in a team also brings to the table the normal obstacles of group

dynamics as in differences, conflicts, egos, levels of communication, leadership, space for creativity, etc.

Team research is also more effective with **multi-site research** that is also becoming more popular these days. Many participant observation studies now use more than one field site for research. Marcus (1995) identifies six common strategies: people, things, metaphor, the plot or story, life or biography and conflict.

Denzin (2009:176) set out some steps in the research process of participant observation which are worth mentioning:

*Step 1:* Before actual field contacts and observations begin, a general definition of the problem is formulated. A theoretical perspective is adopted, the relevant research literature is reviewed, and an initial statement of research and theoretical objectives is written.

*Step 2:* A field setting is selected, largely determined by the formulation of the problem as stated in step 1. The design is flexible, so that multiple settings can be considered for later observations (perhaps as dictated by analytic induction and theoretical sampling).

*Step 3:* Upon selection of the research setting, initial field contacts are made. Entrée is established, the purpose of the study may be made public to certain persons, and initial observations are started.

*Step 4:* In this phase, the initial implementations of step 1 occur. Working definitions of key concepts are developed, and multiple research methods are employed. Statistical data on the setting and participants are gathered, documents are analyzed, and the historical context of the setting is documented.

*Step 5:* By this phase, field research is progressing. Informants have been selected, approached, and instructed, and interviews are solicited. Early theoretical formulations are now tested, reformed and tested again. Negative cases are sought as the general method of analytic induction is followed.

*Step 6:* General categories for data analysis are developed as hypotheses are formulated. Indicators of key concepts are now being developed and refined as a scheme for coding and analysis takes shape.

*Step 7:* Complex sets of propositions are developed and validated with multiple methods and varieties of data. Comparison groups are selected to further specify the casual propositions as a sequential, explanatory network is developed.

*Step 8:* This is the conclusion of the study, although additional observations may be made as necessary. Role disengagement occurs as the field workers begin to withdraw from continuous day-to-day observations. The actual writing of the research report now begins, and all earlier notes and observations are incorporated into a final picture of the events and processes studied. This phase is kept deliberately open-ended, since the observers may be drawn back for supplemental data.

In a simplified way the process may look like this: identify a setting, consent and access, data collection, triangulate observation with literature and interviews, data saturation, analysis and the write up.

Geertz (1973) made a huge contribution to the interpretive approach and specifically to the write up phase of research with his term ‘**thick description**’. This concept became a quality indicator for ethnographic / participant observation research. He describes the task at hand so as to create meaning to social actions and the message to other relevant parties or society as a whole, and to ‘plague subtle people with obtuse questions’ (Geertz, 1973:29). The method ‘thick description’ is described by Miller-McLemore (2012:45) as a powerful way for research in any field of theology as it is a ‘...multilayered analysis of human strife, including detailed, intricately woven, ‘experience near’ rather than ‘experience-distant’ readings of the ‘living human document’.

A ‘thick description’ as coined by Geertz (1973:16) can thus be understood as when a researcher gathered all material necessary to put him in a position of describing a social phenomenon in full detail, so that social behaviour in a given context makes sense and is understood by alternative cultures. It is much more than just report writing, as this should include analysis of the social structure and how this fits in with the rest of the world.

As a quality indicator, verification must take place and Geertz (1973:16) elaborates on this by saying: “...how you can tell a better account from a worse one. If ethnography is thick description and ethnographers those who are doing the describing... then we must measure

the cogency of our explications, but against the power of the scientific imagination to bring us in touch with the lives of strangers”.

### **3.2.5 Participant Observations’ strengths and weaknesses**

#### **3.2.5.1 Strengths**

The strengths of participant observation can be described as the ability to give a full picture with a lot of detail in a natural context and with that the best chance to understand a certain social setting, which can be done over a lengthy period of time.

Ackroyd and Hughes (1981:113) states: "One of the major justifications of participant observation is that it enables a researcher to study a group in its natural setting ... for far longer and in more depth than is possible with the survey or any other research strategy."

Researchers should test or evaluate contextual information, observations and perceptions by enquiring to the validity of it from a position of not-knowing and in the right relationship with the subjects of study as they will correct the researcher when a perception is wrong or provide information when what they say and what they do differs. The researcher does not have to rely on own insight, understanding or intuition to come up with a result.

#### **3.2.5.2 Weaknesses**

Field research asks for a lot of time and energy, therefore it is not always financially viable. In some cases this means time away from home or outside working hours, thus creating uncomfortable situations. The different roles possible can be quite a challenge to the average researcher. According to Denzin (2009), the single case focus of fieldwork has become a focus area of concern as it is a heavily criticised component of participation observation.

Because of the unstructured nature of research or how it can become, criticism is also aimed at the substance of this kind of research, as it relies heavily on the textual representation of the researcher.

### **3.2.6 Conclusion**

This section presented an introductory overview of participant observation. Taking some definitions of participant observation as point of departure, important features of participant



observation were discussed. Finally, it's generally acknowledged that advantages and disadvantages were outlined.

Participant observation is still undergoing some important changes with the contribution of postmodern ethnographers such as Van Maanen (2011) and Denzin (2011). Ethnographic methods and participant observation has grown in all sections of humanities over the last couple of years and has grown in comparison to quantitative research, according to Atkinson (1994:253) and this also reflects in sponsorships from funders.

Some anthropologists, in particular, see it as abandoning key elements of what they regard as ethnography. It is true that in several respects this trend has resulted in significant modification of ethnographic practice according to Atkinson (1994:253).

On the other hand, the goal and what to achieve is what is of importance and that is to generate knowledge of social behaviour in the best possible way. Therefore to give way to demands from criticism from natural sciences, will be to defy the purpose and not to serve the subjects of the ethnographic and participant observation research.

### **3.3 SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION**

#### **3.3.1 Introduction**

The researcher wants to make it clear that the purpose for including the Social Scientific Biblical Interpretation in Chapter three, is for the purpose of taking note of the importance of the social context in which the chosen passage from Luke 24 should be read, the social realities in which the events of Luke 24 took place and secondly for the current context of research with co-researcher's different interpretations of spiritual experiences and interpretation of Scripture. The inclusion is not for the purpose of an exegetical analysis of Luke 24 in Chapter six.

Ethnography and participant observation emphasise the importance of the social context in the process of understanding what is observed, as experienced from the researcher's point of view with the researcher's own background, social context and Christian beliefs, based on Scripture and at the same time with respect and incorporation of the subjects of study or co-researchers' personal background, life story, social context and Christian beliefs based on their interpretation of Scripture. Therefore an alternative approach is followed by adding the

Social-Scientific Biblical interpretation to provide information about the social context in which Jesus ministered, emphasising thus the difference it can make to interpretation and understanding of the Biblical message, which forms part of the academic frame of reference in which this research project takes place.

The researcher will in this section motivate the inclusion of social-scientific Biblical interpretation in Chapter 3. The research design of ethnography and the method of participant observation form the strategy and mindset of the researcher by which to approach this study in theory and empirical studies. The researcher believes that the mindset created by theory, used in the multi-disciplinary field of research should be complemented by an approach closer to Liturgy and Practical Theology. This is an important element to be added to the frame of mind of the researcher with the overall objective of this study in mind, relating to the Reformed tradition and to get to the end result of a liturgical praxis proposal. The research is within the framework of Christianity and the Reformed tradition and the approach of the researcher should be within the parameters and space created by the three topics in Chapter three, ethnography, participant observation and the manner in which Scripture and Christianity are understood.

This section on Social Scientific Biblical Interpretation is specifically aimed at the reading of the chosen passage from Scripture for the theological grounding of this research. The importance of the social context in the time in which the Bible was written for Christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition and for the researcher conducting a research like this, has to be taken into account as meaning and interpretation should be ‘translated’ from one context, that of the time in which the Bible was written, to current time, in which the reader must get to the essence of Scripture’s message. This is an important element especially for pilgrims of the Reformed tradition as the empirical research in Chapter seven proves, in the way pilgrims appropriate meaning for themselves and in many cases have to redefine personal faith.

As the researcher states with references in Chapter one and Chapter eight, the introduction and conclusion chapters of this research, self-designed faith seems to be the trend towards which religion is developing in some parts of the world. Therefore the choice was made for the Social Scientific Biblical Interpretation as the preferred approach to Scripture in Chapter six, although there are other forms of exegetical analysis available.

### 3.3.2 Origin of Social-Scientific Criticism

Social-scientific criticism was initiated by a publication of J.D.M. Derret titled *Jesus' audience: The social and psychological environment in which he worked*, in 1973 and this led to research in this field. His focus is on social context of the 1<sup>st</sup> century (Du Toit, 2009:422).

Social-scientific criticism emerged into the field of Biblical exegesis since the 1980's and earned its place amongst the other exegetical approaches like textual criticism, redaction criticism, narrative criticism, reception criticism, rhetorical criticism, structuralist analysis, post-structural approaches, Deconstruction, Feminist and Post-Colonial readings (Du Toit, 2009:110).

One of the reasons for Social-scientific Criticism to emerge, came from criticism towards exegetes who were not paying sufficient attention '...to the connection between faith affirmations expressed in the Bible and the social contexts in which they were made and failed to indicate the implications of this connection for present day issues' (Du Toit, 2009:424).

The purpose of all exegetical approaches is obviously to understand and therefore to interpret the Bible better while Social-scientific criticism's contribution to this purpose is to highlight the social context of the time in which the writing of the Bible took place, as explained by Du Toit (2009). For the South African context this approach materialised in the work of Wepener (2009a:81-82) with the table fellowship in Luke 24. The content of Andries van Aarde and Stephan Joubert in Chapter 11 of Du Toit (2009:419-456) is done in the same way. Both sources are South African and may be the closest we have to the local culture of reading and understanding the Bible.

On global level several scholars used sociological models based on a specific theory and perspective and they later formed the 'Context Group: Project on the Bible in its Cultural environment' according to Du Toit (2009:423). Contributing to this was the global emphasis on social issues of the 1960's and 1970's.

Current methods of questioning in exegesis were criticised by theologians and were described as Eurocentric which led to misunderstandings. This was motivated by the differences to other cultures also in the first century with the logical conclusion that there will be even more

differences within cultures twenty centuries later (Du Toit, 2009). A case was made that studies of the social context of early Christianity had the purpose of a better understanding of the New Testament.

### **3.3.3 Social-scientific Criticism explained**

The implication in the lives of people, in this case pilgrims and therefore the Reformed tradition as well, when reading and interpretation of Scripture takes place without taking into consideration the social context of the Bible, can be dangerous and the Reformed tradition has an opportunity and a responsibility in this regard. The Bible must be read with first century glasses as well.

Rohrbaugh (1996) calls this experience by the name when he refers to a theological culture shock and some practicalities will be discussed in this section to illustrate this. The importance of realising that there is a shift away from a one-dimensional understanding of Scripture to multiple understandings, is what this theological cultural shock is about.

The future will be challenging as some South African Christians may feel threatened and will regard some of these views as liberal, new age or whatever other way used to minimise a threat. This is part of human behaviour to protect what is culturally functional and to label this as a threat without having to deal with the realities, facts, science or to be blunt, without an effort to read and learn. A lot of this has to do with upbringing and the perception of who God is. This is the kind of perception that confronts the Christian pilgrim of the Reformed tradition, with exposure to the world outside, creating a crisis as ‘faith falls short’, to the questions and religious culture of the day.

Ethnography as an academic theological approach confirms the importance of the Social-scientific criticism, according to Rohrbaugh (1996). Schleiermacher said in the late 1800’s that we need to pay attention to all factors that may affect the understanding of Bible reading. Once understood that the Bible was written in a specific time period and in a specific place, which differs from our time and place, critical methods developed in the field of historical, linguistic, literary and the most recent method, that of social-scientific, as explained by Rohrbaugh (1996). Other disciplines that influenced the evolutionary birth of Social-scientific criticism are ‘communication science, linguistics, literary science, philosophy, history, sociology and archaeology’ (Du Toit, 2009:110).

### 3.3.4 The Social Context of the first century

It will be useful to have a good understanding of the social structure during the time in which the Bible was written, in context of what was said in the introduction. Du Toit (2009:425-427) describes the focus on the social context in order to identify ‘general patterns of human behaviour’ within the social system. This approach may lead to new knowledge and insights into the world of the New Testament. It is descriptive of the “worldviews and value systems of particular groups, movements and communities, (with their own unique social roles, stratifications, customs and institutions) to the study of macro-social systems” says Du Toit (2009:426).

The interaction between various sub-cultural categories is one of the interests. Social science enables us to investigate the social interaction between different cultures or between different groups within a particular culture. The time gap between the ancient and the modern is described by the concept ‘class’ in Social-scientific criticism.

In the first century the hierarchical order was determined by parentage and familial interest. This then led to wealth, in that order. In the time of the New Testament which is described as the ‘advanced agrarian’, the familial status was the most important determinant within the larger social system (Du Toit, 2009:426). This structure only began to change in the fifth century, through to the nineteenth century when the economy became the determining factor for the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

During the first century with familial structures in control, there was also an unequal distribution of wealth as this belonged to a minority group. The rich had a reciprocal relationship with the poor who were the farmers and producers of food, with the rich providing protection from outside threats while the poor were providing the rich with food. There were responsibilities on both sides as the farmers had to produce surplus and the elite had to distribute it within the society. Sometimes the farmers did not produce enough for surplus which made the elite implement a tax system of between thirty to seventy percent. This led to the circumstance of social tension in Palestine in the first century. In this context symbols of value were limited to the elite and very restricted (Du Toit, 2009; Malina, 2001). This led to the appearance of other symbols of status while a spirit of competitiveness to compete for limited goods, was initiated by the tax system.

Du Toit (2009) continued to describe the social world in the first century by referring to another group which was identified and they were called the retainers or supporters of the elite. They were soldiers, educators, religious officials and artisans. The Pharisees, Sadducees and scribes all belonged to this group. The elite and the retainers or supporting groups were 5% to 7% of the total population. This implicates a strong power play to stay in control by the elite. A tension was present and this could easily have been disturbed by any incident. Daily interaction took place when the poor and farmers went into the walled cities to the markets or temples. When a group would gather, it immediately got the attention of those in service of the elite, who should maintain law and order on behalf of the small elite and in this sense it was a controlled society. Merchants and artisans had their own space and formed a bridge between rich and poor. The society also had outcasts for whom there was absolutely no place anywhere.

The following interesting facts about the culture of the first century comes from Malina (1993) and have only the purpose of a better understanding of the differences between the culture from where the Bible comes and twenty centuries later. Some of the cultural habits of those days will be socially unacceptable today and the question is how this is to be incorporated when Scripture is read today and what difference this makes to experiencing God and being a Christian in current times.

**Group interest** overwrites any form of individualism and human rights as we have today while the social perspective of the human being was integrated in the concept of the group. One had to respect and acknowledge the group to which you belonged by obedience to the will of the group, even if it was totally against one's own will. Disobedience to the group was considered a sin.

An individual was born in a 'class' as it was called and the level of respect one would be treated with, was totally dependent on the stance of the family in society and based on personality, gifts, ambition or anything else applicable during that time. Unacceptable behaviour could have ended with a person being completely cut-off from society. With participation in public debates one could have improved one's own social stance or alternatively have been humiliated, according to Mrk 12:24-27, Luk 10:25, 12:53-4, Mt 22:15:34-35 and Luk 10:29.

**Women's** hair and mouth had to be covered at all times and a woman could only leave the house for food or to go for prayer. Children needed approval for literally anything and if not obedient, a child could be killed. This was the case till 374 AC. A father had the right to decide if a baby could stay in his house after birth. The average age for girls to get married was at age 12 and for boys age 16 to 18.

In the Mediterranean world you could divorce a woman if there were no children born after ten years or if she regularly burnt the food or if she appeared in public with loose hair. If a daughter ran away with a boy and was caught, she was then killed by the eldest son and this was considered a deed of honour. Parents were measured against the children's behaviour. The kitchen was a woman's domain and the only place where men had no say. Reading Luke 24 it could be seen as custom why the name of the second person is not mentioned and this is a strong indication that the second person was a woman. Women were regarded as property in Biblical times and this is a hard reality.

**Jesus** rejected all these cultural laws of His social environment and stepped out of line with every single social law and was therefore rejected in Nazareth, his hometown, as can be seen in Luk 4:16-17, 22-31. Christians were in for a major culture shift in basically all social relationships according to Jhn 4:9, Acts 18:4, Gal 2:14 and 1 Tess 4:9-10. It just be imagined how the message of Jesus, was turning the current 'law and order' upside down.

The Pharisee praying in public (Acts 18) was actually standard behaviour and what was expected according to custom and to the requirements of the group, therefore to do that on the street was acceptable and communicating that he had nothing to hide while the contrary of praying in private could have been interpreted that he was hiding something. Again Jesus was totally against the culture of the time by showing that the relationship with God is actually the most important thing (Luk 18:1-9).

**Friendship** was highly valued. Networking made travel a bit easier, so with a letter from a friend of the household, a traveller was guaranteed to get accommodation, as can be seen in Tit 3:13 and Mt 10:5-15. Hospitality was also shown to the stranger, Mt 25:35, Rom 12: 13, Heb 13:2 and 1 Petr 4:9.

A new day started at midnight according to the Mediterranean Roman custom while for a Jew, a new day started at sundown. An appointment's importance was all about the intention,

not the time as seen in James 4;13-17, Rom 15:24, 2 John 12, 3 John 13, 2 Tim 4:21, Tit 3:12 and Acts 1:4-5. A city like Antioch was the same size as New York, with three times the inhabitants of New York but without any infra-structure.

To end this part from Malina (1993) the researcher would like to emphasise the time concept in the Mediterranean world as they had 'little interest in abstract future' and were 'essentially present-oriented' according to Malina (1993:156) and also in Malina, Joubert and Van der Watt (1995).

Rohrbaugh (1996) contributes some research about the first century which could be seen as somewhat of a theological culture shock for the average Christian. There is for instance the concept of the evil eye which is mentioned by Rohrbaugh (1996:3) to which the Bible refers in many places like Prov 23:6, 28:22, Deut 15:7-9, 28:54-57, Matt 6:22-23, 20:1-15, Mark 7:22, Luke 11:33-36 and Gal 3:1. The reader of the Bible today will interpret these passages in a very different way from the reader in the first century. In those days someone with an evil eye was avoided and considered dangerous. It was the belief that when someone with an evil eye looked at a person or at something, a very bad influence was conveyed to the other person or the object at which it was looking. Something very bad was literally transmitted.

Another example is the perception of the people Jesus talked to and mingled with every day or even the children who were brought to Him, in reality they looked quite different from the modern day perception because of modern day pictures or visual expressions of His surroundings. Facts that have to be dealt with in reality paint a different picture. Carney (1975:88) describes the general state of health as: '...one-third of those who survived the first year were dead by age 6. Nearly 60 percent of these survivors had died by age 16. By age 26, 75 percent were dead and by age 46, 90 percent had died. Less than 3 percent of the population made it to age 60'.

According to Rohrbaugh (1996) the health situation amongst those Jesus dealt with showed a different picture as studies by paleopathologists show widespread infectious diseases and malnutrition, internal parasites, rotten teeth and the loss of eyesight by age 30. Fifty percent of hair recovered showed lice eggs in them. Twenty five percent of the average calories per day came from alcohol.



Rohrbaugh (1996) refers to the contribution of Social-scientific criticism as ‘rich meaning’ to be discovered. It is clear that Christians could read Scripture with new eyes, and understanding and information about the social circumstances in which Jesus lived, can change perceptions, leading to the existent knowledge of God with the possibility to enrich perceptions of God and who He is. Therefore as more scientific evidence becomes available Christians have to develop faith accordingly as this may change faith, human interpretation and experiencing God in dramatic ways. This may open up new experiences, ways of worshipping, how to be a Christian in the twenty-first century with implications for Liturgy and Practical Theology.

### **3.3.5 Sociological models**

Sociological models are necessary as they assist in ordering masses of social data, the interpretation of it and to come up with possible projections or reconstructions of history or a social environment where the necessary information is lacking, for whatever reason.

Malina (1993:16-17) elaborates on sociological models by asking how another culture is to be understood as understanding sociological models asks for ‘...abstract thinking’ which seems to be in the ‘...genetic ability of most human beings’, to either be able to think in terms of ‘...ideas or concepts’ or not, meaning if a person can’t, such a person can only think in a concrete way. Conceptual thinking asks for abstract thinking, leading to the essence of something and this enables a person to accommodate large portions of concrete information into one simple symbol. When this becomes a pattern it is called a model.

Du Toit (2009:431) says the value of a model simplifies the process to explain lots of data and counteract confusion and uncertainty. Models can thus be seen as ‘interpretive tools’ and ‘highly selective’ with the intention of focusing only on what is of interest and important and “...they are the lenses through which we establish the meaning of what we allow ourselves to see” says Du Toit (2009:432). It thus becomes clear that models’ purpose is to bring clarity and structure in complicated relations and relationships between social phenomena. Models have to be ‘consciously structured and systematically arranged’ says Du Toit (2009:433).

### **3.3.6 Different facets of Sociological exegesis:**

Social-scientific criticism or interpretation can hardly be described as well-defined according to Du Toit (2009:436-440) who defines four areas of development based on the current stance

and future possibilities. The first to be researched are interpretive models in New Testament studies by ‘ethnographic anthropologists’, the second, the work of the Context Group, referred to earlier in this section, which focuses on the social circumstances of the ancient Mediterranean, in which time the New Testament was written, the third is a combination of literary theory with social-scientific criticism with special reference to the work of Vernon Robbins who made this known as socio-rhetorical criticism and the fourth is ideological criticism, referring to the contribution of feminist and liberation theologians who based their work on Marxism and critical social theories, to which critical exegesis can be added.

A positive aspect of the Social-scientific criticism can be regarded as the avoidance of any form of ethnocentrism, which forms part of Biblical studies in the post-colonial era but is not part of social-scientific criticism. Therefore Du Toit (2009) states that it can be comfortably integrated with post-modern theories and post-colonial models of interpretation detached from ethnocentrism.

### **3.3.7 Ongoing debate about advantages and disadvantages:**

Social-scientific criticism still has many internal differences of opinion regarding methodology. This is not necessarily a weakness as this keeps the debate open on the methodological reflection, constantly refining it and this situation is probably not going to change soon according to Du Toit (2009).

A critical question is whether Social-scientific criticism can be accused of positivism. Du Toit (2009:442) indicate that Social-scientific criticism is ‘...abductive or retroductive’ in its epistemological approach and not ‘...inductive positivistic’, thereby allowing for a perspective to be falsified or adjusted. This may open the potential of transforming conventional perspectives, is the meaning of Du Toit (2009) who continues to refer to Craffert (1991) who states that although there may be many disagreements within Social-scientific criticism in Biblical studies, it is multidisciplinary and inter-disciplinary.

The contribution of Social-scientific criticism can be seen as a fresh look on the unexplored and the old, freed from old restricting paradigms, with ethnocentrism as a perfect example of the past, adding sensitivity to the socio-cultural differences between the first and the twenty-first century. In the words of Rohrbaugh (1996) adjusted to the South African context that no Biblical writer had the average South African reader in mind when he wrote in the first

century and not many South Africans have the ancient Palestinian peasants in mind when they read the Bible. This constitutes the need for mutual understanding.

### **3.3.8 Conclusion**

Sub-question: Will ethnography and participation observation be the appropriate methodological design to unlock the potential knowledge from pilgrims of the Reformed tradition?

Chapter three describes the research design and methodology to be followed in the empirical research. Ethnography and participatory observation will enable the researcher to investigate and explore the meaning pilgrims from the Reformed tradition, appropriate for themselves in order to formulate the outcome in a liturgical praxis for the Reformed tradition.

The expression of faith and worshipping is in a process of transformation and with knowledge from Social-scientific Criticism, Christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition and Reformed churches are better equipped to interpret Scripture for current times and this will have a major impact on how Christians will appropriate meaning for themselves during rituals and worshipping. Reading Scripture may be positively influenced by the social context descriptions which form part of Social-scientific Biblical Interpretation, for the translation of Scripture to current times and the development of self-designed faith.

Chapter four explores relevant concepts that may be of help for this research such as liminality, heterotopia and liturgical-inculturation, which are all concepts that may assist in understanding the reality to be investigated and to make sense of current spiritual behaviour.

## CHAPTER 4

### THEORETICAL EXPLORATION OF SIGNIFICANT CONCEPTS

#### 4.1 LIMINALITY AND LIMINOID

##### 4.1.1 Introduction

Liminality and liminoid refer to the process of change and transformation, exploring the implications of crossing thresholds, into new territory with uncertainty and unpredictability as the norm, rather than the exception. Heraclitus (325BC) could be seen as one of the earliest exponents of change and what liminality is about with his ‘panta rhei’ statement, indicating change as a constant or that everything flows constantly (Barnard, 2010:67).

“To sit in liminality or the darkness/chaos of ‘not-knowing’ without distractions or the escapism of busyness, is the way to new insights” (Arbuckle, 1993:120). With an attitude to approach any form of change as a way to growth and new insights is a positive way to look at the disruptive process of liminality. The relevance of the two concepts liminality and liminoid to the research topic:

##### *Pilgrimage as a challenge to Reformed liturgical praxis*

could be observed in many ways in the Reformed tradition in South Africa. In Chapter one, statistics were given and with reference to that one could say publicity about pilgrimage is where it has never been before. More than one pilgrimage route has already been established in South Africa and is growing in popularity. The South African Chapter of the Confraternity of St James is growing in numbers and statistics show an immense increase in numbers of South African pilgrims to the Camino del Santiago in Spain.

The information about the increasing popularity of pilgrimage and other mental rituals like the labyrinth, are a good indication why concepts like liminality and liminoid are relevant for the Reformed tradition and for Liturgy and Practical Theology in the academic field.

The two concepts liminality and liminoid need explanation, with the accompanying concepts *communitas* and *societas*, as all of these form part of what liminality is all about. Flow is another concept that fits the paradigm and flow is also explained in relation to liminality. Another prominent facet of liminality is the structure and anti-structure relation with social

drama accompanying it. Bodily participation in worshipping and rituals is another growing interest, to be discussed in this chapter before the relation liminality to pilgrimage, Liturgy and Practical Theology is addressed in conclusion.

The work and contribution of four authors is used to explain the concept and the value for this research project and they are Arnold van Gennep, Victor Turner, Marcel Barnard and Cas Wepener. Van Gennep is seen as the one who coined the concept liminality more or less a hundred years ago, whereas Turner took it further about fifty years ago. Barnard can be seen as a current specialist on the subject of liminality from a global perspective and Wepener, from a local perspective, as a South African based liturgist, who has published many articles that include, use or refer to liminality.

A metaphor to explain the concept of liminality, is to think of a ship harboured at a certain place. At a specific point and time it has to leave in order to get to its next destination. From the moment of departure a completely new set of rules apply until it reaches its destination. No one knows what may lay ahead, disaster, storms, calm waters, a break-down, etc. At the next destination another set of new rules will apply. With this metaphor in mind, it makes it easier to look at some of the anthropological themes (Turner, 1969:93; Wepener, 2012:2).

## **4.1.2 Liminality explained**

### **4.1.2.1 Arnold van Gennep (1873-1957)**

The term liminality came into being through the work of Arnold van Gennep, ethnologist or anthropologist, in his book: *The rites de passage* (1906), explained in three phases, separation, boundary or limen, the Latin for threshold and reintegration of rites of passage. The three phases are also explained with different words: separation, marginalising and reintegration or another description, preliminal, liminal and postliminal (Albers, 2007:53; Turner, 1979:16; Van Gennep, 2011:24).

Van Gennep (1996:529-536); Van Gennep (2011:24) argues that rituals are playing a very important role in facilitating society's transition from one state of being to the next, avoiding the chaos and disintegration that can so easily become dominant. Van Gennep (2011:24) emphasises the structure built into rituals, instead of the origin and opened up a whole new approach to the research of rituals as he indicates that the same ritual can have different

meanings or on the other hand may have a universal meaning and this in some way also links with how the ritual is inculturated to become a ritual with meaning.

Van Gennep based his work on that of Durkheim, with the focus on structure of rituals and many researchers followed in their footsteps (Albers, 2007:54). However the researcher's focus is more on exponents of van Gennep's concept of liminality that took the concept of liminality further and they are Victor Turner, Marcel Barnard and Cas Wepener.

#### **4.1.2.2 Victor Turner (1920-1983)**

Victor Turner can be seen as the best known exponents of van Gennep's term of liminality, with his theory about the ritual process in his classical work, *The Ritual Process*, (1969), but he can also be seen as part of the new generation modern anthropologists, emphasising the structure in transitional processes (Albers, 2007:61).

Liminality describes the process of change and transformation towards a new destination or new reality by providing a structural component to enable a better understanding of the process of change (Turner, 1979:16).

The intention of both van Gennep and Turner (1979:16) with the word liminality is to capture the concept of change of the individual, group or society in transition as well as the rituals involved facilitating the process. The three phases of liminality are named separation, transition and incorporation by (Turner, 1979:16).

Turner (1969:94-130) describes liminality's three phases in saying the first phase of separation '...comprises symbolic behaviour signifying the detachment of the individual or group either from an earlier fixed point in the social structure, from a set of cultural conditions (a 'state'), or from both'. The second phase, called the liminal period finds the '...characteristics of the ritual subject...ambiguous; he passes through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state' and the third phase of incorporation, also referred to as re-aggregation or re-incorporation, can be described as the end of the journey where the ritual subject, individual or group, has reached a new state of relative stability, '...by virtue of this, has rights and obligations vis-à-vis others of a clearly defined and 'structural' type; he is expected to behave in accordance with certain customary norms

and ethical standards binding on incumbents of social position in a system of such positions' (Turner, 1969:94-95).

Turner (1979:16) describes the first phase of separation as being separated from an old understanding, towards a new way of understanding or detachment from a current meaning of rituals and symbols to a newly created meaning and '...from a previous socio-cultural state or condition, to a new state or condition...'. Turner (1979:16) elaborates further: '...the phase which clearly demarcates sacred space and time from profane or secular space and time, includes symbolic behaviour...', and this symbolic behaviour communicates a message of detachment to the individual or group's previous position in society with the implication of '...collectively moving from all that is socially and culturally involved'.

Transition is Turner (1979:16) term for the second phase, described as '...a period and area of ambiguity, a sort of social limbo which has few of the attributes of either the preceding or subsequent profane social statuses or cultural states'. It seems as if while in transition, there is also a special status attached to those in transition.

Incorporation, the third phase is described as it: '...includes symbolic phenomena and actions which represent the return of the subjects to their new, relatively stable, well-defined position in the total society' (Turner, 1979:16). This process has to run through the full circle of initial commitment and then a period of preparation, acquiring new skills or ways of thinking.

The work of Durkheim, van Gennep and Turner can truly be seen as ground-breaking with regard to rituals and their meanings. Obviously their work inspired many other researchers after them. Freud for instance, had this view that the human psyche has a universal need for acts of reconciliation which is carried forward from one generation to the following (Albers, 2007:60).

The meaning Turner (1979) indicates in rituals namely the space for liminality to happen which in itself creates the space for *communitas*, *societas* and *flow*, is important for the purpose of this research as it is relevant to the context of Christian pilgrims, either before or during a pilgrimage, into the post-pilgrimage phase. A theoretical perspective describing the process of pilgrimage, could be of great value in understanding the human processes attached to rituals like pilgrimage. Powerful communication happens within these transitional phases

of great value to take note of for the pilgrim and the Reformed tradition.

This may implicate a re-examining of Victor Turner's perception of liminality as under-theorised in terms of effective spiritual communication. If so, this research will do well to investigate a framework for communication elevated by rituals as pilgrimage and labyrinth. This may also lead to exploring new possibilities of how liminality and liminoid can open up new spaces for the Reformed tradition, spaces for personal interpretation, away from the traditional paradigm where the Reformed tradition has a centralised power and more towards a space of self-help, away from restrictions and limitations more towards freedom of expression.

#### **4.1.2.3 Marcel Barnard**

Marcel Barnard is a liturgist from the Netherlands, who published extensively about the concept of liminality and he named the three phases preliminal, liminal and postliminal and describes the process as detachment from the old situation, travelling towards the new situation, with post-liminal the integration of the new situation.(Barnard, 2010:70).

According to (Barnard, 2010:67) the concept liminality, indicates an in-between phase or twilight zone as it separates social and spatial stages in rites of passage and the word itself comes from the Latin word 'limen' which means to cross boundaries, transgress or cross a threshold, in other words moving into the unknown, away from what used to be. Liminality is best known for its inherent features like control or autonomy and in contrast to that, the instability it creates.

In the mid-twentieth century liminality developed in the work of scholars into a phase where 'communitas could come into being as a marginal form of human interrelatedness' (Barnard, 2010; Turner, 1995). The next stage of development for liminality came into being in the 21st century as liminality took centre stage in society, as it became the norm, replacing '...structured human interrelatedness' and the latter more towards the margin where liminality used to be (Barnard, 2010:67). This view is also shared and supported by Castells (2011a) and Barnard builds his theory regarding liminality to a large extent on the work of Castells. The implication of this is a society where nothing is stable and secure anymore with an experience of Heraclitus's statement of 'panta rhei' from the third century BC.



This implicates change in spirituality, for the Reformed tradition as institution, worship, rituals, Liturgy and every aspect of human spirituality. For the Reformed tradition this implies change in structure or disappearance of the liturgical elite, and dominance by a ‘...popular movement characterised by plural authority structures’ (Barnard, 2010:67). Liminality has become the central notion and dominant state of our current world (Barnard, 2010:73). This exchange that took place is a direct result of increasing complexities in society and culture as well as people management in the labour market and what was earlier described as ‘betwixt and between’, has now become the institution (Barnard, 2010:70; Turner, 1995:107).

The heuristic value of the concept liminality is highly regarded by Barnard (2014) in a book with the title: *Worship in the network culture*, as liminality has a lot to offer to current developments in Practical Theology and liturgical studies, in a global world and networking society.

The ‘information age’ is typified by societies in the global community in a constant flow of economic, financial, cultural, information and human resources and means, by permanent transformation, border crossing, travelling, transgression, et cetera (Barnard, 2010:73). What was previously called marginal and weak, has moved to the centre, so spontaneous and momentary *communitas* has advanced to the centre of culture as everything is on the move (Barnard, 2010:73). This situation was created by the dominance of modern technology, internet, social media and infrastructures and ‘...network became the prevailing concept’ (Barnard, 2010:73).

(Barnard, 2010:74) states that Christianity is moving out of a time period based on beliefs and practices into an era of forms, meaning networking, but this is not replacing theology. It is important to understand the concept liminality and obviously its consequences for the purpose of this study project and therefore it is necessary to look at the bigger picture of how faith developed within the Reformed tradition as described by Barnard (2010:74).

Since the Reformation doctrines dominated faith development within the Reformed tradition with a certainty of what is right and what is wrong with emphasis on learning Scripture and this ‘...dominance of beliefs’ came into being with the invention of printing in the time of Martin Luther (Barnard, 2010)

In the sixties of the twentieth century the Anthropology turned the attention to human actions, that is to practices. Practical Theology – in its gradual development for over a century, starting from Schleiermacher’s *Praktische Theologie* in 1850 – began its victory march, holding the banners of hermeneutics or of action theory high, also in South Africa (Pieterse, 1993:13; Vos & Pieterse, 1997:15-18).

The first decade of the 21st century has disclosed a new paradigm i.e. that of the information society, in which networks prevail over content as well as over action. ‘To believe is to connect to Christian networks’ (Barnard, 2010). It is clear that a holistic perspective is very important to understand liminality and its full consequences, meaning it has to be viewed in the context of global social behaviour, as that is an indicator to the Reformed tradition on how to adapt ministry to current times. Barnard (2010:74) gives an indication to the future of Reformed tradition in saying: ‘...the old semantic potential of the concept no longer fits societal and ecclesial reality’, based on observed global worshipping practices, as people ‘want to be both rooted and connected also through their worship’.

As Barnard (2010); Barnard (2014) emphasise the network culture of our time and the importance and dominant role of liminality in global cultures and therefore the implications of what is said for the Reformed tradition in understanding the growing interest in rituals such as pilgrimage, the huge contribution to explain the network culture, coming from Castells (2000); Castells (2004); Castells (2010); Castells (2011a); Castells (2011b), is included in Marcel Barnard section on liminality.

‘People increasingly organize their meaning not around what they do but on the basis of what they are, or believe they are. Meanwhile, on the other hand, global networks of instrumental exchanges selectively switch on and off individuals, groups, regions and even countries, according to their relevance in fulfilling the goals processed in the network, in a relentless flow of strategic decisions. There follows a fundamental split between abstract, universal instrumentalism, and historically rooted, particularistic identities. Our societies are increasingly structured around a bipolar opposition between the Net and the self’ (Castells, 2000:3).

The world has become a village, but only a few inhabit it as such. The network society has generated new masses that are excluded from partaking in the flows that determine the world and its culture and those excluded are forming a network society of resistance (Castells, 2004:6-12).

People who in one way or another are excluded from the flows and fluxes develop an identity that is based on faith convictions, traditions and beliefs and these 'resistance identities' can develop into 'project identities' with two examples namely fundamentalist Christians in the United States and Al Qaeda, two groups that are rooted in resistance against the global flows of money and economic and ethical liberalism '...typified by the exclusion of the excluders by the excluded' (Castells, 2004:9).

The flows of networks, in which time and distance are reduced to zero and which are limitlessly open to everyone who share the values and messages communicated in a network. The stability of a society is determined by the degree to which these resistances or project identities are connected to the network flows.

In conclusion, the network society has brought liminality from the margin into the centre and the metaphors describing and characterising it refer to the strong, the open, the dynamic, in summary the essence of society. Opposite this centre more structured and closed or even fenced-off groups and identities have been developed.

Human society is built around a centre of the stability of the unstable. Liminality regained its main quality as passage, as flow, journey, movement, travel, trajectory, or – the dominant concept – network. As such it also maintained and augmented its qualities of autonomy and instability. In this network flow spontaneous *communitas* can come into existence, but also more permanent forms of *communitas*, mainly of global elite who have access to the networks. In general there is a growing opposition between the networks and the self, and this antagonism originates from local, regional, national or categorical resistance identities (Barnard, 2010:74).

#### 4.1.2.4 Cas Wepener

In 2012 Cas Wepener (2012) wrote an article about liminality and *communitas* with the specific purpose of analysing its contribution to the South African context and liturgical studies within the Reformed tradition of the Dutch Reformed Church in particular.

The term liminality has already been explained through the work of Arnold van Gennep, Victor Turner and Marcel Barnard. A discussion of *communitas* and *societas* is included in the next section of this chapter. The focus in Wepener's contribution to an understanding of the concept liminality, is especially aimed at the second phase of liminality, named 'boundary' or crossing the threshold by Van Gennep (2011), 'transition' by Turner (1979:16) and 'liminal' by Barnard (2010:70), the phase between the pre- and the post-liminal.

The metaphor used in the introduction can now be applied and used to explain liminality in context of what has been said up to now and with regards to the focus of this research as pilgrimage provides the space and time of movement which could be compared with a ship on the open sea on its way to the next destination after detachment from the previous harbour as place of stability while the new destination is still out of sight and thus impossible to visualise or to describe. During this period of liminality or travel a new practical situation comes into being and this is referred to as *communitas*, in contrast with the before and after situations, which are described as *societas*, as the two different harbours (Turner, 1969:93; Wepener, 2012:2).

*Societas* can therefore be regarded as the time of peace and prosperity, 'a period of structure that is characterized by an ordered situation that functions in a formal way' (Wepener, 2012:2). During *societas* relatively few problems are experienced in a well structured environment and energy goes into growth (Wepener, 2012:3)

'It is a time when a community to a great extent controls its problems, when it is well structured and in order, and experiences a growth phase' according to Wepener (2012:3), who continues to describe the *communitas* phase in the same way as already indicated by van Gennep, Turner and Barnard and cites Turner (1969:95) who elaborates on the liminal phase of *communitas*: 'Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial. As such, their

ambiguous and indeterminate attributes are expressed by a rich variety of symbols in the many societies that ritualize social and cultural transition’.

The characteristics of people in the *communitas* phase are described as people without material interests, not in control, just drifting along and stripped from pride, reduced to equality with no positions of power, however empowered in an unexplainable way to cope in this situation of total unpredictability (Turner, 1969:97; Wepener, 2012:3).

It is important to take note of the exceptional power in rituals for those in the liminal phase. People find their own meaning in the ritual, pilgrimage, labyrinth, etc., providing the strength to overcome whatever the situation is, almost as an intuitive gift, seeing that the power and control gained from a ritual is not embedded in the specific ritual, but in the meaning people find for themselves with the inherent power of meaning as a conclusive thought.

The Hegelian dialectical approach mentioned by Turner (1969:129) is also brought into the equation by Wepener (2012:3) in the words: “What is certain is that no society can function adequately without this dialectic”. There is a reciprocal interdependency between structure and anti-structure, between order and chaos, between the old and the new, with energy generated by this interaction, to move from static to dynamic, almost as if the world or any system needs the process of liminality and *communitas* towards growth and development.

The potential of the *communitas* period also needs our attention as mentioned by Wepener (2012:4) which has to do with a space of freedom in contrast with *societas*, citing Turner (1969:128): ‘...virtually everywhere as a holy or sacral time, possibly because it transgresses or dissolves the norms that govern structured and institutionalised relationships and is accompanied by experiences of unprecedented potency’.

Wepener (2012:4) indicates another matter that needs our attention and that is the institutionalisation of liminality and *communitas*, which is then more associated with *societas*, citing Turner (1969:109-112) again who mentions the Benedictines and Chiliastic movements showing *communitas* characteristics like ‘poverty....equality, anonymity and simplicity’ but then it became institutionalised, illustrating the paradoxical possibility.

Wepener (2012:1) elaborates further on an interesting perspective of the South African context stating that South Africa has passed the phase of liminality and has moved into a new

societas. Wepener (2012:204) argues on the basis of the SA Reconciliation Barometer of 2010 regarding Liturgy, that it is no longer in a phase of liminality. The data from the SA Reconciliation Barometer of 2010, measures citizen's attitudes to political and social-economic transformation and the impact on national unity and reconciliation in post-apartheid South Africa, and according to this the following can be listed for improvement regarding the current South African context with regard to reconciliation:

Highlights:

- A majority of South Africans still believe that a unified country is a desirable goal;
- There is an overall increase in support for racial integration within families, neighbourhoods and schools;
- There is an increase in positive evaluations of the legal system and police, and more South Africans are beginning to feel physically secure;
- Although religious institutions still rate the highest as institutions garnering most trust, there is also a recovery in trust with regards to governance.

Points for improvement:

- Socio-economic inequality is the biggest source of division in South Africa;
- Many people still believe that political leaders are not interested very much in what happens to ordinary people;
- Perpetrators of apartheid have not yet been dealt with sufficiently;
- Contact between historically-defined race groups have been relatively slow, mainly because of socio-economic inequality.

Wepener (2012) refers to Grimes (2000) in his argument that we are no longer part of the liminal phase but we are already in a new societas in the South African context, with reference to the statement of Grimes that processes are flexible, can change and do not always have to fit the three phase structure of researchers in general. The bottom-line of the Grimes (2000) statement is again the fact underlined by ethnography and participant observation of a subjective approach to research in any given social context as he asks why most research processes are summed up in three phases as that can only be if it is read into the social context by the researcher's own paradigm, which is most probably what happens most of the time. According to Grimes (2000) the three way approach is Hegelian dialectic

and proof of Western paradigm influence and to strengthen his argument he points out that in global approaches one can find up to seven phases or in India up to twenty-seven phases.

Wepener (2012:207) concludes with a strong case for post-liminality ‘...a new *societas*, in which work must be done on poverty alleviation, job creation and crime prevention, to name but a few pressing issues’.

Wepener (2012:207) in conclusion asks about the implications of a new *societas* for Liturgy, the possibility of ‘...liturgical rituals promoting social capital formation and social cohesion...from pulpits...new prophetic discourse of engaging with issues of poverty and crime’. According to Wepener (2012:207) the new *societas* provides the time of stability to rectify the wrongs of the past in South Africa by doing it right and in this Liturgy has to play a central role.

#### **4.1.3 Researcher’s view on liminality**

The description by van Gennep, Victor Turner, Marcel Barnard and Cas Wepener of liminality has enormous value for the research on pilgrimage as it describes the process of pilgrimage and what’s happening with pilgrims. Liminality is a time of disruption, healing, growth, redefining personal identity, redefining personal faith, etc., that initiates the decision of a person to go on a pilgrimage but the one thing in common is the need for change.

The process of liminality has the ability to re-position the pilgrim in terms of personal circumstances, whatever that may be. It provides a theoretical basis and endless possibilities for the usage of metaphors as well as to redefine any kind of situation into positive terms, for instance, to be excited during the middle phase as the next ‘harbour’ could be such an improvement to the one the pilgrim detached from. Liminality is also a powerful tool to facilitate the process of letting something go, the one feature causing much energy and unnecessary unhappiness.

During the middle phase of *communitas*, a person experience feelings of hopelessness and lack of vision. The value of rituals during this period of time cannot be estimated high enough. Liminality as a theoretical concept can be aligned with Scripture’s message of hope and provides a theoretical base for what happened in Luke 24 with the Emmaus narrative, which is the theme for Chapter six, theology of pilgrimage.

#### **4.1.4 Liminoid**

Turner (1982) developed a new phase in liminality when he was defining social processes after the industrial revolution. He came up with a new concept to capture the process of liminality as he stated that the group liminality or collective liminality disappeared from social behaviour in society and whenever it was still happening, it was on a voluntarily basis, out of free choice, and he coined this ‘liminoid’ (Albers, 2007:67; Turner, 1982:55).

The individual’s freedom to consciously move into a space of liminality, is what liminoid is all about, as it seems to be not part of social structures, political or economical structures but is actually taking place in the gaps and open spaces of society’s structural institutions and it seems to be more individualistic, experimental and more fragmented (Albers, 2007:67; Turner, 1982:55).

The best way to understand the concept of liminoid is to look at where it differentiates from liminality, to determine liminoid’s own meaning. Where there are compulsory rules without choices for liminality, a person might go against his own convictions, as there is free will with liminoid. Liminality tends to dominate in groups or tribal and early agrarian societies whereas liminoid is more individualistic and flourishes in societies with ‘organic solidarity’, bonded reciprocally by ‘contractual’ relations (Albers, 2007; Turner, 1982).

Liminality could therefore be associated with churches, clubs and societies whereas liminoid is more associated with leisure activities like art and sport and although liminoid seems to be more freedom orientated on an individual level, both concepts are still changing according to Turner (1982:159).

Turner (1979:54) describes liminoid in current times almost as a commodity, available for sale at a cost while liminality stayed the same in asking for loyalty but within the context of a membership group or part of a staff unit and describes the difference as: ‘One works at the liminal, one plays with the liminoid’.

#### **4.1.5 Liminoid differentiated from liminality**

Turner (1979:51-54) describes liminality in the following ways:



- Liminality was the dominant factor in early agricultural and tribal orientated societies while Liminoid increased since the industrial and mechanical era linked together to live in the cities.
- Liminality comes to the surface with ‘natural breaks’, whenever disruptions happen in society or nature in the normal flow of life while liminoid is more on an individual level but can become a collective phenomenon outside the professional arena.
- Liminality is embedded in the collective social environment while liminoid is differentiated from any social context, more towards the periphery, multi-faceted and experimental.
- Liminality challenges historical perceptions and convictions finding synergy in symbols to create common ground while liminoid is more linked to what seems eccentric, individualistic, spontaneous behaviour.
- Liminality is a collective process with good intentions for the social system, seeking something better even when it disrupts and causing turmoil while liminoid is usually a manifestation of resistance against the mainstream, like books, art, films, etc.,.

In modern times and in the complexity of societies both liminality and liminoid can change and even switch roles or go back to the original form with the implication of flexibility built into the reciprocal relationship between liminality and liminoid as they give modern society a plural face (Turner, 1979:55). A practical example is where people have to be in a liminal space to comply to the rules and regulations to get access to a certain space, for instance an exclusive club, to enable individuals to get into a space for liminoid behaviour (Turner, 1979:55).

The ability to adjust to situations, to be flexible from moment to moment means the concept of ‘flow’ has become part of the relationship between liminality and liminoid within the totality of the social context, therefore it is necessary to understand and bring the concept of ‘flow’ into the equation (Turner, 1979:55).

#### **4.1.6 Relation between liminality, liminoid, flow and communitas**

Research on ‘flow’ came from Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi which is today a major theme in the field of Emotional Intelligence. Turner says about ‘flow’, ‘...what I call communitas has something of a ‘flow’ quality.....one of the ways in which ‘structure’ may be transformed or ‘liquefied’ into communitas again’ (Albers, 2007:67; Turner, 1982).

Turner (1979:55) cites Csikszentmihalyi and McAloon on the meaning of flow:

‘Flow denotes the holistic sensation present when we act with total involvement...is a state in which action follows action according to an internal logic which seems to need no conscious intervention on our part.... we experience it as a unified flowing from one moment to the next, in which we feel in control of our actions, and in which there is little distinction between self and environment, between stimulus and response, or between past, present and the future’

Csikszentmihalyi and McAloon furthered their flow concept into the field of experiential creativity within art, literature and religious experience, based on scientific and literary sources as they differentiated six features of flow (Turner, 1979:55):

**The first** states the absence of dualism between action and awareness, as it becomes one in the process of flow. To become ‘aware’ of what you are doing, restricts an easy flow of what you are doing, creates tension, stress, anxiety and the combination of that takes away your natural way of being and any possibility of pleasure, leisure and spontaneity.

**The second** feature of flow is where a ‘merging of action and awareness is made possible by a centering of attention on a limited stimulus field’ (Turner, 1979:56). A laser beam will probably be a good metaphor to explain how to narrow one’s vision on one thing or on a small spot amongst many other possibilities. There is only room for the present and no room for past and future. Simplicity is the recipe to get rid of all clutter, in order to intensify one’s attention.

**The third** feature can be described as ‘...loss of ego...’ where ‘...no self is needed to bargain...’ and ‘...reality tends to be simplified to the point that it is understandable, definable and manageable...’ which is good for ‘...religious ritual’, according to Turner (1979:57) citing Csikszentmihalyi and McAloon. To lose one’s ego does however not mean a lack of self-awareness.

**The fourth** feature identified described a person in flow as ‘...in control of his actions and of the environment’ (Turner, 1979:57). This obviously has a positive influence on the concept of

the self, leading to an outcome where fear is overcome and performance matches the challenge.

**The fifth** feature of flow usually ‘contains coherent, non-contradictory demands for action and provides clear, unambiguous feedback to a person’s actions’ (Turner, 1979:57).

**The sixth** feature is described by stating that no goals or rewards are needed externally, as the motivation of flow is natural energy, described by the word ‘autotelic’ (Turner, 1979:58).

#### 4.1.7 *Communitas & Societas*

This section has to be read in combination with Cas Wepener’s section above as he elaborates on the ‘communitas’ concept extensively, the middle part of liminality, as named by Turner (1969:96); Turner (1974); Turner (1995). *Communitas* can be seen as a whole new way of being during the liminal period with new rules and structure (Turner, 1995:96).

Liminality and its opposite called ‘societas’, which is the term for the pre-liminal as well as the post-liminal phase, need each other and the conflict generated by this relationship presents growth in any given system with *communitas* the term for the space between the two forms of *societas* (Turner, 1995:110)

Albers (2007:64) describes the first part of separation from the world as structure, the second, submerging into anti-structure and third the return to the social structure.

Three forms of ‘communitas’ are further distinguished (Turner, 1979:45-46):

- Spontaneous *communitas* is ‘a direct, immediate and total confrontation of human identities’, a feeling of endless power
- Ideological *communitas*, ‘is a set of theoretical concepts which attempt to describe the interactions of spontaneous *communitas*’
- Normative *communitas*, is a ‘perduring social system’, a subculture or group which attempts to foster and maintain relationships of spontaneous *communitas* on a more or less permanent basis. ‘More grace than law, more miracle than regularity’ and for some reason usually during a period of religious revival.

Rite of Passage will most likely be visible in a geographical shift to a different place with the original place as a symbol of the ‘pre-ritual or pre-liminal status’ and the new place or space

as a symbol of the ‘post-ritual or post-liminal status’ (Turner, 1979:17). The duration of the journey in between cannot be related to time. Time becomes irrelevant and unpredictable. Sometimes it can take years or occasionally, minutes.

This process of liminality and *communitas*, is not only recognisable in the great religions but also in contemporary religious and secular movements, says Albers (2007:65). The Hippies and the Hell’s Angels are used as an example by Turner (1995:134) who describes them as groups with certain identities which could be ‘religious or secular’, with liminality constantly present, with structure maintaining a low profile, seen as outsiders but with ‘...universal human values as peace and harmony...justice...health...brotherhood’, where all people are equal before God and where property and materialism, has no presence. This almost sounds like a description of pilgrims on a pilgrimage like the Camino del Santiago. Each and every feature could be applicable to pilgrims. If anything, these similarities have meaning for this research as it shows the importance of understanding a phenomenon like pilgrimage from a sociological, anthropological and theological perspective, supporting the multi-disciplinary approach followed in this research.

Barnard (2010:71) refers to two examples Turner used to illustrate the concept of *communitas* from an anthropological point of view like the ‘hippies’ of the late 60’s to 70’s and how they used symbols and rituals to achieve unity. In this regard Barnard (2010:71) refers to different ways of achieving engagement and commitment by the group in *communitas* as implemented with the use of spectacles at two concerts in 1985 and in 2005 at concerts against poverty in Africa. The same principle was applied at a Youth Day concert in the Netherlands where 35 000 visitors formed a community in *communitas*. The meaning of this for pilgrimage research is the importance of symbols and rituals in transcending differences with groups of people from different cultures and backgrounds and the power in symbols and rituals to create unity.

If the trend identified in Chapter two is true that Christians are moving towards a self-designed faith and the Reformed tradition wants to adjust and create unity amongst Christians with different interpretations of Scripture and different ways in worshipping, certainly there is value in realising the potential of expanding the presence of rituals and symbols in the Reformed tradition.

Another example of *communitas* is the Order of St Francis of Assisi, with three phases distinguished: existential or spontaneous *communitas*, normative *communitas* and ideological *communitas*. Each one of these three forms is in a relationship with liminality and liminoid (Turner, 1969; Turner, 1995).

The first phase called ‘existential or spontaneous *communitas*’ by Turner (1969:132) is described as ‘a happening’, in the language of the hippies while the second phase called ‘normative *communitas*’ is described as the management process of people coming together in an unstructured space as some sort of social system should carry them forward and the third phase ‘ideological *communitas*’ is described as a way of understanding what is going on in terms of visible signs of behaviour to enable an understanding of the inner motivation for being in such a space with the purpose of managing it appropriately.

What becomes evident is the natural process of structure and unstructure which is the focus of the next section, the natural tendency of movement back to structure as it is seen here where the process of change is explained from a sociological and antropological perspective in terms of three phases of which the middle phase is again divided into three phases and clearly the second and third phase of *communitas* are already within the space of structure as it is unavoidable and just a matter of time for the first phase to move towards the next phase. During the phase of *communitas* it seems that there is a free-flow of acts and relationships within the context of spontaneity but that this condition can not be maintained for a long period of time. Soon it needs to move into structure.

If this process as described is applicable on the increasing popularity of ritual, as with pilgrimage and labyrinth, the message could be to the Reformed tradition that there is only a window period to interpret and react to this message, before this phase of *communitas* will move to the next phase of *societas*. What happened in Europe is that the church discovered that it was not part of the new *societas*. Hopefully the message will be processed by the Reformed tradition in South Africa.

The shift from *societas* to *communitas* is explained as marginal at first, not really noticeable and as detachment progress from the previous *societas*, differences entered the relationship and *communitas* experience being alienated, called rebels and troublemakers and not in

favour of leadership or whatever the pre-societas exists of, whether it be the Reformed tradition or any other social system (Barnard, 2010:70; Turner, 1995:108-110).

It seems that *Communitas* does not have a permanent life-span, it is always temporary. Then as soon as relationships develop within *communitas*, the need arises for structure of some sort and eventually it leads to a new *societas*.

#### 4.1.8 Structure and anti-structure

Anti-structure challenges structure but structure and anti-structure belong together and in a strange way, working together. Rules and habits will disappear during liminality, or merge into a blurring effect, with a lack of any structure and scenes that will make no sense but look like spontaneous acts or just playful events (Turner, 1979:20).

This is descriptive of the space Christian pilgrims experience where some acts do not make sense and seem to have no meaning but this is actually the right space, for some new meaning to emerge. In normal life there is probably not enough space to just be and see what comes to the surface in this spontaneous space with no rules and restrictions. Rituals can play a substantial part in creating such spaces.

The Reformed Christian can learn from the process of structure, anti-structure, that life in general is like this with highs and lows, ‘...*communitas* and structure, homogeneity and differentiation, equality and inequality... a type of dialectical process that involves successive experiences’ (Turner, 1969:97)<sup>20</sup>.

It is important to understand that there is a dynamic process and interdependency between structure and anti-structure and that this process facilitates the enhancement of society or

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<sup>20</sup> In this regard, to make the process of anti-structure, liminal and *communitas* more clear Turner, V. 1969. *Liminality and communitas. The ritual process: Structure and anti-structure*, 94:94-130. provides a list of phenomena in life where structure will be opposed by anti-structure: Transition/state; totality/partiality; homogeneity/heterogeneity; *communitas*/structure; equality/inequality; anonymity/systems of nomenclature; absence of property/property; absence of status/status; nakedness or uniform clothing/distinctions of clothing; sexual continence/sexuality; minimization of sex distinctions/maximization of sex distinctions; absence of rank/distinctions of rank; humility/just pride of position; disregard for personal appearance/care for personal appearance; no distinctions of wealth/distinctions of wealth; unselfishness/selfishness; total obedience/obedience only to superior rank; sacredness/secularity; sacred instruction/technical knowledge; silence/speech; suspension of kinship rights and obligations/kinship rights and obligations; continuous reference to mystical powers/intermittent” *ibid.*

individuals into the future. This process asks for the one to be replaced by the other from time to time and this is what Turner (1969) sees in the ritual process as the principal means for growth and development. This is how a new culture comes into being.

#### **4.1.9 Other research on structure and anti-structure**

The work of Douglas (1973) can be regarded as more advanced and a further development of the work of Victor Turner and therefore worthy to take note of.

Douglas (1973:81) follows a different approach to structure and anti-structure by creating a graphic interaction between structure and anti-structure where the focus is on the behaviour of individuals interacting within two social systems, of which one represents order, named 'grid and the other 'pressure', named 'group', meaning the process where liminality enforces itself on people.

'Strong grid and strong group will tend to a routinized piety towards authority and its symbols, beliefs in a punishing, moral universe, and a category of rejections' Douglas (1973:81). This means that any system protected enough from outside influence and ruled by a strong hand, not allowing criticism or open dialogue, will be forced into a space of thinking alike as in military or monasteries.

As the grid and/or group starts losing its grip and control, less rituals are to be seen, less social control and more individualism, while if grid and group are both weak, the total absence of rituals will be seen, or only to be used by individuals but in case of a strong grid and weak group, strong individuals will appear and the rest will become subordinates with strong emotional rituals which will emerge according to Douglas (1973:104)<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> Douglas, M. 1973. *Rules and meaning: The anthropology of everyday knowledge*. [Online] Available from. believes that rituals are nothing other than communication and states four rules: '.....one, the style appropriate to a message will coordinate all the channels, two, the scope of the body acting as medium is restricted by the demands of the social system...three, strong social control demands strong bodily control. A fourth is that along the dimension from weak to strong pressure the social system seeks progressively to disembodify or etherealize the forms of expression, this can be called the purity rule'.

#### **4.1.10 Social drama and worship**

Turner (1982:4) developed the concepts of social drama and ritual as these now became performance and theatre, as liminal can become liminoid, realising the potential of theatre performance in social life.

During his field research in Africa Turner observed that this process which he termed ‘social drama’ followed a certain predictable route with four phases which he called, break in normal day, crisis, recovering and re-integration, (Albers, 2007:63). He later simplified this to the already mentioned ‘structure and anti-structure’ and then brought back the terminology used by van Gennep for ‘anti-structured’ namely ‘liminality’.

Performance becomes a way of responding to life in a playful, expressionist way that may easily become a ritual, as a way of processing what is happening in reality, in a natural way, almost the same principle as nature taking care of itself in recovering or integrating the new (Turner, 1982:4).

Performance, social drama and theatre, are actually the final processing of events or experiences, almost a proof of acknowledging and absorbing the new or unstructured (Turner, 1982:13-15). This has enormous relevance for ritual and pilgrimage as it speaks to the need of pilgrims on either a personal or spiritual level to gain closure on life’s experiences or spiritual life and to integrate what is or has happened in normal life. Turner (1982:18) explains this as the completion of experiences expressed in performance, ‘...an act of creative retrospection in which meaning is ascribed to the events and parts of experience, even if the meaning is that there is no meaning’.

Performance and social drama therefore relate to worshipping in the context of above, as worshipping becomes ‘anamnesis’, the remembrance of God’s deeds in the life of worshippers or pilgrims, the focus of this research, with reference to the discussion on anamnesis in Chapter two.

#### **4.1.11 Role of the human body**

Participation in worship with the body is addressed in several other chapters of the research.



In collaboration with Levi-Strauss, Turner also created a new focus within the social research field about rituals and symbols and that is the human body and an image of the human brain according to (Albers, 2007:68). In close relation to ritual, symbol, liminality and liminoid, is the role of the human body as Liturgy is caught up in the dualism of body and soul and Liturgy more focused on the soul, which is something to be addressed in Liturgy and worshipping, following the example of Scripture where the bodily participation in worshipping is evident (Lukken, 1990:8-9).

The expression of symbolic body participation in ritual and Liturgy is related to space and time and therefore liturgical-inculturation needs to happen although different for different worshipping communities (Wepener, 2004:22). During the Middle Ages bodily participation was neglected but the Reformation brought a positive input with more involvement and this could be greatly advanced with exposure to the African tradition where bodily participation enjoys high priority (Wepener, 2004:11).

Liminality in terms of Liturgy and rituals and specifically concerning body participation emerges in literature and is growing in liturgical consciousness but growing fast amongst christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition who get firsthand experience of the meaning and metaphor of bodily participation. Insightful discoveries are being made at present of communication through the human body. The body is communicating so much knowledge and wisdom and the challenge is to interpret and understand this in a human body. According to Bell (1992:93) ritual gives meaning to pre-cognitive knowledge, mainly situated in the body, whilst emphasising the role of opposites. Grimes (1993:20) sees rituals similar to symbols, as a sensory (smelling) process, relying on intuition, somatic knowledge and the six sense.

The Reformed tradition is in a liminal phase in terms of opening up and creating opportunities for bodily participation in worship, Liturgy and rituals. The body becomes more part of worship services in the charismatic approach or in rituals like pilgrimage with aching bodies and sore feet.

#### **4.1.12 How liminality relates to pilgrimage**

It seems as if liminality and liminoid are relevant for Christian pilgrimage as well as for the Reformed tradition. The liminality process itself as described by van Gennep, Turner, Barnard

and Wepener, could also be related to pilgrimage, travelling from A to B with the process inbetween.

The individual pilgrim could experience the process of liminality or liminoid and it might have something to do with the time and space associated with pilgrimage. It is a natural consequence that pilgrimage will be the spiritual tool to facilitate most of the self-communication inherent to the body, to surface. Most of the time these insights and new knowledge can not be foreseen or prepared for. That is the unknown territory which Martin Buber refers to as the secret destination for any traveller.

The application of this to pilgrimage is indicated by (Albers, 2007) who quotes (Turner, 1969) that any pilgrim should realise that: ‘The Christian is a stranger to the world, a pilgrim, a traveler, with no place to rest his head. Transition has here become a permanent condition. Nowhere has this institutionalisation of liminality been more clearly marked and defined than in the monastic and mendicant states in the great world religions’ (Albers, 2007:107; Turner, 1969). They clearly cross the thresholds of their everyday lives to enter into this in-between state to later return.

#### **4.1.13 Relation to Practical Theology and Liturgical Studies**

The significance of the concept liminality for Practical Theology and especially Liturgical Studies is elaborated on by Barnard (2010) with the concept of the network society. This led to a complete change in research strategy by Marcel Barnard and his team of researchers since 2006, in how they studied new liturgical-ritual developments within the Reformed tradition.

They noticed an increasing influence of ‘.....evangelical, Pentecostal and charismatic influences in liturgical performances, also, but not only, in established churches’ (Barnard, 2010:76). They soon realised that they would have to renew their research methodology, as the traditional resources like ‘...books, documentation and brochures, or the observation and description of services performed in established churches, were outdated’ (Barnard, 2010:76).

The new movement that they investigated uses technology to its full capacity to create an experience. ‘The message is adapted to the possibilities of the multimedia technology used: the flow determines the message’ (Barnard, 2010:77).

The research brought them to some realisations about the Praise and Worship Movement, like ‘... borders between ecclesial Liturgy, concert Liturgy (praise concerts), internet Liturgy and telecommunication Liturgy are fluid in this field’ (Castells, 2004:356). This has become a grey area with no ‘...clearly defined liturgical forms’, in terms of who is taking the lead as liturgist or even if it is a church as it has become more of an independent group by choice with ‘...plural authority structures’ (Castells, 2004:356).

The liturgical leadership could be considered as the new elite in the sense of popular worship leaders and companies that produce worship music, as well as the corporations that supervise the digital networks and therefore researchers concluded that ‘...liturgy in its renewed shapes had become liminal’ (Barnard, 2010:77).

New research strategies should be developed to accommodate websites and the observation of worshipping at big events, independent and traditional churches, going along the redefinition of traditional concepts like liturgical time, space, participation, communion, music and other current trends (Barnard & Post, 2001).

A recent research platform was launched by Paul Post at Tilburg, using technology to integrate gathered information. On this website an introductory video is available introducing ‘pilnar’, a platform where pilgrims can load their pilgrim narratives, which is sorted according to themes. Statistical data about pilgrimage is also in the process of development<sup>22</sup>.

Open concepts and dynamic research designs for this new, dynamic liturgical environment needs to be explored says (Barnard, 2010:77). From this, even the content of the concept liminality is different from what it was in the thinking paradigm of van Gennep and Turner. It used to describe the crossing process of a threshold or to detach from a situation or position in order to depart on a journey to a new, unknown destination.

With changes in global societies and as the world became a small village because of modern technology, the meaning of liminality had to adjust, taking into account the change in perspective and culture regarding issues like relationships, marriage, homosexuality, divorce,

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<sup>22</sup> The link to ‘pilnar’, the website at Tilburg University, Netherlands where pilgrims can load their personal stories: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMWhO3D\\_n\\_Q](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMWhO3D_n_Q)

same-sex marriages, feminism, family, etc. Liturgical implications for current times indicate clearly a process of liminality for the Reformed tradition.

The nature of relationships has become liminal and is part of the ever-changing environment. The Reformed tradition will have to take all of this in account as well as the resistance phenomenon in each of the above mentioned cultural perspectives. This also applies to Liturgy, rituals, liturgical spaces, etc because life as a whole has become liminal. Barnard (2010:77) concludes his contribution by saying the 21st century is all about connecting and at the same time being rooted.

## 4.2 HETEROTOPIA

### 4.2.1 Introduction

Foucault's concept of heterotopia, meaning special places or spaces according to Post (2010:102), is relevant to the pilgrimage concept, as it opens up a whole playground in terms of creative thinking, imagination and an exciting part of pilgrimage. Heterotopia has huge potential for the Reformed tradition as well, as it opens up space for '...dreaming of a church that can become a heterotopia of reconciling diversity' (van Wyk, 2014:6).

Foucault explained his concept of heterotopia on three occasions: '...first, in his preface to *Les Mots et les choses (The Order of Things)* published in 1966 (1966a); second, in the same year, on a radio broadcast as part of a series on the theme of utopia and literature; and finally, in a lecture presented to a group of architects in 1967' (Johnson, 2006:75).

The term 'heterotopia' is derived from the Greek *heteros*, 'another', and *topos*, 'place', and is used to distinguish heterotopia from utopia (Johnson, 2006:77). The term heterotopia's origin is within the medical field '...referring to a particular tissue that develops at a place other than is usual. The tissue is not diseased or particularly dangerous but merely placed elsewhere, a dislocation' (Johnson, 2006:77).

Foucault's ideas have opened up endless speculation of what he meant by bringing forth many different interpretations but this may just be his major contribution, for what is conflict for some, stimulates the imagination of others. As an example Soja (1996:162) describes Foucault's analysis as: '...frustratingly incomplete, inconsistent, incoherent' and indicates why it is sometimes difficult to follow Foucault's argument as he '...uses 'place' when there

is a sense of intimacy or subjectivity, as in his description of the mirror, but it is also noticeable that he can use both words generally within the same sentence, as well as exchanging ‘difference’ and ‘other’ quite freely as in ‘these different spaces, these other places’ (Johnson, 2006:81).

Foucault’s way of open-ended communication also stimulates many different interpretations in various disciplines and his ‘different spaces’ as an example, is interpreted by many as resistance to dominant culture (Johnson, 2006:80-81). Foucault communicated in such a way that the discernment between right and wrong becomes a grey area. A relevant interpretation and applicable on pilgrimage is the fact that Foucault focuses on postmodern spaces, liminal in nature, in a constant state of flow, obviously then in the process of crossing boundaries from the known, in a process of change or resistance to whatever the current context is (Johnson, 2006:81).

It is important to realise that when Foucault refers to heterotopia, he does not mean a specific space or place but something for the imagination, like a child playing in an imaginary place or space, creating almost a reality in the mind but in this creating an energy for ‘expectation and realisation’ (van Wyk, 2014:4). Something similar happens in the adult mind, where an alternative meaning is created, detached from normal life and the normal way of brain functioning. To illustrate this concept Foucault refers to examples from society where the marginal is accommodated by those outside the mainstream of society like ‘...hospitals, jailhouses, cemeteries and old age homes’ (van Wyk, 2014:4).

Foucault distinguishes categories for such heterotopia spaces in society in describing retirement communities as ‘...crisis space or marginalised space’, psychiatric institutions as ‘...space of deviation’, cemeteries as ‘...concrete space’ (van Wyk, 2014:4). Spaces of ambiguity and spaces of paradoxes are also mentioned by Foucault (Johnson, 2006). Foucault (1984a:47-48) refers to ancient Eastern gardens, which fulfil a social role and are depicted in tapestries as a micro-cosmos, to illustrate this says Post (2010:104). Sacred places would also fit into this category as in 1 Cor 12 & Rm 12, the *ekklesia* also referred to as the ‘body of Christ’, is a space of paradox where, the extreme ends of society are accommodated in one space, as an example of the concept of heterotopian space. A final category of heterotopian space is a space which is locked up (closed, inaccessible) for some and is unlocked (opened

up, accessible) for others. Foucault ([1994] 1998: 175–186) has the Scandinavian sauna in mind.

The point is that heterotopia brings along a different understanding of reality for Foucault ([1967] 1984, [1994] 1998), a way of seeing and knowing (epistemology), which in turn influences being (ontology) – the space itself; a space that exists, or rather portrays those things can be different. Not only a space wherein the dream of ‘other than the norm’ is dreamt – that too. Heterotopia is a space where ‘other seeing’ is ‘other being’ – other doing.

Foucault’s intention is to create awareness of space that can hold people back, not questioning boundaries and rather settle for anxiety, instead of listening to the subconsciousness and intuition, trying to communicate that something is wrong or that there may be something else. At least the researcher would say Foucault’s contribution is to create the awareness that people have a choice and in this there is already a message of hope.

In this regard alternative ways of thinking are also explored by McGrath (2012:140) and Wright (1992:132) in how an alternative narrative can be created with four questions: ‘...who are we...where are we...what is wrong...what is the solution’. A perspective on these four questions with Foucault’s heterotopia concept can open up more answers to ‘who are we’ than just our race, gender, social class or geographical location. To the question ‘where are we’, yes we live in a beautiful world but everything is in paradox as it is only temporary and to ‘what is wrong’, the out of sync character of creation is highlighted, in contrast with the Creator’s intention. The challenge is to get to an enriched solution as answer to question four, ‘what is the solution’.

#### **4.2.2 Heterotopia and Church as ecclesial space**

Foucault (1984a:23) refers to space as a sacred concept, not detached yet. If something is sacred, one of the features is that it will be treated differently from normal spaces and Foucault sees this sacredness of space as the reason for anxiety in modern day society. He contrasts that with time and gives the reason that space is still a sacred concept and therefore lives are ruled by concepts, or opposites as he calls it, saying: ‘...oppositions that we regard as simple givens: for example between private space and public space, between family space and social space, between cultural space and useful space, between the space of leisure and that of work. All these are still nurtured by the hidden presence of the sacred’ (Foucault,

1984a:23). The church can easily fall within this due to specific preferences like homophobic exclusivity or gender issues, denying equality in any form (Van Wyk & Buitendag, 2010:1-9).

Eschatology as characteristic of the church is enriched with heterotopia as it brings the Kingdom of God into the present time of the church with the ‘...re-ordering of values’ according to Crossan (1998:283– 284) and van Wyk (2014:5). When Jesus states in the parable of the growing seed (Mrk 4:26–29) that ‘the Kingdom of God *is* like this...Jesus regards ‘the Kingdom of God’ in this parable as a present reality, is the argument of Klyde Snodgras (2008:183) and van Wyk (2014:5).

A number of parables Jesus used could be interpreted in this way that the Kingdom of God is already present at that very moment although not in any physical form (Snodgras 2008:179)(van Wyk, 2014:5). In this regard heterotopia can make a huge difference by integrating the contrast of that which is still to come into the present moment. A Christian has to develop this alternative understanding of reality and heterotopia provides the mechanism for that.

Based on Paul’s view on 1 Cor 12:6 for the nature of the church and that is ‘all for all’, describing the church as the body of Christ with love, described in 1 Cor 13, as the way in which to express faith and to follow Christ as if no binary opposites exist in a world where binaries exist in every moment (Izuzquiza 2009:162–164)(van Wyk, 2014:5). It must be stated that this is no ‘...apocalyptic utopia, but rather an eschatological heterotopia’ (van Wyk, 2014:5).

Heterotopia is a concept that will enable Christians in their daily faith to overcome the paradoxes, diversity and personal differences with others and to create a space in thinking where total acceptance of others can become the norm as the way to live out of the love of 1 Cor 13. The binary culture in religion is a direct result of the influence of Plato, with his argument that reason is the highest form of existence and this is the argument that Christians have to overcome, to cross the threshold into liminality where diversity and pluralism are no threats but embraced, and individuality appreciated (van Wyk, 2014:5). Heterotopia functions as ‘alternative space’ to a narcissistic self-desired utopian space (De Cauter 2008:22) [1994] (Foucault, 1998a:175-186).

Whenever the church or ecclesia manage to enter a space incorporating the different other in this world, it means heterotopia happened where all obstacles were transcended and the love to which Paul refers in 1 Cor 13 manifests.

### 4.2.3 Internal space

Foucault (1984a:23) elaborates on internal space, speaking with metaphors: “The space of our primary perception, the space of our dreams and that of our passions hold within themselves qualities that seem intrinsic: there is a light, ethereal, transparent space, or again a dark, rough, encumbered space; a space from above, of summits, or on the contrary a space from below of mud; or again a space that can be flowing like sparkling water, or space that is fixed, congealed, like stone or crystal. Yet these analyses, while fundamental for reflection in our time, primarily concern internal space”.

### 4.2.4 External space

Foucault (1984a:24) refers to the external concept of space and explains that everything functions in a defined space as he declares his interest in just special spaces and defines it as ‘...curious property of being in relation with all the other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect’.

Foucault (1998b:178) is interested in the outside space in particular describing this space as to live in a framework of relations, constantly interrupted by short periods of time but these are the spaces which have the capacity for us to be ‘drawn outside ourselves’, while still be in connection with our normal places although it may have the effect of turning it upside down.

Johnson (2006) reflects on how Foucault (1998b) describes these spaces that can draw us out of ourselves, as ‘dazzling’ and ‘confusing’ as they ‘...mirror, reflect, represent, designate, speak about all other sites but at the same time suspend, neutralize, invert, contest and contradict those sites’.

Apparently Foucault (1998b:153) read a lot of Blanchot’s work, and as he elaborates on that, it gives more insight as to where his own thoughts were coming from: ‘It does not reveal anything except itself with no ‘conclusion and no image, with no truth and no theatre, with no proof, no mask, no affirmation, free of any centre, unfettered to any native soil’. Both types



of heterotopia therefore form enclosures that are a passage to the outside, detaching us from ourselves. But they are a form of escape without the comfort of a home. Significantly, echoing the phrase used to describe both the ship and the mirror, Blanchot's narratives produce 'placeless places'.

Why Foucault's concept of Heterotopia is so important for this research on pilgrimage, is because he speaks of breaking down barriers which make space sacred, keeping people from exploring other options. The researcher validates Foucault's arguments of how life can be disrupted by short periods of time, exposing the person involved to other frameworks of thought which Foucault (1998b) refers to as not one heterotopia on its own but always in a network with no network the same as the following one, always in relation to others. From this process of chaos or disconnectedness usually comes the something else for a person. A statement of Johnson (2006:85-86) is applicable here: 'Heterotopia unstitch, undermine and transform utopias. This can also be seen in their relational aspect'.

The relevance of heterotopia for this research project is that pilgrimage provides the space for a Christian to become detached from a paradigm or space. By creating the space with pilgrimage, where a different perspective is experienced and less restrictions and rules of normal life are present, it opens up space for the extraordinary, on a physical, mindful and spiritual level, thus outside the boundaries of the known, or comfort, or being safe. This is a space of alternatives reframing labels like being a difficult person, always questioning the system, creating uneasiness, to that of a person not willing to live according to patterns laid down by society, a sub-cultural form or traditional religion.

#### **4.2.5 Heterotopia and Utopia**

Foucault builds on the utopia concept, but indicates the difference between heterotopia and utopia as heterotopia is not 'fantasy islands' like utopia but are other spaces or other places in existence, not overruling utopia but actually bringing it to reality and visibility (Foucault, 1984c; Post, 2010:102; van Wyk, 2014:4). Foucault (1984a) distinguishes between heterotopia and utopia and defines the latter as an unreal place or space. Utopian spaces are actually not in existence and are reality turned upside down.

The relevance of heterotopia in contrast to utopia, for pilgrimage is once again to be found in Foucault (1984a:24) description of heterotopia as real places to be found in all cultures and

societies, where utopia is brought to reality in a process where they are ‘...represented, contested, and inverted’.

#### **4.2.6 Power language**

Foucault is also associated with the concept of power language. This came to be as his ideas implicate the transcendence from power struggle situations and can be directly applied to it in a sense of resisting the relational character of power relationships and in this sense, heterotopia provides an escape route from power (Foucault, 1981:95; Johnson, 2006:86).

The power struggle presents a challenge to avoid negative thoughts and replace them with alternative thoughts, to ‘uncouple the grip’ of power relations and this is where heterotopia creates space with imagination, finding a way out, an undefined path on which self-belief or the lack there-of will play a huge role according to Johnson (2006:87) who further elaborates on heterotopia as disruptive to self and cultural beliefs, in its effort to open a way for the imagination.

Foucault (1984a) then exhibits the kind of thinking that opens up space, using imagination and logic to create a dance and the kind of thinking which should be a trademark of any pilgrim, transforming life to a spiritual experience. Foucault uses a mirror, saying a picture in a mirror is not the real thing, as it only reflects a reality which is at another place.

‘In the mirror, I see myself there where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space that opens up behind the surface; I am over there, there where I am not, a sort of shadow that gives my own visibility to myself, that enables me to see myself there where I am absent: such is the utopia of the mirror. But it is also heterotopias in so far as the mirror does exist in reality, where it exerts a sort of counteraction on the position that I occupy. From the standpoint of the mirror I discover my absence from the place where I am since I see myself over there. Starting from this gaze that is, as it were, directed toward me, from the ground of this virtual space that is on the other side of the glass, I come back toward myself; I begin again to direct my eyes toward myself and to reconstitute myself there where I am. The mirror functions as a heterotopias in this respect: it makes this place that I occupy at the moment when I look at myself in the glass at once absolutely real, connected with all the space that surrounds it, and absolutely

unreal, since in order to be perceived it has to pass through this virtual point which is over there' (Foucault, 1984a).

#### 4.2.7 Heterotopia's principles

A description of principles of heterotopia is set out by Foucault (1984a) cited by Post (2010:102-105) and Foucault calls this heterotopology.

The list of principles provided by Foucault (1998b) on heterotopia, Johnson (2006) describes as '...extremely diverse, and difficult to summarize, but they all refer in some way or another to a relational disruption in time and space'.

**Principle one** according to Post (2010:103) is about heterotopia to be found in every single culture, where certain individuals take on a different position in terms of the normal for example a teenager, a pregnant woman or an elder, a boarding school, honeymoon, or military service as examples, people in a special space in relation to society because of circumstances and a reality in every culture while some may disappear from society, becoming unnecessary for ever or others for a period of time. This is the so called crisis heterotopias. Another one called heterotopia of deviation is distinguished where provision is made by society to accommodate those who deviate from what is considered to be the norm and rest homes, psychiatric hospitals and prisons are mentioned in this regard.

**Principle two** according to Post (2010:103) this feature of heterotopia is within a concrete context, dependent on society for form or function with a cemetery as an example. Foucault (1984a) states that a cemetery had once been positioned in the middle of a town or city next to the church but has been marginalised since to the outskirts, going with the change in belief systems of society and culture.

**Principle three**, Post (2010:103) states that heterotopia is one single place of paradox, incompatible spaces and ambiguities. The theatre and movie are used to illustrate that a multi-dimensional space can be projected within one space or a garden that is sacralised in some cultures as a holy place.

**Fourth principle** entails heterotopia as slices in time also called heterochronies, meaning heterotopia begin to function at full capacity when men arrive at a break with traditional time (Post, 2010:104). Examples of this are playgrounds, feast vicinities, circus and holiday parks

with the characteristic of being open for just short periods of time, while the whole character of place changes and this could be called heterochronies. This applies when there is a short interruption in normal time. Museums and libraries are given as examples, as both will require an interruption in normal time entering a space where all times are captured in one space.

**Principle five** explains heterotopia as those special places where one needs a special condition to be able to enter. As an example, one has to do something specific to be allowed into a prison or in other cases, a special ritual or gesture will be required in order to get access, for an example a mosque.

**Principle six** is heterotopia that covers all other spaces not yet covered between extremes like a brothel or a colony. The heterotopia must create a space of illusion to shed light on the real space, as with brothels or it has to do the opposite and create an illusion of perfection in contrast to the reality of chaos.

In conclusion, heterotopia asks for the free flow of the mind and imagination to create an alternative scenario or to give the sub-alter voice a platform:

‘...a boat is a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea and that, from port to port, from tack to tack, from brothel to brothel, it goes as far as the colonies in search of the most precious treasures they conceal in their gardens, you will understand why the boat has not only been for our civilization, from the sixteenth century until the present, the great instrument of economic development but has been simultaneously the greatest reserve of the imagination. The ship is the heterotopia par excellence. In civilizations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure, and the police take the place of pirates’ (Foucault, 1984a:27).

## 4.3 LITURGICAL-INCULTURATION

### 4.3.1 Introduction

Liturgical-inculturation is the way for the church to be a witness in this world and to stay relevant in modern day context. It is also a practical way of obeying the Lord’s instruction to

His followers and one of the most challenging areas for the church at grass root level, the local congregation. Liturgical-inculturation is one of the many ways in which modern day Christianity accommodates differences and diversity and is explained with reference to the South African context by Bosch (1991:447-457) and Wepener (2009a).

If the future growth and development of the Reformed tradition's liturgical praxis shifts more towards ritual development, including pilgrimage, labyrinth and what else to come, then liturgical-inculturation is the process of integration to the Reformed tradition's culture, adjusting to new ways of worshipping. Bosch (1991:453) makes an interesting comment by asking if the Protestant revolution did not happen because of a lack of liturgical-inculturation at that stage, indicating with that the important role of liturgical-inculturation and the difference it can make. It is the responsibility of the church not to repeat learned lessons if the Reformation was one of them.

Liturgical-inculturation is a concept well-established within the theological world, both in the Roman Catholic and Reformed traditions. Shorter (2006:11), a Roman Catholic theologian defines liturgical-inculturation in just a few words as the '...on-going dialogue between faith and culture or cultures...', which implies an energetic relationship between Christianity and culture.

Liturgical-inculturation as a concept describes the presence of faith in a local community, for the way it is accepted and integrated in the way of living of a local community (Ryan, 2000:10). In the South African context of cultural diversity, this will imply the presence of faith within multiple cultures within one local community, the way in which the diverse cultures process and express faith on a daily basis, always recognising that any form of human culture will always show shortfalls, because of human nature and will never achieve the level to be called Christian culture (Ryan, 2000:6-7). Liturgical-inculturation will always include the strive towards enrichment, either within or in relationship with those outside the local community by sharing and learning from differences and similarities and from each other (Ryan, 2000:8).

Chupungco (1982) description of the difference between acculturation and liturgical-inculturation explains the concept in clear terms. According to Chupungco (1982) acculturation is where Gospel (A) and culture (B) becomes AB, whilst with liturgical-

inculturation Gospel (A) and culture (B) becomes C. If applicable to a church it means a new identity is formed that will express worship in a new way, reading the same Scripture in new and different ways.

### **4.3.2 Historical development of liturgical-inculturation**

Liturgical-inculturation as a concept entered the Catholic tradition during the Second Vatican Council in 1962 and has grown in stature ever since. Liturgical-inculturation is defined by Father Pedro Arrup SJ as to how the message and life of Christianity synergise with current culture to become normative and reforms the culture towards renewal (Shorter, 2006:11).

The history of the church shows liturgical-inculturation came into being because of the changing context in which the church had to obey the command of taking the Word to the world, with other words, missionary as it has been known through the ages. In the early ages after Constantine, the church dominated culture and other cultures were destroyed in one way or another if not to be reconciled and integrated into Christianity as interpreted at that time (Bosch, 1991:448). A changing context because of civilisation, technology and human rights led to the current new context and the church has to adjust, as it had to do many times through all ages.

For many centuries Christianity had only one perspective, coming from Europe and this had to be taken out into the world. It was only at the end of the last century that some other voices were heard, opening up the dialogue that there could be more perspectives to acknowledge. Since the 1970's the concept of liturgical-inculturation came into being and went through the process of different words used for description like: '...adaptation, accommodation, revision, incarnation, indigenation, contextualisation, acculturation and enculturation...' (Lukken, 1994a:8; Lukken, 2005:180). The development of liturgical-inculturation involved many words used in similar fashion in the broader church up to now, like '...indigenization...contextualization... accommodation...adaptation...incarnation', according to Shorter (2006:11).

Adaptation is used in cases where the Western theology was just 'transplanted' into another culture while acculturation implied contact between two cultures, influencing each other and the total integration is called assimilation (Wepener & Meyer, 2012:306). When culture and Liturgy grow into each other leading to a new identity, enriched by the process, it can be

called liturgical-inculturation (Wepener & Meyer, 2012:306). Because of the reciprocal nature of this relationship between Liturgy and culture, the suggestion is made that the term interculturalism is actually a better description (Wepener & Meyer, 2012:307). Post (1996a:11) and Grimes (2000) are both in favour of a concept 're-inventing Liturgy' as further development of liturgical-inculturation while Marcel Barnard refers to the dynamics between cult and culture.

The term liturgical-inculturation has many implications for the Reformed tradition and it is necessary to look at the meaning of this. The researcher addresses the Roman Catholic tradition and the Reformed tradition, to put the concept in a holistic perspective. Shorter (2006:11-12) puts liturgical-inculturation in context by emphasising that '...there must be a continuous dialogue between faith and culture', implicating an enormous difference from where the Roman Catholic Church's tradition was, as it now acknowledges culture as an independent entity, recognised as a dialogue partner and not as it used to be, when Christianity was in a superior position. The interdependency is also stated by Shorter (2006:12) as faith and culture need each other to exist in a reciprocal relationship of '...reformulation or more accurately, reinterpretation'.

### **4.3.3 Religion and culture**

Arbuckle (1991:112) elaborates more on the current content of the concept by indicating that it is about the interaction between Gospel and culture, a dynamic and critical interaction and assimilation between them with a reciprocal character where cultures are 'elevated and purified' because of their exposure to Evangelisation. At the same time the existence of Christian faith is dependent on being '...translated into a culture' (Bosch, 1991:447). The modern culture is influenced by a number of factors of which modernisation and the paradigm of post-modernism can be regarded as two major components (Lukken, 1994a:13-16).

This paradigm shift was also heard at the Second Vatican Council as the church was called to '...the evangelical imperative to enter into the lives of people, their cultures, both to give and to be changed by them', and today this is called liturgical-inculturation or '...earthing the Gospel' (Arbuckle, 1993:21). The church will never be in a position of being fully reformed and therefore it will always be in a state of becoming and reforming.

Christianity without culture is impossible and this was also the case in the days of Christ and with early Christianity. Liturgical-inculturation creates a challenge of when to continue and when to discontinue with traditions. The relation between Christianity and culture is therefore sensitive as it is also more than just dialogue between them, ‘...it is the Gospel bringing into existence a new cultural creation’, with the implication that liturgical-inculturation causes transformation at root level of the church, ‘...stimulating liturgical and catechetical creativity in the community’ (Lukken, 2005:263). In this process members of a community have to experience space and flexibility for themselves individually and for their culture. Small Christian communities can play a huge role here as well as rituals.

Shorter (2006) describes this as recognition that any human being is born in a particular culture of which one becomes an integral part, while liturgical-inculturation can bring about a total transformation and renewal of society, free from injustices and prejudices to which people are accustomed and therefore liturgical-inculturation can in reality be a culture shock. Evangelisation is ultimately synonymous with liturgical-inculturation, the renewal of culture itself, the redemption of people’s whole way of life (Lukken, 2005:268).

Culture refers to the way people live, to the ideas and images that orientate thoughts and behaviour according to Lukken (2005:268), thus liturgical-inculturation refers to the Christian renewal of culture, the transforming dialogue of culture with the Gospel, and indeed the person, of Jesus Christ. Liturgical-inculturation can therefore be correctly called a way of life in itself, since this dialogue and this transformation have to be experienced and lived by people. It is lived and experienced primarily by people in the community and especially in the basic communities which are at the hub of social and cultural life.

#### **4.3.4 Dawid Bosch on liturgical-inculturation**

In his book, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm shifts in Mission*, Dawid Bosch writes on the concept of liturgical-inculturation, saying its time has come, implying that cultures have to be recognised, going with the recognition of multiple theological perspectives and the end of the Eurocentric paternalistic approach (Bosch, 1991:452). This shift in theology has major implications and advantages when the new has to be incorporated into the Reformed tradition for example rituals and pilgrimage in particular as a new trend in Reformed worshipping.



Christian faith has to reformulate itself in relation to all cultures and although this realisation takes time it has become clear within Roman Catholicism and Protestantism that this is actually happening and growing in momentum. Different interpretations of exactly what the concept means in both traditions with the expected resistance as a normal human phenomenon, developments indicate a change of course which will just grow in years to come. Liturgical-inculturation differs from previous approaches as different roleplayers can be identified, as the faith community now has become part replacing the exclusivity that the church hierarchy enjoyed for many ages (Bosch, 1991:453). In this new relationship all participants learn from each other with mutual respect.

The faith community as a new roleplayer implies a variety of community participants to have a say in how Christianity will be integrated and this variety of community participants imply further all sections of the community namely religious, educational, political, economical, social and others (Bosch, 1991:453). The variety of roleplayers goes further as it has to include the broader context of the region's context and culture. Cultural differences must be taken into account in the same way as doctrinal differences are, therefore the area, whether it be Africa or Asia should play a major role, with the emphasis on relevance rather than the exact same confessional stance (Bosch, 1991:453).

Bosch (1991:453) indicates that incarnation is the model for liturgical-inculturation according to John 17:18, 20:21 and Philippians 2, as used by the Roman Catholic Church in the Willowbank Report. The incarnation paradigm implies that the church is formed within a new culture, by the culture and this stresses the importance of the relationship between culture and church. From this flows the low profile of the theological content in the mutual space where the faith community and culture integrate and although still Christ-centric, the local cultures formalise their own perception of Christ and how to give expression to it. Bosch (1991:454) uses a metaphor to illustrate this namely that of seed planted but in different soil.

Both culture and liturgical-inculturation are inclusive of the total environment with no exception and no part of life on the outside. Bosch (1991:455) mentions the boundaries of liturgical-inculturation as the inclusivity of faith and culture, but that does not mean that anything can happen in this relationship as there are specific boundaries for Christianity and the relationship with faith can't become a voice of just the cultural. There will always be a critical tension between the faith community and culture, as faith must find its place within

culture without becoming part of the culture. This idea can be based on the Biblical principle of ‘in the world but not of the world’.

#### 4.3.5 Bosch on the dangers for liturgical-inculturation

Bosch (1991:455) strongly warns against the use of the word inculturated as there is a huge difference with liturgical-inculturation. Inculturated is exactly what the church wants to distance itself from, of not becoming part of, therefore the church should always be alert when confronted by the new and the unexpected, going into unknown territory, stressing the need for theologies which are culture orientated. Bosch (1991:455) cites Bultmann (1977) who describes this process as a kind of osmosis.

Syncretism is always a danger in the process of liturgical-inculturation with ‘...an illegitimate symbiosis’ which can only harm Christianity, therefore it is only authentic symbiosis where Christianity and culture become fully integrated, if liturgical-inculturation is applied correctly, is the view of Shorter (2006:16).

Overemphasising the context and to give it prominence in the interpretation of Scripture is as dangerous for the church as it is for the individual and the same warning applies to the development of ‘local theologies’, therefore Christians always have to find a balanced way of integrating the context and personal human needs because the Word of God should always be central in Christian life (Bosch, 1991:426-427).

Relativism as another danger is mentioned by Bosch (1991:186-187), Küng (1987) and also by Shorter (2006) and Lukken (2005). There must be a limit to cultural relativism, and to the relativisation of religious truth without fear of being judgemental and to impede legitimate comparative analysis. Obviously this is a process that asks for a lot of wisdom and negotiations with mutual recognition. Relativism and absolutism of any specific circumstance are the two ends of a continuum, also to be avoided by Christian perspective which brings another issue into the picture and that is the recognition of God’s acts in this world or ‘...reading the signs of the times’, which is becoming popular lately (Bosch, 1991:428). From this it should be clear that only a relationship with the living God Himself, can guide His followers through a theological minefield and that is exactly the point of authentic liturgical-inculturation, the search for God’s Will and His guidance in arguments for and against, to stay committed to Him and His Word.

This new approach as it manifests in liturgical-inculturation is no threat to the position of missionaries, but rather an opportunity including renewal. Liturgical-inculturation does not mean missionaries are redundant but rather they represent the church's ability to transcend differences and thus create a space where any local faith community should create a worshipping space where they experience comfort in the combination of their faith and culture. Therefore Christians should be alert against creating a cultural space for worshipping as an extension to their culture in which only they feel at home, as according to Scripture's calling, it must also be a home for the stranger so that the church can stand up to its calling. As an outcome to this Bosch (1991:456-457) adds that the challenge for the church is to become a '...universal hermeneutical community'.

The enormous field of enrichment for Christianity through liturgical-inculturation, is underestimated, under-valued, not emphasised or researched enough, is the view of the researcher. Literature tends to focus more on the dangers and pitfalls of liturgical-inculturation. Enrichment of the Christian culture happens with the exposure upon entering new cultural phases and regions, acquiring surplus meaning in loyalty and conformity to its tradition. Shorter (2006:29) cites Bishop Joseph Blomjous who said:

“Liturgical-inculturation (or Interculturation) ultimately means: facing up to the total reality of the present Mission situation, which includes elements like: the fundamental change in Mission thinking, return to the Bible and early Christianity, development of ecclesiology, search for spiritual values, the reality and appreciation of pluralism and of human community, an increasing sense of history, the recent historical facts of colonisation and decolonisation, secularisation, the recognition of Non-Western cultural values, etc”

#### **4.3.6 Theology, Liturgical-inculturation and Natural Sciences**

The relevance to reflect on this relationship between natural sciences and social sciences in the context of liturgical-inculturation, is necessary as social sciences or humanities have to be accountable to the scientific approach in general and liturgical-inculturation introduces yet another 'grey area' as natural science would refer to it, as the integration of different thought paradigms can't happen with rigid boundaries, definitions and facts. Liturgical-inculturation

speaks about the integration of human culture and faith and this creates a huge challenge to human structures like the church.

The difference in approach and the challenge is to think that paradigms can be explained, in that for Natural Sciences one paradigm will be replaced by a new one that proves the old one to be wrong and once this has happened there is no chance of turning back. As an example the Copernican paradigm was replaced, and since then it has been unthinkable to go back to the Ptolemaean paradigm (Bosch, 1991:186). In contrast to this it is just the opposite in theology. An old paradigm can live on, make a come-back or continue in existence simultaneously with a new paradigm or even more than one new paradigm that comes into existence at a later period (Bosch, 1991:189-191; Küng, 1987:162-165). As an example of this flexibility in thinking about paradigms, reference is made to Augustine's paradigm revival of Paul's letters to the Romans, Martin Luther in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and Karl Barth in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Bosch, 1991:190; Küng, 1987:193). What complicates the liturgical-inculturation paradigm further is the diversity present and Bosch (1991:190) mentions the presence of '...fundamentalists, moderates, conservatives, liberals and radicals', in each and every congregation.

What can be accepted is that human behaviour reflects that people can be committed to more than one paradigm at the same time, as Martin Luther broke away from the Roman Catholic Church but retained certain elements in the new paradigm he had created (Bosch, 1991:185-189). Küng (1987) addresses criticism of relativism, of having no norms and values within the Paradigm Theory by stating that every group defends its own paradigm with its own paradigm while no human being could be forced to accept another's paradigm. Change in paradigm can only happen when convinced by another with the highest opinion that of the relevant community (Bosch, 1991:190; Küng, 1976:94)

#### **4.3.7 Liturgical-inculturation and ritual**

It can be stated that modern society, referring to culture and the religious community, has become open to rituals but then not to be rigidly prescribed by the church, as the church should only provide the space for ritual, allowing for individual interpretation and choice (Lukken, 1994a:19). The growing interest in ritual also takes place in an environment where Christians explore various forms of ritual from other religious traditions and even rituals from

outside the Christian context or from the huge self-help industry with a variety of worldviews (Lukken, 1994a:21). Changes in modern day culture that should be taken into account are to be seen at funerals, amongst the youth, the need for meaning of important events, dates and a tendency towards inter-faith celebrations, which obviously poses a challenge for Reformed tradition to find relevancy (Lukken, 1994a:23-27).

Bosch (1991) states insights important for this research on pilgrimage about liturgical-inculturation and for future reference about the role and place of ritual and pilgrimage in the Reformed tradition. The Reformed tradition can't afford a theology of extremes as in absolutes or relativisms as the confession and belief is that Christianity only sees partly according to 1 Cor 13:12 (Bosch, 1991:428). A commitment to open dialogue is necessary to whoever crosses roads with Reformed theology as well as an openness to be convinced by a better argument. This does not imply an attitude of 'anything goes' just because no one sees the full picture or because of an openness for dialogue. Hiebert (1985:9) says we only see partly but we do see.

A commitment to what is believed does not have to be in conflict with openness in dialogue as the Reformed tradition believes in constant dialogue with itself as part of ongoing Reformation. Therefore Bosch (1991:457) states that he believes in a faith with a creative tension between one's own commitment and one's theological perception, accepting that own theological interpretations reflect own context, perspectives and biases.

On the other hand, this does not mean that all other theological perspectives can be approved from a Reformed perspective, it only says that theological interpretation is like a map and that is not the real territory, as in real life, where someone else may have a better map and the conviction grows that it is actually a better map that should replace the old map (Bosch, 1991:454-455; Hiebert, 1985:15; Martin, 1998:373).

In the Reformed tradition any change in paradigm has to be based on Scripture and in this Bosch (1991) and Küng (1987) are in agreement as theology does not operate just in the present and future but also with the past. Therefore theology has to stay relevant and contextual in the context of Scripture, history and Jesus Christ with the Church functioning as an international hermeneutical community say Bosch (1991:457) and Hiebert (1985:16).

Therefore Reformed Christians and theologians should always be willing to go into dialogue with each other, challenging all biases, seeing fellow Christians as partners and not the enemy. This resonates with the commandment of love and no judgemental attitude towards other cultures, and this is the spirit of liturgical-inculturation. As an example the ritual study of slaughtering and sprinkling blood, based on the Old Testament in an African Independent Church in South Africa, is investigated by Wepener and Meyer (2012:300) with the outcome that within this culture this ritual has the purpose of cleansing and inclusion but this ritual will be challenging for the rest of the Reformed tradition in South Africa and this calls for the contribution and necessity of liturgical-inculturation.

Christian ritual seems to be what can create the space for liturgical-inculturation according to Lukken (2005:189). This process asks new questions to the Gospel in how it can integrate into a culture without compromising the Biblical principles. Lukken says about this, ‘...Christian revelation does not merge seamlessly with the varying perspective of human rites...’, and there is always an empty space, which could be called, ‘...Christian mystery, which must always be expressed in liturgical-inculturation’ (Lukken, 2005:189).

Lukken (2005:192) proposed two ways that complement each other in the dialogue process, the first being the ‘hierarchical dimension of ritual or liturgical order’ and the second ‘comparative ritual and theological verification’. The latter means an analysis of a ritual in all its dimensions and to use different methods for this of which one is a comparison of the primary and secondary sources, with primary sources, text and secondary sources, theological and liturgical reflection within the context of the specific culture. The context of the secondary sources is emphasised by Lukken (2005) in alignment with the liturgical change in strategy where the outcome of what people are doing with this and how they appropriate ritual for themselves within their culture, is of cardinal interest.

Lukken (2005:198) quoted the guidelines for liturgical meaning of Hoffman, whether it be for academia, Church leadership or the average Christian, and these guidelines for meaning in ritual are, ‘a. Private: the meaning individuals give to rites, b. Official: the interpretation of ritual experts, c. Public: the shared views about the meaning of certain rites in spite of their official interpretations, d. Normative: how people see the world and themselves as a result of celebrating a rite’.

This structure for comparative ritual and theological verification creates a platform where the sources, both primary and secondary, can go into dialogue until a point of agreement is reached and a level of appropriateness is achieved. Wegman (1994) developed a series of critical questions in this regard.

Lukken (2005) comments on this approach of comparative ritual and theological verification by saying that past and present can be examined either way in contrast to the present always being subject to the past. He also comments about the role of Liturgy and its ability to uncover the hidden truths in past or present, which is not possible for other theological disciplines.

### **4.3.8 Culture and body participation**

In order to be more practical about this, the contribution of Klomp (2011:35) can be of much value here as she indicates that the origin of exclusion of the body in Western culture in worshipping rituals came from Christian theologians and Greek and Roman philosophers, that led the Reformed Church to the current role of the body in worshipping.

Uzukwu (1997) cited by Klomp (2011:35) says that participation of the body in worshipping in Western culture was influenced by seeing God as the ‘unmoved mover’ and this was preferred above ‘undisciplined body motion’. This became practise in Western Christianity through the process of liturgical-inculturation.

Interesting about pilgrimage, is that this ritual involves the body whole heartedly, to participate in a physical manner. The question is whether this is a new way of liturgical-inculturation, of bringing body movement into worshipping. Can this be a compromise to find a way for bodily involvement which is more acceptable in the Western paradigm than dancing?

## **4.4 CONCLUSION**

Sub-question: How can relevant concepts such as liminality, heterotopia and liturgical-inculturation contribute to the understanding of current spiritual behaviour and in managing future possibilities for liturgical-praxis?

The proper management of transformation in all forms, is a responsibility for Christians individually as well as for the Reformed tradition. Pilgrimage is all about transformation but especially on the spiritual side. Chapter four introduced three concepts to facilitate transformation from three disciplines, anthropology, philosophy and theology, reflecting the multi-disciplinary nature of this research.

With the Practical Theology framework of Chapter two, the methodological design and interpretation model in Chapter three, the concepts for transformation in Chapter four, the research continues into Chapter Five, exploring the history and meaning of pilgrimage.



## CHAPTER 5

### HISTORY AND MEANING OF PILGRIMAGE AND LABYRINTH

#### 5.1 HISTORY OF PILGRIMAGE

##### 5.1.1 Introduction

Pilgrimage could be described as a religious phenomenon where a pilgrim departs on a journey to a specific destination (Yeary, 2010:37). Pilgrimages to holy destinations became popular at certain times in history, mostly by foot and completely dependent on the goodwill of people along the road for food and shelter. With adversity part of pilgrimage, complete commitment and dedication was required from any pilgrim for weeks or months to reach an end destination. A pilgrim's whole life was involved with personal safety not a priority.

In an ideal situation one could say that a profound relationship with God was the purpose of a pilgrimage, expressed in a physical way with the practicalities of the journey and the end destination, involving the physical, emotional, personal and spiritual facets of a human being and the desired outcome of a transformed individual. The joy and worship following this is expressed in Psalm 122 where the presence of God is experienced at the temple.

##### 5.1.2 Pilgrimage in Scripture

To journey is a theme that runs through Scripture and in Deut 26:5 reference to Jacob is made with: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor". Jacob is considered to be the father of the three monotheistic faiths, Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Paul assured Christians that they are "...spiritual offspring of Abraham" in Rom 4:1-17, and therefore always sojourners in any land as our "...citizenship in heaven". Phil 3:20, implicates that we are "...looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and maker is God" (Hebr 11:10) with joy in our hearts (Rom 5:1-5), constantly living in a mode of detachment to follow God to the Promised Land.

The pilgrim of today with a different cultural context has to apply the principles from Scripture in daily practical situations for faith to make sense. Personal circumstances play a huge role in pilgrimage today (Yeary, 2010:ix). To follow the pilgrimage of faith theme

through Scripture can provide pilgrims from the Reformed tradition with Biblical guidelines and principles in an environment of uncertainty and the unknown.

In following the thread of pilgrimage through Scripture, the guidelines or principles are indicated in bold Italic print. Although these principles are applicable for every Christian, the researcher focused here exclusively on the relevance for pilgrimage, highlighting the golden thread that runs through the whole of Scripture.

### 5.1.2.1 Pilgrimage of faith with Abraham and Sarah (Gen 11:31-12:3)

How Abram and Sarai got detached from the land Ur, provide the pilgrim of today with guidance as *events were taken out of their hands*. With the death of Haran, the brother of Abram, their father Terah decides to move away without any indication that God made him too. It seems more out of grief but with the implication that Abram and Sarai went with. It only becomes clear in Gen 15 that God made this happen as He then called upon them to go further to Canaan (Yeary, 2010:1-2,6-8).

Transparency about Abram's character plays a role as he is exposed as afraid and lying to others about Sarai as his wife in Gen 12:5, 10-20 but then his faith in God shows the other side as he *believes in God to provide* him with a heir, *in spite of evidence* and this is regarded as a very important act of faith, compared to that of "He has risen" states Yeary (2010:7).

Gen 16:1-16 demonstrates to a modern pilgrim of faith what happens *if one try to intervene* with God's plan, as Sarai's plan with Hagar, turned out to be. This is not about what is right or wrong but about detecting from the relationship with God and guidance from the Holy Spirit, *when to intervene and when not*. This often asks for self-discipline and detachment from self-interest and this is the spiritual path of pilgrimage, which must be coming from the next guideline identified. Gen 17:1-8 shows that becoming part of God's people, asks for a *change of identity*, as Abram becomes Abraham and Sarai becomes Sarah (Yeary, 2010:8-12). Obviously there is much more than just a change in name as the change in names represents a change in relationship, as from then defined in the Covenant.

The concept of *spiritual friendship*, featuring prominently amongst pilgrims of the Reformed tradition, is addressed by Yeary (2010:13) referring to Gen 18:17-22, 2 Chronicles 20:7,

Isaiah 41:8 and James 2:23, describing the friendship between God and Abraham. Spiritual friendship is elaborated on in Chapter seven of this study.

An important principle or guideline for pilgrimage is that *life does not have to be fair*. This is illustrated by God's expectation that Abraham should offer Isaac to Him. God did not interfere with Abraham until the very last moment, emphasising the importance of *human responsibility in choices and obedience* (Yeary, 2010:13-15). To find one's balance between own responsibility and not to intervene with God's plan, is a constant challenge that demands an open communication channel between God and the pilgrim. Again Augustine sets an example in his famous "The Confessions" and "City of God" with a life attitude embedded in the metaphor of Scripture as a "marinade for life experiences" according to Rylaarsdam (2006:97).

#### 5.1.2.2 Pilgrimage of faith during the Exodus

The pilgrimage of faith theme continues during the Exodus period as Moses is born into *circumstances out of his hands but still part of God's journey* with His people. As Moses has to flee from Egypt, he probably saw it as an escape according to Yeary (2010:22) but it turned out to be a major step in his pilgrimage, *journeying with God, with the encouraging words from God "I will be with you"* in Ex 2:23-3:14. These words should be an integral part of every Christian pilgrim of the Reformed tradition's journey, as confirmed by Ex 15:1-18 where the Song of Moses indicates that there is a *foundational relationship between God and His people that must always be the focus of pilgrimage*, as many other distractions may happen on the way, mislead pilgrims, difficult to understand, but not taking away that God is on His way with His covenant and His people.

Ex 16:1-3 addresses the question so often heard amongst Christians, "*where is God in all of this*", when confronted with confusing circumstances, as it can be compared with Moses and God's people in the dessert without food, hungry and in a hopeless situation. Again the pilgrimage theme is declared in Deut 8:3-5 with God still in control of the journey, learning them *self-discipline*, showing them enough *to follow Him even if they don't understand* (Yeary, 2010:29-30).

In the Promised Land His people developed their culture and religion, later called Israel, Joshua 9:3-15, 13:13 and later became one nation with one capital, Jerusalem. As they were

driven into Exile again by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:1-12), in 587 BC, God was still with His people and the journey continued. Following the pilgrimage narrative, imagining the mixed feelings and emotions of His nation, it provides a framework of reference for any Christian pilgrim from the Reformed tradition.

### 5.1.2.3 Pilgrimage of faith during Exile and afterwards

Psalm 122 gives wording to the despair and hopelessness and Ps 137:1-6 to the bitterness after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (2 Kings 25:1-11) with the pilgrimage lesson of *never to become complacent*. No situation should ever be taken for granted.

*Hope must be present at all times for the children of God* and in Lamentations 3:18-24 and verse 22 to be specific, hope featured again, an important lesson for the pilgrim. In Ezra 1:1-6, fifty years later, the return to Jerusalem and the rebuild of the temple were granted by Cyrus, of the Persian Empire after the overthrow of Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon with Isaiah 44:28 referring to the Hand of God, in Cyrus's decision (Yeary, 2010:36-45).

The *adversity element of pilgrimage of faith* is demonstrated by the fact that God's people adjusted in the civilised society of Babylon and now they have to return to a destroyed Jerusalem and have to rebuild it, bringing forth another principle of pilgrimage namely always *out of the comfort zone into the unknown*.

The Exile brought major changes as their pre-Exile language was Hebrew, while in post-Exile it became Aramaic. Scripture was preserved and restored in a "foreign" language as well as all the traditions, history and faith. Interpretation of Scripture by Ezra has become the guidance factor in faith with the implication that there was a shift in religion and the Torah became central in religious practices (Nehemiah 8:1-8). The interpretation of Yeary (2010:47) of these events is that *Scripture has the power to speak in a fresh and powerful way* and therefore Scripture is known as the living Word of God.

The pilgrimage of faith theme also relates to Matthew 2:13b-21 when Joseph and Maria flee from Herod the Great, into the unknown, detach from the known. Jesus introduced a new concept to pilgrimage of faith called *discipleship, as a central theme* (Yeary, 2010:54).

#### 5.1.2.4 Pilgrimage and Psalms

Psalms speaks of pilgrimage in the most eloquent way and especially Psalms 120 to 134 specifically known as the Psalms of the pilgrim, all with the title ‘A song of Ascents’, refer to pilgrimage in more than one way. The destination, longing to God’s presence, God’s protection on the way, the blessings going with pilgrimage and the joy of community and for being with others, are central themes in these Psalms. Ps 84 also has pilgrimage as theme and could be regarded as the Psalm that describes pilgrimage in the best way.

#### 5.1.2.5 Pilgrimage of faith and Jesus

Mark 1:1-18 emphasises to believe in Christ means *your cross will be revealed to you*, a costly discipleship according to Mark 8:34 in contrast with the emphasis today on the Gospel of Good News (Yearly, 2010:58). To become a pilgrim has consequences for a pilgrim and not all of it is good news for the pilgrim or the friends or relatives. Pilgrimage changes something in a person and this does not suite everybody. Many Christians comment that they are too afraid to go on a pilgrimage and any kind of excuse will be made with the possibility that they know intuitively something will be asked from them that they do not want to let go off.

John 1:35-39 and John 15:4 teach that discipleship means “remaining” or to stay with Christ, which may add meaning to pilgrimage as not always wandering off but *the opposite can be true in what is asked and that is “to stay” or “to remain”* (Yearly, 2010:62). Pilgrimage from a Reformed tradition perspective can go either way, instead of a physical journey, it may also mean “to stay”, depending circumstances.

In Matthew 10:5-10 Christian pilgrims are called to *live the fullness of God’s presence in their reality* with their gifts and Luke 9:28b-33, 51-52a, confirming that the Kingdom is made known with actions, deeds of healing and liberation of evil with *prayer that reveals His glory* (Yearly, 2010:65-67).

Pilgrimage of faith as in the Emmaus narrative in Luke 24:13-35, forms the basis of chapter six of this research project. The *principle of sojourners in this world*, is described in 1 Peter 1:1-2, 17-19, while Hebrews 12:1 shows pilgrims to *never fear loneliness*, as pilgrims are surrounded by many witnesses that undertook a pilgrimage of faith throughout history.

Yeary (2010:73-74) emphasises the *role of prayer in pilgrimage of faith*, with God the pilgrim's companion in every step of the way. He who had promised Moses *"I will be with you"* in Ex 3:12, repeats Himself with Jesus saying "I am with you always, until the end of the age" in Matt 28:20.

The Christian pilgrim of the Reformed tradition, with personal circumstances could find comfort in the message from Scripture that the unforeseen and events out of personal control, are part of life. Acceptance of this and sensitivity for what God expects should be the focus. This message in Scripture is confirmed over and over again. Therefore pilgrims should follow the example of Augustine, searching for the presence of God in what seems to be small things and inconsequential, as He is present in every moment (Rylaarsdam, 2006:95).

Pilgrims of faith in current times, find comfort in God presence in events that have an impact on personal lives and it does not have to make sense at any moment, with sense or a mission only to be revealed by God at a later stage, if ever as with Abram in Gen 15. These guidelines become powerful in the surrendering to God's presence and trust *in Him whatever the circumstances*.

### 5.1.3 PILGRIMAGE AND THE EARLY CHURCH

The origins of pilgrimage in the post-Biblical times can be found in the work of the well-known church historian, Eusebius of Caesarea (260-339AD), describing how the bones of the martyr Polycarp (156AD) were preserved by Christians, accompanied by a tradition of remembrance every year (Walker, 2004:74). This is an example of how the tradition of pilgrimage was continued after Biblical times as travelling to these sites were meant to strengthen faith.

The New Testament provides clear principles for worshipping, to be focused on God alone and this is the point of departure for this research from a Reformed perspective. Interpretation of the words of Jesus in Matt 23:27 confirms that worship should never be aimed at anything else besides God. The essence should always be worship in "spirit and truth" according to John 4:23-24, not dependent on anything else, according to Heb 4:14-16; 10:19-22, like "...geographical stimuli or other types of intermediary" (Walker, 2004:74). This is also confirmed by Acts 1:8 encouraging Christians to be fully detached from places like Jerusalem and to be focused on taking the Word to the "...ends of the earth".

The first three centuries after Christ and the Apostles could be seen as the time of detachment from Jerusalem as the city did not play a role in the development of Christian faith, mainly because of socio-political circumstances. Jerusalem was not in the hands of Christians, totally destroyed with all of its biblical sites, precious to Christians and Jews, destroyed or covered with shrines for pagan deities. Jerusalem was rebuilt in AD 130 as a pagan Roman city called 'Aelia Capitolina'. It was dangerous to travel to Jerusalem at any stage during the first three centuries as persecution could still happen at any given moment. Nevertheless, some Christians did visit Jerusalem in the first three centuries because of various reasons, some for reasons of faith and others as scholars to verify historical facts. From church historian, Eusebius of Caesarea (260-339AD), we learn about two visits to Jerusalem of importance. Alexander, bishop of Cappadocia, went to Jerusalem around AD 200 for reasons of faith and when asked to stay in Jerusalem, he did. Around AD 230, Origen, an Egyptian theologian went to Jerusalem to investigate biblical sites. Although there were other pilgrims going to Jerusalem, not much is known about them and they were few.

This was the situation for the first three centuries which stayed basically the same from a Christian perspective. During this period of time of the Early Church, the place Jerusalem's identity transformed to a "heavenly Jerusalem", according to Paul in Gal 4:26 and Hebr 12:22, ensuring Christian focus to be on God and the exalted Christ, and not on any earthly place or concept according to Col 3:1 and John 4:23-24 (Walker, 2004:76). As history evolved places became necessary for practical reasons and this was centralised around the cultural and political circumstances of the time. These places happened to be Rome, Antioch and Alexandria (Walker, 2004:77).

Pilgrimage to Santiago started during the first century as pilgrims wanted to visit the grave of Saint James (Post, 1998b:206). Everything changed in the fourth century with Constantine who became the ruler of the whole Roman Empire (324AD) and strategically decided that he needed symbols to unite east and west and this is how Jerusalem became a priority. At the turn of the century three Christian historical sites were identified, although Eusebius, the church historian, refers to this as 'three mystical caves' (Walker, 2004:81). Churches were built at the sites where Jesus was said to be born, at the resurrection and the ascension, to play a huge role in Christianity of the time with pilgrimages as a continuation of the Old and New

Testament to these sites that became popular and part of the Christian worshipping tradition (Walker, 2004:81). Pilgrimage became re-established in this way.

In this period warnings were heard against the human tendency to make faith “easier” for the human mind with visible places to bring God closer to the human and thus more controllable. The danger of abusing pilgrimage and certain places in the expression of faith is nothing else than the rest of life, the same as any other segment of faith expression and there should always be an awareness and sensitivity for pitfalls. But this, on the other hand, does not mean that there is not huge value in using pilgrimage as a spiritual tool.

“El Camino de Santiago” was well-established in the beginning of the twelfth century for pilgrims visiting the grave of St James in Santiago and authors at that stage mention the existence of four starting points in France namely: Arles, Le Puy, Orleans and Vezelay (Post, 1998b:206).

“Pilgrimage is a geographical travelling (in space) which enables an imaginative travelling (in time)...” opening up space and time for Divine intervention as pilgrimage is “...historical enquiry bathed in prayer” (Walker, 2004:88). The value of the history of pilgrimage is that it connects a modern day pilgrim with the historical path of faith development, providing a holistic perspective, enabling discernment in current experiences.

#### **5.1.4 PILGRIMAGE TOWARDS THE MIDDLE AGES**

The period from the eleventh century until the early sixteenth century is described as the golden age of pilgrimage and the estimation is that one-fifth of the population in Europe was involved with pilgrimage in one way or another, either as a pilgrim or servicing pilgrims on their way (Bradley, 2010:44).

Various reasons were responsible for this situation and not all of it was spiritual as people used pilgrimage to get away from personal circumstances, for the adventure in it and even to get away from the Roman Catholic church, dominating society. As pilgrimage became more popular amongst people the church started to regulate pilgrimage more and it became part of a system for penances and punishments. From the twelfth century onwards pilgrimage became part of the church and the state’s judicial punishment and courts were sending people



on pilgrimages with verdicts (van Herwaarden, 2005). In the church a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela was only given in the most serious cases.

In time the Roman Catholic Church developed a notion of purgatory in which people can reduce their sins of debt, especially for after life and the tradition grew in momentum. Jerusalem was the most popular of all destinations for pilgrims with Rome the most popular within Europe. The spirit of the time is captured in the sermon of Jacques de Vitry: “...for just as a man sins with all his limbs, so too must he make reparation with all of them” (Birch, 1999:84). Relics became important in the Roman Catholic tradition because of the decree by the Council of Nicaea in AD 787, which became one of the main criticisms from the Reformers (Bradley, 2010:44). From literature study the researcher came across the claim of Canterbury Cathedral with the shrine of St Thomas, that they are in possession of a piece of clay which God used when He created Adam (Bradley, 2010:50). The term ‘hospital’ relates to pilgrimage and comes from this period of time, used in AD 800 for the first time, to indicate places where care was taken of sick pilgrims (Bradley, 2010:52).

Statistics from Saint Gilles du Gard in the south of France provides research with valuable information to get an indication of the pilgrimage extend at the height of the golden age at the end of the twelfth century. This town was situated on route for pilgrims on their way to Rome, Santiago and the Holy Land and records show that 100 000 pilgrims were passing through per week, while by estimation pilgrims to Santiago numbered at two million per year. (Bradley, 2010:57).

### **5.1.5 PILGRIMAGE IN THE MIDDLE AGES**

In a sense current times could to a certain extent be compared with what happened during the Middle Ages as social behaviour and existence become revolutionised with new possibilities for human behaviour, such as human consciousness, exploring the new and unknown, exposure to other cultures and religions, as travel became accessible to ordinary people (Dyas, 2004:93). Therefore there is a lot to learn from the Middle Ages in the current pilgrimage interest and development of spirituality for the basic elements stayed the same, such as the expression of faith and worship, pitfalls of pilgrimage and that pilgrims still appropriate meaning for themselves in exercising spiritual tools such as pilgrimage (Dyas, 2004:95).

Although criticism on pilgrimage is expressed in the Middle Ages by the Reformers, aimed at the emphasis on earthly destinations and physical activities in worshipping God, the basic understanding in both these periods, is based on Biblical understanding of the pilgrimage as metaphor for pilgrims making their way through life towards a heavenly destination (Dyas, 2004:95).

#### **5.1.5.1 Pilgrimage and the Reformation**

The most important fact for the Reformed tradition today, is to know that there is no Biblical or theological grounds for a negative attitude towards pilgrimage, even though the perception is that the Reformers were strongly against pilgrimage (Tomlin, 2004:119). The lack of knowledge is responsible for prejudices and scepticism amongst some in the Reformed tradition, paving the way to the marginalisation that some pilgrims experience after returning from a pilgrimage to their community of faith.

It must be stated categorically that the strong views of Luther and Calvin against pilgrims and pilgrimage were related to the abuse of this spiritual tool by the Roman Catholic tradition at that point and time (Tomlin, 2004:119). Abuse in many ways was present during the time of the Reformers, therefore pilgrimage, and all other rituals and symbols were scrutinised by the Reformers, leading to the perception that pilgrimage is not part of the Reformed tradition (Tomlin, 2004:110). In general Calvin came out stronger than Luther against pilgrimages but this was influenced by the practical situation of the day in Wittenberg as Luther's patron, Frederick the Wise, lived close by and he bought heavily into relics and possessed a huge collection of relics. This must have tempered Luther in a way.

This did not prevent Luther from criticism on pilgrimages and he says the following in his *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* in 1520: "...all pilgrimages should be dropped. There is no good in them: no commandment enjoins them, no obedience attaches to them. Rather do these pilgrimages give countless occasions to commit sin and to despise God's commandments" (Tomlin, 2004:110).

The added value of taking note of the opinions of the Reformers, besides rectifying the wrong perception amongst Reformed Christians regarding pilgrimage, is to learn about dangers for pilgrims in current times, especially amongst Christians from the Reformed tradition, who are not experienced in this field and exposed to situations outside their frame of reference.

Therefore the Reformed tradition has to guide the responsible development of pilgrimage as a spiritual tool, given the growing interest amongst Reformed Christians currently.

The intention of the Reformation was to clear the arena of worship from the abuse and distractions that was going on at that time in the Roman Catholic tradition. The Reformation wanted to focus on the honour of God and all accompanying actions of Christians had to be aligned with that, therefore Luther emphasised that mind and heart should be on the same page, which made Tomlin (2004:111) to say: “What distinguishes good pilgrimage from bad is motivation”.

Martin Luther, one of the Reformers but not part of the Reformed tradition, addresses pilgrimage in his *Explanations of the 95 Theses* with specific reference to the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, amongst others (Tomlin, 2004:111). As relics were highly in demand in Luther’s time and abused for mostly financial reasons by the Roman Catholic tradition, Luther emphasises strongly the spiritual value of suffering as a relic to the example of Christ. This was in contrast to the dominant theological environment and experience of faith orientated towards a theology of merit and good works, meaning less dependence on God, where the human being becomes prominent in deserving grace and salvation. Luther expressed himself strongly against the notion that God is to be found at the end destination of a pilgrimage, as it is contradictory to the Reformed principle that God is everywhere and therefore there is no need to travel to certain places in order to meet God (Tomlin, 2004:113). Luther also warned against pilgrimage as an escape route from normal daily duties and said pilgrims should always be involved with their local church as the body of Christ while the financial gain and corruption around pilgrimage to the benefit of clergy of the Roman Catholic tradition, found in Luther an explicit opponent (Tomlin, 2004:114-115).

Calvin came out strongly against the abuse of pilgrimage, the corruption involved and stated that pilgrimage is not required by Scripture, that no merit can be the objective of any human being’s actions, that vows should not play a role, as well as relics of the saints, for this became the focus of pilgrims of his time and he warned that it could easily become the “...parent of idolatry”, instead of the presence of God who could be found anywhere, especially in the Word and the sacraments (Tomlin, 2004:116-117). For Calvin, the Reformed principle of synergy between heart, mind and body is the principle which should

guide any pilgrim to focus on God alone, allowing no distractions at all. Calvin came close to reject pilgrimage totally because of all the wrong doings in his time, related to pilgrimage.

### **5.1.6 PILGRIMAGE AFTER THE MIDDLE AGES UNTILL CURRENT TIMES**

After the Middle Ages and the Reformation that started in 1517, the Roman Catholic tradition experienced many changes and the political situation changed with the downfall of the Armada in Spain and an invasion was expected (Van Herwaarden, 1974:159-161). A journey to the Holy Land also became nearly impossible with the agitation between Christianity and the Muslims. Another reason for pilgrimages to Santiago to become less was because of the upcoming of regional pilgrimages, which was much shorter in time and distance, achievable and less dangerous (Van Herwaarden, 1974:161).

In the nineteenth century a pilgrimage revival was experienced because of factors like a journey to the Holy Land became possible again and in 1854 the change in dogma regarding Mary and the Lourdes miracle in 1858, boosted regional and local pilgrimages (Van Herwaarden, 1974:163).

Vidal (1996) states that although the Reformed principle states that God is everywhere and not to be found in just certain places, history and human experiences indicate that some places, called “thin places” seems to be more transparent than others and in experiencing God’s presence and people will always feel the need to visit places like these.

In recent times spiritual tourism has become a major factor in pilgrimage (Van Herwaarden, 1974:165). Pilgrimage routes are upgraded, re-opened and newly developed all over the world, in countries like Australia, United Kingdom, Norway, etc. The Italian government invested a huge amount in the restoration of one of the most famous pilgrimage routes from France to Rome, called the *Via Francigena* (Bradley, 2010:13). An organisation was established recently by the European Commission, called Cammini d’Europa, based in Rome, specifically aimed at the promotion and development of Europe’s historical routes, of which the Camino and Via Francigena are the most important. There is also a socio-political objective behind this as pilgrimage is seen as one of the natural ways to build synergy amongst the different cultures currently still in process to build their unity within the European Union.

The growth in numbers of pilgrims on the Camino reflects the growing interest in pilgrimage for since 1982 when an average of a hundred pilgrims per year were counted, the number went to five hundred in 1984 and in 1987 it increased to one thousand five hundred per year and in 1989 the number of pilgrims were twenty two thousand five hundred and one (Post, 1998b:221).

## **5.2 PILGRIMAGE AND MEANING**

### **5.2.1 Descriptions of pilgrimage**

In order to provide a comprehensive understanding of pilgrimage, a description from several authors and sources follows:

Pilgrimage is a practical and demonstrable way of seeking. It is a sure way of putting beliefs and commitment to the crucible. It digs up the answers from deep within. Whilst physically uncomfortable, it provides spiritual reassurance and comfort. You can walk and talk, in largely uninterrupted measure, with God. Give Him an inch, and He will show you the mile. Go the mile and He will remain with you on your life's journey (Baldwin, 2001:82).

Pilgrimages symbolize the experience of the homo viator who sets out, as soon as he leaves the maternal womb, on his journey through the time and space of his existence. This is the fundamental experience of Israel which is marching towards the promised land of salvation and of full freedom; the experience of Christ who rose to heaven from the land of Jerusalem, thus opening the way towards the Father: the experience of the Church which moves on through history towards the heavenly Jerusalem: the experience of the whole humankind which tends towards hope and fullness. Every pilgrim should confess: 'By the grace of God, I am a human person and a Christian; by my actions, a great sinner; by my condition a pilgrim without a roof, of the lowliest species that goes wandering place to place.' This quote is from *The Great Pilgrimage in the Jubilee*, (1998:1).

To be a pilgrim is to opt of one society and join another. To be a pilgrim is to tear away from the standard way of thinking. As a pilgrim you aim towards the unknown. In an age stamped by individualism and self-assertion, the pilgrim dares towards humility: there is no class distinction on the way. People will take you for what you are, not what you represent (Luthen, 1997:18).

Augustine once referred to travel saying: “The world is a great book, of which they who never stir from home, read only a page” (Riggles, 1995:12). Morinis (1992:56) writes in his book *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*: “We make our journeys, and they make us.” Another quote reads: “One does not go on a pilgrimage to stay, but to pass through a privileged experience that will change us in unsuspected and uncontrolled ways so that we return to ordinary life in a completely new way” or “...we re-enter society as a changed, renewed human being” (Elizondo, 2003:14).

Pilgrimage has a spiritual formation impact on the lives of pilgrims as their existential experiences lead them to deepen and cultivate their religious identity and re-orientate their value system onto Christ (Elizondo, 2003:9).

### **5.2.2 Presence in religious traditions**

Pilgrimage is a feature of all major religious traditions. Muslims travel to Mecca which is one of the five foundations of the Muslim tradition, Jews visit the remains of the western wall of the temple in Jerusalem, which is called the Wailing Wall, Hindus call pilgrimage ‘tirtha’, meaning a bridge to the divine, with many pilgrimage sites usually close to rivers, Buddhists have a whole network pilgrimage sites of which each is associated with an episode in the life of Buddha and of which the Golden Temple in the Punjab is the most prominent (Bradley, 2010:11-12).

Pilgrimages are also popular amongst the Jianists as well as the Japanese. The biggest ever spiritual event occurred in 2001 during a Hindu special pilgrimage when 25 million people participated on one single day (Bradley, 2010:12).

### **5.2 3 Motivations to become a pilgrim**

People decide to become a pilgrim in their search for a deeper level of spirituality, mental, physical and psychological healing with components of adventure, change in lifestyle, broadened horizons, a different experience, simplicity, silence, to become less self-orientated, start with something new, or sometimes with more specific personal identified objectives (Bradley, 2010:16).

Pilgrimage is often associated with the term liminality, described in Chapter four (4.1.2) leading to ‘thin places’ where crossing of thresholds happen much easier than in ordinary life and the different perceptions of realities are more accessible (Bradley, 2010:21).

(Turner & Turner, 2011 (1978)) describe the pilgrimage culture as a community of equality, freed during this period of time from any other status and roles and therefore challenged by their basic identity. The global social environment of current day also contributes to the popularity of pilgrimage today with career mobility on global level, people travel more than ever before and with the increasing pace of life, all of this leads to the paradox that more people realise the need to be grounded and this is where pilgrimage fits in (Elizondo, 2003:7).

This realisation has led to a quest of the soul for ultimate meaning, for an encounter with the sacred. In this milieu many people feel the restless urge to go on a spiritual pilgrimage to places where the presence and power of God has manifested. “There is something about seeing a sacred place that, in a way, demystifies it. It also makes it, and all it represents, more real” (Budd, 1989:12). Such a visit can disclose ultimate meaning and a clearer understanding of life. The journey becomes an agent for development and change that affirms faith, nurtures life, and is the epitome of Christian experience for followers of Jesus (Duncan, 2001:11).

Many questions can be asked about the reasons for the rise in popularity of modern day pilgrimage and certainly these questions are very important for the purpose of this research. This creates a situation where Reformed Christians go against their religious upbringing, to cross religious and cultural boundaries to go on to old medieval routes. This phenomenon could be an indication of a transformation process of pilgrimage, indicating continuity of the old tradition but at the same time a discontinuity from what meaning used to be (Post, 1998b:224,238). The possibility is that people become so needy for personal growth and healing that alternative ways are explored and this perspective could fit global social behaviour change patterns.

The interest in pilgrimage as social phenomenon could be a reaction to the overwhelming effect of technology and loads of information, uncertainty due to constant change in the culture of the working environment and experiences in relationships. Pilgrimage could be the expression of a need for grounding in an ever-growing detached world. Pilgrimage could be

modern man's intuitive reaction to use spiritual tools that stood the test of time and can make a difference to the quality of life.

According to (Post, 1998b:224) the recent interest in pilgrimage is something different to what it was through all the ages, with less emphasis on the spiritual element and more towards the human need side. This may implicate a turn away from the religious towards the social-existential. Pilgrimage provides an open space, an enchanted space, within a world of modernistic thoughts, a space where anything can happen, the birth of new perspectives, detachment from cultural and religious paradigms, with a new interpretation and realisation of the freedom in Christ which is God's gift.

Salomonsson (1984:45-46) made a valuable contribution in saying that research should turn towards the underlying ideas with social behaviour, to "...analyze the motivational forces of the process". In this context the outcome of pilgrimage has to be what the pilgrim appropriated for the self with own interpretations and this seems to be more orientated towards the emotional experience than spiritual, according to Assion (1982/1983) who describes pilgrimage as the expression of a new form of religion of which ritual behaviour fulfils a function in context of the social-cultural.

Post (1998b:226) emphasise the importance of research sensitivity towards shifts in perspective, variation in meaning and how meaning is created as well as the function of ritual, the meaning and the change coming from function, once that is determined.

"Musealization", meaning the transformation of negative past into the present with beauty as the outcome, is introduced as a feature of pilgrimage by Post (1998b:234-236) who explained the concept with "...vessel-ritual", where the pilgrim becomes the "...actor in a performed reality", responsible for the change of context and function. Pilgrimage could become more of a metaphor for life with concepts like this in daily life as it can transform daily experiences into holy ones, bringing one closer to God, experiencing God in the little things of daily live.

The challenge for the Reformed tradition with the renewed interest in pilgrimage is to determine if this is just a continuity of the old tradition or is it in its present form rather a discontinuity with the old tradition. In a sense it is a continuity of the pilgrim tradition as it is attached to the old routes of the Christian tradition and in a sense it is a discontinuity as it changed in terms of the modern pilgrims view, differentiated interpretation according to the



individual pilgrim, which may differ from one pilgrim to the other according personal needs in which the “vessel-ritual” is filled with the religious or the spiritual or not (Post, 1998b:238).

#### **5.2.4 Pitfalls and dangers of pilgrimage**

Similar dangers are present today for pilgrims as in the time of Luther and Calvin. Therefore it is necessary for the Reformed tradition to take into consideration today what was identified in the time of the Reformation as pitfalls and dangers, in developing the pilgrimage concept today. It is clear from literature that both Luther and Calvin were strongly against how pilgrimage as a spiritual tool was applied within the religious community of their time. However, all of their criticism was against how pilgrimage was used and not about the concept itself (Tomlin, 2004:119).

Tomlin (2004:120-124) mentions some principles to be taken into consideration in developing pilgrimage from a Reformed perspective. Pilgrimage should be seen as just another spiritual tool with no exceptional value or merit for the pilgrim. The value of it can be seen in the same way as prayer in a Christian’s life as it is another way of worshipping. Some Christians pray regularly with a God-orientated approach while other Christians hardly ever pray, emphasising the importance of personal motivation and intention in faith experiences embedded in the teachings of Christ.

This implies an ethical responsibility in any involvement with pilgrimage, starting with the intention of the pilgrim, the relationship with a host or stranger that may cross the road of a pilgrim. Tomlin (2004:121) indicates the vulnerability of people in the pilgrimage spiritual space by stating they are: “...open-minded and open-hearted...vulnerable to abuse”.

Pilgrimage has many implications for business possibilities as spiritual tourism. The intention and motivation should reflect in activities and itineraries with local communities where involvement, visits, interaction and mutual benefit, could be observed in contrast to a self-orientated attitude of tourists ignoring the realities of poverty and other social circumstances around destinations (Tomlin, 2004:121).

Pilgrimage applied correctly, should strengthen any pilgrims attachment and involvement with the pilgrim’s faith community at home. When this is not the case, it means that the

pilgrim is influenced by external factors with a negative effect on the motivation and intention of a pilgrim. The temple of God is now anywhere and everywhere and is to be experienced at any place where His Body manifests in Christians coming together (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19).

### **5.2.5 Spiritual friendship**

A pilgrimage is the purest form of Christian community that is forged out of the blessing of hospitality when strangers become friends on the road and at the various resting places along the way (Duncan, 2001:14).

Rooted in this thread of hospitality, years later Paul wrote in his *Letter to the Romans*: “Extend hospitality to strangers”. In *The Letter to the Hebrews* the writer warns, “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it”.

Hospitality is a way for the community of faith to celebrate the way God created diversity and celebration starts with sharing at God’s table with Eucharist. Therefore spaces of hospitality, to apply the heterotopias concept, could assist for people to connect with each other, across different traditions and social boundaries, as partners in learning. This is the space that the Camino pilgrimage presents for pilgrims on a journey of faith, discovering a new identity in the travelling companionship of others or in many cases an identity stripped from whoever the pilgrim has become in life. In such a social-theological paradigm a community is formed on the road that presents the context for the life-changing experience a pilgrimage is meant to be.

From an overwhelming load of information on spiritual friendship shared with the researcher by Prof Lee at the Princeton Theology Seminary, the researcher chose one for the purpose of this study to further enlighten the concept of spiritual friendship, written by Bernard of Clairvaux, in the form of a conversation between Aelred, Walter, Gratian and Ivo. The researcher processed the conversation coming from three books for the purpose of this research and what is to follow is from Bernard of Clairvaux (1983:233-251).

Spiritual friendship is driven by the conviction of a need and possibility for spiritual friendship in the deepest sense of the word with its possible origin to be found in Gen 2:18:

“It is not good for man to be alone, let us make him a helper like himself” (Bernard of Clairvaux, 1983:233).

Ivo, the one participant is driven by a desire to know more and is inquiring further. Both participants in the conversation have read Cicero’s definition of friendship which reads: ‘Friendship is mutual harmony in human and divine affairs, together with benevolence and charity’, based on Rom 12:15: ‘Love of a friend is like a garden, where we can rejoice in his joys, and weep in his sorrows’. Spiritual friendship is hard to find and asks for perseverance in what is written in Mt 7:7: ‘Ask and you shall receive’, to be able to experience what is written in Acts 4:32: ‘...having all things in common’ (Bernard of Clairvaux, 1983:234).

Later in the conversation Aelred defines carnal friendship as ‘...lustful eyes and ears turned outwards’, (Ezekiel 16:25), filled with desire for material and profitable advantages, and the researcher immediately thinks about current culture summarised with: “what is in it for me”, while in contrast spiritual friendship is driven by: ‘...prudence, ruled by justice, guarded by fortitude and moderated by temperance” (Bernard of Clairvaux, 1983:235-236). A follow up input in the conversation says friendship in the true sense of the word is nothing else than wisdom, as God is friendship (1 John 4:16 and 1 John 5:16).

The conversation continues in Book II on the topic of spiritual maturity and fruitfulness of friendship with the question raised of what is the value and purpose of spiritual friendship and the answer that follows states spiritual friendship is happiness, (Ecclesiastes 4:10) (Bernard of Clairvaux, 1983:237). Spiritual friendship is described as the medicine of life (Gal 6:2, John 15:15) and can be seen as the highest form of spiritual maturity with the fruits of 1 Cor 13 visible, always inspired by the love of Christ (Acts 4:32, Ps 133:1, Songs of Solomon 2:6).

A question follows about boundaries in friendship, as to when is it appropriate to draw a boundary with a special friendship, which obviously can’t be applied to all friendships and relationships but in this case the answer came with John 15:13 which refers to Christ’s example: “...lays down his life for his friend” (Bernard of Clairvaux, 1983:240). Paul provides more examples of this in 2 Cor 11:28 when he was weak with the weak, sorrowful in Rom 9:2, cherished people in 1 Thess 2:7 and filled with grief in 2 Cor 2:4, 12:21.

The profile of false and immature friendships then become the focus and is described with words like ‘aimless, playful affection, catches the attention of the passerby, lacks reason, unstable, fickle, impure motives and no discipline (Bernard of Clairvaux, 1983:242).

In Book III the conditions and characteristics of an unbroken friendship get attention as it should have a relationship with God as foundation, further described as to be carefully chosen for no secrets can be allowed and nothing must be feared in such a friendship and lastly, it should also stand the test (Bernard of Clairvaux, 1983:244). Four stages are identified namely: selection, probation, admission and perfect harmony. The selection stage is elaborated on as to avoid the irascible, fickle, suspicious and talkative (Proverbs 22:24, Eccl 7:16) with more advise coming, to choose one that suits your habits and temperament. The second phase, probation, is described as the willingness to give it time, let the friendship be tested and if it has to stop, then it should happen gradually, not with trauma, to prevent bitterness, therefore also patience with faults (Bernard of Clairvaux, 1983:244-247).

Four virtues of friendship are called affability of speech, good manners, serenity and the expression of a kind eye, while slander, revealing confidential information and fickle can destroy a friendship (Bernard of Clairvaux, 1983:250).

This section on spiritual friendship can be rounded off with the opinion of Augustine on spiritual friendship: “...someone I can jest with, sometimes quarrel with, learn from, long for in his absence, and then receive back joyfully” (Bernard of Clairvaux, 1983:251).

### **5.2.7 Pilgrimage and transformation**

Pilgrimage could promote sanctification, spiritual growth and personal transformation. Pilgrimage could bring spiritual growth to the pilgrim, more visibility of the fruit of the Holy Spirit, in serving others, in suffering and in the development of faith.

‘Pilgrimage has become a metaphor for life after completion of my pilgrimage’, are words often heard from co-researchers (Tomlin, 2004:123). Yeary (2010) investigates this in his book *Pilgrim People: a Scriptural Commentary* by asking: “...what does it mean today to be part of a people whose very identity is rooted in the belief that they belong to God and that their lives are a pilgrimage of faith” (Yeary, 2010:ix). Pilgrimage poses therefore a challenge to pilgrims in terms of lifestyle and to be more God-centred in everything (Walker, 2004:89).

Pilgrimage has the potential to become a metaphor for life with a powerful impact while also simplifying life. Pilgrimage can create a mind-frame of anticipation, a future-orientated life, releasing burdens from the past that may distract Christians from a fulfilling life. Pilgrimage could bring hope and a life attitude of no complacency.

Pilgrims could become orientated towards the destination, preventing them from getting stuck in present realities because of the eschatological element in God's Word. Pilgrimage should never be just about the travelling and it could bring the notion of the whole of life as a journey. Tomlin (2004:123) describes this attitude further in saying: "Christians, like their Lord, have nowhere to lay their heads". Pilgrimage should have the effect of enhancing the pilgrim's true identity in Christ in a world of confusion, with a positive message in a world of uncertainty.

Pilgrimage should have the effect on pilgrims where they become more supportive and involved in their local faith communities with a renewed faith and understanding of Christ as their role-model with an end destination in mind far beyond Santiago but rather the Kingdom of the Lord.

Pilgrimage is an agent for development, change and spiritual formation. Just as people have different needs and stages at various times in their lives, so "...the pilgrim-images of our lives are found in whatever identifications we may make with certain places or people, and in their significance for us. We see in them what seeks to live within us. And what we imagine we will find there is already within us, but it takes the journey to discover it" (Elizondo, 2003:23).

Pilgrimage to a sacred site may reinforce faith and commitment to Jesus Christ and basic Christian values as it describes travel with a profoundly meaningful purpose. For many, it is a rite of passage, experiencing transformation during the course of the journey. This is an impetus for deepened discipleship upon returning home from the journey (Duncan, 2001:20).

The transformational power of rituals such as pilgrimage has become an endless source for studies in various disciplines but originates from Anthropology and Arnold van Gennep (1909), to be specific, who refers to rituals accompanying transitional periods for individuals and groups (Post, 1998b:190).

(Turner & Turner, 2011 (1978)) apply the concept of liminality as explained in chapter four to pilgrimage in saying it has the effect of: “...release from mundane structure, homogenization of status, simplicity of dress and behaviour, *communitas*, both on the journey and as a characteristic of the goal...healing and renewal, ordeal, reflection on the meaning of religious and cultural core-values, ritualized re-enactment of correspondences between a religious paradigm and shared human experiences, movement from a mundane centre to a sacred periphery which suddenly, transiently, becomes central.”

Pilgrimage has definite features of liminality which includes disruption and chaos, overwhelming experiences, sensory overload, spiritual friendship, contact across boundaries into the unknown while all of this creates a challenge to the pilgrim’s current frame of Christian interpretation (Post, 1998b:192). Pilgrims are subject to intense experiences of which they have to make sense with their own meaning-belief system but sometimes confronting their own convictions. Research about the physical effect of pilgrimage done at Lourdes, which obviously is orientated more towards the Roman Catholic Church, indicates a decrease in fear and an improvement in self-confidence (Post, 1998b:185-188).

Further research on the transformational power of pilgrimage specifically focused on the Camino de Santiago de Compostela in Spain, was done by Post (Tilburg), Pieper (Nijmegen and Utrecht) and van Uden (Nijmegen and Tilburg) and the outcome indicates:

- The real impact and meaning become clear after two years
- An improved relationship with nature
- A movement closer to history and historical figures related to pilgrimage
- A more profound symbolic meaning developed for those originally meaningless articles like “backpack” for instance, and the meaning developed is towards symbolic values like emotional support, freedom and simplicity
- An improved self-relationship, an ongoing self-development in areas like forgiveness, let go, less stressed, detach easier and more socially involved, to name a few (Post, 1998b:217-218).

Given the background of Post, Pieper and van Uden which includes Liturgy and psychology of religion, the researcher would like to emphasise the need in future studies for the combination religion and self-development, taking into consideration the recommendation of

Post (1998b:219) of the relevance and need of the Psycho-social development theory of Erikson and more specific his life eight-phases about integrity, attribution-theoretical notions for its relevance to the impact of nature on the spiritual interpretation as well as the social role-theory of Sunden for spiritual experiences.

### **5.2.8 Postmodern use of pilgrimage**

Post (1998a:299-315) argues for a new way in which pilgrimage is being used in current times where pilgrimage transcends space and time to become part of daily lives in a variety of forms as the traditional form of pilgrimage is currently crossing the boundaries of church, religious tradition and the secular world.

The concept of ‘topolatry’ is introduced as Post (1998a:305) cites Korf (1996:39) who coined the term, which means the transformation of historical sites, cultural sites, places of remembrance, museums, places where disasters happened and crosses next to roads where fatal accidents took place, even places in nature, to bring the past right into the present. This transformation of the past to present happens with the musealization process, where the past is transformed from negative to the positive in the present, transformed as beauty (Post, 1998a:310-311). This is different social behaviour from the past when the past was celebrated with the anamnesis concept, recalling from the past what was to be celebrated. With ‘topolatry’ the past becomes cherished in the presence.

### **5.2.9 Pilgrimage meaning and Neuro-science**

Jones (2001:120-121) mentioned three steps in terms of the relationship of trauma with religion in Chapter six, of which the third step is about the necessity to start a new story or brain path where the reframing of events can bring about hope and healing. The contribution of Neuro-scientific research in combination with the effect of pilgrimage as ritual on the body and mind of the pilgrim need further investigation. The holistic well-being of the pilgrim is addressed in the comment of Vuijsje (2001:140) that pilgrimage was the anti-depressant of the earlier Ages. Recent research on the physical effects of the labyrinth is also applicable and addressed in the next section.

The term ‘neurotheology’ attracts attention in the academic world as it addresses the relationship between the brain and religious experience, states Newberg (2010:1), who defines brain further with the alternative of human mind. To include this section on neuro-

science is important for this research as part of the post-modern interpretation of pilgrimage as indicated in the previous section (5.2.8) for the only movement is not just across the boundaries of church, religious tradition and the secular but also in terms of science.

Latest research illustrates that from a liturgical point of view, knowledge of the brain and its different sections may have to be taken into consideration in future to be respectful towards the human being with available knowledge. In this regard different areas of the brain are involved with certain human responses like stress and the long-term effect of that on the body (Liston, 2009:912-917). The similarity between emotional and physical pain in relation to the brain area and response is another revelation (Eisenberger, 2003:290-292). A separate area of the brain is responsible for the sense of self (Newberg, 2003:282-291) and another for human abilities to cope with change (Newberg, 2010:4).

The research of d'Aquili & Laughlin's (1975, 1990) on "The biophysical determinants of religious ritual behaviour" and "Brain, symbol and experience" opens up another interesting perspective as Neurophysiology confirms the importance of ritual. It seems that ritual blocks the "...dominance of the cerebral hemisphere and neutralise the function of the analytic conceptual mode. The non-dominant right hemisphere, the locus of holistic comprehension, becomes predominant over left hemisphere, in which speech and analytical thought are located" (Lukken, 2005:62). Biological effects also applicable to the heart rate in a positive way, creating synergy on biological level as well as spiritual level, as it creates unity with creation, the self and God, as the whole brain (left and right) integration is stimulated by ritual.

The concept of neuroplasticity which refers to the ability of the brain to change its structure and function, needs to be explored within Neurotheology to improve understanding of the interaction between human behaviours, such as the ability to let go, the sense of self and other behaviours based on how the mind works (Schwartz, 2003).

Scholars who can be regarded as pioneers in the emerging field of Neurotheology are: Eugene d'Aquili (1941-1998) and James Ashbrook (1925-1999), with more recent researchers such as James Austin, Rhawn Joseph, Mario Beauregard, Patrick McNamara and Gregory Peterson. Research on rituals, spiritual experience and how it effects the body and



mind is attributed to Eugene d'Aquili, Charles Laughlin and John McManus (Newberg, 2010:12-13).

Neurotheology seems to be the term to be used in future for the combination of scientific research on the brain and theology which includes Liturgy and rituals and therefore principles to clarify this relationship will be needed to create the platform and synergy in this dialogue. Newberg (2010:14-15) cites Barbour (1990) who formulated four principles for the interaction and communication between neuro-science and theology and these are:

- management of the perception that science or religion can exclude each other in understanding the world
- acknowledge the interdependency between science and theology
- dialogue of border issues such as quantum mechanics
- integration where science and theology reflect on each other to present clarity to the world from both perspectives

The response from Practical Theology for communication on mutual interests with Neuroscience, is already stated in 2.5.3 with the heading: 'Normative task and Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue', where Osmer (2008:161-164) states the importance of cross-disciplinary dialogue between different disciplines in one conversation, referring to the relevance of Paul Tillich's work and explaining two models for such a conversation, the Transformational and Transversal model.

## **5.2.10 Labyrinth**

### **5.2.10.1 Introduction**

The inclusion of labyrinth as part of the research on pilgrimage, is because the researcher understand labyrinth as nothing else than a mini-pilgrimage. The previous section on the neuro-scientific effect and the implications for body and mind is also applicable to the labyrinth. The researcher will focus only on relevant information about the labyrinth for the purposes of this research.

The labyrinth can be interpreted in many ways, bring mind and heart together in one space and it is a spiritual tool par excellence to become focused on whatever is needed for spiritual growth or healing, detach from the complexities of life, improved self-knowledge, in a way

the simplicity of it creates awareness of materialism and it opens up space for transparency and vulnerability. The labyrinth is indeed a mini-pilgrimage. As Christians 1 Thess 5:19 is the guidance needed from Scripture: “Do not put out the Spirit’s fire”.

The labyrinth is becoming as popular as pilgrimage in contemporary time (Baker, 1997:83-87). This global spiritual phenomenon also has a growing interest in South Africa (Wepener, 2011:267). Labyrinth as ritual was treated in the same way as pilgrimage by the Reformers, therefore the lack of knowledge applicable to pilgrimage and labyrinth by the Reformed tradition, is exactly the same. The labyrinth has a mystical element and can’t be explained in exact terms as it stimulates the intuitive, pattern-seeking mind to emerge. As a spiritual tool it finds its way in the spiritual awakening and personal growth culture of today (Artress, 1996).

#### **5.2.10.2 History of the labyrinth**

In Western Christianity, the mystical path of the labyrinth is traditionally explained as a threefold path, based on the sixteenth century teachings of Saint Teresa of Avila. The three stages define the sequence or the process experienced as an “ever-deepening sense of union with the Divine” (Artress, 1996:28). Stage one, purgation, represents entering the labyrinth and the journey towards the centre, while experiencing a let go process in silence. The second stage, known as illumination, is linked to the centre of the labyrinth, a place for meditation and prayer. The final stage of union describes the journey from the centre outwards with more clarity, insights or a new found awareness (Artress, 1995).

In its earliest form and context, the labyrinth is built on mathematical principles of geometry (Conty, 1992; Pennick, 1980). The labyrinth is believed to be the oldest known symbol drawn by humans as evidenced by artifacts, have been around for thousands of years and are to be found in all major religious traditions and on all continents (Jung & von Franz, 1968). Like Stonehenge and the pyramids, they are magical geometric forms that define sacred space. This immediately put the labyrinth today in a much bigger picture than what can be seen, understood or explained in this research, with an element of the mystical and added to that, theories attach the labyrinth to the cyclical changes of the cosmos and human relationship to such movements (Purce, 1974).

During the crusades, they were used to symbolically represent the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Classical writers of antiquity from Herodotus to Plato frequently refer to the labyrinth

in some form (Reed Doob, 1990). By the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the major cathedrals in France had incorporated church labyrinths.

There are three basic designs -- seven circuit, eleven circuit, and twelve circuit. These seven circuit designs were found on pottery from over 2000 years ago. Once considered a “sacred art” the concepts utilized in sacred geometry represent the earliest and fundamental manifestations of civilization and underlie many subsequent developments in architecture and art.

### **5.2.10.3 Meaning generated from labyrinth**

Although we have ways and means to communicate better than ever, the counter effect is actually the truth and isolation is a huge result of improved technology says (Lukken, 2005:14). This leaves us with a challenge of how to tap into the inner being. (Lukken, 2005:205) poses two possibilities how to tap into the inner being and that is to reflect and symbolisation, to which the labyrinth lends itself. Rituals like pilgrimage and labyrinth enable sensory thinking which precedes all cognitive perception (Lukken, 2005:53).

The externalisation of inner communication with labyrinth as spiritual tool can be linked with the Narrative Approach, based on the philosophy of Michel Foucault and the Anthropology of Gregory Bateson in ways that place it within social constructivism (White, 1989). Social constructivism believes that knowledge is socially constructed by a group, which relates with the work of Malony (1984) and his Inter-subjective theory of truth, explained in Chapter two and eight.

Walking the labyrinth enable people to experience spiritual energy in a new way, seeking energy, insight or integration, seeking new understanding and interpretation, facilitating personal agency to experience, feel and interpret. Individuals walking the labyrinth feel empowered afterwards as the labyrinth facilitates focus on the kinaesthetic as a means to spirituality and development of spiritual energy. The space becomes intensified, meaning smaller or bigger, whatever serves the purpose, as “ritual condenses reality” states (Lukken, 2005:56). Lukken (2005:61) cites Martin (1973) whose research on rituals of feast, indicates the positive effects of rituals such as labyrinth, describing it as “openness, renewal of consciousness, presence of spirit and self-awareness”.

#### **5.2.10.4 Labyrinth's impact on body and mind**

The involvement of bodily participation activates kinaesthetic energy, based on the principles of sacred geometry upon which the labyrinth is constructed (Artress, 1996:64). Rituals such as labyrinth provides space for pre-cognitive knowledge, mainly situated in the body, to manifest (Bell, 1992:93). Grimes (1992:20) describes this pre-cognitive knowledge as intuition, somatic knowledge and the sixth sense, to externalise through ritual.

To walk a labyrinth, means walking back and forth, turning one-hundred-and-eighty degrees each time you enter a different circuit, shifting awareness from right brain to left brain and this may have the effect of a receptive states of consciousness, making each person's walk a personal experience.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

Sub-question: Is there value in studying the history and meaning of pilgrimage through the ages, in determining the current meaning of the pilgrimage phenomenon for a future orientated liturgical praxis?

In this chapter an overall view of pilgrimage is presented through history as one of the spiritual tools that stood the test of time. Wrong perceptions within the Reformed tradition are addressed and pilgrimage principles identified from Scripture. In answer to the sub-question, the determination of continuity and discontinuity may be of great value, going into the future.

The meaning enclosed in the pilgrimage concept is explored with the potential for current times for spiritual development as well as knowledge available due to modern technology from a multi-disciplinary perspective. The labyrinth is included according the researcher's view to the postmodern use of the pilgrimage concept.

Chapter six to follow, has the objective of theological grounding for the use of the pilgrimage concept as a metaphor for life and the formulation of a theology of pilgrimage.

## CHAPTER 6

### THEOLOGY OF PILGRIMAGE

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION TO A THEOLOGICAL BASIS

Reference was made in Chapter Two that Practical Theology and Liturgy Studies are the study of what people do to express their faith, the study of communicative acts in religious life (Barnard, 1998:91; Heitink, 1993:154; Pieterse, 1993:2).

This study chooses one well-known passage to develop a preliminary theology of pilgrimage. This theology will together with all the insights from all the other chapters in this study in the conclusion be integrated in order to develop a new theory for praxis in the Reformed tradition.

In the first section of this chapter emphasis is on the textual approach embedded in the historical development of what we have today in the Reformed tradition. The researcher wants to work towards a theology of pilgrimage which implicates a shift in theology. Modern day phenomenon in the world of faith and religion, referring to rituals like pilgrimage, current understanding of faith, increased participation of the individual in worshipping acts and how Christians appropriate meaning in their expression of faith, all indicate towards a renewed interpretation of Scripture. Research indicates that current faith experience resonates more with the ongoing journey of the Emmaus narrative than with the Damascus, one-moment-conversion-experience of Paul (Bradley, 2010:20).

This renewed interpretation of Scripture is embedded in the title of this research project as the pilgrimage phenomenon poses a challenge to the Reformed tradition's ritual-liturgical praxis. The practicality of this is that expressions of faith in ritual and symbols may have more than one interpretation, as God can make Himself known to man in many different ways (Miller-McLemore, 2012:101). This perspective came about as explained in 2.2.2 in this research, with the contribution of Gadamer (2004:307-309) to the hermeneutical field of the Reformed tradition, by challenging positivism, which led to the outcome that Scripture could be understood and interpreted in more than just one way. Pieterse (2001:81) also confirms that the contribution of Gadamer (2004) with his book *Truth and Method*, first published in 1960, had a transforming effect on hermeneutics.

The implication is interpretation of Scripture from understanding current hermeneutical context within current social, political, economical, and religious environment, seeking guidance from the Word (Pieterse, 2001:82). Interpretation of Scripture has to be with an eschatological perspective (Miller-McLemore, 2012:105). Current times confirm the need for practical wisdom as part of the expression of personal faith, therefore the individual process should be acknowledged as people are involved on a personal level to explore their faith (Browning, 1995:2). (Heidegger, 1962:182-195) refers to the human being as hermeneutical by nature and now has to find his way in a world already well-defined. Osmer (2008:21) emphasises the element of surprise and the unexpected in life, which so often is the experience of the pilgrim on a daily basis, confronting the pilgrim to make sense of it and often leading the pilgrim to completely new insights. Gadamer (2004:255-275) states a good understanding of one's own context, meaning knowledge and insight into the original context and pre-understanding, must include one's own prejudices. The text must also be explored, independent from anything else, the text is communication from God (Gadamer, 2004:311-314).

Pilgrimage creates a unique context where all of this mentioned above, the unexpected, experiences, wisdom, personal faith, new insights, one's own background and prejudices and of course the text from Scripture could be integrated within personal faith, for the desire and intention of a Christian pilgrim, is the presence of God and communication with God. It is therefore not out of the ordinary to hear of some unique faith experiences, how God has provided in certain circumstances and how His presence was experienced in unique ways. The integration of all these factors on an individual basis already implicates diversity of understanding or appropriating meaning in personal faith<sup>23</sup>.

According to Ricoeur (1995) and Gadamer (2004:311-312), the challenge in theology is to apply the written text in a way that will make sense in the here and now and this interpretation is exactly the spiritual need of a pilgrim, for sometimes current faith paradigm falls short and new ways of appropriating meaning has to be found. A pilgrimage is always

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<sup>23</sup> To indicate the sensitivity around a theology of pilgrimage and the diversity in interpretation, a Protestant perspective on the theology of pilgrimage comes from Sheldrake, P. 2001. *Spaces for the sacred: Place, memory, and identity*. JHU Press. who says: "The physical world, images and rituals need to be questioned because they tend to divert people from placing their security in God alone".

pedagogical, therefore an openness with no limitations should be the approach, for no pilgrim can foresee the learning that will come (Scott, 2004:151).

Wepener (2009b) states categorically that ritual as an expression of Liturgy, semi-liturgical and even those rituals not part of the Reformed tradition's activities, must be seen as a source for theology. Lukken (2005:250) also states that symbols and rituals should be the sourcing ground for theology. These contradicting views by Sheldrake (2001), Wepener (2009b) and Lukken (2005) indicate the sensitivity within the Reformed theology regarding rituals, such as pilgrimage. The view of this research project is that rituals such as pilgrimage and labyrinth for example, are to be regarded as sources in the formulation of current day theology, referring to Chapter Two and the question put forward by Osmer (2008:4) of "What is going on", as part of the task of Practical Theology.

A ritual is communication even if it does not make sense to any outsider and theology should always be prepared to find out what the appropriated meaning is to any form of ritual, to learn from it, to influence it if needed from a Reformed perspective, and then also to see in what way it could be integrated into Liturgy with inculturation (Lukken, 1984:10-45; Wegman, 1991:44-45).

The researcher's perspective is based on prominent leaders in the field of Practical Theology (Browning, 1995; Lukken, 2005; Miller-McLemore, 2012; Osmer, 2008; Wepener, 2009b; Wepener, 2011). The theological approach of Schuman (1998) is in alignment with the mentioned theologians and is used by the researcher as a first way of exploring the chosen passage from Scripture, Luke 24, the Emmaus narrative.

## **6.2 LITURGICAL BASIS FOR THEOLOGY OF PILGRIMAGE IN THE EMMAUS NARRATIVE (LUKE 24:13-35)**

Schuman (1998:23) says that people all over the world are giving expression to their faith in their own individual way but at the same time Liturgy is finding its own way with people. This reminds of the words of one of the co-researchers that you go on the Camino pilgrimage but later the Camino is finding its way with you as the pilgrim. This was confirmed in a couple of the interviews where co-researchers mentioned that something happened to them on the Camino, different from what they expected, reminding of the words of Osmer (2008:21)

that the unexpected or the surprise element also has the effect of a realisation of the personal faith, falling short to interpret or understand things as they happen.

Exposure to situations different from what they are used to, confront pilgrims to broaden their understanding of the active involvement of God in daily life. As put by one of the co-researchers: “Can one take a wrong decision?” Even if one takes the wrong way, as it may seem, events or an incident or the outcome, will prove that even what seems wrong turned out to be the right thing in the context. In these words an indication of faith been uprooted is to be found and a process of redefining the concept of personal faith in relationship with the living God.

Taking all of this into account the tendency or pattern of a self-designed faith has become the norm and Liturgy and theology should adjust to modern behaviour within the context and space of the written Word of God. Therefore the basic elements of Liturgy are essential in order for the Reformed tradition to find its way into future ways of worshipping.

Liturgy in itself has many different interpretations, in fact it can be considered a miracle once one start to discover the similarities in religious traditions (Schuman, 1998:23). Liturgy’s basic elements, in its most basic form, can be seen in all the different religions, and they are present in the narrative of Emmaus in Luke 24:13-35 (Schuman, 1998:23). Here it is described in foundational terms what the basic elements of Liturgy are and still is today, in the service of the Kingdom of God. Five elements are distinguished from the Emmaus narrative in Luke 24 namely communion amongst the children of God - as Cleopas and his companion were sharing their honest feelings and understanding of the Jerusalem events with Jesus who joined them on their journey - the central position of Scripture, prayer as a fundamental, breaking of bread together and the witnessing to others as a natural outcome (Schuman, 1998:23; Wepener, 2010:26-29).

Wegman (1991:22) indicates that the origin of Liturgy could be traced right back to Moses with the prominent characteristic still applicable, to show the way, expressing what is to come, not yet seen. Referring to what is to come is probably the one most dominant feature if one looks at the origin and development of Liturgy from the beginning but at the same time it is also explaining the diverse interpretation of what is to come through all the ages and in all the religious traditions (Schuman, 1998:24). In this diversity of interpretation the differences



can become such a dominant factor that the people of God cannot see the common ground any more or alternatively the common ground can be seen as a miracle, once one recognises it. It is a real simple process to become so involved with one's own ways and perceptions that any other form of Liturgy are declared wrong, implicating that the own Liturgy is the only true one. Historical and cultural diversity also play a role as well as personal prejudices and habits, as all of this are working together to create distance and separation (Schuman, 1998:24-25).

The irony is that from exactly the same position one can also be in awe for the similarities in worshipping God in liturgies as one can find the very same five elements of Liturgy in all religious traditions (Schuman, 1998:25). The researcher will follow the argument of Schuman (1998:25) about the relatedness of different religions as just different ways in which the journey of the Kingdom of God is unfolding in this world. The historical and cultural differences with the additional factor of personalities can be an obstacle in respecting or appreciating each other until it is seen in the same light as how God interacts differently with individuals from the same tradition (Schuman, 1998:25)

The freedom for people to act, pray, experience their faith, leaves the Christian with the realisation of the enormity of this freedom, which obviously also implicate responsibilities. To explain his view in a bigger context Schuman (1998:26) refers to the origin and development of Liturgy, which not only provides insight to the fact of similarities but also brings about appreciation and respect for the similarities in the different religious traditions.

### **6.3 THEOLOGICAL-LITURGICAL BASIS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT AND JUDAISM**

Words and traditions from the Old Testament provides insight as to how embedded the five elements of Liturgy are, as distinguished by Schuman (1998:23) and Wepener (2010:25-29). As an example Schuman (1998:26) cites Monshouwer (1992:16) who refers to three Hebrew words like “amen, hallelujah and hosanna”, well-known from the oldest literature and still in use.

Liturgy starts with the calling of the Name of God in praise and worship, as in Is 6:3 and Rev 4:8 (Schuman, 1998:26). Reading the Ten Commandments has been part of Liturgy all the time as well as the priestly blessing in Num 6:22-27, with other elements present during

liturgical development in the Old Testament like teaching from the Word and prayer, offers, Eucharist and thanksgiving (Schuman, 1998:27).

#### **6.4 THEOLOGICAL-LITURGICAL BASIS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT:**

Jesus had a strong relationship with Liturgy, as He and the disciples attended regularly the Synagogue. Jesus always had a renewed interpretation which sounded like criticism but it was never meant to destroy the Liturgy according to Schuman (1998:29), who also indicates that the diversity in Liturgy picked up momentum after Christ.

The more formal agenda for Liturgy in Acts 2 is presented in an informal way in Luke 24:36-49 where Jesus joined two men on their way to Emmaus. In this narrative, all the elements of a renewed Liturgy is to be found, the communion, reading Scripture, prayer, Eucharist and although praise and worship are not mentioned it is embedded in the way how the reading of Scripture took place, as it was sung, according to tradition (Schuman, 1998:31). The value of the Emmaus narrative of Luke 24 is that all the elements of Liturgy is to be found while journeying, which is of critical importance for this research project about pilgrimage, as pilgrims has this example of a Liturgy en route.

#### **6.5 THEOLOGICAL-LITURGICAL PERSPECTIVE: EARLY CHURCH:**

The unfolding of Liturgy in the early Church is reflected on by Schuman (1998:32-36), based on material from different authors and documents like Plinius, Didache, Justinus Martyr, Hippolytus and from Constitutiones Apostolicae. The Didache or teaching of the Twelve Apostles consists of church regulations, the ethical and liturgical prescriptions. The Apostolic Tradition document from Hippolytus from Rome, dating 220AC, was distributed to Churches in the East and West and this explains why the same elements of Liturgy can be found today in Churches from all traditions and religions, although the many differences in practise and expression.

During the 4<sup>th</sup> century Liturgy became more fixed and visible in places like Jerusalem, Constantinople and Rome as the main centre but were followed by Antioch, Alexandria, Caesarea, Cartago, Milan and Arles of Toledo. This period is described by Wegman (1991:98-99) as the period in which the Church transformed from a “bleeding” Church to Church of the state (Schuman, 1998:35; Wegman, 1991:98-99). Another development during the 4<sup>th</sup> century, was how the presence of the Christian religion changed in format as the house

churches were replaced by Church buildings, prominent and unique according to Wegman (1991:106). This was also the time in which Christian literature came into being with the contributions of Athanasius, Ambrosius and Augustine, to name a few, as they had to put Christianity on paper, accountable to the rational thinking of the Greek philosophers like the school of Plotinus and Plato and these Christian writers were also influenced by them (Wegman, 1991:102).

This was also the time in which the Christian confessions came into being, still in use today like the Apostolic Confession of faith from 300AC onwards, the Confession of Nicea in 325, the Confession of Constantinople in 381 but with strong resistance from the logic-orientated Greek philosophy (Wegman, 1991:117). This situation forced the Christian apologetics to formulate their writings well in literature and detailed descriptions of faith were the norm (Schuman, 1998:35). Half way through the fourth century Christianity has grown to a presence in cities everywhere but very little is known of the situation amongst ordinary Christians during this period of time (Wegman, 1991:102, 107).

What became clear is the growing separation between East - of which the Greek Church formed part of - and West in liturgical expression, even though the same elements were present. Contextualising of Liturgy took place and can be seen as a necessary development that happened (Schuman, 1998:37). During the fourth century a shift took place in the format of Liturgy as two directions manifested namely Scripture and prayer and secondly worship and blessing, which could also be described as Word and breaking of bread. Diversity took on a new momentum during the Middle ages as different traditions came into being and six of them could be mentioned here: Lutheran, Anglican, Reformed, Puritans, Roman Catholic and the East-Orthodox (Schuman, 1998:37).

An interesting and valuable contribution by Denny (2013:1-9) indicates the presence of another tradition, also present when the other traditions came into being, called the Spirit tradition or the Pentecostal tradition, which in today's terminology will include the Charismatic approach, with the spiritual need of experiencing the work of the Holy Spirit. The contribution of Paul in the Word of God is described by Pelsner (1995:67-649) as "the Spirit-controlled, charismatic togetherness of people in Christ" (Pelsner, 1995:645). The Spirit tradition is defined in context with the Meal tradition as explained by Stringer (2005). The outcome of this research in modern day South Africa, of relevance for this research, is the

lack of emphasis on the Meal tradition within the Charismatic or Spirit tradition and that the meaning of the breaking of bread is overlooked by the Charismatic churches in general, as the “...sensory, symbolic, didactic and theological potential this liturgical ritual has to communicate the message of the gospel in the worship service...” do not get the necessary acknowledgement (Denny, 2013:1).

The most important outcome for this study on a theological basis for the pilgrimage phenomenon, is not a right or wrong, is not a one-dimensional interpretation but to open up for the many ways in which God works with His people. This part focuses on how different traditions developed through the ages with the same elements of Liturgy, building a case for common ground, in spite of the differences because of contextualisation. The Emmaus narrative provides the basic elements of Liturgy which is still present today across religious traditions and this knowledge should empower the unity and counteract the diversity that exists, with more emphasis and appreciation for the common ground between the different traditions. The impact of modernism in the twentieth century however, emphasised the diversity in Liturgy which was not present before and this was forced into Liturgy. This point of departure is important for the development of a theology of pilgrimage, as the same approach is followed by the researcher with ethnography as methodology, synchronising theology and methodology.

This insight into the development of Liturgy can provide space for the tolerance of different interpretations, symbols, etc., providing much more potential for the children of God to demonstrate their unity across the different religious traditions. As an example the researcher refers to the outcome of the research within the Charismatic tradition within South Africa by Denny (2013:1-9) and how this may lead to a reciprocal relationship of enrichment bringing traditions closer together or in other words, a more integrated form of Christianity, bringing the old and the new together, as proposed by Webber (1994, 2007), cited by Denny (2013:1-2) in a more meaningful unity to the glory of God. The Emmaus narrative of Luke 24 provides the Scriptural foundation for a theology which appreciates the similarities, opening up possibilities for mutual respect while acknowledging the diversity.

A further investigation into the development of Liturgy according to various interpretations as presented by Jones (1992), Schuman (1998:39-50), Wainwright (2006) and Wegman (1991) follow with the focus mainly on the most prominent interpretations within the East-

Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican and Protestant traditions. The history of liturgical development can be described in six different phases according to Wainwright (2006:33) and that is “the apostolic age, the patristic period, the medieval (early, high and late, the Reformation and beyond, the Counter-Reformation and baroque, the modern and contemporary”.

During the apostolic age, the emphasis was on the differentiation of Christianity from Judaism, states Wainwright (2006:34), continuing to say that during the patristic period, Christianity had to define itself from pagan religion and especially from the fourth century managed to transform paganism by redefining many of the pagan features with Christian meaning.

During the middle ages separation took place between clergy and Christians and faith became a confrontation with the mysterious as distance was created between worshipping acts by clergy and ordinary Christians but with the Reformation ordinary Christians came closer to worshipping acts by simplifying worship and the provision of doctrinal instructions, states Wainwright (2006:37). During the Counter-Reformation period, “...para-liturgical activities flourished...” like the rosary, with much emphasis on music and art and the separation of preaching and communion with the Mass according to Wainwright (2006:38).

The modern and contemporary is described by Wainwright (2006:38) as a quite period from the nineteenth century to middle twentieth century but since the middle twentieth century the Liturgical Movement brought about some changes in the effort to transform worship with more involvement by worshippers. The spiritual need of personal involvement in worshipping has just grown since then to the present day.

Once understood that all traditions started at the same point, the plural form of Liturgy could be seen in a different light. The challenge is to observe these differences as part of contextualising, influenced by culture and although in many different forms, it is the same liturgical elements as in Luke 24, the Emmaus narrative. This view will serve the purpose of this study research.

### 6.5.1 East-Orthodox tradition

Schuman (1998:40-41) says that the East-Orthodox tradition is known by the well-known term “Byzantine” but not all of the East-Orthodox Liturgy could be labelled like that. Chaillot (2006:131) refers to this tradition as the ancient Oriental churches, that originated from Antioch and Alexandria from which two families of churches grew but also became divided because of theological, political and cultural factors of which the divinity and humanity of Christ was the most prominent.

Since the 1960’s the name officially became the Oriental Orthodox, which includes the Greek Orthodox and includes the “Copts, Ethiopians, Armenians and Syrian Orthodox” according to Chaillot (2006:131-132) who works on a number of 49 million members worldwide, including congregations in Europe, North and South America and Australia. Because of Islamic fundamentalism and emigration, this tradition is subject to many changes and some have become part of Catholic and others to Protestant traditions because of practicalities (Chaillot, 2006:133).

Rentel (2006:254) estimates Christian worshippers worldwide, early twenty first century, that can be related back to the Orthodox church of the Byzantine period, at 130 million and also mentions countries like Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Turkey, parts of Italy, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Romania, Georgia, Ukraine and Russia but also emphasises that in the twenty first century, they could also be found in any part of the world. The interpretation differences of Scripture and a growing distrust between East and West, since the fifth century onwards, led to a situation where one church representing all Christians became a lost dream at the end of the seventh century (Rentel, 2006:105; Wegman, 1991).

Iconoclasm can be considered another major development in terms of the liturgical development when the removal of all images of Christ was started in 726 AD and went on for 150 years, as the argument was that an image of Christ as a human, divides the nature of God (Rentel, 2006:260). Iconoclasm focused on another liturgical theme after the image of Christ phase and that is the “unity of heavenly and earthly worship” (Rentel, 2006:261).

Liturgical developments within this tradition were completed middle of the fifteenth century, states Rentel (2006:255). According to Schuman (1998:40-41) imagination plays a huge role in the Liturgy, giving worshippers access to both sides of the wall called “iconoclasm”. This

wall is painted with many images from Biblical history and provides the space for worshippers to enter the Kingdom of God or heaven. Easter or the Resurrection forms the highlight on the liturgical calendar, associated with fasting, and the typical Liturgy is drama viewed by passive members of the congregation, observing, associating with the visual expression of a collective version of the tradition's whole dogma (Chaillot, 2006:134; Schuman, 1998:40-41). In this dramatised Liturgy, space is created for the work of the Holy Spirit. The East-Orthodox Liturgy is therefore also close to the original Old Testament Liturgy. Their Liturgy consists of the Eucharist, reading from Scripture, prayer, confession and baptism (Chaillot, 2006:134-135).

Pilgrimage is a common feature amongst the Oriental Orthodox Churches and there exist many pilgrimage destinations with Jerusalem the main destination where all the different Churches have their own buildings and monasteries (Chaillot, 2006:135).

It is clear that the East-Orthodox tradition has a battle in modern times to maintain the traditional way of worship as it is exposed to contact and influence of other traditions throughout the world for it is no longer located just in eastern Europe or the Mediterranean or the Balkan but as all traditions now has to deal with globalism, technology, language and other phenomenon like the rest of the international faith communities and besides this situation it also has to function within the context of fifteen other independent Orthodox Churches (Rentel, 2006:273). It is therefore clear that the East-Orthodox tradition is subject to many changes and has to adapt in modern society.

The theology of pilgrimage is only strengthened by what is known of the East-Orthodox tradition as this tradition also has to deal with modern society's demands, realities or challenges and it also has to be more lenient towards different liturgical interpretations in different parts of the world acknowledging different cultures and open itself for change.

### **6.5.2 Roman Catholic tradition**

During the period of time starting in the third century when Liturgy became more tangible in the history of the Church, the growing separation between East and West unfolds in two main centres, namely Constantinople for the East and Rome for the West (Wegman, 1991:105). In a context of political instability, the Church in Rome became the one stable factor with its structure and organisation, with its foundation based on the relationship with the apostle

Peter. Since Christianity was acknowledged in 313AD, it became the only religion by the turn of the century (Wegman, 1991:106).

The Church became visible in the form of huge buildings and rituals in the form of processions, Sunday services where reading and preaching from Scripture and the breaking of bread took place as continuing of what happened in the house-churches up to that time, according to Justinus who wrote about this in 150AD, as cited by Wegman (1991:107). The Church in Rome became bigger and stronger although many joined still clinging to old pagan beliefs and rituals as performed by the Church, became meaningful as it carried the message of exorcism or freedom from evil while the Cross became a symbol of Christ's victory over evil, according to Wegman (1991:108).

During the fifth century a Liturgy developed in Rome that spread to Churches everywhere, promoting the unity of the Church and its Liturgy, states Wegman (1991:109-110) who describes it as demonstrative, expressing itself in feast, processions, rituals, reading from Scripture, prayer, breaking of bread.

The important fact this far for the purposes of this research is to realise that whatever happened to each tradition, as they grew further apart because of the social environment, culture or politics, their Liturgy developed around the very same elements as illustrated by Luke 24:13-35 in the Emmaus narrative. This insight and knowledge is crucial for a theology of pilgrimage, with the understanding that inculturation and heterotopias – as explained in Chapter two – created cultures, rituals, symbols and manifestations of faith that look different from each other as the centuries went by, but by further investigation the similarities become clear.

Another meaningful factor for this research on a theology of pilgrimage, is that Rome became the leader of the Church in the West because of the cultural and political context, indicating the importance of social context and cultural phenomenon of a particular time and its impact on the growth and development of religious traditions and spirituality (Wegman, 1991:105-106, 109-110). This approach is the point of departure for this research on pilgrimage, with the acknowledgement of cultural phenomenon and the possibility of inculturation into religious tradition, if accountable to the Word of God.



Schuman (1998:43-44) views the Roman Catholic tradition in terms of a period of complexity with the Reformation in the sixteenth century before finding its liturgical way in the same century and the renewal of that in the twentieth century in 1970. Flexibility and inflexibility are both trademarks of the Roman Catholic tradition according to Schuman (1998:42). After a period of a Pope orientated Liturgy, a shift took place in the twentieth century to provide for a more plural form of Liturgy as worshippers became more involved in participating in the Liturgy. Where most of the activities previously happened at the altar, it shifted more towards involving the congregation. An important feature of the Roman Catholic tradition is the substantial transformation of wine and bread into the blood and body of Jesus Christ. Volp (1992:337-340,677-682) is cited by Schuman (1998:43) with his powerful formulation of the difference between the Roman Catholic and the East-Orthodox tradition by describing the first as “the Word as ritual” in contrast with the latter as “the Word as drama”.

### **6.5.3 Anglican tradition**

Schuman (1998:44-46) indicates that the Anglican tradition might as well be addressed with the Reformed tradition although it has a Liturgy strongly associated with the Roman Catholic tradition prior to 1570. This tradition is known for the emphasis on prayer, the morning and evening prayer, the colourful clergy’s robes and the high standard of worship singing. Differences in the Liturgy is the communal prayer of the Lord’s Prayer at the beginning of each service, the congregation’s response of “amen” to the Ten Commandments and the singing of “Gloria” after having communion at the table (Schuman, 1998:45).

The Liturgy is still similar to that of the Roman Catholic tradition but the liturgical diversity is an outstanding feature of the Anglican tradition with more emphasis on the Scripture and preaching than the Roman Catholic tradition with lesser emphasis on the bread and wine as symbols at the table (Schuman, 1998:45). This tradition acknowledge the need for renewal from time to time as Liturgy is closely attached to the time and cultural setting of the time in which it place.

The emphasis on a time related Liturgy within the Anglican tradition is of extreme importance for this study as pilgrimage as a spiritual tool also has times of being more relevant than other times. This kind of flexibility is what is needed to acknowledge the

relevance of Christian's behaviour in a certain period of time. Therefore the Anglican tradition has made a lot of pilgrimage in a way the researcher can associate with, as the emphasis is more on applying the principles of pilgrimage than to be attached to certain destinations, routes and "holy" individuals, as is the case with the Roman Catholic tradition.

#### **6.5.4 Protestant and Ecumenical tradition**

With the Reformation, the liturgical intention was an effort to give back the Word and Liturgy in the hands of the Christian believer (Schuman, 1998:46). In retrospect the Reformation had some gains and losses and some of it are only becoming clear in our day. The pilgrimage is an excellent example as the Reformation excluded it for the last 500 years.

Schuman (1998:46-49) elaborates on the two main characteristics of the Protestant tradition as the Holy Scripture and breaking of bread, as it manifests especially in the Netherlands. Following this, prayers were closely associated with the Holy Scripture. Protestantism originated within the Roman Catholic tradition with the intention of bringing the Word of God to the hands of the people. The Lutheran tradition puts emphasis on the participation of the congregation in all liturgical acts, with preaching the Word and worship by singing, are also strongly present.

In the Calvinistic tradition two orders for Liturgy are distinguished with the first, Word and breaking bread as a unity, and secondly God's commandments and the confession of sins, along with preaching and prayer, while communion at the table could be included, but not as a given every time (Schuman, 1998:47). During the late twentieth century a new Liturgy appeared, with more emphasis on the Word and breaking of bread separately while the unity is also reconfirmed, states Schuman (1998:47) also indicating another feature, a constant change in the reading of Scripture according to the liturgical calendar year, creating liturgical variety and is strengthened by the provision of Scripture reading programmes from one to three years, according to Moses, the prophets and the Gospels.

Ruether (1993:19) describes the Calvinistic interpretation by saying: "Calvinism dismembered the medieval sacramental sense of nature...only the disembodied Word, descending from the preacher to the ear of the listener, together with music, could be bearers of divine presence". The Reformed tradition became very rational in their approach, influenced by Zwingli, with very little space for any rituals, if any, according to Schuman

(1998:48), with the focus just on Word and prayer. In contrast with liturgical trends in other churches within the Reformed tradition, who focus much more on spontaneous guidance by the Holy Spirit. With the elements of thanksgiving, praising God, Word, preaching, prayer and singing, Schuman (1998:49) states that this form of Liturgy is probably the closest to the original service in the Synagogues.

The Reformed tradition can be rightfully described as diverse, as one can find forms of theological rigidity and conservatism to alternative ways of flexibility and openness. A huge factor to be taken into consideration is that rituals as understood in the sense of the Roman Catholic tradition have a negative context, going with the fact that the Reformed tradition distanced itself from spiritual tools like pilgrimage and the labyrinth for almost 500 years.

On the other hand, in our current world all these prejudices seem to play a lesser role and as the development of theologies become closer to each other nowadays, it reflect also in personal relationships and experimenting with spiritual tools, like pilgrimage and labyrinth, which provides the space for personal contact and exposure, leading to the change of perceptions in general.

### **6.5.5 The role of imagination**

Schuman (1998:49) states that it is always easy to be critical on other liturgies but one can also appreciate the very same intention and elements in the Liturgy of other traditions. His emphasis is more on evaluating the current stance within the context of the historical background, recognising that the intention is not always what is happening in worshipping. The intention of Liturgy is to give guidance, security and the space for worshipping through all the ages as this happened also during times of unsettlement, uncertainty, fear, guilt, confusion and other obstacles.

The various forms of Liturgy can be seen as imagination on the part of liturgists and worshippers according to Schuman (1998:50), as the presence of Liturgy can be seen in the same light as the tabernacle in the Old Testament, representing God. In Ex 31:3, Bezaleel received special gifts through the Holy Spirit to fulfil the role in establishing the tabernacle, the symbol of God's presence and the origin of Liturgy, with His people on their way to the Promised Land (Schuman, 1998:50). Liturgy can be seen as fulfilling the role of the tabernacle, showing or guiding or being a symbol of the way to the Promised Land, the

Kingdom of God. Liturgy wants to protect the vision of the eternal future, externalise it into words and rituals. Liturgy provides the space for individual imagination, with no limitations or boundaries, the space of the Holy Spirit (Schuman, 1998:50).

Hays (1999:3) elaborates on the concept of metalepsis, which demonstrates the value of imagination in using Scripture as Paul did in 1 Corinthians, using three references from the Old Testament, in his argument to convince them to move from the speech in tongues to prophecy, as they have to imagine the effect on gentiles and outsiders experiencing worshipping for the first time. “Metalepsis is a rhetorical and poetic device in which one text alludes to an earlier text in a way that evokes resonances of the earlier text beyond those explicitly cited” (Hays, 1999:3). Metalepsis is therefore asking the use of imagination to uncover the relevance between texts and in that way reveals more meaning than just using one text.

The approach of the Charismatic tradition in current times in South Africa can be explained in terms of communion. According to the research of Denny (2013:4-6) communion does not get much attention, if any, during worshipping services in the Charismatic tradition and is usually available afterwards, for those who want to, without any guidance. In terms of imagination, this can be positive although a lot of criticism can also be expressed from a holistic perspective. The practical situation however, creates the space for personal experiences and this is described as convicting, challenging, reminding of Christ’s sacrifice, to be loving and caring, affirming freedom from sin, forgiveness, connect with Christ, gratitude, surrender to God, to pray and creates awareness of the unity in Christ (Denny, 2013:5).

The heterotopias concept of Foucault (1984a) as explained in Chapter two, is of relevance here as it unleashes the imagination of the human mind in creating a space of meaning, to get past the limitations of societal frameworks or external rules and regulations of Liturgy, clergy and the Church. The individual spiritual need of Christians including wisdom for daily life can be fulfilled independent of that of co-worshippers, in this space of imagination or it could be called the space of the Holy Ghost.

## 6.6 SPACE AND PLACE

The relationship of pilgrimage and specific places or spaces needs to be clarified and within the context of this research and the purpose of this research, the researcher will maintain the Reformed perspective. The Reformed tradition emphasise the shift from a specific place to the space of the person, in relationship with God, with no fear for the unknown.

This shift or detachment from place can be seen with the role of Jerusalem as all indications are that the place Jerusalem lost its meaning and role in several texts from Scripture (Luke 24:47, Acts 1:8, Rev 21:1-2), regarding mission and where Jerusalem was the destination before Christ, it now became the point of departure away, into the world (Scott, 2004:151). Christianity has become independent of holy places and has two elements to carry it forward namely Scripture and the practice of Eucharist, with the only places that should play a role, the place of preaching and breaking of bread (Scott, 2004:152).

Sheldrake (2001:30) has an interesting interpretation of the Resurrection of Christ as it transcends the boundaries of place as Jesus became unbounded and “...God’s place ultimately escapes the boundaries of the localized”. Following the argument of Scott (2004:153-156) pilgrims should also find the delicate balance between place and space as God is everywhere. He chose Jerusalem as the centre of all action but this was only for a certain period of time, with the implication that if a pilgrim goes on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, there will obviously be a lot of meaning in such an experience, however this meaning should have an eschatological character based on a Christological approach. Jerusalem therefore, has a liturgical memory where Jesus first said: “This is my body, this is my blood”, and because of this Jerusalem and Israel, will always be part of a Christian’s memory and a meaningful pilgrimage destination.

## 6.7 INVESTIGATING THE EMMAUS NARRATIVE (LUKE 24:13-35)

Wepener (2010:24) states that this passage of Emmaus in Luke 24:13-35 challenges the Christian in recognising God in everyday life. A challenge Augustine also dealt with in the fourth century (Rylaarsdam, 2006:95-97). Wepener (2010:24-25) continues by saying that each Christian has a Jerusalem and an Emmaus, in other words a place where a Christian experiences God or expect to experience God and then a place to go when disappointed, without answers, understanding or insight when God’s presence is not experienced. This

process then leads to the experience that He is actually accompanying the Christian all the way, as in the case with the Emmaus men, explaining, caring, nurturing, addressing wrong perspectives, serving until been recognised for who He is, and then the turnaround of worshipping Him, until a Christian is ready to go out, to witness and to testify (Wepener, 2010:25).

Five steps are then introduced by Wepener (2010:25-29) for the Christian to go about in recognising God's presence in the context of Luke 24:13-35.

- 5) Koinonia is the first step, meaning His resurrection implies that He is now everywhere, especially where Christians get together as with a Sunday service. He could be the stranger with you and the challenge is to experience His presence everywhere and in everything.
- 6) As Jesus explained the Scripture on the road to Emmaus, we should experience that in the reading of Scripture and preaching, as part of the Liturgy at Sunday services, in order to experience God in Jesus Christ with emphasis on the Golgotha.
- 7) "Stay with us because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly spent" (Luke 24:21), is a prayer important in the Christian tradition and one of the oldest, also used in monasteries for centuries. The concept of hospitality to the stranger is also relevant here as it is a way of recognising Him in the most unexpected ways.
- 8) Jesus breaks the bread after the prayer and this relates to the Eucharist where communion is shared at the table with bread and wine. This is the point of critical juncture where their eyes were opened and they recognise Him as Jesus Christ. The stranger became the host. The stranger makes one see God or it is God Himself.
- 9) This activates the men from Emmaus and they immediately departed to go and tell the disciples, relating to the blessing at the end of a service and the congregation goes out into the world. The challenge for Christians today is how to react in the Emmaus way, from a place of uncertainty to that of witnesses.

The Emmaus narrative provides the opportunity for every Christian to discover who God really is and to experience His presence in every moment of our lives in the words of Luke 24:32: "...were not our hearts burning in us while he was talking to us on the road..." (Wepener, 2010:29-30).

### 6.7.1 Performance as interpretation of Scripture

Laytham (2007:101) responds to a form of Scripture interpretation described as a kind of performance, in an article on Luke 24:13-35 about the Emmaus narrative. The integration between Jesus as interpreter of the text, as in explaining the Word to Cleofas and companion, and then performing the act of breaking bread together, opened the eyes of the two disciples and brought them to action by departing immediately back to Jerusalem, also a meaningful act in terms of the fifth element as distinguished by Wepener (2010:28-29), of going from Emmaus, a place of uncertainty to Jerusalem, a place of witnessing.

Lash (2005:37-46) states interpretation of the Word can be described as performing art by the Christian as a demonstration of personal faith. Douglas and Wells (2008:45-70) and Young (2002) both work from the same point of departure with their emphasis more on the role of the Church today as the performers of Scripture. Work and Hays (2001:167-213) also lay emphasis on the work and person of Jesus, which could be interpreted as performance.

In Luke 24 the interaction of Jesus with Cleopas and companion is described as performance, first about Scripture, presenting Himself as the resurrected and lastly the breaking of the bread at the table. This performance enables the two disciples to perform their own act after they recognised him (Laytham, 2007:102).

Performance interpretation is not a downplay of the text as the interaction between performance and the text is fundamental in performance interpretation with the only purpose to bring about a new understanding of the Word, according to Laytham (2007:103). The importance of this interaction between Scripture and performance is further underlined by what happened in Luke 24:13-35 as the explanation of Jesus lay the foundation for understanding the table performance and it is with the integration that their eyes opened (Laytham, 2007:104).

Laytham (2007:106) states that one can think of the Bible as a play and a drama and emphasises the importance of narrative skills in this regard. Wells (2004:53-57) elaborates on this by giving the Bible a drama plot and he distinguishes five acts Creation, Israel, Christ, Church, Consummation. In our day and time we are in the fourth act of Church. In the mind of the Cleopas, his companion and the perception at that stage, they would have said that there are just three acts, called Creation, Covenant, Consummation and that they find

themselves at the end of the second act just before Consummation, as that was their belief of the role Jesus had to play according to Laytham (2007:107), elaborating on Wells (2004:53-57).

In this play it is Jesus that makes the difference in Luke 24:13-35, as He gives direction with His acts and words, present in the play, towards the fulfilment of God's will (Laytham, 2007:107-108).

“Performance has significant ability to spark perception or give interpretive insight” says Laytham (2007:110). Performance is based on interpretation and in this regard reading Scripture is nothing else than one's own interpretation states Lash (2005:40) also indicating the personal responsibility for an appropriate interpreting strategy which should not necessarily be a blueprint of that of experts, whether clergy or academics. Lash (2005:43) is of meaning that “...performance of Scripture is the life of the Church” and on an individual level of Christians, the “...performance of the Biblical text ends only at death” (Lash, 2005:46).

### **6.7.2 Bodily participation in performance.**

Only when we are performing ourselves, we usually gain most and this is a further motivation to understand current trends in worshipping where participation becomes more important. In his book, fresh from the publisher, Wepener (2015:143-148) elaborates on this theme. According to Wepener (2015:145) there is a need within the Reformed tradition to focus more on bodily participation or “body intelligence” as the Reformed tradition is since its origin very much verbally orientated. The human body is equipped to understand what is impossible on a cognitive level (Wepener, 2015:146) and the psycho-somatic unit of body and mind is still to be explored within the Reformed tradition.

Jennings (1996:325-326) states the noetic value of rituals, that it is a way of gaining knowledge on a non-verbal level, not accessible in any other way. Elaborating further on his bodily based epistemology: “It is not so much that the mind ‘embodies’ itself in ritual action, but rather that the body ‘minds’ itself or attends to itself in ritual action” (Jennings, 1996:327). Another perspective on the importance of bodily participation in worshipping acts like rituals came from Saliers (1996): “The study of worship understands that the body remembers long after the mind may be dimmed”.



This perspective is strongly supported by Grimes (2000:7) who states: “Effective ritual knowledge lodges in the bone, in its very marrow...how certain values and social practices can be inferred from ancient bone matter...certain social practices are literally inscribed in the bones...it is also socially formed...Rites are choreographed actions...their traces remain in the heart, in the memory, in the mind, in texts, in photographs, in descriptions, in social values and in the marrow, the source of our lifeblood”.

In South Africa the advantage exists to learn from Africans as bodily participation in worshipping acts is normal and the standard in African cultures and the preferred method of interacting with God in worshipping acts according to Uzukwu (1997:6), who states: “While it is likely in Africa to have motions of the body unaccompanied by speech, it is less likely to speak without body movement”. Uzukwu (1997:6) also refers to human beings as “embodied spirits”.

With this insight the bodily participation in rituals and the concept of performance is explained and provides a perspective on Luke 24 and why Jesus behaved in this particular way with the two Emmaus disciples.

In the Emmaus narrative Jesus takes initiative at the table and became the host. In the way He did this, they recognised Him. He reveals who He is by doing it similar to the way when He was feeding the masses in Luke 9:16 and at the Last Supper in Luke 22:16, enabling the two disciples to recognise Him in His acts and at that moment all His words came into context for them (Laytham, 2007:111). It is also this act at the table that echo in the Church of today when we celebrate Eucharist in the very similar way as Jesus did with the Emmaus disciples. This is what we are called to do, in following the narrative of Luke 24:13-35, as put by Laytham (2007:115), “...all the way from Jerusalem to Emmaus and back again...to make the performative journey from text to table to telling”.

Several authors use several metaphors to explain the meaning of performance as an interpretive act and for the researcher the meaning in all of this, is for every Christian to take ownership of the text like an actor, who makes a specific role his or her own by studying it, understanding it and definitely not by reading it on stage but to give character to the role by the acting out of what was understood from the text, reflecting authenticity. Giving meaning to what is understood, takes a physical image. Interpretation of the text then comes from the

heart and is not just understood intellectually. The implication for pilgrimage is that it is not just to complete a distance to the end destination but to understand it as a personal, spiritual journey to be done whole-heartedly, for pilgrimage to become life transforming in all facets of life, not only spiritually but also in terms of relationships, forgiveness, self-validation, etc., reflecting the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

This is exactly the message from the mystics through all ages, that theology and any doctrine should be understood from the heart, and not only to be understood intellectually but for knowledge to become an inner experience. This process is not rational, intellectual, only verbal or argumentative, but more on the level of an inner experience, hardly to be described in verbal communication.

### 6.7.3 Exploring the Mystical side of Emmaus

The researcher specifically chooses the contribution of Chance (2011:363-381) with his mystical approach as a heuristic tool and the concepts of attachment and detachment in the context of the interviews with co-researchers where the insight presents itself of the need of an integrated process between spirituality and personal development. The challenge is how this can manifest in a personalised theology. A cliché one often hears is that of “trust the process”, but what is the meaning of this, the content of this in a practical sense for faith. It must be stated by the researcher that this section is more towards being descriptive than prescriptive.

It is clear that the Emmaus narrative can contribute massively to a better understanding of the journey with Christ by literally experiencing His presence in daily life and as life unfolds. The valuable contribution of the Emmaus narrative can also be seen in published works in this regard. As examples the researcher would like to mention “Theology for Pilgrims” by Nicholas Lash, the personal journey of Jim Forest in “*The Road to Emmaus Pilgrimage as a Way of Life*”, a Gnostic reading of Luke by Jan Wojcik, “*The Road to Emmaus Reading Luke’s Gospel*”, a historical apologetic for the resurrection of Jesus by Carsten Peter Thiede, “*The Emmaus Mystery Discovering Evidence for the Risen Christ*”, then regarding the Christian mission to Muslims by J Dudley Woodbury (ed), “*Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road Crucial Issues in Witness among Muslims*”, Ann Maria Stevens and Anthony M Stevens-Arroyo speak of “the Emmaus Paradigm” in their study of Latin-American

religion in the United States called, “*Recognizing the Latino Resurgence in US Religion: The Emmaus Paradigm*” and Peter Doghramji, in his address to seminary graduates of the Near East School of Theology, Beirut, Lebanon, employs the Emmaus travellers as examples of potential growth for seminary graduates with the title: "Appearances of the Risen Christ Emmaus, Damascus, Berytus" in *Theological Review* 28 [2007] 28-39.

Chance (2011:364) takes the mystical route of Dionysius (ca. 500 C.E.) with his focus on three concepts namely the path of purgation, illumination, and union, but Chance (2011:364), only focus on the first concept of purgation, consisting of two relevant metaphors in this regard, attachment and detachment. A lengthy view on Dionysius is given by Parrinder (1995:10), while McGinn (2006) elaborates on a threefold way based on the Trinity, referring to Bonaventure from the 13<sup>th</sup> century (McGinn, 2006:153) and Marguerite Porete from the 14<sup>th</sup> century (McGinn, 2006:172-179). Chance (2011:364) makes his contribution also in the light of the work of St. John of the Cross, who paid much attention to the concept of purgation in his works “Ascent of Mount Carmel” and “Dark Night of the Soul”.

Chance (2011:365) uses the attachment metaphor to indicate the reason why the two disciples could not recognise Jesus prior to the table and breaking of bread. The question is why they were blinded and as a result could not identify or recognise Jesus. The question is if God sometimes blinds a person not to see as some may read and understand Luke 14:16. This argument is very important for any Christian and thus especially pilgrims yearning for His presence, as man has a responsibility in relationship with God, not to be guided by anything else than God (Chance, 2011:365).

The two Emmaus disciples were blinded because of their attachment to the perception and interpretation of the Israel tradition of the role that the Redeemer should play, as the general perception was that He would come and free them from earthly oppression and would become the earthly ruler, freeing His people from their bad social circumstances (Chance, 2011:365). Therefore they were blind for any other option of a living Christ as Redeemer as this was not to be associated with dying on the cross. Their whole world was turned upside down. This had the implication that something had to happen which could open their eyes to a different interpretation (Chance, 2011:365).

The argument of Chance (2011:366) is that this is what attachment is all about, it could be positive or negative but in the sense of the Emmaus narrative it is the negative compared to something being nailed to wood. It is important to realise from this interpretation that it is not God withholding the recognition and insight but man's tendency to be blinded by his own convictions and interpretations while being surrounded by all the information needed as in the case of the Emmaus disciples, for they knew about the crucifixion (Luke 24:20-21) and the empty tomb and what was said by angels to the woman at the grave (Luke 24:22-24).

This part of the Emmaus narrative is very important for any pilgrim on the road. The attentiveness of a pilgrim should be sensitised as already indicated by Augustine in the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Rylaarsdam, 2006:95-97). It is the responsibility of any Christian, especially on a pilgrimage, to have faith in His presence and communication and therefore to pay careful attention to the metaphors of attachment and detachment and how that can prevent one from seeing Him or finding the answers to whatever the personal and spiritual need may be. As with the two Emmaus disciples the image of God and not God Himself, can be an obstacle (Chance, 2011:366).

Another major possible obstacle is more on a personal level, the relationship with the self and this also became clear from the empirical research. In some way or another, a shift also takes place in how pilgrims experience themselves with life changing outcomes. Therefore a special focus needs to be on the self in relationship to fellow human beings and in the spiritual life with reference to Gadamer (2004:279), as explained in Chapter two, and his explanation of the hermeneutical context, which is very much applicable to pilgrims in terms of the pre-understanding of the position of self, the experience of a personal theology falling short, the counter-factual and dialogical interplay, fusion of horizons or new insights and applying a new way of thinking.

As in the case with the two Emmaus disciples who had to detach from previous convictions, the same should happen with a modern day pilgrim, not only in terms of a theological perspective but also including the self-validation. To illustrate this argument the researcher refers to Chance (2011) and Lee (2014). Chance (2011:366) refers to "sensual desires" as a first focus of detachment by referring to St. John of the Cross from the sixteenth century who speaks about worldly things, the pleasures of the flesh and a person's own will, of which to

detach from. It must be stated that there are no indication of sensual desires in the case of the two Emmaus disciples.

This argument about the role of self is addressed in a recently published book by Bo Karen Lee (2014) about two women from the seventeenth century, who both focused on detachment from the self and any pilgrim today may only benefit in reading this prior to a pilgrimage. Self-denial is the focus of Anna Maria van Schurman according to Lee (2014:15-35). For Madame Jeanne Guyon the focus is on self-annihilation according to Lee (2014:57-80). An Augustinian theme which was neglected by the Reformation is at the centre stage, as both van Schurman and Guyon claim that the enjoyment of God is something to pursue in this life, by saying that “ridding oneself of false joys required self-abnegation” and “deep, painful purgation”, as they combine these concepts with delight (Lee, 2014:4-5).

There is huge value and meaning for modern day pilgrims in what can be learned from alternative perspectives regarding the self in a modern day culture of “comfort and consumption” as described by Lee (2014:6), who elaborates on the benefit for Christians and in this case pilgrims, as Christians: “...lose their fixation on self by becoming lost in the grandeur and beauty of God” (Lee, 2014:107). In this process God is at the centre and a person must be willing to surrender “vision, orientation and mentality” as well as “ambition, hopes or reputation...possessions and gifts, earthly or spiritual”, and this implies a paradigmatic shift in perspective, towards a “a God-made self”, and away from a “self-made self” (Lee, 2014:110-112). The implication of this: “...is to create more room for God’s presence in one’s life. Letting go of one’s own agenda open’s up space for God’s Spirit to work, to lead, and to create the individual anew”, allowing for “radical hospitality to God’s presence” and with that to experience “intima notitia”, or inner knowledge of God as “kind, generous and gracious” (Lee, 2014:128).

Perceptions and images in the spiritual or religious context are just as important when it comes to detachment as humans have the tendency to try and give fixed forms to that they cannot see and then become attach to that image or perception, therefore Chance (2011) states: “God is not seen except where he is seen spiritually, free of all images”.

These images Christians have of God are also socially embedded as they are created in our social environment then to become fixed as knowledge. In the process Christians forget that it

was self created and become attach to these images, measuring the self against it, live by it and find security in it. This becomes the reason why faith sometimes falls short of what reality requires according to Chance (2011:369), and this implicates the process of purgation, the detachment of images and perceptions to come to a real knowledge of who He is. This process is typical of what happens to pilgrims on a pilgrimage and resonates with what happened with the two Emmaus disciples.

The way in which this situation is handled by Jesus is meaningful as He starts by going back to the Scripture, explaining to the two disciples the true meaning of Scripture, going back to the Prophets, explaining His own role, in contrast with their image and believes (Chance, 2011:370-374). In this act of Jesus, He lays the foundation for what is going to happen at the critical juncture, with the breaking of bread at the table.

In terms of man's own responsibility more questions could be asked about the journey along this road like what if they did not invite the Stranger into their house or what if they felt like they were too tired to continue the conversation or that they did not have the time, to put this in modern day context. Because they had the choice as Jesus did not force His way into their house or did not present any indication that He needs a place to sleep, and as a matter of fact, was prepared to continue further on the road according to Luke 24:28. This is meaningful as the researcher became sensitive for the appearance of the spiritual friend by listening to the co-researchers and in many other interviews or in participating in pilgrimages.

#### **6.7.4 Theology and trauma in the context of Luke 24**

Jones (2001:113-128) offers another perspective on the Emmaus narrative as she approaches Luke 24:13-35 with a theological framework in combination with studies in trauma. A paper with the topic "Trauma and theology" was prepared months before, for presentation during September 2011, eight days after the 9/11 attack. Jones (2001:113) states that since 9/11 she had rewritten the presentation every day. In this paper she focuses on Post-Traumatic Disorder and in explaining that, in a real world situation, also brought it in context with Luke 24:13-35, the Emmaus narrative, indicating the effect of traumatic events on the two Emmaus disciples. "To suffer from a traumatic stress disorder is to live in a mental world where the usual landmarks of meaning have fallen down and the most familiar path to reordering this disordered world is to repeat the event" (Jones, 2001:119).

Jones (2001:116) describes the symptoms as (1) "recurrent and painful re-experiencing of the event...the compulsion to repeat (2) phobic avoidance of trauma-related experiences and memories (3) emotional numbing and withdrawal, ...dissociation or cognitive shut-down, which produces a silence or blankness at the center of memory and (4) hyperarousal...adrenal overdrive, in which the body stays in terror mode, always ready to fight or flee".

To address the situation as described in Luke 24:17b: "They stood still, looking sad", Jones (2001:120-121) describes three steps of intervention namely the traumatised needs to tell the story, secondly another person needs to apply "priestly listening", with reference to the description of Long (2005:55); Osmer (2008:35) in Chapter two (2.1.1), and thirdly the necessity to start a new story or brain path where the reframing of events can bring about hope and healing.

What Jesus did in Luke 24:25-26, is exactly this, by changing their perception. He then took them on a different route and started to explain Scripture, referring to Moses and the prophets, very far from where they were, slowly paving the way to what ended with a completely new understanding, one of hope and victory in their hearts. The concept of heterotopias comes to mind, which was elaborated on in Chapter four, the idea of "of other spaces" from Foucault (1998a:175-186), as the two Emmaus disciples had a sacred concept, not detached yet, which were holding them back. Jesus spoke firmly with them, challenging their mind-set, creating space for something else.

In this regard, Christians and the church have the task of following the example of Jesus in Luke 24 by allowing the traumatised to tell the story, listen priestly, and then interrupt the repetitive pattern with empathy to reframe the story: "...and so the churches, as distinctive, strong Christian voices, must be heard clearly in this struggle for imaginative space (Jones, 2001:119-120).

Chance (2011:120) refers to the possibility of new insights emerging from sadness and despair, with the purpose of interventions to open up the potential for a constructive new spirituality. The process of detachment in the context of purgation could bring about a deeper insight and understanding of spirituality and often precedes a more mature knowledge and insight. Chance (2011:376) referring to the process of detachment, quotes Underhill (2005:161,151) who lived from 1875-1941 and published her work in 1922 in saying: "This

dissatisfaction, this uncertainty and hunger, may show itself in many different forms,' but there is regularly a kind of 'falling out of love' with things as they are, whatever that might be".

The willingness of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus to detach from their previous convictions are illustrated by three things namely their willingness to continue the journey and the conversation with the Stranger, secondly they opened their hearts and home to the Stranger by inviting Him to stay with them and lastly they reflected afterwards that their hearts were burning while He was explaining Scripture to them (Chance, 2011:376-377).

It is this willingness and openness to evaluate personal and spiritual attachments that pilgrims should prepare for, as part of the pilgrimage process, including their perception and image of God and their understanding of Scripture, as this can be an obstacle to new insights or the beginning of true knowledge of who He is, as was the case with the two Emmaus disciples (Chance, 2011:377).

In conclusion the breaking of bread at the table must also be attended to from the mystical paradigm and especially the disappearance of Christ at the moment of recognition in Luke 24:30-31. It is important again to emphasise the phenomenon that whenever a person moves into a space of interpretation or understanding of the Word, which is self-made and not inspired by God, it has the effect of becoming inhibitive and it creates a context of attachments which restrict insight, as was the case with the Emmaus disciples (Chance, 2011:379). The next step is when a Christian or pilgrim experience a situation where their faith fall short, with reference to Osmer (2008:41), many times creating a crisis or a traumatic experience, causing many Christians to lose faith. At the same time this may also create an opportunity where a Christian may realise that there must be an alternative understanding, not yet explored and this opens up the opportunity for the new.

By following the narrative of Emmaus in Luke 24, Scripture must be read in the context of the risen Lord, and He provides a complete new understanding of Scripture, as illustrated by the Emmaus narrative, establishing a new interpretive tradition (Chance, 2011:379), based on His presence and nothing else, including traditional interpretation of the Scripture. Although Chance (2011:380) maintains the role and necessity of Church leadership in whatever way it



has presented itself through all the ages and the interpretation of Scripture by Church authorities, it can never become more important than the presence of the Lord.

The role of blinding attachments, most of the time difficult to recognise as it can be part of the Church's activities, interpretation by church authorities or some other some other good features in Christian life, cannot be underestimated. "Scripture, like all images, can serve either as icon or idol", says Chance (2011:381) who refers to the warning from John of the Cross that humans beings have the tendency that where they detach from one inhibiting factor, they just replace it with another, creating a new way of attachment, further preventing the focus on His presence, preventing Christians to recognise and see Him.

"Scripture, along with its powerful symbols and myths, is, like any image, a valuable and necessary tool to experience the Divine Reality to which it points" (Chance, 2011:381). This quote sums it up that everything has its purpose but never to be forgotten, its purpose is in pointing to the real purpose, God's presence and thus not to become the purpose in itself.

## **6.8. THEOLOGY OF PILGRIMAGE**

Beginning with the end in mind, the researcher states that a theology of pilgrimage is necessary and a useful spiritual tool but should not be considered as compulsory, only to be there when needed (Bartholomew, 2004a:206). How should we understand the Word of God in relation to pilgrimage as: "Modern pilgrimage thus presents the Church with a challenge as to how to relate Christian doctrine to life today" (Bartholomew, 2004a:207).

### **6.8.1 History in Old and New Testament**

The history of pilgrimage is addressed in chapter 3, so only relevant content to theology of pilgrimage will be mentioned here. Christian pilgrimages only became possible in the 4<sup>th</sup> century because of the political change and the stance of Constantine. The interest in pilgrimage, as an Old and New Testament phenomenon then picked up and became popular. In the Old Testament it was compulsory, Ps 122:4, as a decree with fixed activities, time and place and an integral part of worship were for people to travel to the temple, (Bartholomew, 2004a:204-205)

The Old Testament had ritual as an important element of the religious society where the values of people were expressed in rituals, indicating the importance of rituals and God's

concern in this regard (Bartholomew, 2004a:204). In Ps 120-134 the “Song of Ascents” was designed to centre the life of God’s people upon Him with pilgrimage as the central theme. Pilgrimage functioned indeed as a ritualised practice to embed the consciousness of Israelites of their identity as God’s people (Bartholomew, 2004a:205)

Many traces of pilgrimage can be found in the New Testament as well, as Bartholomew (2004a:202) states:

- Jesus and His disciples are pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem
- The Gospels are structured around pilgrim festivals
- Acts 8:26-40: Ethiopian went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem
- Converts at Pentecost were pilgrims
- In Acts 20:16 Paul is in a hurry on his way to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost
- It can be accepted that many journeys to Jerusalem recorded in Acts and epistles had to do with festivals.

From the Reformed tradition it is understood that Christ’s fulfilment of the Old Testament also has implications for Jerusalem and holy places in general as any place in itself was de-sacralised from being holy and the Trinity now being present everywhere at any place (O'Donovan, 1999:44). This however does not mean that there is no value for a Reformed Christian pilgrim in visiting Jerusalem, Santiago and other historical places. The value is not in being at a specific place but the value it may add in a pilgrim’s relationship with God. The researcher compare this to fasting as an example as nothing prevents a Reformed Christian to utilize it as a spiritual tool in the strive towards spiritual maturity. Pilgrimage is present everywhere but nowhere is the specific position stated according to Bartholomew (2004a:206).

Pilgrimage did not feature prominently since the Reformation as with many other rituals and is still to be regarded as a spiritual discipline, to be exercised out of the own free will.

Nolan and Nolan (1992:338) contribute an alternative by indicating the importance for human beings to have significant places or things, as this is just part of how a human being is in creation. Bartholomew (2004a:205) supports this in saying God has made human beings like

that, to express in rituals the embodiment of their highest values and rituals like pilgrimage keep lives centred.

In other words pilgrimage as a spiritual tool may present enchantment in a disenchanted world. Peterson (2001:85) elaborates on this: “We necessarily live most of our lives in exile, so to be able to spot the people and places that re-establish our true identity is so important”. Bartholomew (2004a:205) states that Christians should develop the ritual of pilgrimage further: “...as one means to recentering our lives around the Christian narrative”.

Newman (1973:374) states the relation of pilgrimage with the development of Christian doctrine as crucial for an understanding of a theology of pilgrimage and continues to describe pilgrimage, other symbols and rituals growth into Christianity, explaining this with the tendency and need of people to make the unseen tangible.

### **6.8.2 Relationship with pilgrimage today**

The multi-faceted authority of Scripture is stressed by Bartholomew (2004a:203) in the context of the work of Gadamer (2004), as explained in Chapter two, taking into account that positivism is replaced with the possibility of more than one interpretation of the Word. The challenge for theology and for that matter the Reformed tradition, is irrelevance or syncretism if ignorance is the response to what is already happening or to provide a theological interpretation accountable to the Reformed tradition (Bartholomew, 2004b:201).

Consciousness of pilgrims to fulfil their role of being salt in the world, is the opposite of being oblivious of tension in the world (Bartholomew, 2004a:201). With Church attendance declining whilst pilgrimage and religious tourism are booming, theology should look at this phenomenon in depth (Bartholomew, 2004a:202; Brierley, 2000).

From a post-modern world some appealing factors to pilgrims today to embark on this journey can be described as the visual and tangible element associated with pilgrimage or in other words the personal, physical, bodily, emotional, spiritual participation of the pilgrim, the experiential, adventurous element and the communal with emphasis on the concept of spiritual friendship, states Bartholomew (2004a:202). These factors are completely different from what is experienced in church.

The combination of a group experience, being surrounded by other pilgrims, whether to Jerusalem or amongst others pilgrims on the Camino, a certain corporate spirituality is present with just as much emphasis on individuality and the space for personal response (Bartholomew, 2004a:202; Dyas, 2000:94).

Pilgrimage suits the need of people today, which could be summarised as the integration between spiritual and personal development, which clearly presents itself with the empirical research reflected on in Chapter seven. The challenge for theology and the Reformed tradition is to incarnate the Gospel again in Western culture, to contextualise the Word and that asks for theological reflection to appropriate the church's practice, states Bartholomew (2004a:202).

Any appropriation today of pilgrimage within Reformed tradition will have to take the process through creation, incarnation and sacrament (Bartholomew, 2004a:207; Newman, 1973; Wright, 2014:4). Therefore a discussion about the Theology of Place becomes relevant.

### **6.8.3 Theology of place**

The researcher relies on the work of Peterson (2001), Post (2008b) and Wright (2014). Peterson is known as a leading Evangelical authority on spirituality.

Post (2008:30) distinguish between three models of holy places, namely, the classic temple model as in the Old Testament, the mobile holy place, with the Arc, the tent of the Covenant and the two bags of ground that Naaman wanted to take back with him after being healed by Elisa in II Kings 5 and thirdly the person related holiness, detached from any form of place. Post (2008:30) states that reality is that all three models are still present in the Reformed tradition, using the example of pilgrims bring something physical back with them whenever they are at a place of religious interest.

Although certain places may have some special meaning like Jerusalem or Santiago, the Reformed tradition maintain the holy place is now where two or three gather in His name and in the personal relationship with God, not in any specific place (Post, 2008:32). The need embedded in religion will always be an attachment to a specific place and this forms part of the process of contextualisation according to Post (2008:39), who sees this need as one of the

reasons for the increasing numbers of pilgrims from the Reformed tradition, in contrast to the traditional rituals within the Reformed tradition, becoming less in demand.

Again the heterotopias concept of Foucault (1998a:175-186) comes into the picture as Post (2008:42-43) refers to heterotopia to play a role for the Christian to see place in a different light, using the church building as an example as a place where Christians go but it could also open up other faith dimensions in the mind, to experience the presence of God, the eschatological dimension or transcending current realities. The contribution of Post (2008) says the Reformed tradition could give priority to place as something inherent to the person in relation with God and that certain places with special meaning can also compliment faith and could be used to the pilgrims benefit. However place, like anything else, should not be allowed to distract the pilgrim from the relationship with God.

Peterson (2001:85) has an approach towards the theology of place best illustrated by the following:

Your delight in coming across that monastery isolated out there on those austere plains, miles from nowhere, and finding a community of praying brothers there is contagious. I am more and more convinced that holiness does indeed infiltrate place. In such places, I have always a sense of homecoming – heaven-coming.

Wright (2014:5) is in agreement with this and his approach to theology of place can be illustrated by his description of a visit to a school building in Canada, that was previously a church:

I walked in and sensed the presence of God, gentle but very strong. I sat through the loud concert wondering if I was the only person who felt it, and reflecting on the fact that I had no theology by which to explain why a redundant United church should feel that way. The only answer I have to this day is that when God is known, sought and wrestled within a place, a memory of that remains, which those who know and love God can pick up.

It must be said immediately that from a Reformed perspective, this does not mean that some places are holy and others are secular as the whole universe belongs to God and He is present everywhere (Smit, 2009:99-100). The presence of God can be experienced at any place at any

given moment and this can be regarded as the essence of Reformed theology, to be applied in a context of other religions during a pilgrimage where much meaning is attached to rituals, places or people (Smit, 2009:100). Place however, needs to be understood as having a special meaning and role to play in ordinary life and forms part of the identity of an individual or people (Bartholomew, 2004a:208). It needs to be stressed that whatever Reformed Christians do, or for this matter pilgrims, the non-negotiable principle of “*Finitum non capax infiniti*”, meaning the Infinite cannot be contained by the Finite, creates the overall theological framework (Smit, 2009:100).

O'Donovan (1999:47) describes place as to: “...grasp the reciprocal relation between nature and culture: geographical space mediating a possibility for human life in community; human inhabitation elevating a dead space into the character and distinctiveness of place”. Place seems to be more complicated and by simplifying it, will do no one a favour. That is the reality of life and it is a challenge for the Reformed tradition to find the balance between special places of interest, take note not holy, and other places, as memories, history, nature and so many other factors that may influence place. Therefore a pilgrimage to Israel or the Camino could have a different meaning than visiting the Free State.

In the broader picture of Western culture, place has become more important exactly because of the opposite, as the late-modern and postmodern culture created a situation where people become detached from space, due to mobility, communication abilities, virtual reality, cyberspace, working space and many other factors (Bartholomew, 2004a:209). The repossession of space can be seen as a need, an expression of enchantment in a disenchantment world, which could be another explanation of the current increase in social-spiritual behaviour with the increasing numbers of pilgrims.

The connection between pilgrimage and the rest of life becomes very important for the pilgrim in a disenchanted world, therefore the physical pilgrimage can be seen as the way in to the centre and afterwards it becomes the way out into the world, states Bartholomew (2004a:209).

This chapter on theology of pilgrimage covers only part of the immense depth there is to it as pilgrimage has historical, anthropological, sociological, philosophical, neuro-scientific,

noetic, etc., dimensions to explore. It is indeed a ritual that comprehends the fullness of life, which can be turned upside down at any stage as a pilgrim is a guest of God.

#### **6.8.4 Spiritual maturity**

Spiritual maturity is a concept associated with pilgrimage and the intention of every co-researcher and it can be accepted the intention of any pilgrim from the Reformed tradition who is serious about personal spirituality. The strive to grow in spiritual maturity is something else than knowledge, insights and theology and the process of growth towards ‘...balanced wholeness’, seems to expose a weakness in the Reformed tradition (Schwanda, 2000:198).

Any form of spiritual formation or spiritual growth must be embedded in the life of Christ and pilgrimage is a spiritual tool to conceptualise this (Schwanda, 2000:200). Four characteristics could be distinguished as pilgrimage implicates a moving action from a to b, which is purposeful and not randomly, with a specific focus and objective and the pre-understanding that the journey is challenging and when a pilgrim could get stuck for some reason the pilgrim becomes a settler (Schwanda, 2000:200).

Four phases of the pilgrimage journey are distinguished by (Schwanda, 2000:200-202) namely tradition, crisis, awareness and obedience phases, referring to Joseph, the father of Jesus, tradition, the customs from which he was called by God (Mt 1:1-17), with the restricting power locked in traditionalism, then the crisis phase (Mt 1:18-19), going with knowledge and realisation of a problem to phase three, the awareness phase (Mt1:20-23), with a decision-making moment, usually with conflict, leading to phase four, obedience (Mt 1 24-25), meaning the implementation and action steps of a decision. Pilgrims will recognise these phases playing out in their pilgrimage experience at any stage, pre, during and post.

Many pilgrims will recognise this process throughout pilgrimage as it applies right from the beginning with the announcement that they want to do a pilgrimage, right to the end during pilgrimage as well as in the post-pilgrimage phase. Therefore pilgrimage can also be described as a “...lifelong process of becoming” based on Mark 1:17, when Jesus told His disciples: “...I will make you become fishers of people” (Schwanda, 2000:196). This ‘lifelong process of becoming’ is neither continuous nor linear and although phases are distinguished, it does not mean a structured process as the process can start anywhere or in two phases at the

same time. This is however a good indication of the process that pilgrimage facilitates into a pilgrims life.

The presence of spirituality in pilgrimage is one thing but in what way could guidance be given to pilgrims in terms of spiritual growth towards maturity. The presence of the Holy Spirit, with no human measurement or judgement in terms of the work of the Holy Spirit, we grow in desire and ability, love God and neighbour, growing out of sin into sanctification, self-examination, more God focused, growing into healthier relationships, Christ words dwelling in us, more radiant with gratitude and worship (Schwanda, 2000:209).

### **6.8.5 Theology of pilgrimage**

‘Denouement’, is a well-known French concept for conclusion of the conclusion, the ultimate outcome of theology of pilgrimage. The intention of the researcher is to bring everything together to make sense in a conversation with a prospective pilgrim in a very practical way but the same will apply in a conversation with leaders of the Reformed tradition. Less is more and the challenge is to present what theology of pilgrimage is in the most simple way.

The researcher will begin with the word ‘metaxological’ to describe what pilgrims experience. Pilgrims experience something of the presence of God which they find very difficult to explain. The word ‘metaxological’ may help to comprehend this experience of absolute joy in presence of the Divine. The concept ‘metaxological’ is coined by the philosopher, William Desmond (1987) and reflected on by John Milbank in Oakes (2009). It is described as an agapeic gift, a state of ‘between’, the meaning of the Greek word ‘metaxu’, for example applied to immanence and transcendence, same and different, difference and plurality, mind and being, finite and infinite, etc. In contrast to the Hegelian dialectic that will close the circle, ‘metaxological’ will keep the circle open for ‘otherness’, to enter or to exit. The ‘metaxological’ is a way of describing the unexpected awaiting a pilgrim, something one can’t prepare for but may open oneself up for, something of the unknown and detached from anything known.

In the most practical way ‘metaxological’ could be explained with the experience of the Emmaus disciples in the presence of Christ. The state of ‘metaxological’ means detachment from any physical circumstances, transcends context, time and culture and could rather be described as a spiritual state of being.



To become more practical in terms of a theology of pilgrimage, the researcher would propose five concepts as focus areas namely, small things, wisdom, stretch, self-empower, and visibility with the understanding that God works with no structure, at any time, in any way. These five concepts represents an effort to create a theology of pilgrimage, from literature study, theories, Scripture and empirical research, as part of the responsibility of the Reformed tradition to react to public demand. The researcher realised that the five concepts link with the five elements in Luke 24, which forms the basis of Liturgy and after describing the five concepts, the links will be made to Reformed Liturgy.

- **Small things:** It was a small thing for a man to join the Emmaus disciples on the road, a small thing to invite the stranger to their house and both could have been regarded as coincidence but it turned out to be the biggest thing in their lives. This means a different outlook onto those things happening ‘by coincidence’. An alertness for the presence of the random stranger, the unexpected and to become curious when things start going wrong with attentiveness to see God behind and in everything that’s happening.
- **Wisdom:** A lot has been said about Aristotle’s concept of ‘phronesis’, the current trend of personal development to be integrated with spiritual development. Therefore an intent to constantly seek wisdom in the Word of God, to understand the most obvious as if for the first time, to actively seek His presence with silence and simplicity, to make oneself accessible to wisdom to come to you and live life with delight and pilgrimage as a metaphor for life.
- **Stretch:** As a pilgrim, regular challenges will be experienced, via a stranger, a friend, hospitality to be stretched, experiencing the mystical, healing in one way or another but usually one will be stretched to cross thresholds, to get out of comfort zones but at the same time to be filled with a positive anticipation.
- **Self-empowering:** This is more than sensitivity for the self, emotional boundaries and far away from self-centredness or narcissism, as self-empowering means to take care of the self as if appointed by God to look after His possession. To seek intimacy with the Divine, live in anticipation for eyes to be opened at any moment. Pilgrims learn this the hard way as they can’t deny the voice of the body, and it usually has something to do with pace. Self-empowering asks for exploration of self-knowledge in areas such as the noetic and numenous.
- **Visibility:** Everything is put to the test and actions are measureable otherwise it is lip service and this becomes clear in situations of uncertainty. Visibility usually means

the end of personal comfort zones. Hiding and excuses won't work anymore instead one will become 'different' and attract attention and even resistance.

These five concepts link with the five elements of Reformed Liturgy, present in all major religions through history, providing some solid theological ground for a theology of pilgrimage.

- Small things: Small things in everyday life reflect Divine koinonia and presence with the human being. A travel companion.
- Wisdom: Scripture as element of Liturgy is the undisputable source of wisdom.
- Stretch: Prayer as element of Liturgy is the one element that stretches the Christian to cross thresholds in faith, sometimes with no rational explanation, just faith.
- Self-empowering: The purpose of the sacraments, breaking of bread in Luke 24, has the intention of building up faith and re-assurance of Christians.
- Visibility: Witnessing as the case with the Emmaus disciples cause behaviour out of the normal, like travelling back to Jerusalem after dark and this links with the praise and worship element of Liturgy.

A theology of pilgrimage will do well in a simplified form with just five words, easy to remember, easy to communicate, but each could be the stimulus to endless thoughts, debates, conversations, spiritual and personal growth. A theology of pilgrimage should rather be a pocket guide with an open-end.

## 6.9 CONCLUSION

Can a theology of pilgrimage enrich the liturgical praxis of the Reformed tradition?

This chapter focuses on the theological-liturgical basis from Scripture and in different religious traditions. The special role of place in pilgrimage is also addressed. The Emmaus narrative from Luke 24 is analysed from different perspectives to lay the foundation for a theology of pilgrimage. In the formulation of a theology of pilgrimage attention is paid to the role of place and spiritual maturity. This chapter paves the way to the empirical research in Chapter seven.

## CHAPTER 7

### EMPIRICAL RESEARCH OF PILGRIMAGE

Sensitivity for perspectives of co-researchers is part of reality and therefore the researcher set up twenty seven pre-interviews, in order to invite nine co-researchers to participate in the empirical research. The following examples illustrate the importance of this strategy for this research.

#### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

Ethnography as a framework for research design is described in Chapter 3. The researcher will work with that content as a foundation for the empirical studies in Chapter 7, but will go further in this chapter by focusing on ritual-liturgical ethnography. The ethnographic approach is relatively new in the field of Liturgical Studies, with only a couple of completed dissertations with ethnography as research methodology (Klomp, 2011; Wepener, 2004). Ritual-liturgical ethnography is therefore still in the process of being shaped. Klomp (2011).

Klomp (2011:79-90) describes four authors who recently published books and used ethnography as their research design of which one of them, Stringer (1999); Stringer (2008), is also used in this research.

Literature was consulted in the field of ethnography and participant observation, as well as case study research by Coffey and Atkinson (1996), Gillham (2000), Pieterse (2001), Yin (2011) and Yin (2013) were consulted for relevance and application in the preferred approach of ethnography. To process the data from interviews, just relevant information from case study research will be included, referred to as PO (participatory observation), for the purposes of this research.

Ethnography is the preferred methodology, as it provides a position of participation observation to the researcher, enabling an inside understanding of an intangible context, not visible from the outside, brings clarity to connections and relationships between social phenomena, which from the outside seems to have no connection at all (Reeves, Kuper & Hodges, 2008:514). According to Yin (2013:21), research needs a strategic methodology as the researcher has to deal with a massive load of information.

For this research on pilgrimage and the challenge to the Reformed ritual-liturgical praxis, the openness required from the researcher may even go to the lengths of discovering in the data analysis that there are no messages or challenge at all. Christians could be just exploring options available without appropriating meaning for themselves in any different way than in everyday life or that pilgrimage is just another spiritual tool available. The challenge for the researcher is to have this kind of openness and tamed intuition, conscious about one's own subjectivity, towards the outcome of a scientific general analytic strategy, striving towards objectivity, as best to the researcher's abilities.

## 7.2 ETHNOGRAPHY IN RITUAL-LITURGICAL RESEARCH

Empirical research must be sensitive for a never-ending renewal of meaning to the same concept as this can be different from person to person or even with the same person but on different days, is the view of Klomp (2011:69). In the research of Hoondert (2006), he states that the future of worship is currently developing outside the traditional ways of worshipping. In this regard ritual-liturgical ethnography should take note of the contribution of cultural-anthropology (Klomp, 2011:70; Stringer, 2008:19; Wepener, 2012:2). The implication for this research on pilgrimage is to explore and to discover possible new meanings or opening space for new meanings, as they emerge. This reflects on the concept of liminality as defined by Van Gennep (2011)[1909] and Turner (1969), as described in chapter 2, with three phases: separation, marginalising or crossing the threshold and re-integration.

Two main characteristics of ethnography are observation and participation and this process is not cast in stone, therefore it asks for ongoing reflection for the researcher to be accountable, but at some stage the process asks for a decision by the researcher, described by Atkinson and Hammersley (1994:23) as "...the exercise of judgement in context". The ethnographic research is also labelled as reflexive and cyclical by Klomp (2011:75). This asks for the researcher's sensitivity as to objectivity during the analysis phase of research, being both observer and participant, and it is recommended for the participants to act as co-researchers, which is the case in this research (Klomp, 2011:77).

Ritual-liturgical ethnography can be related to the 4th century, in the notes of the pilgrim Egeria, who travelled on her own as a woman from what is today known as Spain or France,

to the Holy Land and whose notes were found many years later (Klomp, 2011:79; Wainwright, 2006:64-65).

Research with ritual-liturgical ethnography as methodology is already possible for technological data collection and processing, however the researcher investigated the possibility for using programmes such as Atlas.ti, HyperRESEARCH, NVivo or The Ethnograph, but decided to stay with the conventional method of interviews and coding (Fielding, 1991; Yin, 2013:134). Reflecting on the interviews the researcher experienced intense emotions during the interviews and is this cannot be accounted for in a computer program.

Technology may have a lot of advantages, going forward, like incorporating numbers of interviewee's but to the experience of the researcher, some responses or follow-up questions were only formulated in the moment based on a hint or a non-verbal way of communication during the interview, which of course won't be possible with technology. More than once a co-researcher react in saying that he or she would not have spoken about something if it was not put as a direct question, not only because they did not want to but because they were also realising the importance of the discussion in terms of their own process of appropriating meaning, not realising the importance before or not verbalised by them before. The physical interviews also provided the researcher with a better understanding more than once and provided a chance to evaluate perceptions. However this possibility is probably a research project worth on its own.

### **7.3 TRIANGULATION**

Triangulation was applied to verify methodology and methods and many adjustments were made. "Triangulation is a term linked to navigation or surveying...", to find out exactly where you are by drawing lines using landmarks and where the lines intersects, is where you are, citing Reeves, Kuper and Hodges (2008:513). Triangulation can be used for methodology, as data can be used for the purpose of triangulation or presentations to academic researchers to get their input or different theories can be used, to verify research methodology (Reeves *et al.*, 2008:513). This strategy is often used by ethnographers to verify their work or to improve the quality of research because human behaviour is never in a static form. For the purpose of

this research, triangulation is applied with three identified landmarks, which is literature, presentations to different role-players and interviews.

Triangulation was also looked at from the case study research methodology as described by Yin (2013:16), especially when it came to categories and the researcher's own list was compared with the list from the interviews.

Triangulation by presenting the collected data to academic researchers was build into the research process on different occasions and correlates with reflexivity in 2.3.4. The researcher did the following to comply with triangulation and reflexivity with regard to the empirical part of this study:

- The project in general and empirical data in particular was presented to Dr M. Klomp and post-graduate students during her visit to the University of Pretoria
- Discuss the research topic with Professor Sally Brown from Princeton Theological Seminary during her visit to the University of Pretoria
- Discuss the research topic with Prof Bo Karen Lee and post-graduate students at Princeton Theological Seminary and had several sessions with Prof Lee
- Present methodology and outcomes of the empirical research to Prof Cas Wepener and post-graduate students at University of Pretoria during seminars specifically designed for this purpose.

The strategy of triangulation is elaborated on by Osmer (2008:57-58) who states that social scientists have become more reflexive in their research due to “representation” and “legitimation”, the first refers to the validity of direct observation and the “legitimation” refers to the value of multiple criteria in contrast with just one set of criteria. Triangulation is the strategic effort of the researcher to build in a reflexive space and multiple criteria from different role-players in the liturgical field.

#### **7.4 IDENTIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

The strategy followed in this research was guided by the research topic in terms of the data analysis with the identification of concepts while going through the literature in preparation for the interviews. A list was made of what the researcher think is important or relevant concepts during unstructured interviews. The idea was to use these concepts as a framework for the conversations with the co-researchers to respond to any of them if they want to. If a

co-researcher wants to go a totally different route or come up with the unexpected, that would have been fine. This method of interview directors balanced with the freedom to explore, is in alignment with the ethnographic methodology, as the purpose is to tap into the co-researcher's mind and according to Klomp (2011:79-80) and Stringer (1999:3), it must be kept in mind that each and every pilgrim has their own thing going in their minds.

## 7.5 UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Unstructured interviews are proposed by Atkinson (1994:248) and encouraged by Klomp (2011:91), who says it is not standard practice to conduct interviews with predetermined questions in ethnography. In creating a context where the focus was on the co-researcher to reflect on what they want to, this strategy worked well. It creates a natural, spontaneous environment in contrast to the researcher with the one pre-prepared question after the other. The momentum of the co-researcher must determine the discussion, with what they want to talk about, even if this means that some of the pre-identified concepts or questions won't get addressed (Atkinson, 1994:248).

The pre-interview concepts identified by the researcher were formulated as faith, church, self, relationships, healing, life and values. The researcher also had other focus areas in his mind, like in which area of life will it never be the same, how and when did it happen? What experiences led to meaningful change? Are there any experiences with other pilgrims in the context of spiritual friendship to be explored? The role and presence of rituals and symbols while on the pilgrimage or any role for this afterwards? Any spiritual experiences to be shared for the purpose of this research? What was the relationship with the Church and fellow Christians before the pilgrimage? Did anything change after the pilgrimage and what exactly changed?

None of the interviews went according to plan. The interviews just generated their own momentum right from the start. All co-researchers expressed their appreciation to talk about their pilgrimage at some stage during or at the end of the interview. Studying relevant concepts beforehand was more on behalf of the researchers own knowledge. The main purpose was to get insights as to what is important for the specific co-researcher and what could be learned for the ritual-liturgical praxis of Reformed Churches. It must be stated that

within the research approach of ethnography, it is more important to explore and not to prove a hypothesis, in contrast with the natural sciences, says Atkinson (1994:250).

The researcher had a couple of questions for the interview sessions with the co-researchers, such as the accuracy of the concepts identified from the prior literature study by the researcher, the accuracy of the researcher's own perceptions and if there was a clear message for the Reformed tradition from the pilgrim co-researchers. Criticism or any valuable information relevant to the main research topic of the liturgical praxis of the Reformed tradition. The researcher also had a special interest in the spiritual experiences of the pilgrims, being convinced that it is the intention of God to interact and communicate with His children, wherever His children are prepared to create the space and time for this to happen in relation to the theology of creation, as explained in chapter two (Osmer, 2008:92-94).

A personal interview is essential to explore the wide range of possibilities provided by attentive communication (Gillham, 2000:61) or "priestly listening" as explained by Osmer (2008:35-37) within Practical Theology.

The interview enables the researcher to observe emotions like, sorrow, joy, thankfulness, anger, hurt etc., and the different ways in which the presence of God was experienced, interpreted and appropriated on an individual level. The interview has to be in a space of trust to maximise the flow of information, from time to time based on the intuition of the researcher, revealing the kind of information that can make or break a research project like this (Gillham, 2000:61).

The researcher followed some guidelines, like being aware of the introduction to put the co-researcher at ease, own non-verbal communication, attentive listening, non-verbal communication of both, to probe where necessary or appropriately, respect the natural flow of energy and pace with balanced control and ending the interview in a socially acceptable way (Gillham, 2000:70).

## **7.6 IDENTIFYING CO-RESEARCHERS**

Pre-interviews were held with twenty-seven individuals before any decision was made who will be invited to become a co-researcher. In the end, eight pilgrims were asked to participate in the formal interviews. These individuals became co-researchers from then on, with the



process explained and cooperation asked for their willingness, full transparency on spiritual and personal level and the freedom to talk about what was important for them in the pre-, during and post-pilgrimage phases. Co-researchers had to be willing to discuss their spiritual relationship and basic knowledge of the Reformed tradition. Co-researchers were also told that the interview will last for an hour and that they are welcome to send more information via email.

Two ministers and a high-ranking Church official from the Reformed tradition were included into the group, thus providing for the concept of “elite” interview according to Gillham (2000:63), which is not implying any in-egalitarian connotation, as the term is still conventional in research interviewing. The researcher’s argument for including two ministers, is that they are suppose to be in a better situation to express themselves in terms of the experience, embedded in their theological background and they are all from the Reformed tradition. The youngest co-researcher is 26 years of age. One co-researcher included was hesitant at first because of a “lack of understanding” experienced at church and became marginalised. The intention of the researcher was to allow as many “voices” possible into the small group of co-researchers.

The researcher had pre-interview meetings with the co-researchers individually, in which the whole process was explained to them and where they also had the opportunity to ask questions and to decide if they are completely willing and voluntary participating in the research project. They were handed the letter of consent, approved by the ethical committee of the University of Pretoria, which they could read and discuss before signing it. Only then the interview was scheduled.

## **7.7 CODE ANALYSIS OR CODING**

Each of the conversations was recorded in full, transcribed afterwards by the researcher word for word and is available as an addendum to this thesis. As all interviews were conducted in Afrikaans, those elected parts of the interviews, relevant for the research were translated into English for this research. In sending the transcribed versions of the interviews to the co-researchers for approval, an interesting response came out of it. More than once the researcher heard the comment that co-researchers noticed that they “did not complete a line of thought verbally, before carrying on with another”, realising that there was too much going

on in their thoughts or they noticed “half-sentences” before interrupting themselves to talk about something else.

This observation by the co-researchers also made the researcher to reflect on this. When observed, the researcher could bring the interview back to what was communicated but many times the researcher was totally unaware that the co-researcher was actually heading somewhere else during the discussion and could not even recall some of these incidents. During the interviews the researcher was making notes when this happened where a co-researcher did not complete a line of thought, exactly for this purpose, to remind the co-researcher at a convenient point, to elaborate further on what was said earlier.

The researcher’s conclusion about this is that there is still a lot of information to tap into and a video recording could help in this regard to further explore the “hidden” or “forgotten” information available, especially when this video recording could be analysed by the researcher in the presence of the co-researcher. The researcher is convinced that the research could easily double the load of information from the same interview if this procedure could be followed.

The chosen method to make sense from nine hours of recorded meaningful data is code-analysis. Code-analysis is explained by Coffey (1996:27-32); Pieterse (2001); Saldaña (2012); Seidel and Kelle (1995:52-58) and Strauss and Corbin (1998), with the latter describing this process as fracturing the data, transform it into concepts and integrate all of it into a theory. From this point a researcher must be creative to use the code system with data-analysis, to make sense out of the data and to work towards a theoretical outcome for the research project (Strauss & Corbin, 1998:105). The purpose of using coding can be seen as simplifying the process of analysing the research data from fieldwork and may lead to reconceptualising data and expanding possibilities (Coffey, 1996:28-29). Coding can be seen as a tool to link the analysed data with the researcher’s theoretical concepts and can be instrumental in identifying similarities, differences, patterns and structures (Seidel & Kelle, 1995:52). They also described coding as “...heuristic devices for discovery” (Seidel & Kelle, 1995:58)

Tesch (2013:121) uses de-contextualisation and re-contextualisation to indicate concepts may have a meaning in the context of origin, but also a different or expanded meaning in a group, a culture and therefore a multi-meaning or a “pool of meanings” can also be possible.

This process is important and is paving the way for the explanation of a theoretical outcome, called grounded theory.

## 7.8 GROUNDED THEORY

Grounded theory is explained by Strauss and Corbin (1998:12-14) as a theory that slowly emerges from the process of obtaining the data, like for instance with interviews, analysing the data by breaking it up in manageable concepts, allocating codes to it and from this process the researcher can formulate a theory, emerging from the data, which is called grounded theory, from which the actual theory will be formed. Ethnography as a research design has this advantage, this openness in terms of theoretical framework which is unique as it is not attached or accountable to any theory as point of departure (Geertz, 1973:16). It opens the door for the creation of a theory after analysing a situation involving human behaviour.

Important is, the theory is formulated based on “what is going on” - to refer back to Osmer (2008:4) and his four questions as the basis for Practical Theology - concepts embedded in data, the analysis of this data, in this case pilgrimage, which can produce an understanding and insight leading to more reality related interventions or appropriate responses or even better, it provides the space for pro-active behaviour for the Reformed tradition. This is the objective of this research to come up with pro-active guidance to make a positive contribution to Reformed churches future.

From here on the process can almost be described as artistic, a dance between the raw data and the researcher. Creative ways of going about with the data is now required (Strauss & Corbin, 1998:13). The reason why coding is important for this process, besides having to deal with an overwhelming amount of data, it also provides the researcher the ability to work systematically, be able to verify, shift content around, literally play with the data until the message becomes clear of what the actual meaning is of a particular social or spiritual phenomena (Strauss & Corbin, 1998:13). In this research, coded concepts are reflected in an Excel spreadsheet to determine quantity's as another effort to understand meaning from the

data. However this research cannot be regarded as quantitative research or even Mixed Methods, as explained in chapter 2, as this research is defined by qualitative research.

From various coding strategies, the open coding strategy as described by Strauss and Corbin (1998:101-121) is the preferred method, implicating that the text should be explored to identify concepts, the thought and meaning behind it, in order to create an understanding of what is happening. In this process, the data needs to be studied to discern the different sections in it, isolate specific issues, leading to the result of the interview as a unit to become a combination of smaller fractions. These concepts or “labelled phenomenon”, are put together on the basis of their properties, meaning their characteristics. The concepts are then screened for similarities, differences or a relatedness and as the different groups of concepts that belong together are formed, they then become a category with properties meaning characteristics (Coffey, 1996:27; Strauss & Corbin, 1998:102). From what becomes clear out of these categories, the theory gets formed, to get to the purpose of the study and that is to get to an understanding of certain human behaviour.

## **7.9 CONCEPTS TO CATEGORIES**

A category can also be explained or be defined with the above mentioned properties or characteristics, which further the analysis towards the identification of patterns, as patterns become visible by way of aligned characteristics, even if they differ to the extreme (Strauss & Corbin, 1998:117).

## **7.10 DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS**

The interviews were recorded and transcribed by the researcher and will be available as an addendum. Notes of concepts were made right from the beginning and went through a couple of repeated cycles before it was finalised, as described in more detail in the next section.

The system created by the researcher, based on a literature study from various sources will now be explained (Coffey, 1996; Gillham, 2000; Pieterse, 1993; Pieterse, 2001; Yin, 2011; Yin, 2013). The researcher wanted to identify indicators of meaningful concepts for pilgrims, group these concepts until they become a category, based on analysed data, as part of the outcome of this research about the challenge pilgrimage has for the ritual-liturgical praxis of the Reformed tradition. This is a method to structure the unstructured interviews by analysing what people talk about in a one-hour session, where they have the opportunity to reflect on

whatever they want. The researcher also realised that one comment, in some cases, fits two concepts, and where this was evident, one coded comment was put in two categories.

It was, and is the intention of the researcher to learn as much as possible of what pilgrims coming from the Reformed pilgrim's tradition do on a pilgrimage, their understanding, the meaning they create from doing it and what can be a possible message for the Churches from the Reformed tradition.

### 7.11 DATA ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEWS

- When the recorded interviews were done, a specific strategy was followed to interpret the data. All recordings were transcribed and are available as an addendum to this chapter.
- Each co-researcher's transcribed data were read several times and anything that looked like a possible concept or theme was highlighted.
- A separate list was made for each co-researcher, for all identified concepts or themes, during that specific interview.
- This process was repeated three times before the researcher was satisfied. In this process some content was re-conceptualised and similar concepts given by the researcher, with different wording, as to how the concept was formulated from the initial reading, were changed to the exact same wording in order to simplify the process of categorising.
- When the concepts were done, categories were finalised.
- Colours and codes were given to the concepts of each co-researcher to distinguish that particular contribution.
- A separate document was created for a random group of concepts that do not fit the already existing list, labelled "unique".
- The codes and related content of all co-researchers were then integrated into one document. Each co-researcher had a colour and a code and in that way the researcher could easily identify the contribution of each co-researcher.
- This enabled the researcher to illuminate duplication of the same concept by adding all codes together with only one descriptive heading.
- The first round delivered 128 concepts and after the second round with the integration of certain concepts with others, the number became 68. With the third round the figure became 14 after integrating categories like 'analogies in life' with 'Wisdom:

spiritual and life’, ‘self-knowledge’ with “personal transformation” and “personal crisis” with “healing”. By adjusting some of the category names, it allowed space for some “unique” concepts to be accommodated.

- The final list that emerged from the process is:

Body awareness / Personal crisis and/or healing / Personal transformation & self-knowledge  
Pre-pilgrimage: decisions & influence of others / should / say & actually doing / Silence & solitude / Simplicity / Spiritual experiences / Spiritual friendship / Symbols / Wisdom: spiritual & life analogies & applications / Worship / Post-pilgrimage and future / Unique (no category) Testify.

- This list was given a numerical number from 2 to 15. It starts with 2 as it makes it more practical with the Excel spreadsheet while the co-researchers were coded from A to H.
- In this list only one concept was added by the researcher as this was present in some of the interviews but not explicitly referred to by the co-researchers and that is “should / say / actually doing”, or in the words of Stringer (1999:50): “...what a person says they should be doing, what they say they are doing and what they are actually doing, then only ethnography, full participant observation, can provide an answer”. This paradox in terms was evident a couple of times but not addressed directly.
- The last list of concepts then made it easy to plot any and all related content, meaning this list is sufficient to cover all that has been said in the interviews.
- Only then the researcher felt comfortable to proceed to the next step.
- An Excel spreadsheet was created with categories and their codes running vertically and the co-researchers codes in the top horizontal line. The categories and co-researchers were then structured alphabetically.
- Every category was reflected in the appropriate square and those with subdivisions were reflected separately with a / dividing them.
- Calculations were made to indicate how many co-researchers responded to a specific concept.
- In this way the researcher could see which concepts got the most coverage by co-researcher’s and therefore indicate where the focus is for co-researchers as a starting point to see how they had appropriate meaning for themselves with their pilgrimage.

- All of this provides the foundation for guidelines, insights, new understandings, new areas for research and what we can learn from a spiritual-social-ritual-cultural phenomenon like pilgrimage.
- A final document was created with all the codes to related content under each category and some final comments were made in general about all the identified concepts and categories in preparation for the final chapter where the interpretation of this research will take place.

## 7.12 CATEGORIES, CODES AND COMMENTS

Coded concepts and themes are now structured in categories where the concepts or themes indicate the same thing or duplicate each other, with an accompanying summary of the message from the coded, analysed data.

This section is structured in the following way:

The categories are numbered from 2 to 15.

A summary of the content's message

The coded translated version of applicable comments from co-researchers in alphabetic order according to the co-researcher's code.

The code will refer to A, which is the code for the co-researcher, 2 refers to the category followed by a number, for instance, 3 referring to the 3<sup>rd</sup> comment by the co-researcher in this particular category.

In brackets follows the researcher shortened interpretation of each comment divided by / in case of more than one comment.

Quotes are highlighted in green in abstracts from the full transcription.

The full transcriptions are available in the addendum.

The next section describes the categories containing the concepts as identified by the researcher in detail. Each category begins with a summary by the researcher. This is followed by a layout of the specific coded comments from the co-researchers, with the researcher's summary in brackets for each one, to indicate how the researcher identified the specific concept.

### 7.13 BODY AWARENESS

Each and every co-researcher (9) refers to the physical challenge of the pilgrimage and that it really asks for commitment, perseverance and focus. It is also described as the one element that opened up many other personal awareness's and spiritual experiences. An awareness of the body seems to be very important with reference to Chapter two where it is addressed in the liminality section.

Experiencing pilgrimage also led to the physical involvement of one of the co-researchers with the Confraternity in preparing others who want to do the pilgrimage. Most of the co-researchers also refer to some adjustments they had to make, because of their body awareness, like adjusting their plans or pace. One co-researcher refers to the bodily experience as a renewed appreciation of the body while another emphasise the importance of bodily participation in worship rituals.

A:2:1 "...how my body adjusted" A:2:2 "...does not make sense to the body" A:2:3 "...realise I took too much stuff" (body adjust / no sense to body / travel light)

B:2:1 "...terrible blisters on my feet" B:2:2 "...run these workshops to try and help these people" B:2:3 "...You suffer, it is part of the experience..." B:2:4 "...forget about yourself a little" (physical hardship / get involved with others / physical suffering / less self-focused)

C:2:1 "...physical challenge", C:2:2 "...then you have to carry on till you get to place", C:2:3 "...sunburn...sick...you have to get up, get dressed and carry on..." (physical challenge / resilience / persevere)

D:2:1 "...cramps as soon as I start walking", D:2:2 "...I'm slower than most others", D:2:3 "...I can't do uphill..." (physical challenge: cramps / learn and keep own pace / physical & mental adjustment)

F:2:1 "...had to make a choice", F:2:2 "...make it enjoyable for our bodies..." (choices enforced by body / put body first)

G:2:1 "... to experience a body awareness moment", G:2:2 "...rest to respect body's pace" (experience a body moment/ body pace)



H:2:1 “...only then you realise what is happening to your body”, H:2:2 “...physical exhausting”, H:2:3 “... gets better until you realise when you wake up that you want to start walking...” (body adjustment / physical challenge / flowing to mental state)

#### **7.14 PERSONAL CRISIS AND/OR HEALING**

One co-researcher made a comment that the overwhelming need experienced amongst pilgrims in general was that of a personal nature, personal healing or development, rather than spiritual reasons as a main focus. Only one co-researcher indicated a spiritual focus as motivation for the pilgrimage. This finding does not mean that pilgrims do not make much of spirituality, as they do, it only says something about the original intention and interest, which seems to be more related to personal matters, a crisis of some sort, a period of change, health or emotional healing. It must be emphasised that the focus in this category is on crisis and healing.

A:3:1 “...I experienced healing”, A:3:2 “...have to live more in balance”, A:3:3 “...rubbish I had to let go”, A:3:4 “...more tolerance towards others”, (healing / balance / let go / more tolerant)

B:3:1 “...support my sister emotionally. I just needed to get away for my own sake”, B:3:2 “...also that I can do things...I am not the terrible person that I thought I was”, B:3:3 “...It definitely gave me more confidence in life” (boundaries, redefining self, healing: confidence)

C:3:1 “...I am a people pleaser”, C:3:2 “...I don’t like conflict”, C:3:3 “...have to see from different angle”, C:3:4 “...probably my self-confidence” (self-perception / avoid conflict / realising a solution / self-perception)

D:3:1 “...it took me long to figure out who I am”, D:3:2 “...I don’t get along with my brother”, D:3:3 “...I withdraw...I keep the negativity out of my life”, D:3:4 “...came to a standstill and realise this pilgrimage is reflecting my life”, D:3:5 “...I will take care of my mother”, D:3:6 “...I now make decisions with what I know” (own identity development, family relations, withdrawal /boundaries, life perspective externalised, family relations, life decisions)

E:3:1 “...we are going to do this for our marriage”, E:3:2 “...our kids are moving out of the house, we are moving into a new phase” E:3:3 “...this pilgrimage is going to be a spiritual thing for us” (marriage relationship, redefine identify as couple, spiritual objective)

F:3:1: “...they were both experiencing a career crisis” (career crisis & healing)

G:3:1 “My life changed dramatically during the Camino...three weeks later I was appointed”,

G:3:2 “...my mother said the Camino healed my son” (career crisis, inner healing)

H:3:1 “...career change to make...big decisions to take with major changes in one’s life”,

H:3:2 “...then the emotional stuff starts happening...I cried...I cried about all the things that happened to me” (big changes in life, emotional catharsis and healing)

## **7.15 PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION & SELF-KNOWLEDGE**

It must be stressed that the difference between this category and the previous one, is that the focus here is on personal growth and development, which to the judgement of the researcher is more pro-active, in contrast with the crisis and recovery theme of the previous category.

The data-analysis using the code method of all self-related comments by the co-researchers indicates the concepts and themes important for them during the pilgrimage. As can be seen in the first group, the majority of comments indicate personal characteristics, emotional intelligence concepts or the role in families or relationships. The comments referring to spirituality (5) are a minority in comparison to personal themes (48). The comments on the learning experience (5) during the pilgrimage, equals that of spirituality. From this data, it is clear the emphasis is on personal growth and development for pilgrims most of the time. This may be challenging for the assumption that the Camino is all about spirituality.

### **7.15.1 Personal themes:**

A:4:1 “...I desperately needed a breakaway...this was about caring for myself” (boundaries)

A:4:2 “...this was a springboard that changed my whole life...more relaxed...less stress...more balanced... better listener...more caring” (balanced lifestyle)

A:4:3 “...we burden ourselves...we can go with a more gentle touch” (simplify life)

A:4:4 “...get to know your own pace...you never know about others” (know thyself)

A:4:5 “...I take life more easy...if I can’t use something I get rid of it” (forgiveness/travel light)

A:4:6 “...never judge other people...get rid of prejudices” (no judgemental)

A:4:7 “...simplify life” (simplify life)

A:4:10 “...get to learn your own pace...growth differs” (self acceptance)

B:4:2 “I was a bit nervous about the walking... You are a bit concerned before you go” (overcome fear)

B:4:3 “Never had that confidence in myself. ..I am not the terrible person that I thought I was. It definitely gave me more confidence in life. I can do anything I put my mind to” (restore confidence)

B:4:4 “I always enjoyed beautiful things you know, nature and things like that. It gives you a good perspective. One has to spend time on your own. I am more relaxed now on my own. I can spend more time on my own can just sit here and relax” (peaceful and serene)

C:4:1 “...my experience was that I was the stronger one, in spite of my lack of confidence...” (self-perception)

C:4:2 “I did my own thing. I saw that I can also be witty. In a sense I could be the strong one” (re-evaluate self-perception)

C:4:3 “...my mom do running as everything else, in her stride...I thought she is actually right. I don’t get excited... I just do my thing” (re-evaluate self-perception)

C:4:6 “I believe you have to be yourself. We are not all the same” (personal boundaries)

C:4:7 “...can really upset me...it shouldn’t...I am not there yet to say ‘so what’...I need to brace myself...I want to be who I am...this is because of my sensitivity and lack of confidence” (personal boundaries)

C:4:8 “...you have to work on yourself. I have to change or settle down” (self-perception)

C:4:9 “...if this happens, it triggers depression with me...this message that I am not good enough” (self-knowledge)

C:4:10 “My biggest problem is I am a people pleaser. I want to keep everybody happy...” (self-knowledge)

C:4:11 “...I am a people pleaser as I don’t like conflict. I avoid that. I have to change ways” (self-knowledge)

C:4:12 “I have to develop an alternative perspective” (alternative story: growth)

D:4:1 “...we had a long conversation about the importance of experiencing the moment...to be in a state of awareness of the present moment” (self-awareness)

D:4:2 “In the first week I was constantly worrying...it was difficult to let go” (let go of worries)

D:4:3 “I addressed this prior to the pilgrimage that this is my journey. What a process...” (ownership of journey)

D:4:4 “I battled to get distance with the concept that this was my journey. I am used to adjust my journey to that of others because of my fears....” (personal boundaries)

D:4:5 “...this is a repeating pattern in my life...I definitely have more freedom now...it is not about other people...I was never myself...it took me long to figure out who I am” (identity & boundaries)

D:4:6 “...it took me some time not to give in to others. To realise I can talk and listen to God myself” (spiritual / personal boundaries)

D:4:8 “I now have filters in my head” (differentiate; boundaries )

D:4:9 “I do withdraw when I sense that someone is not actually listening to me” (Protect self; boundaries)

D:4:12 “As soon as I realise I am abused... I withdraw...can nearly say, I will give until my limit and then I withdraw...” (withdrawal compensate for no boundaries)

F:4:2 “...you create space for each other, to differ” (accommodating)

F:4:3 “...had to let go...experienced that freedom” (let go / surrender)

F:4:5 “...it was three weeks in which I had spoken the least” (talked less)

F:4:6 “...there is guidance...with signs...an important thing that I brought back...what kind of guide or sign am I?” How do people see me?...it has an influence on your behaviour” (self-awareness)

F:4:7 “That is what it is, patience...analogy of life” (self-awareness)

F:4:8 “...I don’t know where this flexibility comes from ...I am an easy going person” (self-awareness)

G:4:2 “With the Camino, I got simplicity, silence, away from the buzz, inner peace” (personal transformation)

G:4:3 “...during the walk, poems came to me...playfulness, joy of life, came back...I went on the Camino when I was not in a good place...anti-depressant...” (creativity exploded)

H:4:1 “...then the emotional stuff start to happen...I cried so much...about everything that happened to me” (emotional catharsis)

H:4:6 “... my self-confidence got a boost” (self-confidence)

H:4:8 “I’ve always been someone who will finish what I started with. I would have persevered” (self-knowledge)

H:4:9 “I think it is more about how you are doing what you’re doing and how you think about it” (redefine own thoughts)

### **7.15.2 Family related:**

C:4:4 “...she plays a huge roll in my life. She will always motivate me. makes me believe in myself” (external motivation)

C:4:5 “...it is difficult in my own family, for they are strong personalities, therefore I am always under pressure, not exactly on their level (role in family)

C:4:13 “...they understand each other, tease each other but I am sensitive. That is my problem in life. I try to change this but without success” (role in family)

E:4:1 “...we are going to do this for our marriage” (family relations)

E:4:2 “...our kids are leaving home...we are on our way into a new phase” (family relations)

### **7.15.3 Journey related:**

A:4:11 “If someone asks you if you did the Camino, yes, yes. It became a consumer article. Then you miss the value of it” (consumerism & materialism)

B:4:1 “...great privilege to have done it. So many times too. It is not the destination that really matters, although you are walking along (appreciate the journey and the moment)

C:4:14 “...people say the Camino brings change over time or it is for a time of change...” (pilgrimage creates change)

D:4:11 “I came to a standstill and realise that pilgrimage gives one a perspective on your whole life” (life perspective)

F:4:1 “...there is change, you can’t do this (pilgrimage) without experiencing change” (change is implicit)

F:4:4 “...it (pilgrimage) just gives you confidence, in a sense” (self-confidence)

G:4:1 “...pilgrimage has become an analogy for life...a very important one for me” (pilgrimage journey became life metaphor)

H:4:3 “it (pilgrimage) becomes an analogy for life... if you do the right thing, it’s okay, if wrong, then you turn around or you keep going until you get onto the road again. It’s actually wonderful” (metaphor for life’s decisions)

### **5.15.4 Spiritual related:**

A:4:8 “...pilgrimage, a spiritual experience...pay attention to immediate surroundings” (spiritual attentiveness)

A:4:9 “...to see or experience makes it reality..., the road is important, that is where you learn” (spiritual clarity)

D:4:7 “Looking back the Camino was a time of grace in my life. To get away, get silent, be alone with Him without any responsibilities... in preparation for where I am now” (God’s grace for transformation)

D:4:10 “...this is quite an outcome to this journey, where I am and His plan for my future” (synchronise with God’s will)

H:4:2 “I was in a constant dialogue with God. I never experienced it so intense”(spiritual experience)

H:4:5 “...another layer was added to my spiritual life...I totally freaked out...it has an influence on many things today” (overcome fear)

H:4:7 “...my faith got empowered” (impact on spiritual life)

#### **5.15.5 Perspective on life:**

A:4:12 “...therapy can create a space where brokenness finds a comfort zone...to help people see the alternative, is real help” (comfort zones not good)

H:4:4 “...is there a right or wrong in life? Is it not about taking a decision and go with it. One can play with this concept” (life perspective)

### **7.16 PRE-PILGRIMAGE: DECISIONS & INFLUENCE OF OTHERS**

Again the spiritual motivation seems not to be the top priority prior to the pilgrimage. It seems that personal circumstances played a major role in the decision-taking process to go on the Camino pilgrimage without knowing what it is about or this is how they reflect about it afterwards when they discovered something difficult to put in words. One thing is certain and that is that each pilgrim discovered something wonderful. Even D who mentioned “God’s calling”, put that in the context of wanting to get away from family and circumstances. All co-researchers heard about the Camino pilgrimage randomly.

### **7.16.1 How co-researchers took note of the Camino:**

A:5:1 “...heard about people going to Taize...that is something I would like to do” (exposure)

A:5:3 “2006...in Europe...want to go to Taize...met people there on their way to Santiago” (exposure)

E:5:1 “We heard about this in Spain...google it, read about it...we (wife) said we would like to do this someday...one day she said we are going to do this next year” (both interested)

F:5:1 “...when I heard about the Camino the first time, I said, I want to do this...more adventure...no idea what it was all about” (more adventure than spiritual)

G:5:1 “...youngest finished school...she had more time at hand...start talking about the Camino...some magazine articles” (redefining life)

G:5:2 “...I was intrigued...pilgrimage...my interest in different traditions...then at one stage I said ‘when are we going to do the Camino?’” (Religious interest)

H:5:1 “...about to travel, then by coincidence I’ve heard about the Camino...I did not know a thing about it...no conscious decision, it happened randomly...I was totally blown away in a positive sense (more circumstantial than spiritual)

### **7.16.2 Personal motivation or objectives mentioned:**

A:5:2 “...parent died without doing what they wanted to...me and wife decided we are going to travel...we are not going to postpone it” (personal motivation)

A:5:4 “This (pilgrimage) fits my field of expertise” (personal motivation)

C:5:1 “We do have an ordinary marriage. It is not as if we have problems...we have our differences. (Objective 1: marriage)

C:5:2 “Both our children are students...one of these days they will be moving out...then the two of us will be on our own...I am not a talker...he can talk a lot (Objective 2: redefine relationship)



D:5:2 “My first idea was just to get away from where I was at that stage...want to get away from the pressure” (to get away from family)

D:5:3 “She had this expectation that I should do missionary with her. My no was never enough” (pressure from others)

D:5:4 “...I am not sure how thought through my acts were” (more reaction than action)

G:5:3 “...someone said: ‘you have to decide if you want to do it as a tourist or as a pilgrim’,...a pilgrim surrender to the route, become dependent of the route, he lives from what the route offers... a tourist book everything in advance, you control everything... we decided to go as pilgrims (decision tourist or Reformed pilgrim)

G:5:4 “I gave meaning to the pilgrimage in that the value is in the journey, not the destination” (meaning in the journey, not destination)

### **7.16.3 General comments**

B:5:1 “I did four Camino’s... that was fantastic...So those are my Camino’s but it is amazing and I would love to go again (appreciation for opportunities)

B:5:2 “...definitely a growing interest in doing the Camino, although a lot of people don’t do enough prep time beforehand...Getting your things together and getting your mind in the right mindset for it (Prepare better and mindset)

D:5:5“...I’ve read somewhere that one can actually take your fears along with what your are packing...everybody wants to give advise...with their prejudices...then you pack their fears as well. You have to decide” (know your fears/ your decisions)

F:5:2 “...some people with us...feels a bit safer” (safety an issue)

F:5:3 “... started our planning 18 months ahead” (pre-planning)

### **7.16.4 Spiritual related comments**

D:5:1 “...I had an appointment with God...it was part of His plan that I should go” (God’s calling)

E:5:2 “I got invited with this Ecumenical visit to Egypt...life changing...in desert in monastery...my world opened up...I just cried during the liturgy...I experienced that the Lord touched me” (Previous experience in desert monastery)

E:5:3 “...went on my own and stayed in a monastery for a month to understand something about this spirituality...what really hit me was the silence...also their spiritual symbolic” (previous exposure to monastery)

### **7.17 SHOULD / SAY & ACTUALLY DOING**

This is the only category added by the researcher, taken from literature, in order to dig deeper into the research topic to uncover some meaning in the overall data from co-researchers. From literature, the work of Stringer (1999:3) mentioned the paradox sometimes to be found between what people say they should be doing, what they say they are doing and then what they are actually doing, in worshipping. This is very much applicable to the meaning in rituals like pilgrimage, as Christians seems to be able to do the exact same ritual but have many different meanings based on individual understanding. The comments below illustrate what we are saying, is not necessarily what we are doing or should be doing.

A:6:1: live detached from materialism (yet let us ourselves be ruled by it)

A:6:2: don't allow burdens (yet we are loaded with it)

A:6:3 & F:6:1: freedom in Christ (yet we live with burdens, dragging from childhood)

A:6:4: don't worry about tomorrow (yet we have high stress levels)

A:6:5: respect own uniqueness (yet subject ourselves to the opinion of others)

F:6:2: we trust God, yet... (we doubt and fear...)

### **7.18 SILENCE & SOLITUDE**

The silent moments or days, just being on your own, is one of the striking features of pilgrimage. Silence enable people to connect with their inner being, create the space for life as it happened to surface, processing personal history, get clarity on some life issues, get the chance to evaluate, renew and to make life-changing decisions. Silence as experienced on a pilgrimage like the Camino, can be confrontational. However there is no doubt that according

to the co-researchers, this is one of the most important attributes of the pilgrimage, as one of the co-researchers put it: “first you walk the pilgrimage but later on the pilgrimage walks you”.

A:7:1 “...we must actively seek silence and plan for it...not happening from itself” (make silence happen)

A:7:2 “...silence is spatial but also within yourself” (inherent)

A:7:3 “...silence not to be filled with information...no reading...just thinking and to write perhaps what is coming to you...no extra information” (know what silence is)

B:7:1 “Sometimes I walked with them but mostly walked alone. I like to walk alone. I always think you have a chance to be on your own. (value in being on your own)

B:7:2 “It means a lot to me to be alone with God. It is such wonderful places, to take the time out from the rush of life and have a time of solitude and reflexion. (alone with God)

E:7:1 “...what struck me was the silence. To be in silence with the Lord” (power of silence)

F:7:1 “...at times I was just in silence...the others were okay with it (silence from time to time)

G:7:1 “...in simplicity, silence, away from the buzz, brought me rest and peace” (at last, peace and silence)

H:7:1 “...we split up 90% of the time...walked alone...each busy with her own stuff” (solitude decision)

H:7:2 “...what I learned there, I can apply now, like in becoming silent” (silent time became habit)

## 7.19 SIMPLICITY

Simplicity is another strong feature and attribute of a pilgrimage like the Camino. Experience that seems to take a pilgrim across the threshold into the unknown. Each and every one of the co-researchers referred to simplicity as having a major effect on them. The conclusion is unanimous amongst co-researchers that we carry too much “stuff” with us in life. This

awareness starts with the material world, in realising without exception that we can live and get along with much less clothes, possessions and money in the material world. Vuijsje (2009:139) links the awareness of simplicity to a yearning for freedom from earthly burdens, not only on a physical level but also dogmatic, ecclesiastic and theology in general: “Hoe minder je meeneemt, letterlijk en figuurlijk, hoe meer vrijheid de deel zal zijn”.

The value of silence and simplicity are present in the post-pilgrimage phase with major effects sometimes. The process does not stop there but continue into the personal life with realisations of how complicated we can live with unnecessary emotional bondages.

An important observation was made by a co-researcher who did the Camino pilgrimage for the fourth time, in stating that with the last Camino the co-researcher saw the effect of modern technology and social media. Pilgrims are spending lots of time, trying to find Wi-Fi, post on Facebook or sending text messages and emails. This seems to be the trend for the future, where pilgrims will share their surroundings, experiences and thoughts with the world outside. The question is what effect could this have on the process of the pilgrimage, the personal space, silence, simplicity, etc. Pilgrims as the co-researchers, love to talk about becoming aware of the presence of God in many ways and even though this research is indicating that the spiritual experience is not featuring high during the initial decision-making process, there is no doubt that the spiritual character of pilgrimage is part of the process.

A possibility is that social media may have the effect where Christians develop skills to verbalise their spiritual experiences, take more accountability for the spiritual process, become more conscious or make the pilgrimage more accessible for their friends. What the effect of social media, etc., is going to be on the traditional form of pilgrimage, will be a valuable topic for research in the field of ritual-liturgical praxis.

A:8:1 “...leave unnecessary stuff...you complicate the journey with that...someone makes a comment and then you carry it with...not a problem in the short run but... (detach clutter)

A:8:2 “...only plan for today...just enough food for today...simplify life...destination is today’s journey” (live and enjoy the moment)

A:8:3 “...just go the pace to your ability...same with our thinking processes...we differ” (don’t compare to others)

B:8:1 “...You have nothing, one pair of clothing and you don’t have to think... Just your own physical ability that gets you going...The more possessions you have, the worse it is....possessions become less important to you (no possessions)

B:8:2 “You detach from the normal stuff. You put all that behind you. (detachment)

B:8:3 “You don’t need all that stuff. You tell them don’t take too much stuff. And what do they do. They do. Then they throw it away or post it home. (difficult to detach)

B:8:4 “...one thing that made me sad the last time were the number of people who at every moment don’t talk to each other anymore. They are all on their Facebooks and sending photos home. I said rather take the time and talk to the people (complicate due to social media)

F:8:1 “...the simplicity...no worries besides eating and sleeping and clothes...like letting go of burdens...it is so good with no outside influences” (simplified life)

G:8:1 “...silence and simplicity...the two things I got from the Camino” (silence & simplicity)

## 7.20 SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES

Spiritual experiences can be a challenge to some Reformed Christians, depending on their specific background, taking them to new ground and after returning home, leave them a bit on alien ground. Some co-researchers state that they quickly learned not to talk about all that happened to everybody. One co-researcher has close connections with the “mystic paradigm” as it was framed, welcoming the holistic participation of mind and body in pilgrimage, as it is in rituals within the “mystic paradigm”. For others to experience a Catholic mass is to cross the threshold, to experience the Reformed principle of “no coincidences”, small things happening, realising “this must be from God”, is in most cases a new experience for co-researchers, although using the words is not new, but the experience opens up a new perspective on old knowledge.

Co-researchers can become emotional when they talk about spiritual experiences, cry easily, sometimes opening up further or prefer not to talk about this in detail. It is clear at these

stages that the researcher was on Holy Ground. Some pilgrims like B and C also stated the importance of being alone with God, since then.

### **7.20.1 Impact on pilgrim's life:**

As researcher one will either hear “I am so glad that I have the opportunity to verbalise ....” or “I do not talk like this to anyone”. Co-researchers talked about their fears, uncertainties, vulnerabilities, discovering the spiritual diversity, a total renewed perspective on God and Scripture, at times asking the researcher not to record a certain part, elaborating on emotional healing that flowed from spiritual experiences and the researcher even heard at one stage: “now, you are digging deep....” while the researcher had not said a word for quite some time.

A:9:1 “...I am much more mystic in my understanding of God” (mystic paradigm)

B:9:1 “I am very spiritual. It means a lot to me to be alone with God. It is such wonderful places, to take the time out from the rush of life and have a time of solitude and reflexion. (alone with God)

B:9:2 “...pilgrims mass which is absolutely fantastic, just wonderful” (pilgrim's mass)

B:9:3 “...it gives you that thing that you can do anything. God strengthens you to do anything. (experience God's support)

C:9:1 “...it was not that much of a spiritual encounter...it was more the experience of being alone” (spiritual in being alone)

D:9:2 “...I thought I would like to be more consciously with Him in future...want to experience Him all the time...that was not what I expected...If I think about that then that is what He wanted to do for me...I am more spiritual, I changed and my relationship with Him has grown...not what I had in mind” (experience His presence different from my expectation)

D:9:3 “...a conscious decision that I want to make this a spiritual experience” (spiritual choice and intention)

D:9:4 “...although different from my expectation, I know it was Him...if I look back I know He was with me...I am more at peace...more focused...did not get my answers but I got what He wanted me to have...that was my lessons (He gave me what I needed / no disappointment)

D:9:5 “...I do now realise that my filters are in place...my relationship with Him in place...I can now verbalise it better (able to verbalise it)

F:9:1 “You go with the flow...then you relax...not worried again...there is care” (from fear to trust)

F:9:2 “...you genuinely experience His care for you” (experience His care)

F:9:3 “...you experience it in a different way because of your vulnerability” (vulnerability makes trust different)

F:9:4 “...I think that is what I was freed from...the unknown, now I will go” (overcome fear)

F:9:5 “If you want to travel with God, then you have to observe His signs” (became attentive to His signs)

H:9:1 “You are in constant communication with God. I never experienced it like this before or after” (intense Divine interaction)

H:9:2 “...looking for a place to sleep...things always work out as it should...if it is next to the road, then that’s fine” (uncertainty a spiritual learning experience)

H:9:3 “...it is like independent independency. You are alone...very much dependent on His guidance” (Divine dependency and own responsibility)

H:9:4 “... I will now take the same attitude in life but the communication is not the same” (Divine communication)

H:9:5 “...how vulnerable you are and how strong His influence is...never experienced it like this” (own vulnerability)

H:9:6 “I think about that time a lot and it is very metaphorical for what is happening now” (value of silence)

H:9:7 “What I experienced is actual communication, now I know it is there, there are alternative ways...there is a deeper message in the Bible than just to know what is in it” (Spiritual diversity)

H:9:8 “there are different ways in which God communicates, I now cling to that...I did not know this before” (not to restrict God to own paradigm)

H:9:10 “I did not go with exceptional expectations...it was more about the adventurous experience...this changed completely...made me realise what is possible with prayer (power of prayer)

### **7.20.2 Spiritual experiences by pilgrims:**

The researcher presents this as a personal view and realises that this can't be generalised, if he puts it that Reformed Christians are not used talking about spiritual experiences out of the ordinary. They are cautious not to overstep some Reformed boundaries and will always describe spiritual experiences in broad terms that “won't harm anybody”. Co-researchers used words as: “His presence in small things” or “He gave me what I needed”. The researcher became aware with the interviews that co-researchers won't elaborate on comments like these unless asked by the researcher and then there is usually a whole story behind each comment. Another observation during interviews, is that all co-researchers are in awe, of what they discovered, clearly not always able to describe that in words.

B:9:4 “...lots of co-incidences. I decided to read John's gospels. ..The one place I stayed was for pilgrims and they have services or something for each pilgrim. After the service they gave us a St John's gospel... it all got wet...Dutch Christian group. That night they also gave out John's gospel again. It was like you were meant to read it you know. It was the 3<sup>rd</sup> time that John's gospel were given to me! (God's presence in small things)

C:9:2 “I was so aware of His presence the whole time...that was for me the spiritual experience” (presence of God)

D:9:1 “...I had myself and God. I spoke with Him myself” (close to God)

E:9:1 “...this gigantic dog walked up to me, stared into my eyes...it brought the question to my mind “who am I, what am I doing here”...then the dog went away...why do I keep thinking about this...why such a moment? (Experience His presence)



E:9:2 “...if God can communicate through a burning bush, He surely can do the same through a dog...He is the invisible...He can confront me with the question “who are you”...maybe that is the crux about pilgrimage” (Meaning from the experience)

G:9:1 “...on the flight...song of Leonard Cohen...’I am blind but you can see, I’ve been blind totally, please don’t pass me by”...this became a metaphor for our concept about the “friendly stranger” (sensitive & experience His presence)

G:9:2 “...something strange...about John 4...we decided to take a rest at a dam and fountain where you can drink water, around midday... we are very tired...there I read John 4, describing exactly our circumstances but where Jesus got water from a woman at a fountain around midday as He was tired” (no coincidences a Reformed principle/ His soft touch)

G:9:3 “...crucial decision for her career to be taken on the Monday...we could not find an open church the two previous days but on Monday we found three open churches...it felt like His care” (God ministering)

H:9:9 “like David and Victoria. I am 100% sure they were sent by God...that was sort of my wake-up call” (God send people)

H:9:11 “...in our society you just don’t realise the meaning of it when you are tired and some stranger offer you water...here it is taken for granted” (different experience with Scripture)

## 7.21 SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIP

The concept of spiritual friendship is by far the one co-researchers love to talk about, it is easier to talk about, more explainable, lots of practical examples, more demonstrative and always a lot of fun. Co-researchers are more relaxed to talk about this as well. It has an incredible impact on pilgrims as explained by the co-researchers, to experience the century old “spiritual friendly” pilgrimage culture, amongst fellow pilgrims but then also from strangers, passing by, the Catholic Church, the monks at the monasteries, volunteers along the road, people who are just there to serve pilgrims and then of course, at the end, sharing emotions and experiences with strangers who became almost like angels along the way. It creates awareness during the pilgrimage and post-pilgrimage, that the practical implication is realised that the favour has to be returned in being a spiritual friend to others. Sensitivity for

this concept seems to be growing in time, long after the pilgrimage, as put by one of the co-researchers: “once you notice someone, pay attention, it may be a Divine hint”.

### 7.21.1 General comments

A:10:1 “...the people you walk with...they are just unbelievable, the people you meet”

B:10:1.“...wonderful friends... Amazing people you meet. You meet people all the time. That’s just wonderful and the people you meet are wonderful. Everybody is in the same boat. Everybody is friendly. 90% are friendly, put it that way. People go out of their way to help you and you go out of your way to help people. You are all the same. You have lost all your possessions. (Amazing people)

B:10:2 “He is a South African guy and he opened an Albergo. I scraped his kitchen floor for him...”

Suddenly you have people who had common experiences with you...at the Confraternity and we try and help people... I joined the Confraternity ...I said let’s start running workshops. ...every year since 2006. This year 120 people... another 24 (Servant to others)

B:10:3 “...you are very emotional to get there. You find people very emotional in Santiago... They call out to you, “come and have coffee, drink a glass of wine, come have supper” (emotional finish)

B.10.4 “She refused to go to Santiago...Anyway I am not friends with her anymore. She only wanted her way. So I thought one day I will go” (experience the opposite of spiritual friendship)

B:10:5 “Oh, my grand-daughter wants to walk with...” (bonding)

B:10:6 “People at the church are very excited. I send ‘n letter every week and they published it... I try to encourage other people to do it. People think they can’t do it on their own (encourage others)

B:10:7 “The timelessness of people, people were extremely kind ...I just wept and wept. How kind people were. They went out of their way to help you” (overwhelmed at the end)

B:10:8 “...one guy carried somebody’s sack because he had a sore foot. For a whole day he carried two rug sacks...I met an elderly couple in France... Anyway he died one night, heart attack. It was an Australian couple and they took this lady and they went to Bourgeois with her, arranged the funeral and went all the way to Madrid with her, until her daughter arrived. Then they came back and continued on the Camino. I mean they really went out of their way to help somebody in need. Those kind of things, you don’t get this kind of people.....

One lady on the train from Paris saw I was a pilgrim and when we got to Lepoi, she asked me if they could give me a lift to where I was going to start, to the Albergo, anyway we did not know where it was. We drove around and eventually I said just drop me here at the cathedral. They did not want to. They parked the car and she in her high heels got out and walked with me. They would not leave me at the gate. They want to ensure that I will be allowed.

C:10:1 “...I never had these emotional experiences” (realise lack of spiritual, emotional experience)

D:10:2 “...you make friends, you lose them, you love, you hate, you get hurt, you heal. All in a short while. It goes quickly”

E:10:1 “...go inside the church...the priest bless the pilgrims, pray for us” (from local Catholic Churches)

F:10:1 “...you share something that you don’t understand if you were not there” (special bonding)

F:10:2 “...you just have a connection, although you don’t know each other...you just start having a conversation” (immediate connection)

F:10:3 “...understanding each other without words” (no explanation necessary)

G:10:1 “...so we journeyed together...carry each other’s burdens” (bonding in Christ)

G:10:2 “...he just took his map from his back and hand it to us...for us a case of ‘please don’t pass me by” (stranger as a spiritual friend)

G:10:3 “...our term for this was the friendly stranger...we were discussing the direction...a guy working on his roof, whistle and direct us... (experience a centuries old pilgrim culture)

G:10:4 “David another example...it is hot, our water bottles empty...then in the middle of nowhere, a guy with refreshments...’help yourself, it’s free’...he discovered meaning in life...so he told us: ‘no, it’s me that should thank you, if it wasn’t for you pilgrims, to whom shall I give” (find meaning in life in spiritual friendship)

G:10:5 “...we saw a man walking with a limp...L is a physio-therapist and she spoke with him, see if she could help...he had polio...they had a discussion” (if you notice, focus then act) (notice is probably God through the HS)

G:10:6 “...we sit next to this Dutch woman...problems with her feet...L a physio could helped her with advise and treatment” (just follow the flow)

H:10:1 “...you meet people from all over the world...you hear about so many different reasons why they came” (exposure across culture)

H:10:2 “...sort of relationship is you help each other on the road...strange connections... (experience spiritual friendship connections)

H:10:3 “...whole community there is focused on the pilgrim...it is beautiful...you order a coffee and they will bring you a sandwich with because they see you are tired” (experience spiritual friendship culture)

H:10:4 “...I was shocked at this monastery...the monks were unbelievable in hospitality...showed us around...provide a place to sleep...we were thirty...they don’t take money...and then there is a container with the words ‘give what you can, take what you need” (experience spiritual friendship across religious traditions)

H:10:5 “...something happened at the beginning that wiped my mind...arrived at the airport at Santiago...no storage for my luggage...elder man gave me his personal locker and the key...no buses...met up with David and Victoria, also pilgrims...they went out of their way...even changed their own route to see that I get where should meet my friend...at the end in Santiago they took me for dinner...we are still in contact” (experience spiritual friendship)

H:10:8 “...you want to stay in a town where they cater for the pilgrim...many pilgrims go stay there, open an Albergo...always someone to help you...always someone to offer the water...co-dependency...the same attitude should be with you to help someone else in

need...that is how God wants it” (practicality of Biblical principles behind spiritual friendship)

### **7.21.2 Across religious boundaries**

A:10:2 “...professor from the Catholic tradition...weird...we discussed theology...we are so different when it comes to communion...she wanted it...I offered to serve her communion...she refused”

E:10:2 “...small vehicle there, serving you food and drinks...volunteers that do this...we discussed this as actually communion served to us...served in love with ‘bless you, now go on” (Volunteers serving pilgrims)

### **7.21.3 Spiritual friendship linked to God**

C:10:2 “...just over this mountain...there is this oasis...what an experience...volunteers did it...and you are exhausted and thirsty...things like that...that is Him taking care” (His presence through others)

C:10:3 “...we said we will be on the lookout everyday...to see how He provides...water bottle empty...elderly lady at her house, filled our bottles...small things... (awareness of Him)

C:10:4 “...woman behind me asked ‘do you speak Afrikaans?’ ...she had medicine I needed in the middle of nowhere...small things happening...you experience His closeness” (His presence through others)

D:10:1 “...so much grace as He provides the right person at the right moment to help you with a translation...” (He provide right person at the right time)

H:10:7 “I am 100% sure they were sent by God. That was my wake-up call. I went for the experience....He wiped that clean...made me realise what is possible with prayer” (discover power of prayer in spiritual friendship)

## **7.22 SYMBOLS**

It does not seem that symbols have a significant role in the pilgrimage of the co-researchers. Only one mentioned the Pilgrim’s Prayer that was carried along and read every day and this is the same person who also has an affinity to the mystic. For the rest symbols played a role

in the sense that signs of the Camino got meaning or in the sense that pilgrimage became a symbol of life. Three others had communion along the way when they felt that way. One co-researcher mentioned that the symbols in the Catholic Churches had him think a lot about the visibility of Christ in the Reformed tradition.

E:11:1 “...silence, sign of the Cross, to be on the road, the journey” (Rituals & symbols from early Church)

E:11:2 “...the Sunday before our departure, a minister did the pilgrim’s prayer and blessed us...I carried the pilgrim’s prayer with me and prayed it regularly”

E:11:3 “...one of the slogans on the way is ‘altreia soseya’ meaning forwards, upwards” (signs on the Camino)

F:11:1 “...the shelf is your guide...very symbolic, some people will tell you it’s the fingers of God on the shelf. It is the most beautiful thing on the way as you know then you are on the right track. You become addicted, especially in the towns, you just search for it the whole time...I’ve got a lot of pictures of it, a series...” (shelf’s meaning and value)

G:11:1 “...in the Catholic Church...all those symbols...in a way their religion has a much more human face...and then the friendly priests...” (impression by Catholic symbols)

### **7.23 WISDOM: SPIRITUAL & LIFE ANALOGIES & APPLICATIONS**

There is no shortage in wisdom amongst the co-researchers. A lot of life applications could have been identified and duplications were illuminated. This resonates with what was said under the theme “Personal transformation & Self-knowledge”, that this research indicates an emphasis on self-development. Although the summary below can all be related to principles from Scripture, they all relate to human behaviour, relationships and life in general.

A:12:1 “...we complicate life...we can go with a gentle touch” (travel light through life)

A:12:2 “...goal should be today’s road” (live more in the now)

A:12:3 “...determine your pace to your abilities. Our development is not the same” (respect own uniqueness)



A:12:4 “...never judge others” (no judgemental)

A:12:5 “...address the attitude of chase and expect to receive” (balance give and take)

A:12:6 “...my dairy is more rigid concerning personal time. I have to balance life” (personal boundaries)

B:12:1 “ ...like life...walked through snow...difficult...It was raining and my feet was wet every single day but it didn’t matter. The thing is you are walking along this nice road and there are signs along the road, arrows... and suddenly you have to turn off. The arrow goes into the bush into the mud. It is just like life. You think everything is going fine, fine and then suddenly something hits you. You end up in the mud. You get out of it. You get back on the nice road again. Just like life. (unforeseen and unpredictable)

B:12:2 And sometimes you decide to take a short cut...It is very difficult to get back onto the road. Sometimes you get lost if you take the off road. You don’t have arrows to guide you. Like life you don’t have that goal, that markings of the way you should be going. It is easy to go into the mainstream of life, follow the herds you know, than staying on the chosen road. It is difficult then to get back into it. Should I avoid the mud or go on the nice and easy road. To me it is very much a parallel to life. (no short cuts in life)

B:12:3 “The other thing I tried to do is you get to know the arrows. Some time there is a long time before you get to a sign. You won’t get a sign for a long time if you don’t know if you are on the right path. You just keep going. When you get to a cross road, I used to check the arrows at the crossroads because you don’t want to take the wrong turn I tell you. You don’t want to walk 8 km and then back. One day I did. Then you eyes look very hard at the cross roads.... The thing is you just have to keep going forward. Usually unless the road takes a turn, you just go straight. Usually at a cross road you will find an arrow. In life if you have a decision to make you have to pray about it. The signs are there. That’s for me. Signs are there. You have to be patient. You got to be willing, keep on looking, even if you have to turn back. Communication is always there.” (alert & observe signs)

B:12:4 “Like going to retreats, it is a good thing. Stepping out of the normal rat race and then you look after your spiritual side, emotional side, whatever. You do need time out.” (take care of self)

D:12:1 “...my life is a journey...where I am is a journey...where I am going, whatever is going to happen is a journey” (life is pilgrimage)

F:12:1 “...you can’t be stupid and think the world has to wait for you. so we started early, by three o clock we were done and we always got a place to stay. That’s life, you can’t sleep till late” (pro-active attitude pays)

F:12:2 “...you have to be flexible on the Camino...uncertainties must not unsettle you” (flexible, adjust to uncertainties)

F:12:3 “...the shelf became your guide...made me think...what kind of guide am I? Probably the biggest thing I brought with me...in a way it has an influence on your behaviour” (self-awareness into Christian leadership)

F:12:4 “...patience...you will also get there, just be patient” (patience)

F:12:5 “...listen to people with experience and then make your decision, as in life...” (observe, ask, learn before decisions)

G:12:1 “...you have to flexible...you have to take the road as it allows you” (become flexible in life)

G:12:2 “...if in doubt, that is not permanent, you are just passing through” (embrace doubt, there is meaning to it)

G:12:3 “...you put 10 ingredients in a cake and then you ask what is the contribution of this one ingredient to the success of the cake. You can’t detach one thing from the other” (appreciate the mystery)

G:12:4 “...that evening we were really exhausted...decide to take the next day easy...came down energised...we have to build in that kind of rest in life, it is important” (allow time just to be)

H:12:1 “...(pilgrimage) becomes a metaphor for life...if you take the right road, good, if not, then it is decision time whether to turn back or carry on till you get back on road again. Is there a right or wrong? Just decide and push through”(decision-making in faith)



H:12:2 “...your only thought is to get to Santiago...it’s not an anti-climax...but you realise then it was about the journey, not the destination” (value in journey, always)

H:12:3 “The rest of my trip in Europe was based on the pilgrimage...the independent dependency relationship with God that develops on there. (pilgrimage became life metaphor)

H:12:4 “...last year with my studies, the pilgrimage became a constant motivator”

H:12:5 “You are on a high and somewhere you have to get back in routine, back to balance. There you experience constant adrenaline” (finding balance between extreme exposure and the normal)

### **7.24 WORSHIP**

All co-researchers indicated an awareness of the presence of God and worship took the form of communicating with Him, listening in silence or praises His name when they experienced spiritual friendship. All had contact with the Roman Catholic Church, either at the monasteries, the monks, entering an open church or attend the pilgrims mass. Participation with body and soul makes a huge difference in worshipping, makes it more real, opening up insights and experiences, different from what the traditional Reformed Christian is used to. The after effect of this experience of worshipping with body movement and soul is another good topic for a research project.

E:13:1 “...it became a meditation walk with God...your whole body involved...as with liturgy...all your senses, your whole being busy with worship. With pilgrimage something of this is true” (whole body involved)

E:13:2 “It is only about God in liturgy. Worship is away from the human being” (must be God orientated)

E:13:3 “...you worship God with your whole life” (importance of symbols)

E:13:4 “...at the end...we read the pilgrim’s prayer again, had communion...I did not want to have communion on the pilgrimage...enough other rituals to experience the immanent God”

G:13:1 “...we decided to read the Gospel of John, a chapter every day, this was part of the pilgrimage” (do Scripture)

G:13:2 “reading John did not bring about major changes...something of a routine, to remind us that this is a spiritual journey” . (routine is not bad / read Scripture, a principle)

G:13:3 “We tried to sit in a church every day, when we could find one” (create time for worship)

### **7.25 POST-PILGRIMAGE AND FUTURE**

This part of the interviews highlighted the “difference” co-researchers experienced after the pilgrimage. Many of the identified concepts or themes were already mentioned earlier in the interview. This section can be regarded as “of all experiences, what did you bring home with you”.

A:14:1 “...let go of the unnecessary...develop a gentle touch” (travel light)

A:14:2 “...let go of those that hurt you” (accommodate differences)

A:14:3 “...never judge another person on their looks” (no judgement)

A:14:4 “eating habits...I eat less and more healthier” (healthier)

A:14:5 “...end goal is today’s journey” (focus on today’s journey)

A:14:6 “just go at your own pace” (own pace)

A:14:7 “...consumer attitude will make you miss the value” (no consumerism)

A:14:8 “...more balanced lifestyle” (Balanced life)

A:14:9 “...the value in journey is a place to come back to and implement what you have learned” (appreciate home)

A:14:10 “...why did you go if not to develop and grow...’the un-contemplated life is not worth living” (contemplate)

C:14:1 “...I know I am too sensitive, it creates problems, if I could change that...” (Challenge)

E:14:1 “...you become holy when you accept yourself totally...more at peace with yourself...think I experienced something of this...think I growing towards peace with myself and my inner battles” (sanctification and its fruits)

E:14:2 “About my marriage, we still argue...but I know I can grow old with you” (Marriage outcome)

E:14:3 “I am comfortable with my spirituality and my experience of God. The dog that stared at me, freed the dog inside me...surfacing slowly in time. That’s the work of the Holy Spirit. (still under construction)

E:14:4 “What was it like?...if answer is new and different. I think it is the same with the Camino” (journey still in progress / constant renewal)

F:14:1 “...I was involved in an accident... a man died...it was bad...something came back what I experienced there that it will be okay in the end...God is with you...without knowing I was empowered to use it soon afterwards (prepared for biggest challenge in life afterwards)

G:14:1 “...a profound experience...you see my tears...a profound experience (intense experience, emotional and spiritual)

G:14:2 “...source now from many fountains” (discover richness and diversity of His presence)

H:14:1 “I definitely want to go back for the full Camino” (amazing experience to be repeated)

H:14:2 “It was nice to be able to talk about it. It feels like an experience that I keep for myself” (value in verbalising spiritual experience)

### **7.26 UNIQUE (NO OTHER CATEGORY)**

During the interviews there were a couple of unique comments that do not fit any of the identified concepts and themes but are important enough to take note of. For instance the pilgrimage is also used by non-believers for non-religious purposes and any pilgrim should be aware that this environment could also include the presence and activities of people with non-religious agenda’s as well as Christians with no specific spiritual purposes, refer B:15:1.

Secondly, even amongst the religious pilgrims you may find behaviour that does not relate to the spirit associated with a Christian pilgrimage, refer B:15:2. Then of course, although one seldomly hear of a disappointed pilgrim, that does not mean that there are individuals who go with a totally wrong attitude, lack of knowledge and a different expectation to what a pilgrimage is, usually ending in disaster, H:15:1. Any person with the intention of becoming a pilgrim, should take note of the advice of well-experienced pilgrims that nothing is better than to be on your own, refer B:15:3. No words will ever be efficient to describe exactly what a pilgrim is going to experience, refer F:15:1.

B:15:1        But you know there is a lot of people on the Camino that is not spiritual at all. They are just there for a good time and the walking. For lots of people it is a cheap holiday or an adventure. (spiritual absence)

B:15:2        (Germans) They were a spiritual group. They had a priest with them. They stop and pray and things like that... did not want to mix with us... at a little shrine and she was sitting down there, phoning her daughter. The Germans came and told her to move because they wanted to pray. They were not very happy to wait. She moved on. ... we were going to have supper at seven instead of six because the Germans want to have a mass. So they had the mass. Then it came to supper. ...The lady said we have a tradition here. Everybody must just say one word about the Camino. One word. The Germans said no, they can't wait they are hungry, they want to eat. (unrelated behaviour)

H:15:1        "...the pilgrimage is not a good experience for everyone... x's mother went last year on a two week pilgrimage and came back three days later...she thought about it as a holiday...it is all about your attitude, the same as with life..."

B:15:3        That is why I will always encourage people to do it on their own... In a group you have to consider the group, consider everybody, their likes and wants. (alone is recommended)

F:15:1        "...wonderful experience that no money can buy...if you don't go, you won't understand...value is in the experience...it was not punishment (no words for best experience in life)

The researcher also reflects the data in grid form below and percentages further below but wants to state categorically that this is in no way indicating a quantitative approach or for that matter even indicating a mixed method approach. The only purpose of this is to develop alternative ways of getting a clear picture on the data-analysis from an ethnographic perspective.

### 7.27 GRID SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

**Grid Summary of outcomes:** (Sub-categories are reflected with a comma in between)

Code	CR: A(AC)	CR: B(AL)	CR: C(AvdH)	CR: D(FM)	CR: E(JvdH)	CR: F(LJ)	CR: G(NJ)	CR: H(SdK)	Total/ %
2	3	4	3	3	0	2	2	3	22/7%
3	4	3	4	6	3	1	2	2	28/9%
4	8,0,1,2,2	3,0,1,0,0	10,3,1,0,0	9,0,1,2,0	0,2,0,0,0	6,0,2,0,0	2,0,1,0,0	4,0,1,3,1	64/22%
5	2,2,0,0	0,0,2,0	0,2,0,0	0,3,1,2	1,0,0,2	1,0,2,0	2,2,0,0	1,0,0,0	25/8%
6	5	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	6/2%
7	3	2	0	0	1	1	1	2	10/3%
8	3	4	0	0	0	1	1	0	9/3%
9	1,0	3,1	1,1	4,1	0,2	5,0	0,3	9,2	33/11%
10	1,1,0	8,0,0	1,0,3	1,0,1	1,1,0	3,0,0	6,0,0	6,0,1	34/12%
11	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	0	5/2%
12	6	4	0	1	0	5	4	5	25/8%
13	0	0	0	0	4	0	3	0	7/2%
14	10	0	1	0	4	1	2	2	20/7%
15	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	1	5/2%
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The value of calculated outcomes is just another way of reflecting data analysis and is at least an indication of the content and concepts co-researchers focus on during an one-hour session in which they could have talked about what was and is important to them. The grid's data above fits the categories as follows:

- Body awareness 7%
- Personal crisis and/or healing 9%
- Personal transformation & Self-knowledge 22%



a. Personal related	66%
b. Family related	8%
c. Journey related	12%
d. Spiritual related	11%
e. Perspective on life	5%
- Pre-pilgrimage: decisions & influence of others	8%
f. From notice to decision	28%
g. Personal motivation or objectives	36%
h. General comments	20%
i. Spiritual related comments	16%
- Should / say & actually doing	2%
- Silence & solitude	3%
- Simplicity	3%
- Spiritual experiences	11%
j. Impact on pilgrim's life	70%
k. Spiritual experiences	30%
- Spiritual friendship	12%
l. General comments	79%
m. Across religious boundaries	6%
n. Spiritual friendship linked to God	15%
- Symbols	2%
- Wisdom: Spiritual & Life analogies & applications	8%
- Worship	2%
- Post-pilgrimage and future	7%
- Unique (no category)	2%

7.28 Conclusion



Sub-question: Will this research be able to tap into the motivations driving this current global spiritual behaviour and process this information into a presentable format to enrich Reformed Liturgy in South Africa?

This chapter contains the process of empirical research in first the description of the steps followed, followed by the processing of transcribed interviews to identify the outcomes of the research process. This was done in a way to get to measurable outcomes to get clarity in terms of the meaning pilgrims from the Reformed tradition appropriate for themselves after the pilgrimage experience.

All information from previous chapters will now be integrated with the outcomes of the empirical research to come up with a liturgical praxis for the Reformed tradition.

## CHAPTER 8

### LITURGICAL THEORY FOR PRAXIS

#### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

The final chapter of this research presents a summary and outline of all the chapters, followed by a liturgical theory for praxis for the Reformed tradition based on the literature study of all previous chapters, integrated with the empirical research outcomes. The integrated research is presented as an answer to the question in Chapter one, namely in what way can the study of current day pilgrimage enrich the existing Reformed liturgical praxis in South Africa, in reaction to the research theme of:

*Pilgrimage as a challenge to Reformed liturgical praxis.*

#### 8.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH OUTLINE

**Chapter one** explains the practical situation and challenges that are presented by pilgrimage to the Reformed tradition in the South Africa with personal input from the researcher on the motivation behind this study. Reasons why the pilgrimage concept was chosen as topic of research and why it is important for the future of the Reformed tradition was elaborated on.

**Chapter two** situates the study on pilgrimage in the academic field of Practical Theology, liturgy and rituals. The domain of Practical Theology was defined and the continuous process of redefining was indicated according to Browning (1995); Osmer (2008) and Miller-McLemore (2012), explaining Practical Theology as a context-orientated approach. Chapter two contains a description of the four tasks of Practical Theology as formulated by Osmer (2008). The redefinition of Practical Theology was further explained with the development of hermeneutics, the 'living human web', public theology, the relevance of a proposed leadership model, the dynamics of change, the application within liturgy and the relationship between worship and culture.

Liturgy then became the specific area of concern describing the shift towards multi-disciplinary research, individualism, globalisation and technology. In liturgy one way of worshipping is through rituals and symbols, dependent on individual interpretation but also providing space for synergy, meeting the demands of faith expression in current times and





also creating space for unity amongst diversity with *liturgia condenda* / liturgy in the making. The necessity of a multi-disciplinary approach within Practical Theology is another feature of Chapter two as social sciences and other relevant disciplines have a lot to contribute to the context of worshipping and the expression of faith.

**Chapter three** motivated ethnography as research design or methodology and participant observation as method with the limited use of Social Scientific Biblical Interpretation for the purpose of knowledge of the social context in Biblical times. This design was chosen as current behaviour of Reformed Christians indicate that the liturgical praxis could possibly benefit by studying the ritual behaviour, specifically participation in pilgrimages. The Reformed tradition has to hear from pilgrims as to what is actually going on (Osmer, 2008; Post, 2001d; Stringer, 1999; Stringer, 2008). Ethnography together with participant observation enables research to reflect the reality of what is going on (Klomp, 2011:69).

Participant observation enables understanding of behaviour while acknowledging reciprocity and respect in the relationship and can be described as a process of gathering data, recognising patterns and learning about the meaning pilgrims appropriate in actions and symbols (Atkinson, 1994:256). The researcher stayed committed to the principles of triangulation and reflexivity throughout this research with presentations to different role-players.

**Chapter four** introduced three relevant concepts from a multi-disciplinary perspective namely *liminality* from anthropology, *heterotopia* from philosophy and *liturgica-inculturation* from theology. As for *liminality* the distinction was made between *liminality* for groups and *liminoid*, as the individual choice for *liminality*, with the other sub-concepts of *communitas*, *societas* and *flow*, all associated with the process of *liminality*, as a pro-active way of structuring transformation (Turner, 1979:16). Reformed Churches have a responsibility to serve the faith community in the best way possible, therefore the responsibility to manage change or transformation.

To comprehend what pilgrims of the Reformed tradition appropriate for themselves brought the researcher to the heterotopia concept of Foucault. Heterotopia opens up endless possibilities of understanding and interpretations of one single gesture, ritual or symbol with the right answer, whatever the right answer may be, only to be found from the individual person or pilgrim. Heterotopia is to the researcher, aligned with the message of hope from



Scripture, the renewal of thoughts and paradigm transformation. Liturgical-inculturation contributes to the logical line of this research as cultural development and new ways of expressing faith becomes part of liturgy at some stage

**Chapter five** investigated the history and meaning of pilgrimage through the ages, in order to contribute to the future road of Reformed Churches. Current changes in the expression of faith can only be meaningful by discerning differences from the past. Chapter five tracks pilgrimage from its origin, according to the Scripture based frame of reference, as pre-Old Testament forms of pilgrimage are also a possibility. The pilgrimage track is then followed in the Old Testament through the New Testament, the early Church, the Middle Ages, the Reformation and afterwards up to recent developments. The outcome of this research clearly indicates a difference in how pilgrimage is used as a spiritual tool in current times by incorporating the more personal needs with the spiritual, as reflected in Chapter seven and eight. The current trend according to the outcome of this research may as well be understood in the cultural context of our day with emphasis on individuality, freedom of speech and human rights but pilgrimage today is different in many aspects from its history in how and why it is done and Churches of the Reformed tradition should be well informed about the implication of this.

**Chapter six** describes the development and context in which the different forms of liturgy developed in the different traditions, East-Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Protestant Ecumenical and the Charismatic Churches. Chapter six emphasises the presence of the five basic elements of liturgy according to Luke 24 in the Emmaus narrative, also present in all the different traditions. Chapter six then elaborates on the role of imagination, space and time, bodily participation in worship, the relation with trauma and the mystical side of the Emmaus narrative.

Worshipping God should be the ultimate objective for any Christian pilgrim of the Reformed tradition but in the cultural context of today this incorporates the broader social existence of the pilgrim with personal needs regarding emotional, physical or psychological transformation or various practical life processes. This could in fact be a positive development in the expression of faith as faith infiltrates life in its fullness and the Church may become part of worshippers' lives in all aspects. The researcher regards this as a unique



opportunity for the Reformed tradition to become part of Christians’ daily lives in a renewed way but from a different authoritative stance than ever before.

**Chapter seven** explains the empirical research process in terms of co-researcher identification, unstructured interviews, transcribing interviews, identification of concepts from interviews, coding or code analysis of interview concepts and co-researchers, concepts to categories and finally the data analysis process.

A Grounded Theory came from the data analysis process. The Grounded Theory is based on literature study, the empirical research and application of triangulation. The outcome of the empirical research in the grid in Chapter seven is repeated here:

Body awareness	7%
Personal crisis and/or healing	9%
Personal transformation & self-knowledge	22%
Pre-pilgrimage: decisions & influence of others	8%
Should be doing & say they doing & actually doing	2%
Silence & solitude	3%
Simplicity	3%
Spiritual experiences	11%
Spiritual friendship	12%
Symbols	2%
Wisdom: spiritual & life analogies & applications	8%
Worship	2%
Post-pilgrimage and future	7%
Unique (random category)	2%



**Chapter eight** is the concluding chapter of this research which integrates all previous chapters as well as the Grounded theory from Chapter seven, into a liturgical theory for praxis. Eleven statements came out of the empirical research, as listed above, of which each one will be integrated with all the previous chapters.

### **8.3 LITURGICAL THEORY FOR PRAXIS**

The researcher finds some encouragement in the words of Strauss and Corbin (1998:13) describing the process of formulating meaning from raw data as art and dancing. The role of intuition in interpreting a liturgical theory for praxis can indeed be compared with dancing, keeping in mind the words of wisdom from Lukken (1997:145) also cited by Post (2001a:12) that a researcher must exhibit ‘tamed intuition’, seeing that an objective observer is impossible. The implications for a researcher to integrate ‘tamed intuition’ is elaborated on by Post (2001a:11-12) with a concept from Physics called ‘interferention’, which means the movement and influence of sound and light waves on each other which may have a positive or negative effect and applied to the person as researcher, ‘interferention’ describes the process and impact of raw data, the accompanying excitement, insights and wisdom needed to integrate all of this with ‘tamed intuition’.

#### **8.3.1 PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

#### **8.3.2 SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

#### **8.3.3 SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATION**

#### **8.3.4 BODY PARTICIPATION**

#### **8.3.5 DECISIONS**

#### **8.3.6 WHAT CHRISTIANS DO, SAY THEY DO AND ACTUALLY DO**

#### **8.3.7 SILENCE**

#### **8.3.8 SIMPLICITY**

#### **8.3.9 SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIP**

#### **8.3.10 SYMBOLS**



The researcher addresses all the themes from the Ground theory in Chapter seven but re-organised some information such as ‘spiritual growth’ as it is present in more than one element in Chapter seven. The liturgical theory for praxis includes the pilgrim with the Reformed tradition as far as possible.

### **8.3.1 Personal growth and development**

As seen from the empirical data, this is the major theme for pilgrims of the Reformed tradition, clearly indicating the prominence of personal development which could be better elaborated on as development of personal identity, emotional boundaries, self-value, development of Emotional Intelligence’s dimensions and practical wisdom in general. This may be challenging for the assumption that the Camino is all about spirituality and this is the case for the pre, post-pilgrimage phase, as well as during the pilgrimage itself.

The merge of faith and personal development could be acknowledged and addressed and can be seen as an opportunity in contribution to the liturgical theory for praxis. It also creates grey areas in terms of this liturgical theory for praxis, for what is mentioned under this heading might as well be under spiritual growth and vice versa.

Christians want to experience God and this is not happening with current Reformed Liturgy. Question is if Reformed Liturgy is too cluttered that the simplicity of experiencing God is absent and therefore people go to other ways and means to have that. This is exactly the situation that led to the Reformation. The Reformers response was to clear the clutter and focused on the simplicity of the Word. The essence of the Reformation was to simplify and the experience of God alone. This is one of the transforming features of pilgrimage, according to the co-researchers. Are Reformed liturgy not trying to keep up with other traditions and therefore losing focus, reminding of: ‘The task of the prophetic ministry is to nurture, nourish, and evoke a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture around them’ (Brueggemann, 2001:13).

Liturgy is in the process of transformation or ‘liturgia condenda’ with far reaching consequences for Practical Theology and Liturgy (Barnard, 2010; Barnard, 2014; Denny, 2013:7; Harris, 1992:11; Klomp, 2011:8; Vos, 2014b:120; Wepener, 2005:2) and focus on the human development side, needs urgent attention of which other headings in this liturgical theory for praxis can testify.



Liturgical theory for praxis:

In Chapter two in the Liturgy section, Plato's Cave theory was used as an analogy to indicate that Christians from the Reformed tradition are leaving the cave (2.8.3). Two basic reasons emerge from the empirical research namely, the need for personal development and the need to experience the Divine. This could be addressed by enriching the Reformed liturgy in creative ways.

Address 'spiritual trauma' by creating platforms for the three steps of intervention: tell the story, 'priestly listening' and start a new story or brain path, exactly what Jesus did in Luke 24:25-26 (6.7.4). This could be done with members of the congregation returning from pilgrimage and would facilitate the re-integration with the faith community. This approach presents the Reformed liturgy with a unique opportunity for pastoral care as influenced by the approach in Public Theology, more community or group orientated than individuals.

Invite the latest science and theological developments into the liturgical sphere, as an example discussions on the books from Julian Muller and Nelus Niemandt could be productive.

Reflecting groups and platforms, personal and online, to discuss sermons and questions in general in the context of 'open dialogue' (2.4.4) and link this with pilgrimage by inviting members of the congregation to join on this pilgrimage. With the use of technology today can there be any reason why a congregation can't have an e-platform of some sort, even facebook, for questions about a sermon or a spiritual issue. From these platforms individuals could be identified for individual care or coaching...otherwise they feel neglected and leave.

Group discussions and interest groups can be integrated into liturgy with a report back session afterwards on topics of practical wisdom, (2.4.1) Emotional Intelligence topics, with part of it consulting research in the field of liturgy (3.3.2) (Post, Pieper & van Uden, 1999:219).

Liturgy has to become practical and there is only one way. Christians need to be send out, come back and report, giving them the chance to tell the story to priestly listeners and together start new brain paths (6.7.4) for newly discovered knowledge needs to be anchored, recalling Malony's Inter-subjectivity theory of truth in Chapter two (2.2.1), as well as the section on the Neuro-scientific impact of pilgrimage in Chapter five (5.2.9).



Keep the pattern, send out, tell the story, look for new brain paths and this pattern can become a strategy in different fields of interest, not just to visit hospitals but also to go and find knowledge from an expert in any field. The group of interest always has the responsibility to do the sourcing and then sharing with the rest of the faith community.

Reformed community offers a unique opportunity and openness in a period of liminality, as described in Chapter three, as pilgrimage is actually facilitating the renewal of an image and understanding of God, facilitated with ‘open dialogue’, as a whole new value system is in the process of development (Graham, 2002:6-7).

### **8.3.2 Spiritual growth**

Spirituality is present in every interview, in all experiences and throughout the entire pilgrimage experience. Re-interpretation of any experience to seek for Divine presence has become a lifestyle for co-researchers.

Co-researchers had appreciation for a focused spiritual conversation, verbalising that such a conversation is scarce and that they have a need to talk about it, but also admit that it is not happening enough. Co-researchers talked a lot about a changed, renewed experience of the Divine. Healing on a personal level with spiritual growth is present like a golden thread.

There is awareness about insights during the Camino but also the realisation that not enough was done about it since. The value of pilgrimage as a spiritual discipline cannot be emphasised enough. Reformed Christians have a spiritual need and this has to include experience.

#### **Liturgical theory for praxis:**

Pilgrims need to talk. They do realise it but liturgy goes far further than the Sunday service and liturgy has to provide platforms for communication. Pilgrims need to talk about the inculturation of precious knowledge and plan accordingly.

A coaching program for pilgrims could be advertised and this could be in the team coaching format. This will address several other needs also addressed. The best way to do this is to get an independent facilitator while the minister participates as listener, demonstrating priestly listening. Focus areas for such a coaching process could be:



Increase awareness about insights coming from pilgrimage that needs to be revisited or needs to be taken further

The new level of consciousness moves away from the rational which makes it more difficult to explain in words (Harris, 1992:87; Otto, 1958:1-2).

The trend in self-designed faith should be addressed

How to provide for change in perception of the Divine

“Dream competition”: what is it that you always wanted to do as a Christian but it never happened yet

Experimental groups defined as “open dialogue”, after explaining the intention and groundrules to be drawn up together

Create groups of interest, in congregations, online, etc

The personal narrative of the pilgrim is of the essence in the meaning pilgrims appropriate for themselves during pilgrimage or with any other forms of self-designed rituals and therefore the Reformed tradition should adapt in liturgical praxis to accommodate this phenomenon (Browning, 1995:59; Gadamer, 2004; Miller-McLemore, 2012:58).

Reformed Churches should pay attention to the 5-phase model of pre-understanding, the experience of being brought up short, communication about the new and unknown or contradictions which may eventually lead to new knowledge and understanding and obviously a new way of thinking, as proposed by Gadamer (2004:279).

Work on program of spiritual discipline where you identify something like “materialism” and replace it with “simplicity” and focus on this for 21 days or a week with weekly feedback of progress (Lukken, 2005:22)

Camping, workshop, discussion group, talks, are ways to address themes such as: “Quality of life” or “Enchanted in a disenchanted world” or “Individualism vs the need to relate as Body of Christ” or “Pilgrimage as a metaphor for life”.

Only one way of tapping into the value: just do it as it is the experience that creates the meaning (Stringer, 2011:218).





Workshop with pilgrims one or two years later as most of the learning only happens long after the physical journey (Post, 1998b:218).

A study group on the topic: “self-designed rituals” always with feedback to the faith community

### **8.3.3 Spiritual communication**

Communication was identified as a key area for spiritual development and as Habermas (1993:131) says: ‘...communication elevates knowledge’. Labelled as ‘spiritual communication’ by the researcher, it means focused transparent communication.

Co-researchers used expressions like ‘His presence in small things’ or ‘He gave me what I need’, communicating cautiously, not to upset or reveal too much and would not elaborate unless asked and only then emotional co-researchers shared stories of great value.

#### **Liturgical theory for praxis:**

Re-investigate communication skills in new ways and with an open mind to what other disciplines can offer, such as noetic, the numinous, kinesiology, neuro-science and the creative usage of social media, to ensure verbalising and externalising information to become available to the Body of Christ. Intentional communication with graphic symbols could be another valuable source.

Re-evaluate the rational and knowledge orientation of the Reformed tradition at the expense of experience.

Group interaction on topics of mutual interest is one of the latest trends in metropolitan areas and these groups connect online<sup>24</sup>.

The value, power and impact of spiritual attendance, priestly listening and good listening skills and the development of this should never be under-estimated.

Talking is not communication but can sometimes be to avoid spiritual communication. This is clearly a very rational approach to a spiritual tool which is not given freedom to move as it wants.

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<sup>24</sup> One website for this is: [www.info@meetup.com](mailto:www.info@meetup.com)



Reformed Churches will do well to process the available knowledge with an openness to learn and understand, with creativity to open channels for transparent communication.

In a most practical way a group of Christians can do a ritual together, with permission observe each other and reflect what they see. A simple exercise like this opens up endless opportunity for ‘spiritual communication’ in the most natural way to gain, transmit and sharing spiritual knowledge.

It is telling and re-telling of stories that develop spiritual identity demonstrated by Shea (1982), leading to communication such as: ‘God speaks to me first in the events of daily living, in the words and challenges which friends and enemies direct at me and in the moods and questions which seem to drift into my days’. Just by reading through the comments of co-researchers in Chapter seven (7:15), will give anyone an idea of pilgrimage capacity to build personal identity, as confirmation of the above.

Co-researchers found it easy and comfortable to communicate about bodily experiences and this must find a way to be translated into spiritual meaning.

Reformed Churches need to create a context where communication could take place in a safe, comfortable environment. Feedback from co-researchers was that they quickly learned not to share experiences with any one as the response they got, discouraged them to do so.

As Liturgy acknowledges the multi-disciplinary nature of future developments, then surely communication should be high up on the agenda. A plea from Browning (1995:292) for communication to be included in the Reformed tradition’s development agenda is encouraging, and endorsed from a South African, namely Pieterse (1993; 2001).

Co-researchers stated that their communication with God experienced a huge shift and that it is now completely different to what it was before with His presence much more of a reality. This asks for a thorough investigation as one moment of Divine presence can change a whole life. It is also a Reformed principle that the Christian has a responsibility to remove all obstacles that may prevent Divine communication although God interact whenever He wants.

The value, use and potential, of social media has to find a place in spiritual communication amongst spiritual attendance, priestly listening, development of listening skills.



Social media was not identified as an issue amongst co-researchers, although one co-researcher noticed the presence on her fourth Camino recently, in comparison to previous times. Pilgrims are spending lots of time trying to find Wifi, posting on facebook and sending text messages and emails. This seems to be the trend for the future, where pilgrims will share their surroundings, experiences and thoughts with the world outside. The question is what affect will this have on personal space, silence, simplicity, etc. Pilgrims, as the co-researchers, want to talk about their awareness's of the presence of God and experiences.

On the positive side social media may have the effect that Christians develop skills to verbalise their spiritual experiences, take more accountability for the spiritual process, become more conscious or make the pilgrimage more accessible to their friends.

### **8.3.4 Body participation**

Co-researchers became very sensitive of their bodies and many spiritual insights and awareness's came out of bodily experiences, which became an analogy in many different ways. Commitment, perseverance, focus and pace are prominent which then flow into an individual determined spiritual application. Renewed appreciation of the body became a spiritual experience in its own, as one co-researcher puts it: "... to experience a body awareness moment".

#### **Liturgical theory for praxis:**

Probably a good way to start a process of bodily awareness is to start with what the Reformed tradition is good with, get a speaker. Someone to introduce the latest knowledge and research on bodily communication or the value of rituals such as pilgrimage and labyrinth and the physical effects and neuro-scientific effects that will stimulate interest.

This could be followed up by organising a local pilgrimage of which two examples were given in Chapter one namely Prieska and Sedgfield. If this happens once in a local faith community, it will become an annual item on the calendar.

Topics for group discussions that will sensitise awareness:

'...the body 'minds' itself or attends to itself in ritual action' (Jennings, 1996:327)



‘The study of worship understands that the body remembers long after the mind may be dimmed’ (Saliers, 1996).

Body participation in the local congregation’s pilgrimage is a way of gaining knowledge on a non-verbal level, not accessible in any other way (Jennings, 1996:325-326).

The ‘how to’ culture could also be utilised as in: “How to unlock the pre-knowledge in your body” (Bell, 1992:93).

Church leaders just have to make this happen, the bodily participation will do the rest.

Some Reformed congregations could also copy the ‘flashmobs’ technique, which is a rehearsed performance in a public place with full bodily participation<sup>25</sup>.

The best part of pilgrimage is that it involves bodily participation which won’t stretch any members of a local congregation as it involves walking which everybody will be comfortable with but this could open up many other possibilities once understood.

### 8.3.5 Decisions concerning pilgrimage

It was striking to realise during the interviews what it took from co-researchers to make the decision in the first place and secondly the reactions from their significant others and how much resistance they had to face and how much courage it took, just to implement this decision. It is as if there is a meta-knowledge that this means there is some thresholds that going to be crossed with no return. The researcher then often heard the words: ‘my life will never be the same’. Therefore decision-making merge from the empirical data as a significant step into the unknown, as most co-researchers also testified to the fact that they only discovered on the Camino what this is all about.

#### **Liturgical theory for praxis:**

Decisions have a formula in Emotional Intelligence which is linked to integrity. Each element of the formula gets a score out of ten, processed then to an average percentage:

$$D \times (A + V) = I \quad \text{Discernment} \quad \times \quad (\text{Action} + \text{Voice}) = \text{Integrity}$$

This may be a usefool tool as it creates awareness in terms of decisions and integrity. This could be used in many creative ways.

<sup>25</sup> YouTube video demonstration of ‘flashmobs’ from Die Bron Church in Bellville.



An independent decision is a challenge. To create decision-making moments during liturgy where every individual has to decide for themselves will be a challenge to most church members. To commit to a week of fasting or to go without coffee for a week or to join a local pilgrimage on a voluntarily basis, will give each member of the congregation a chance to make their own decisions. Only then do we realise the value and necessity of independent decisions and the spiritual value it has for spiritual growth.

God works in mysterious ways and personal circumstances force some individuals to decisions. This could be a wonderful opportunity for Christians to testify and share how they went about taking a difficult decision and what role their faith played in the process.

Once realised that the Reformed liturgy does not allow individual decision-making as part of it, a threshold is being crossed. To build independent decision-making into liturgy creates a context for growth, especially when church members get the opportunity to reflect afterwards on their decision. Such an opportunity could even be to lid a candle in front of others.

People may become emotional when they reflect on their choice, why they did what they did as it triggers many other related issues such as self-value, confidence, etc. That is the value and power of ritual. Whatever the ritual it is just an entrance to something much bigger.

### **8.3.6 What Christians do, say they do and actually do**

Coming from literature, this element falls in the same category as decisions as it may lead to intense processes of awareness. This is all about congruence and synergy because it is suppose to be aligned that what Christians do, say they do and actually do, are actually the same thing, and it seems to be not the case. To create an awareness and insight to this is another thing and once achieved it is also crossing a threshold into new territory in spiritual life. People never forget that moment of insight. Liturgy could play a major role to facilitate this but again it needs full participation and not just by listening to someone else. The challenge for liturgists is to create the context or space for this to happen.

#### **Liturgical theory for praxis:**

One of the most prominent features of the Camino is the realisation that one still has an identity without anything that determines role and status in ordinary life. Stripped from status, money, possessions and all else, the pilgrim has only the self to present to others and



this leads to an awareness of personal identity. A liturgist can create a scenario during liturgy with a topic to create awareness of the level of alignment between what Christians do, say they do and actually do.

The following can be used from the empirical research in role-plays with members of the congregation as actors, in each case demonstrating the opposite from what is being said:

detached from materialism...but don't take my car and home keys....and cellphone! ,

no burdens allowed...but feelings of not good enough are allowed...perfectionism is a virtue!

freedom in Christ...untill I reach the church's front door, then I have some unresolved issues...

don't worry about tomorrow...yes, that is what I told the man from the Bank but he is probably not a Christian!

respect own uniqueness...yes but what will the people say, I rather won't.

we trust God, yet...but I will handle this, just in case.

Pilgrimage offers an opportunity where Christians of the Reformed tradition could be provided with guidance to align that which should be done from a Reformed perspective, with what is being said and actually done. This was the only category added to the list by the researcher from the literature study done before the empirical research. The reason for this is the realisation of the presence of unknown factors in faith, unknown to Reformed Churches of what people do or think by themselves, which is totally different from what they say they do or from what they learned from Church about what they should do (Stringer, 1999:3).

As an example, Christian pilgrims of the Reformed tradition will seldom refer to the symbolic value of something they took with them as symbols do not fit the Reformed background or the perception that the Reformed faith does not allow anything to replace Christ but if the question is asked and a trust relationship exists, symbols and symbolic value can be found anywhere.

Only one co-researcher mentioned an item that was carried along with a special symbolic meaning. The paradox between what should be done, what is said and what actually happens



is usually more visible on a rational level. Reference to detachment from materialism is contrasted by materialism, reference to burdens not to be allowed are contrasted by the opposite, reference to freedom in Christ is contrasted by dragging along some unresolved issues, worry contrasted by high stress levels, reference to the own uniqueness is subjected to the opinion of others. Increased awareness of these contrasts in normal society was observed amongst the co-researchers during the interviews.

### **8.3.7 Silence**

Silence experienced from time to time during the Camino pilgrimage has a powerful effect on pilgrims. Silence usually leads to profound insights in the present or past, or brings clarity to difficult situations the pilgrim has to deal with or in decision-making processes. This is another difficult subject for co-researchers, and discussing exactly what happened and when it happened can be regarded as personal and sensitive. It becomes clear at this stage that the researcher was on holy ground. Some pilgrims like B and C also stated the importance of being alone with God, in silence, since the pilgrimage. Silence experienced during the journey was elevated as one of the most powerful experiences by all co-researchers with the realisation of the importance of it in normal life.

In 2010 the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa included a section on silence and meditation in their Worshipping Guidelines for church services for the first time and this could be regarded as an official step in the direction of exploring the concept of silence coming from the empirical research in Chapter seven.

Barnard and Post (2001) and Post and Schmid (2001) and Post (2014) did research on the power and impact of silence as well as different ways to implement the principle in worshipping which could be helpful in implementing this powerful section of liturgical praxis.

#### **Liturgical theory for praxis:**

Interrupt a Sunday service by announcing that for the next ten minutes every one will be on their own, they may even leave to go outside, one condition is no external information, no reading, just sit and do nothing and see if anything is coming to them. Then give time for reflect in small groups.



“...we must actively seek silence and plan for it...not happening from itself”, are the words of one of the co-researcher’s. Give people a chance to come up with their own plan and get the congregation to commit to one week to practice this. A congregation can actually decide to follow one single plan, mutually accepted as long as this is not the minister’s plan.

Silence is something to be learned and it asks for self-discipline. How is this to be done? This can be very confrontational on a personal level. This is where leadership comes in with the responsibility to create the context.

Silence does not always mean that you have to be on your own. It can be experienced within a group as well, sometimes more powerful that way.

Important to realise that silence needs practice, like going to the gym for the first time in months. Many individuals will be uncomfortable in the beginning. This is also about creating a new brain path as one has to become used to it.

The principle apply here as well of send out, come tell the story and find ways to re-enforce and encourage each other.

Certain passages could be read with a period of silence between the verses

The space for silence is important but it is the believe of the researcher that the skill can be developed to do this in any environment, especially where this is not to be imagined.

A group was taken to city centre and at a busy crossing, next to the drilling sounds of roadworks, they were asked to be on their own in silence after reading Psalm 51. This exercise change their perception of silence with the Lord forever, always referring to it.

To create a space for silence means one is crossing a threshold into the unknown and people in general are afraid to do so.

To silence the mind from negative thought, especially about the self, opens up so much space and energy, it actually scares people off.

### **8.3.8 Simplicity**

In the words of one of the co-researchers who said that these are the two things this co-researcher brought back from the Camino, namely silence and simplicity, both having a huge





impact on the lives of the co-researchers and simplicity is probably one of the attributes with the biggest post-pilgrimage effect. Simplicity changed the lives and lifestyles of the co-researchers in more than one way, on material, physical, emotional, social and spiritual levels. Simplicity seems to infiltrate the thought paradigm of a pilgrim, according to co-researchers, as it becomes a way of life. Vuijsje (2001:142) describes the concept of simplicity in the context of modern society where too many choices and thoughts in modern society creates the need for simplifying processes and where pilgrimage enables this kind of thought paradigm. In current times the human being has created too many choices because of wealth and complicating life, to which pilgrimage creates a context of detachment and freedom (Vuijsje, 2001:142). Valuable research was done by Post and Schmid (2001:162-170) in this regard regarding space and the design of space.

To simplify life is an ideal for many people, as complexities in life tend to draw people inwards. Awareness of the power of simplicity cannot be experienced in a rational way therefore it must be experienced in a practical way to have the necessary impact. It is the experience of simplicity that makes the human being aware of the value of simplicity and which creates the urge to integrate simplicity into lifestyle.

The combination of a symbol and simplicity can be explored by the Reformed tradition, enabling people to let go of burdens, unnecessary issues and feelings that complicate life and prevent the presence of joy. This is exactly the situation that the Reformers had to deal with during the Reformation when they cleared faith experience from all the unnecessary and declared that the focus must be on the Word of God alone (Tomlin, 2004:119). Both Luther and Calvin warned against anything that distracts the believer from worshipping God alone (Tomlin, 2004:113-115). The irony today is that rituals and symbols were part of making life complicated in the days of the Reformation while today it could be instruments to simplify life. This just demonstrates that the value does not exist in anything else than the context created by man. Simplicity as it presents itself today, as part of this global shift in social behaviour is actually to go back to the original intention of the Reformation.

### **Liturgical theory for praxis:**

The human being needs to have a physical experience of simplicity and silence as well in order to process the information and to make a conscious decision to re-orientate the self towards simplicity.



To implement simplicity as a principle into liturgical praxis should actually be true to its intention, with other words, it should be simple.

It seems to be that the principle, ‘the more, the less’, is present when it comes to simplicity as ‘the more’ possessions, ‘the less’ freedom and the other way round. The challenge is to make people realise this and again there is one way of doing this: experience, then reflect, then integrate the new knowledge.

The Camino teaches the lesson of whatever you take with, you have to carry. Not one single co-researcher did not discover that they still took along too much stuff.

Practical ways of implementing simplicity could be to take a group somewhere but to restrict what each person may take along and see how the group still come right.

Visiting people living in conditions of simplicity is one of the most powerful ways, the first hand exposure. To reflect and share afterwards is of cardinal importance to integrate this knowledge because it is a human thing to reject information that could be confrontational on a personal level.

A congregation could participate together in a fun activity with the challenge of simplicity. As an example they could go to a camping place but everybody is allowed to only bring two items and nobody knows who is going to bring what. A fun way of creating awareness of simplicity. This could be done after visiting a destination and experience other people who have to cope with it from day to day. In South Africa we have multiple opportunities for this.

A hike could be organised with the theme of simplicity

A poem evening could be organised where everybody has to present a poem that they have sourced or even wrote themselves. The purpose besides the koinonia is also to create awareness.

All of the above could happen from the liturgical platform and could be linked back to liturgy with report back, feedback or a open discussion where the participants share their awareness’s with the rest of the congregation.



A simple exercise is to challenge a congregation to clean up the garage or a cupboard, a drawer with one thing in mind, simplicity and then to tell the story in small groups of the effect. This could be called de-clutter.

The labyrinth is an excellent spiritual tool for silence and simplicity. It creates the context and force the individual into the space of simplicity and silence. The benefit is you only need an hour and not the logistics of a pilgrimage.

In most cases to improve simplicity is to ask the question: ‘What is the one thing you need to do, to grow in simplicity?’”. Answering this question usually brings clarity for any person. For the researcher the answer is to focus on one thing at a time until it’s done.

Challenging people to list their top five values, has an incredible effect to simplify.

Most people could simplify their life immensely with one ability and that is to master the art of saying no.

A competition could be run with a reward of some kind on the topic: ‘what is enough’.

People could be encouraged to find a creative way for self-expression.

Everybody could be asked to search online and come up with the best three ways to improve on simplicity as a Christian virtue.

Find a fixed time for social media or limit the time spent on this.

### **8.3.9 Spiritual friendship**

Long (2001:19) asks the question in his book: *Beyond the worship wars: Building vital and faithful worship*, what the deepest needs are that we have as worshippers and then answers we need mystery and mystery is the presence of God. During interviews with co-researchers, this element of pilgrimage stood out. Spiritual friendship and what it stands for, is the fun part of God’s presence, where God makes the pilgrim laugh or cry. There is always a surprise element, the unexpected, the unexplainable, the part where co-researchers as pilgrims still experience an amazement of what actually happened in specific situations, and then with a smile and a far look in their eyes co-researcher’s will say: “...it must have been from God”. In



worship people need to experience the mystery of *koinonia* with God and that reflects in the relationship with others.

Spiritual friendship takes this research right back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century Heidelberg Catechism with the question and answer: ‘What is your only comfort, in life and in death? That I belong – body and soul, in life and in death – not to myself but to my faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ’. This is followed by: ‘Secondly, because we belong to God, we need to join ourselves in community with others to give ourselves away to God, to offer our lives to something larger than ourselves, something that provides meaning and lets us know that our lives count for something of ultimate value’.

To belong to God is the comfort of Christians and this will reflect in relationships with others, providing the opportunity to experience God’s presence in any and every person crossing the pilgrim’s path. Lathrop (2009:44) reminds about this principle in saying ‘...a key to the experience of the holy in worship is the maintaining of a dialectic, a tension, between strangeness and welcome’.

To sensitise people for spiritual friendship asks the same as with the other outcomes from the empirical research and that is exposure and experience. This, like silence, simplicity and all the others are not meant to be experienced only on the Camino but it is in everyday and everywhere. It is there to be explored.

### **Liturgical theory for praxis:**

During the liturgical process on a Sunday people could be challenged to mingle and to connect with someone they do not know.

Members of congregation could also go in a group to an identified place, like an old age home, where they go with the intention of being a spiritual friend to someone.

The ultimate is to sensitise fellow Christians to go through the week with anticipation, to expect the unexpected as there are spiritual friends in everyday. The full potential could be explored when people start sharing stories of what happened during the week as sharing the stories sensitise fellow Christians to look with different eyes to whoever may cross their ways.



### 8.3.10 SYMBOLS

Symbols are present and on the increase in the broader South African context but almost invisible and without much debate as for example, the crosses on nearby hills in nearly every town and city became part of the South African landscape during recent years, as noted by (Wepener, 2011:1-2). The Reformed tradition has many symbols in liturgy but symbols were not allowed in personal capacity as that would replace the centrality of God. A lot of this has to do with the practical situation of the Reformers five hundred years ago, however many new ways and forms of ritual and symbol have appeared in the Reformed tradition during recent times.

For the rest symbols played a role in the sense that signs of the Camino attained meaning during the pilgrimage or in the sense that pilgrimage became a symbol of life. Three others had communion along the way when they felt the need or the opportunity presented itself. One co-researcher became friends with a Roman Catholic theologian along the way and when this person expressed the need for communion, the co-researcher, a minister from a Reformed Church offered to serve communion but the offer was declined politely.

The Reformed tradition's approach towards symbols could still be seen as very rational, restricting the inherent power of symbols and this is where pilgrimage as a ritual can play a major role. It is a much safer way of physically demonstrating participation in ritual than for instance dancing and pilgrimage has a natural way of strengthening the presence of symbols, rituals and performance as part of the journey, the walk, the road and much more part of the inner space and thus a better strategy than to enforce it from the outside with a decision from Church leadership.

The symbol in ritual has the ability to unlock or create a mutual space for different perceptions and experiences into a shared experience, it binds people together, opening up a much bigger world that people can share, moving into the world of imagination and has the ability to unite people to focus on one idea from the past or future or a historical fact (Lukken, 2005:18).

Symbols and rituals are becoming more part of culture every day in the South African society. Symbols and rituals lend itself to create mutual ground or space for a country of



diversity which is the same process going on in Europe with the unification of many countries in Europe.

### **Liturgical theory for praxis:**

Pilgrimage as a metaphor for life has endless possibilities and as there are already local congregations organising pilgrimages for their faith community, it will hopefully become a feature of each and every congregation of the Reformed tradition in South Africa.

This could open the door for further use of symbols as Christians are invited to carry along a symbol of something they need to let go or whatever the symbol may represent. From feedback from Christians of the Reformed tradition who did this, they found it to be powerful, meaningful and strengthening their faith.

Pilgrimage makes provision for full bodily participation without any resistance as it fits the culture. Symbols have the advantage of providing space for individual meaning to the spiritual and personal need of the pilgrim, incorporating in this way a major outcome of this research for the need of personal development.

Symbols only ask for space, which is the responsibility of the minister to provide in liturgy or in case of a spiritual leader, with no criteria or evaluation, as the only person who can determine the meaning, is the pilgrim self.

### **8.4 CONCLUSION**

All of these outcomes from the empirical research processed into a liturgical theory for praxis are possible in daily life with the Reformed perspective of God's presence not to be found in places, routes or distances, for God is everywhere. Therefore the pilgrimage concept can be applied in a journey of a couple of metres on water, like Peter, or without moving at all in a physical way, when in hospital for instance, creating endless possibilities for the handicapped or the less privileged, not able to do a pilgrimage like the Camino. The Camino can therefore be transformed to a journey anywhere, at any time with any kind of resources or none at all.

The researcher would like to conclude with a quote that could be regarded as prophetic:

‘We face a time reminiscent of the coming of the printing press and the way in which Martin Luther, for one, addressed its implications and responded to the challenges it represented. We



live in a transformation of culture with implications even more far-reaching for the life of the contemporary church than those of Luther's time' states Sample (1998:15), also cited by Klomp (2011:37).

## **8.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

8.5.1 The integration of the major outcome, the integration of personal development with spirituality. Given the background of Post, Pieper and van Uden which includes liturgy and psychology of religion, expressing the need in future studies for the combination religion and self-development, taking into consideration the recommendation of Post (1998b:219).

8.5.2 Spiritual preparation for pilgrimage and a debrief process. The pilgrimage journey and the return afterwards to normal life and especially the faith community are as important as the future role to play in such a community. The excitement of departing on this adventure should be balanced with the joy in returning back to normal life.

8.5.3 Communication development within spirituality.

8.5.4 The effect of bodily participation in ritual. Participation with body and soul makes a huge difference in worshipping, opening up insights and experiences, different from what the traditional Reformed Christian is used to. The after effect of body movement experience in worshipping is another good topic for a follow-up research project.

8.5.5 To become attentive to God's presence in little things.

8.5.6 Multi-disciplinary research especially between cultural-anthropological and liturgy. The world has become bigger in terms of the so-called network culture with an effect on worship, with more exposure, knowledge and information than ever before or it can be said at the same time that the world has become smaller with technology, communication tools, and accessible travel around the globe (2.2.4 & 2.8.2).

8.5.7 The transformational power of silence, simplicity and symbols.

8.5.8 The validation of spiritual friendship

8.5.9 The change in the ritual landscape. A further challenge for the Reformed tradition is to redefine tourism, gap years and sabbaticals into spiritual tourism as recognition of the trends



of our time. Self-designed rituals should be observed and researched by liturgists to gain insights and knowledge of this turn in spirituality (Miller-McLemore, 2012:57).

8.5.10 Pilgrimage has much more to contribute to the South African society as a whole with cultural integration than can be imagined with unlimited possibilities. A centre for the advancement of the pilgrimage culture in South Africa that will make the pilgrimage culture accessible to all the people of South Africa, especially those not in a position to travel abroad.

8.5.11 Neurotheology, an emerging new field between neuro-science and theology presents an opportunity for research on the neuro-scientific effect, of rituals such as pilgrimage and labyrinth on the physical brain.

8.5.12 The effect of social media on the traditional form of the pilgrimage and the potential it may have for Liturgy.

8.5.13 The development of leadership and communication in theological education (2.6.3).



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