

**THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS AND THE
ORDINATION OF WOMEN IN THE BAPTIST
TRADITION**

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis/dissertation submitted for the degree of Master in Theology with the title: "The Priesthood of All Believers and the Ordination of Women in the Baptist Tradition", is my own work and has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

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August 2018

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1 Introduction to the study

1.1 Aim of the chapter

In this chapter the study will be introduced and the research design will be explained. The aim of this chapter is threefold:

First, the chapter describes the goal of the research and provides personal, intellectual and practical reasons for undertaking this study. This will result in the formulation of the problem statement and the research questions, followed by the relevance of this study and its contribution to the field of Practical Theology.

Second, the chapter provides the conceptual framework of the research. The problem statement will be conceptualised and for each of the identified concepts a brief overview will be presented of what it entails and how the theories that underlie these concepts will be approached.

Third, the chapter provides an overview of the research methodology. A brief overview of available practical theological research approaches and methods will be presented, followed by a substantiation of the approach and methodology chosen for this research.

1.2 Goal of the research

1.2.1 Why this research?

The title of this research leaves no doubt that this study is about the role and ordination of women in the church. Much has been written on this topic. Where modern society continues to embrace and fight for a more egalitarian view on the role of women in all areas, the church at large is still divided over the issue, although there is a (slow) move towards a more egalitarian position. More women are allowed to fulfil roles in churches that were previously only fulfilled by men and many universities and Christian colleges allow women to enrol in studies that will equip them for pastoral leadership. The debate on the role of women has two extremes. At the one end of the spectrum are the so called egalitarian churches that allow a woman to be ordained and fulfil any pastoral leadership or other ministerial role. On the other end of the spectrum are the so called complementarian churches that do not permit a woman to be ordained and fulfil any role in which she would have authority over or teach men. Most churches find themselves somewhere in between these two extremes and within these churches, whether within a denomination or across the denominations, many different practices can be found when it comes to the role of women.

A legitimate question in this regard is: if so much has already been written on the role of women in the church, then why the need for another study in this area? Has the topic not been explored enough? The researcher believes that the answer to this question is no, and will explain this answer by following the three types of goals for doing a study, as identified and described by Maxwell (2012: 219-222). The first type of goals identified by Maxwell are personal goals. These are the goals that motivate the researcher personally to do the study. They can come from an interest in a particular topic, a desire to bring about change in a certain area or from a desire to advance the researcher's career. Personal goals can overlap with other research goals but will always have a link with the person of the researcher (see Maxwell 2012: 219-220). It is important to be aware of the personal goals for a study because they may influence (the objectivity of) the research. The second type of goals are intellectual goals. These are the goals that aim to provide insight into what is happening and why this is happening (see Maxwell 2012: 220-222). The third type of goals are the practical goals. The primary purpose of these goals is that they meet a certain need and/or bring about change in an existing situation (see Maxwell 2012: 220).

1.2.1.1 Personal goal

The topic of the role of women in the church is of personal interest to the researcher. In 2016 she graduated from the Cape Town Baptist Seminary after having fulfilled the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Applied Theology. A logical next step for many students who have obtained this degree is to apply for recognition at the Baptist Union of South Africa (hereafter: BUSA). In the handbook of the BUSA, in the section "Regulations for Governing Recognition for Ministry", the following is written on ministerial recognition (see Baptist Union of South Africa 2015: 271): "Baptist believe in the priesthood of all believers. In particular, they believe that no inherent distinction exists between Christians such as that underlying the use of the words "priests" and "laymen". A church may appoint any one of its members at any time to perform any of those functions usually undertaken by its pastor. At the same time, we believe that God calls some to undertake a recognized ministry, for which the Union requires theological training and vocational equipping. It remains the prerogative of the local church to appoint whom it will to undertake such ministry roles and to lay down whatever conditions are deemed appropriate. However, for the guidance of the wider Baptist family, where such a call is more widely recognised, and following an interview to ascertain that the applicant is adequately qualified for the kind of ministry being exercised, the person's name may be placed on the Ministry List."

The section then goes on to explain the process of how to become a recognised minister within the BUSA. It is interesting to note that the regulations do not make any gender distinctions. Both men and women can apply for recognition and, once all requirements have been met, be included on the list of recognised ministers within the BUSA. In practice however, not many women become pastors of local Baptist churches. For her previous thesis done through the Cape Town Baptist Seminary, the researcher once counted the number of female names on the list of pastors of churches in the Western Province Baptist Association as recorded in the 2014-2015 handbook of the BUSA (see Baptist Union of South Africa 2015). Although the data may not have been a hundred percent correct, a quick count showed that of the ninety-five churches associated with the Western Province Baptist Association (hereafter: WPBA), only two churches on the list gave evidence of having appointed women in leadership positions. It also showed that in the two churches that had appointed women in leadership positions, it was never in the position of senior or lead pastor but always in a more associative position.

There can of course be various reasons for this. It could be that there are not many women available to pastor a church because they lack the qualifications or aspirations to become pastor. It could also be that, although women were part of the interview process for the role of (senior) pastor, male candidates were considered more suitable and a better fit for the position and the church in question. Further research would be needed to gain insight in the contributing factors to why so few women are ordained as (senior) pastors of local Baptist churches. Despite not having exact insight into this situation, it is however common knowledge that many churches in the Baptist tradition have not allowed women to pastor a local church because of the belief that it is not biblical for a woman to teach or have authority over men. Even though women can be fully qualified, can have a genuine divine call to pastor a local church and are part of the same priesthood of all believers as men, many churches still do not allow women to be ordained into church leadership for biblical reasons.

This practice presents the following question: How can it be that Baptists, who hold to the priesthood of all believers in which there is no differentiation between genders, still apply a gender distinction within that same priesthood when it comes to church leadership? How do men and women differ in their priesthood within the overall priesthood when it comes to church leadership?

1.2.1.2 Intellectual goal

The study also aims to serve an intellectual goal. During a previous research in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master in Philosophy, a limited literature research on the role of women in the church was conducted by the researcher, which led to several

informal discussions with other believers on the topic of the role and ordination of women in the church. One of the things that became evident in these discussions was that many believers, including those in church leadership, have an opinion on the role of women but not many can substantiate this view beyond sayings such as, “those scriptures are not applicable anymore in our time”, proposing an egalitarian view, or, “man is the head of woman”, proposing a complementarian view. This became evident again in a recent church consultation on the role of women in which the researcher took part. In a casual conversation with a (male) theologian it became evident that he lacked a clear understanding of what the debate on the role of women is really about and what the main arguments are to hold to either a complementarian or an egalitarian view on the topic. The Dutch expression¹ *“hij heeft de klok horen luiden, maar weet niet waar de klepel hangt”*² appears to apply to many believers when it comes to their view on the role of women in the church. Even more so when this is approached from the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers which, for Baptists, is one of the basic principles they hold.

That the role of women in the church needs to be observed within the context of the priesthood of all believers is something that was also identified by BUSA itself. In 1988-1989 the BUSA appointed a subcommittee to investigate the role of women in ministry. In her report the subcommittee concluded among others that the role of women cannot be seen separate from the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Furthermore, the subcommittee concluded that many Baptists had unwittingly held to a view of ordination that was not in line with the principle of congregationalism; according to the subcommittee, Baptists had come to accept an unbiblical distinction between clergy and laity (see Baptist Union of South Africa 1989). The importance of viewing the role of women in the church in the context of congregationalism can also be found with Bosch (2012: 483). He mentions that a new model of church, where a hierarchical structure is being replaced by a structure where everyone is directly involved, such as a congregational model, “is of great significance for the entire debate about the ordination of women”. It raises the question how there can still be some form of ordained ministry and some form of authority of one person (man) over the other (woman) when the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is fully embraced by a church. Bosch (2012: 478) describes this movement from vertical church models to (more) horizontal models as: “The movement away from ministry as the monopoly of ordained men to ministry as the responsibility of the whole people of God, ordained as well as non-ordained.” He sees this as one of the most dramatical movements

¹ Researcher has Dutch nationality.

² Literal translation: “he did hear the sound of the bell, but does not know where the clapper hangs”. This refers to people who think they know the subject but the essence eludes them.

in the church today and writes (2012: 483): “Laypersons are no longer just the scouts who, returning from the “outside world” with eyewitness accounts and perhaps some bunches of grapes, report to the “operational basis”; they *are* the operational basis from which the *missio Dei* proceeds. It is, in fact, not *they* who have to “accompany” those who hold “special offices” in the *latter’s* mission in the world. Rather it is it the *office bearers* who have to accompany the laity, the people of God.” It is clear that in this new understanding of church the laity are the principal carriers of the mission of God and not only the clergy. Vertical church models with the clergy on top and the laity at the bottom are being replaced by models in which all are directly involved.

The topic of the ordination of women was again tabled at the 2016 Assembly of the BUSA, where a theological committee presented and proposed a revised statement of belief for the BUSA. Compared to the current statement of belief that was passed at the Assembly held in Durban in September 1924 (see Baptist Union of South Africa 2015: 257), where there was no mention of any gender restrictions, the proposed statement of belief took a clear complementarian stance on the role of women in both the family and the church. It is not surprising that this caused a stirring under the member churches in which different views and practices on the role of women can be found. This was disturbing to such an extent that there was a real fear within the BUSA that it could lead to a split within the denomination. At the 2017 Assembly, the BUSA postponed the debate by proposing that the adoption of the proposed statement of faith would be voted on at the 2018 Assembly.

The issue that the ad hoc committee raised in 1989 is in line with the question that is asked in this study: How can a church uphold the priesthood of all believes and yet, at the same time, make a gender distinction within this priesthood when it comes to church leadership? Is this biblical? This study aims to provide further insight in the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and how this doctrine relates to the ordination of women in the church. It aims to find out how these two concepts are interpreted at a local church level and how this influences how a church views the role of women in the church.

1.2.1.3 Practical goal

The practical goal of this research is to gain more insight into what is happening at a local church level. How do local churches interpret and implement the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers? Does gender, whether consciously or unconsciously, play a role in how this doctrine is viewed and implemented? How is the practice of ordination in the church seen, especially with respect to women? This study aims to identify what is needed to help the debate move forward in the BUSA and, if possible, also in the wider Baptist tradition.

1.3 Problem statement

Based on the above, this study will explore how the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is understood and implemented in a local church and if this has an influence on the church's view on the ordination of women in church leadership. In other words, was the subcommittee of BUSA right in saying that Baptists (unwittingly) hold to an unbiblical distinction between clergy and laity and that this underlies their view on the ordination and role of women in the church?

The problem statement is formulated as follows: **Is the church's view on the ordination of women in church leadership influenced by how the church understands and implements the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers?**

The supposition is that the understanding and implementation of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers has an effect on how the church sees the ordination of women in church leadership. During the course of the research, evidence will be gathered and analysed to determine if this supposition is correct or not.

It is important to state upfront that the scope and limitations of this study do not allow for an extensive research among all members of the churches that will be part of the practical research. As will be explained in chapter 1.6.3 and chapter 4, the interviews will be conducted with the pastors of local churches. Although the view of a pastor may not always represent the general view of the church, the opinion of the pastor will usually influence the opinion of the church. A more extensive research would be needed to assess whether the view of a pastor indeed represent the general view of the church that they pastor.

1.4 Research questions

In order to find the answer to the problem statement, this research seeks to answer the following questions in particular:

1. How is the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers understood and implemented in the life of the local church? Does the church maintain a distinction between clergy and laity? If yes, what distinguishes the clergy from the laity in her view?
2. How is the practice of ordination understood and implemented in the life of the local church? Does the church ordain its leaders and/or its members? If yes, what does the church see as the purpose of this ordination?
3. How does the church view the ordination and role of women in church leadership? Is gender an issue in the church? If yes, what are these gender distinctions based on and how are these placed within the context of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers?

1.5 Relevance of the research

The relevance of this study is expected to lie in the following:

- It will provide insight on how the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is understood and implemented at a local church level by the leadership.
- It will provide insight on how the leadership of the church interprets the practice of ordination and what it achieves.
- It will provide insight on how the leadership of the local church sees the role of women in church leadership and what this is based on.
- It will explore if there is a relationship between how the church understands and implements the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the position of the church on the ordination of women in church leadership.

One of the challenges Osmer (2011: 5) identifies for contemporary Practical Theology is what he calls, “the challenge of Christian particularity and the common good”. By this he means that Practical Theology need not only make a contribution to the church, but also a contribution to the world in order to remain relevant as a science. Osmer (2011: 5) finds the answer in the *Missio Dei* where, “the mission of the church is located within the mission of God, which is universal in scope”. He is of the view that when Practical Theology serves this mission of the church, “it attends to both identity and relevance” and “contributes to the up building of the church and to the church’s contribution to the common good”.

This raises the question how this research can also add to the “common good” instead of only making a contribution to the field of (practical) theology. The answer to this question lies in the fact that the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the role of women in the church are crucial elements in the further building up of the church in the world of today. With the church no longer playing a central role in society but having been pushed to the very fringes of it, the full and dedicated involvement of all believers is essential for the church to effectively (continue to) fulfil God’s mission in the world. Any confusion and misconceptions around the priesthood of all believers and the role of women within this priesthood will need to be clarified as best as possible, to make sure that no believer is excluded from his/her priestly duties without there being a clear basis for doing so. This is where this research aims to make a contribution to the “common good”.

1.6 Scope of the research

1.6.1 Practical Theology

This research will be conducted in the field of Practical Theology, more particularly within Practical Theological Ecclesiology. Heitink (1999: 285) distinguishes four subdisciplines in the area of church and faith. These are: (1) church development, (2) catechetics, (3) liturgics and (4) homiletics. This research will be conducted in the subdiscipline of church development, also referred to as congregational development.

1.6.2 Baptist Union of South Africa

The empirical research will focus on Baptist churches associated with the BUSA. The BUSA is divided into the following sub associations:

- Baptist Association of the Northern Cape (BANC).
- Baptist Northern Association (BNA).
- Border Baptist Association (BBA).
- Eastern Province Baptist Association (EPBA).
- Free State Baptist Association (FSBA).
- Kwa-Zulu Natal Baptist Association (KZNBA).
- Western Province Baptist Association (WPBA).

The research will be conducted within a select number of churches within the WPBA.

1.6.3 Interviews

The interviews for the empirical part of the research will be held with pastors of local churches. As mentioned in chapter 1.3, the views of these pastors might not represent the view of the entire congregation nor of the wider denomination. Given the nature and scope of this research and the fact that pastors perform a central function in the body and from that place can exercise influence, the interviews as part of this research will be conducted with the pastors of the local Baptist churches. Further and more extensive research will be needed to establish whether the pastors views indeed represents the views of the wider local congregation.

1.6.4 Scriptural references

All scriptural references in this research paper are taken from the English Standard Version.

1.7 Conceptual framework

It is important to assess what is already available in terms of theories, beliefs and other research that will inform and guide this research. The conceptual framework for this research will be established primarily through the review of literature and other available studies.

From the problem statement two key concepts have been identified that will guide the conceptual framework. These two concepts are (1) the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and (2) the ordination of women.

1. The priesthood of all believers

The priesthood is a concept that runs through the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation. In the Old Testament God appointed the Levites to perform priestly sacrificial duties on behalf of the entire people of Israel. The redemptive work of Jesus, as prophesied in the Old Testament and described in the New Testament, brought an end to this system (see Hebrews 10: 1-18). Jesus, as the ultimate High Priest, offered Himself as the ultimate sacrifice that was sufficient to cover all sins, past, present and future. The old system had come to an end and a new era had arrived. In this new covenant every believer is a priest and, together with all other believers, constitutes the church which is among others referred to as a holy and royal priesthood (see 1 Pt 2: 5, 9).

The conceptual framework of this topic will be established by reviewing literature of which the scriptures will be the starting point. This part of the literature review will focus on the priesthood in the Old Testament and in the New Testament and the purpose and function of this priesthood. It will specifically investigate whether the New Testament allows for a distinction of the priesthood, as was the case in the Old Testament when God appointed the Levites to perform priestly duties. Further, the literature review in this section will focus on the development of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers through church history to gain insight into how the church has interpreted and implemented the doctrine, and to identify key moments in the development. Important works in this part of the literature review are by Anizor and Voss (2016), Eastwood (2009a, 2009b), Kramer (1958), Muthiah (2009) and Voss (2016). Eastwood's two-volume work, originally published in 1963, provides an extensive investigation of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers from biblical times to the time well after the Reformation. Kraemer's presentation of a theology of the laity has been significant in the rediscovery of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers in the twentieth century and therefore deserves a place in this study. The works by Muthiah, Anizor and Voss are of a more recent date and approach the doctrine of the

priesthood of all believers from perspectives such as the doctrine of the Trinity, the *Missio Dei* and ecclesiology, postmodern culture and congregational practices.

2. The ordination of women

The scriptures give evidence of the practice where certain individuals, or sometimes groups, are set apart by God to fulfil a specific function or role. Examples of this in the Old Testament are the setting apart of Aaron and his sons and the Levites, and the commissioning of Joshua. Examples in the New Testament are the choosing of the seven men in Acts 6 and the commissioning of Paul and Barnabas for missions. These passages of scriptures are frequently used in support of a doctrine of ordination and will therefore be the starting point for establishing the conceptual framework for this topic. Some of these scriptures will be investigated to see what evidence the text provides. This part will also include a brief literature review on key defining moments in the understanding of the doctrine through church history, together with a presentation of different views and interpretations of ordination. This will be helpful in analysing the empirical data of how a local church views the practice and purpose of ordination.

Based on the scriptures and other available literature and research, this part of the framework will then be continued by providing an overview of the main arguments for keeping to a complementarian or an egalitarian view on the role of women. It will also include an overview of how the view on the role of women has developed through church history. A lot has been written in this regard and it is not possible in this research, to do justice to all that has been written on the topic. Works that will be consulted in this part of the study are by Payne (2009), Pierce and Groothuis (eds. 2005), Piper and Grudem (eds. 2006b) and Sumner (2003). Payne's work provides a thorough exegetical and theological study of the key scriptures that are used in the debate on the role and ordination of women in the church. The works by Pierce and Groothuis and by Piper and Grudem provide a solid overview of the arguments that are normally used to defend an either egalitarian view or a complementarian view on the role of women in the church. The work by Sumner approaches the topic of the role of women in the church from various different and often refreshing perspectives. Material provided by the World Council of Churches will also be used to gain insight into the ecumenical aspects of the ordination of women. Where possible, dependent on available studies, this part will also provide insight in how the ordination of women is viewed in a South African context.

1.8 Research design

1.8.1 Practical Theological approaches

The object of Practical Theology is the praxis, which refers to an action or activity in real life. This does not mean that this field in theology is only practical, because it also aims to develop new theological theories (see Heitink 1999: 7). Practical theological studies may study the praxis but never in isolation from theory. But how exactly does praxis need to be defined and conceptualised and how does it relate to theory? Scholars agree that there are many different practical theological approaches which are characterised by their different ways of conceptualising practice and their relationship with theory (cf. Dreyer 2012: 44, Osmer 2012: 68). In what follows, three models will be described and the choice of model for this research will be explained.

1.8.2 Model 1 - Zeffass

The model of Zeffass, which has had a major influence on other models, shows the interaction between theory and praxis as follows (see Heyns 1990a: 35-36, Klostermann et al. 1974: 166):

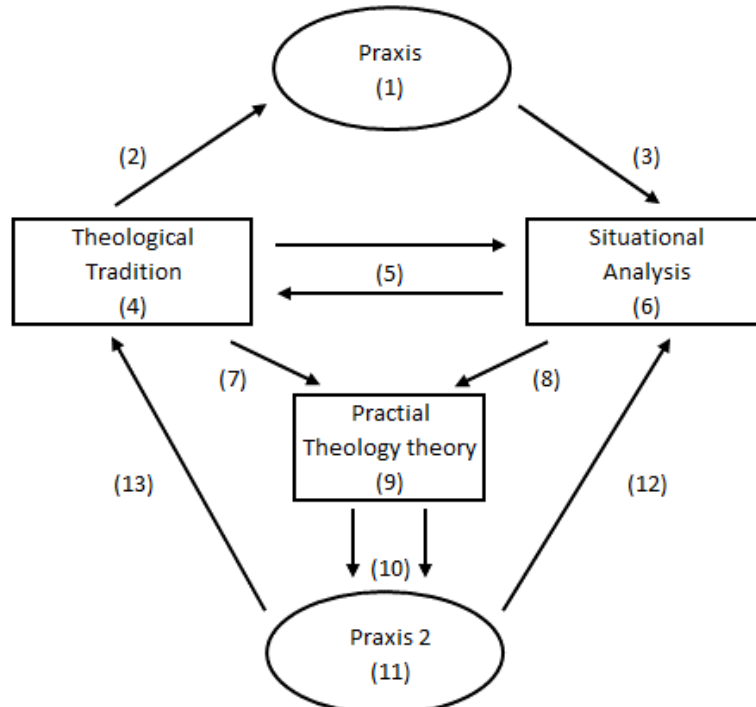


Figure 1.1

Zerfass' model is a useful model that leads from an existing praxis 1 (1) to a new praxis 2 (11) via different steps. The existing praxis has its origin in a theological tradition that is no longer satisfactory and that calls for change. Before something can be done, the existing praxis must be examined from traditional theological viewpoints (2) in order to understand where the praxis comes from. By making use of instruments from the social sciences, the praxis is then analysed and described to find out what is happening and why this praxis is unsatisfactory. This leads to a situational analysis (6) which is then compared to existing theological models (4). The interaction (5) between these two will lead to a new practical theological theory (9) that will overcome the problems that were encountered in the existing praxis (1). Application of this new theory (10) will lead to praxis 2 (11). In this model, creating the new praxis (11) is the goal of Practical Theology, which should be evaluated against existing traditions (4) and the desires situation (6) to establish its effectiveness.

1.8.3 Model 2 - Heitink

Heitink (1999: 6) defines Practical Theology as, "the empirically oriented theological theory of the mediation of the Christian faith in the praxis of modern society". According to Heitink (1999: 8-9, 151) there are two different concepts of praxis. The first is the praxis of the mediation of the Christian faith and the second is the praxis of modern society. Theory in this model is derived from the Christian tradition and the hermeneutical-theological statements that have been formulated in this tradition. Heitink's model of Practical Theology includes three sections that are interconnected and together form a distinct circulation system of theory formation that, in a simplified form, can be shown as follows (1999: 165):

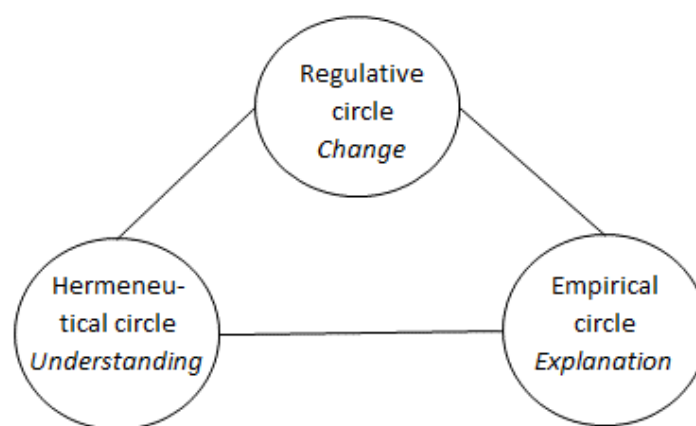


Figure 1.2

Understanding in this model is described as, “the interpretation of human action in the light of the Christian tradition (hermeneutical perspective)”. Explanation is described as, “the analysis of human action with regard to its factuality and potentiality (the empirical perspective)”. Change is described as, “the development of action models and action strategies for the various domains of action (the strategic perspective)” (see Heitink 1999: 165).

Within Practical Theology it is possible to identify five different approaches or currents. These are: (1) the normative-deductive current, (2) the hermeneutical-meditative current, (3) the empirical-analytical current, (4) the political-critical current, and (5) the pastoral-theological current (see Heitink 1999: 171-176). According to Heitink (1999: 174) the empirical-analytical approach is the most appropriate one. This approach aims to “categorize, analyse, interpret and evaluate the religious convictions, ideas, images and feelings of the people”. It is based on an inductive research based on experience, followed by a deductive process of composing theological concepts that are subsequently operationalised and tested (see Heitink 1999: 174). One of the strengths of this model is that it aims to overcome the traditional distinctions between research being either quantitative or qualitative and in which the researcher is either an observant or a participant.

1.8.4 Model 3 - Osmer

Osmer’s model (2008: 4-11) identifies four tasks of practical theological interpretation. These tasks interact and mutually influence each other and need to be seen as a spiral that constantly circles back and forth between tasks, even those that have already been explored. The model can be depicted as follows:

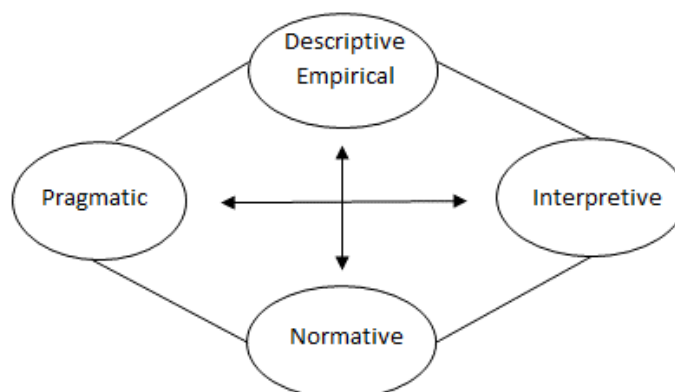


Figure 1.3

The descriptive empirical task is about gathering information that will help answer the question: “what is going on”? The interpretative task is about interpreting the gathered

information and asking oneself the question: “why is this happening”? The normative task focuses on the question: “what should be happening”? The pragmatic task focuses on determining strategies of action that will help respond in ways that are faithful and effective and will shape events towards desired goals.

1.8.5 Choice of model for this research

All models above show the importance of empirical research (praxis) in the research and the ongoing interaction with theoretical and normative models. This does not mean that praxis is of more importance than the other two elements. Although the excellence of practical theological research lies often in the detailed empirical work, the other two elements need to be given equal importance in order for practical theological research to contribute to theology as a whole and fulfil its constructive task (cf. Miller-McLemore 2012: 23-25, Osmer 2012: 70-71).

This research will follow the basic elements of practical theological studies as identified by Heitink (1999: 238), namely observation, description, analysis, reflection and suggestions for change. These basic elements are to a great extent similar to the model Osmer (2008: 4) proposes. The reasons for choosing this approach is that it is a widely used approach in Practical Theology and that it allows for a constant interaction between, and attributes equal importance to, the empirical, hermeneutical and strategic cycles without overemphasising one.

The research will start by outlining the theoretical framework that is used as input for the empirical research. In reference to Osmer’s model as shown earlier, this part will provide the answer to the question: What should be happening? The next part of the research is the gathering of data. This part will provide an answer to the question: What is happening? This data is then analysed and interpreted in order to provide an answer to the question: Why is this happening? In the final part of the research, the data is evaluated and based on this, a strategy for change and action is proposed. This will answer the question: Where do we go from here?

1.9 Operational field

Practical Theology in the traditional understanding is seen as the discipline within theology that focuses on the practical application of the other theological disciplines with the aim to equip the (potential) pastor or minister for the actual work of ministry. For example, the course on practical theology at many Baptist seminaries usually includes topics such as pastoral care, church administration and the preaching of the Word. They all focus on how

to be a “good” pastor in the practical sense of the word. Where Practical Theology traditionally was placed firmly within the Christian faith, recent trends in Practical Theology propose a widening of the operational field by taking the religious experiences of individuals within a society as the point of departure, regardless of to what religion or to which god this experience may lead. Practical Theology in such a view is no longer exclusive to the Christian faith but places itself in the religious landscape of society where many different religions and spiritual experiences can be found. It is for this reason that Ganzevoort (2009: 3) uses the term, “hermeneutics of lived religion” as the platform from which all Practical Theology departs. It leads to a widening of the field of Practical Theology beyond the Christian faith. Ganzevoort (2009: 7-9) sees six fields of study that Practical Theology can work in. These fields form concentric circles that can be shown as follows:

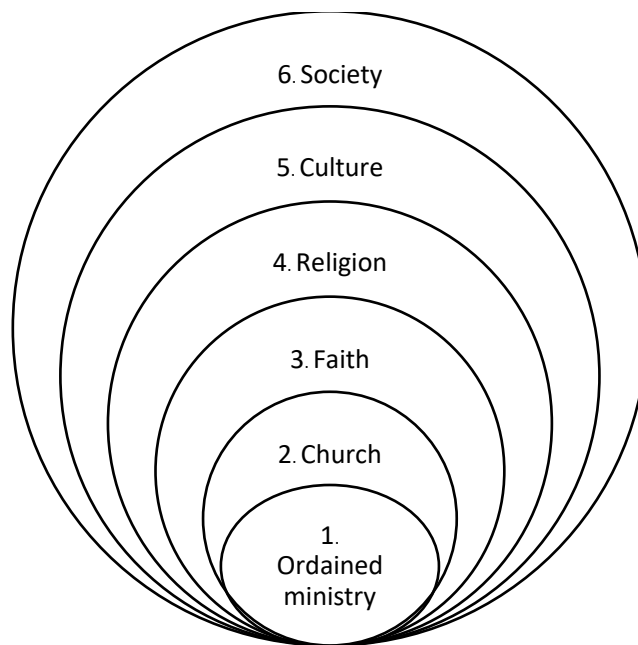


Figure 1.4

In the smallest circle, Practical Theology is focused on the clergy. This is the traditional view on Practical Theology that can be found with Schleiermacher who is often viewed as the founder of Practical Theology. This view is also referred to as the clerical paradigm (see Miller-McLemore 2012: 9). In this view Practical Theology is the part of the curriculum that focuses on equipping the clergy for the tasks of ministry. Although this view is at times criticised for being too narrow, it is an important aspect of theological training and should not be dismissed and replaced by the academic paradigm (see Miller-McLemore 2007: 19-38). In the second circle the focus of Practical Theology is on the church or the congregation and specifically on how this congregation functions in and interacts with wider society. It is also in this circle that newer subdisciplines such as congregational studies have emerged.

The third concentric circle moves from the church or congregation to the wider field of faith. Ganzevoort (2009: 8) describes this faith as, “the subjectivized and individualized shape of religion”. The focal point in this circle is not just the individual person with his/her faith but also the gap between this individual and the traditions of organised communities in which they find themselves. Practical Theology in this circle focuses on the relation between the individual and God. This relation is described as “faith”, which traditionally was understood to be the Christian faith but in a more liberal view can be any faith. The fourth circle is even wider and focuses on religion in its broadest form. As Ganzevoort (2009: 8) writes: “In our increasingly globalizing world, one can argue that we need to develop a practical theology that is not confined to one specific religion, but seeks to understand the relation with the sacred in all its shapes and traditions.” It is in this circle that conservative practical theologians may become uncomfortable as it raises the question to what extent the Christian faith is unique, or just another religion among many others. Theology in this circle is no longer understood to be Christian theology but embraces the broad definition of being the study of the divine in which the divine can be *any* divine. In the fifth concentric circle the focus is on culture. Where the previous concentric circle still focused on religion, this circle focuses on culture including both religious and non-religious activities. Cultural meanings are the object of study and these are interpreted in relation to religious or non-religious traditions and forms. The lines between religion and non-religion in this circle are blurred because of the contingency in distinction. The sixth and widest circle focuses all spheres in a society whether they are religious or not. In this circle, issues that can be addressed can be as broad as poverty, violence, pop music or gender inequality, however in order to still be part of Practical Theology, they need to be reflected on from a religious perspective. Not all practical theologians would define the operational fields of Practical Theology as wide as Ganzevoort does. Many practical theologians operate in the second circle, the ecclesiastical context (cf. Ganzevoort 2009). According to for example Heyns (1990b: 6), Practical Theology is the field in theology that focuses on people’s religious actions. These actions represent the object of study and Heys (1990: 6) writes: “Practical theology is that part of theology that concerns itself with this event - the encounter between God and humanity – and particularly with the role of human beings in this encounter.” These actions take place within certain domains. Heyns (1990c: 13-15) distinguishes five actions (preaching, instruction, care, celebration and service) that can take place in eight operational fields (worship service, Sunday school, service projects, the home, church council, work situation, Bible study and the school). Heyns’ definition of Practical Theology and his definition of the actions and operational fields, show that he stays within the Christian religion and that his primary focus is an ecclesiastic context.

Hendriks (2004: 19), in defining a methodology for doing theology in an African context from a congregational perspective, also places the focus of Practical Theology in an ecclesiastical context. He (2004: 19) describes Practical Theology as, “a continual hermeneutical concern discerning how the Word should be proclaimed in word and deed in the world”. According to Hendriks (2004: 21-26) theology as a whole is one discipline that is missionary in its very nature and in doing theology, all sub-disciplines need to be taken into account. The ecclesiology that Hendriks (2004: 21) aims for, “is both missional and practical: it develops a methodological strategy on how to be a contextual, missionary church.” Where Practical Theology at first was about the application of biblical and systematic theology in ministry with a particular focus on the role of the pastor or minister, this has shifted to an emphasis on the role of faith communities and the laity. The focus is on the church, although Hendriks broadens this to include denominational and ecumenical church structures, with a particular focus on leadership (see Hendriks 2004: 26).

Heitink (1999: 249, 252) identifies the following three domains of action within Practical Theology: (1) Practical Theological Anthropology which focuses on humanity and religion, (2) Practical Theological Ecclesiology which focuses on church and faith and (3) Practical Theological Diakoniology which focuses on religion and society. Although this distinction allows to define the operational fields as broad as Ganzevoort does, Heitink, unlike Ganzevoort, does seem to enter each area from the perspective of the Christian faith (see Heitink 1999: 248-249). One of the strengths of Heitink’s model is that it allows for Practical Theology to move beyond the reach of the church because it acknowledges that with the church having moved from public life to private life, its reach has become limited. Practical Theology, according to this model, can take place in the sphere of a person’s individual beliefs in society without needing to be linked to the area of the church. With respect to the second domain of action, Practical Theological Ecclesiology, the way the church is structured is an essential theme. Within this domain Heitink (1999: 285-291) distinguishes the four sub-disciplines of church development, catechetics, liturgics and homiletics.

This research will be carried out in the second domain of action as identified in Heitink’s model, the domain of Practical Theological Ecclesiology. The particular focus will be on church development with a focus on leadership. The research is done within the Christian tradition, more particularly the Baptist tradition.

1.10 Methodology

The primary purpose of research is to find a solution to a problem, the answer to an important question or the explanation of a phenomenon. In order to achieve this the researcher will have to find and generate new knowledge. But what kind of knowledge is

this? And how will this knowledge be gained? These questions are part of the field of epistemology which deals with knowledge in general and different theories about this knowledge.

A research methodology describes the methods of investigation that the researcher follows to gather this knowledge, that will contribute to finding the solution of the problem, the answer to the question or the explanation of the phenomenon. A first way to distinguish between approaches in gathering data is that between quantitative and qualitative research (cf. Pinto 2012: 813). Fritz and Morgan (2010: 47-51), by comparing both approaches, come to the following overview:

Qualitative research	Quantitative research
Inductive	Deductive
Purpose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generate theory from observations - Oriented to discovery, exploration 	Purpose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Test theory through observations - Oriented to cause and effect
Procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emergent design - Merges data collection and analysis 	Procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-determined design - Separates data collection and analysis
Subjectivity	Objectivity
Emphasises meaning, interpretations Tries to understand other's perspectives	Emphasises things that can be measured Results do not depend on beliefs
Researcher is involved and is close to the data. He/she is the research instrument	Research is detached and distant from the data and relies on standardised protocols.
Emphasises specific detail and depth. Analysis holistic systems	Emphasises generalisation and replication. Analyses variables.
Uses a naturalistic approach and relies on a few purposefully chosen cases.	Uses experimental and statistical controls and works across a large number of cases

Table 1.1

Although this overview is high level and lots more can be said about each of the characteristics of each approach, for the context of this research it provides sufficient information to highlight the differences between both approaches. There is a third approach that has been gaining popularity. This approach is a mix of both qualitative and quantitative research design (cf. Morgan 2014, Pinto 2012). By using a mix of qualitative and quantitative design it becomes possible to combine the best of both approaches and

achieve what neither qualitative nor quantitative approaches could ever achieve on their own.

For this study a qualitative approach will be followed and open-ended interviews will be used. The main reason for this is that although the researcher has a general understanding of what might be happening at a local church level, a (first) qualitative research will provide more insight as to whether this theory is correct. It will also give the participants the opportunity to provide additional insights and interests on the topic that this study at first may have missed but that are essential for further research. As such, this research can be seen as a first exploration of the topic under study in order to gain a better understanding of what is happening at a local church level, by getting more insight into the beliefs and views of the participants.

The open-ended interviews will provide empirical data. This type of data, in contrast to non-empirical data, has to do with what Hendriks (2004: 224) calls “real life issues”, and refers to the praxis within practical theological research. It is common to use methodologies from the social sciences to gather such data. This empirical data will normally be primary data, meaning that the data is gathered first hand. Non-empirical data on the other hand refers to analytical, conceptual, theoretical and philosophical questions. Within practical theological research, this type of data refers to the normative models and will often be secondary data, meaning that the data is already available. This research will use both. For the conceptual framework, primarily non-empirical data will be used. The empirical part of the research will generate empirical data. In describing and explaining the empirical data a combination of inductive and deductive methods of reasoning will be followed. Although there may be a certain presupposed theory of what might be happening on a church level that can be brought into the interviews (inductive), the empirical part of the study will allow the data to correct this theory (deductive). By doing this, the research remains open to change and an ongoing interaction between the researcher and the data is ensured

Three main types of research used in empirical studies are descriptive, explorative and explanation or testing hypotheses (cf. Heitink 1999: 228-231, Hendriks 2004: 224-225). Descriptive research focuses on observation. It is the systematic description of that which was observed and is often the first phase in research followed by either explorative or explanation research (see Heitink 1999: 229). Explorative research usually has no specific hypotheses, but can lead to the formulation of one. It focuses on explanation and interpretation and is often a mixture between descriptive research and testing hypotheses (see Heitink 1999: 230, Hendriks 2004: 225). Explanation research or testing hypotheses is research where a hypothesis is put to the test and where the test will show whether certain relationships that were thought to exist on theoretical grounds, exist in reality or not.

The research entails the full empirical cycle of observation, induction, deduction, testing and evaluation (see Heitink 1999: 231).

This research is primarily descriptive in nature. Based on empirical research the study will describe what is observed in order to answer the question: What is happening? This is then followed by a more explorative research in which the data will be explained and interpreted, in order to answer the question: Why is this happening? These two steps are then followed by a process in which existing theological models are consulted and engaged with, to answer the question: What should be happening? This last step in the research will consist of making recommendations based on the collection, analysis and interpretation of the data. By doing this it is ensured that the basic steps in a practical theological research are followed: description, interpretation, explanation and action (cf. Heitink 1999: 228).

1.11 Outline of the chapters

In chapter two and three, existing normative and theological models will be discussed for each of the key concepts identified in the problem statement. This focuses on the question: What should be happening? These models will be used as input for the empirical research. Chapter two will provide insight into the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers with a specific focus on the role and leadership in the church. Chapter three will discuss the practice of ordination and the role of women in church leadership. Chapter four will contain the empirical research and aims to answer the questions: What is happening and why is this happening? This will be done via full structured open-ended interviews. Once all data has been collated, the data will be analysed and the findings will be summarized. Chapter five seeks to answer the question? So what? The chapter will contain recommendations for action and conclude the research.

2 The priesthood of all believers

2.1 Aim of the chapter

The aim of this chapter is to provide the first part of the theoretical framework for the empirical research. The problem statement in chapter 1 was formulated as follows:

Is the church's view on the ordination of women into church leadership influenced by how the church understands and implements the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers?

In the problem statement two key concepts have been identified that will need to be discussed, the first being the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the second being the ordination of women. The aim of this chapter is to explore the first concept, the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. This will be ensured by:

1. Providing a brief overview of the historical development of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers.
2. Investigating the scriptural basis for the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers.
3. Defining the priesthood of all believers; what it is and what it is not.
4. Discussing the purpose and ministry of the church as a priesthood.
5. Exploring the ministry of leadership within the priesthood of all believers.
6. Exploring the concept of leadership authority within the priesthood of all believers.

The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is a broad topic on which much has been written and said, even more so when the ministry of leadership and leadership authority within this doctrine are included in the discussion. It is not possible to do adequate justice to any of these topics, especially from a biblical theological perspective. However, in line with the problem statement, the goal of this research is not to provide an in-depth study of each of the concepts but to find out if and how the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers has influenced the ordination of women on a practical theological level. It is therefore justified to discuss the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, including the ministry of leadership and leadership authority within this doctrine with relatively broad strokes of the pen, to such an extent that it provides a theoretical framework for the practical research without getting lost in the details.

The chapter starts with a brief overview of the development of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Reference will be made to Eastwood's two-volume work on the development of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers from biblical times until the present day (2009a, 2009b). For the scriptural basis of the doctrine of the priesthood of all

believers, the study will focus primarily on the text in 1 Peter 2:4-9, where the church is referred to as a priesthood of all believers. This is a direct reference to Exodus 19:5-6 where the people of Israel are referred to as a kingdom of priests. The focus will be on the status and function of the priesthood. For the definition of the priesthood of all believers recent works written by among others Anizor and Voss (2016), Muthiah (2009) and Voss (2016) will be used. Because a crucial link between the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the ordination of women in the church lies in how the concept of leadership authority is interpreted within the doctrine, the study will narrow the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers down to leadership and leadership authority. This will first be done by discussing the purpose and ministry of the church as a priesthood in the context of the text in 1 Peter 2:4-10. It will then be done by looking at the place of leadership and the church offices within the priesthood of all believers. Because Luther played such an important role in the rediscovery of the priesthood of all believers (cf. Muthiah 2009: 6), his view on the church offices will also be discussed, followed by a broad overview of church leadership in the New Testament. This part of the study will focus on the Pauline writings and particularly on spiritual gifts and servanthood leadership. The study will briefly pay attention to the traditional shepherd-teacher leadership model and the APEST³ leadership model. For the concept of leadership authority reference will be made to the work by Carroll (2011). Carroll approaches leadership and leadership authority from the perspective of shared ministry and complementarity between clergy and laity, and provides a model of how leadership authority can have a place in the church without it being either abused by church leaders or interpreted in such a way that it leaves no room for the unique place God has reserved for church leadership. The study will continue with discussing Ogden's (2003) whose work aims to answer the question how the ministry can be returned to the whole people of God, and who looks at leadership authority in that context.

2.2 Introduction

The priesthood of all believers is often associated with the Reformation in the early sixteenth century. In the many decades leading up to the Reformation the clergy had gained for themselves a secure position in both the church and in society as priests that stood between God and the people and through which (they believed) God's grace was mediated. Luther's discovery that justification comes by faith alone led to the revival of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Although it is regarded as one of the pillars of Protestantism,

³ The word APEST is made up of the first letters of Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd and Teacher.

the doctrine remained neglected and only starting to gain full attention in the twentieth century through the works of theologians such as Mott (1932), Congar (1957), Trueblood (1952) and Kraemer (1958).

The priesthood of all believers is a biblical metaphor that refers to the church. Minear (1960) has identified a total of ninety-six images and metaphors for the church, the priesthood being only one of them. Nel (2015: 26-27) writes that underneath all the metaphors that can be found in the scriptures and that refer to the church, there is a, “theological core on the essence (identity) of the church”. Where the huge variety of metaphors enriches the understanding of the purpose and identity of the church, adding them all up will still not provide a complete understanding of the church in all its facets. As Nel (2015: 27) writes: “The church is all metaphors and more”. The metaphor of the church as a priesthood of believers is however an important metaphor when placed in the context of ordination, because traditionally ordination has led to the establishment of a ministerial priesthood within the church. The priesthood of all believers is also an essential principle in the Baptist tradition, which is the tradition in which the empirical part of this research will be conducted. Together with the principles of religious liberty and soul competency, the priesthood of all believers forms the foundation for Baptist ecclesiology (cf. Young 1993: 131).

2.3 Historical development of the doctrine

Eastwood (2009b: 56-80), in describing the development of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers throughout history, shows that until Cyprian (AD 195-258), the priesthood of all believers was upheld and firmly rooted in the life of the church. Although the church knew bishops and deacons who performed certain sacrificial tasks, the whole church was regarded as the priesthood and there was not a separate class of priests. The distinction between clergy and laity appears to be first made by Clement of Rome at the end of the first century, but the term laity was not a common word until well into the second century (cf. Muthiah 2009: 17). Use of the word clergy did however not mean that the priesthood was separated into clergy and laity. It was more a term to refer to those that performed specific tasks. All believers were still considered part of the high priestly race and capable of offering spiritual sacrifices (cf. Eastwood 2009b: 80).

Under Cyprian a significant shift in the understanding of the Priesthood of all believers can be seen which Eastwood (2009b: 80) explains by writing, “he [Cyprian] conceived that the bishops were a special priesthood and had a special sacrifice to offer”. A separate priesthood emerged from the priesthood of all believers. Some of the reasons for this shift were the influence of Greek and Jewish ideas and that of the Roman state. For Jewish

Christians it was not uncommon to interpret the New Testament covenant in terms of the Old Testament law and priesthood. For Gentiles, the Greek temples had their own hierarchy and the idea of a religion without priests would be unknown to them. Also, the Roman empire was based on empirical rule and a strong hierarchy and, as church and state became more intertwined, the imperial rule became the model for ecclesiastical supervision (see Eastwood 2009b: 81). Another reason for this shift, which was even more important, was the need to guard the unity of the church and preserve sound doctrine for which Cyprian made the bishops responsible (see Eastwood 2009b: 81). From this time onward, the church was ruled by bishops who also controlled the finances and presided over the worship. They were seen as the ones who represented Christ and who were the priests of God. Because of this position and its associated authority it was believed that the bishop alone was able to discern what was the true Christian teaching that had been handed down from the apostles. Bishops were given the same authority as what Christ had. Where Christ was in authority over the universal church, bishops were believed to have the same authority but over a local church (cf. Eastwood 2009b: 84). Where Christ had the authority to forgive sins, so bishops also gained the authority to forgive sins. They were seen as the dispensers of grace. This change in the bishop's status affected primarily the worship service and especially the Eucharist. Cyprian believed that the Eucharist was a sacrifice and that only the bishop, as priest, had the power to offer such a sacrifice (cf. Eastwood 2009b: 84). It was therefore during Cyprian's time that out of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, a doctrine that was held high in the first two centuries, a ministerial priesthood arose that was given a separate status and authority that was distinct from the normal priesthood. This change paved the way for the rise of the Roman doctrine of the papacy, which would last until the time of the Reformation where Luther re-emphasised the priesthood of all believers by declaring that all believers are priests and part of the priesthood, and that grace comes by faith alone and is not dispensed via the clergy.

Although the clergy, ever since the time of Cyprian, gained for themselves a secure position in both the church and in society, this does not mean that the role of the laity in church history and especially after the time of Cyprian should be undermined. Kraemer (1958: 19-20) observes that from the time of the New Testament the *diakonia* or ministry was primarily carried out by lay people including men and women. The New Testament, in dealing with functions and vocations in the church and not with church offices and structures as they developed later in history, speaks of both men and women being involved in the life of the church. Even some of the great church fathers such as Tertullian, Cyprian and Augustine were lay men by their education and secular career and only later in life became clergy. It was also the laity who initiated the monastic movements in the fourth century. During the

Middle Ages, when the papacy was firmly established and kept the laity submissive and docile, lay initiatives can be seen in men like Peter Waldes and Francis of Assisi (cf. Kraemer 1958: 20-23). The laity were the driving power behind various reformation and charismatic movements that sprang up and were also the ones who prepared the political, social and religious grounds that paved the way for men such as Luther and Calvin to spark the Reformation. Although the place of the laity and the priesthood of all believers were significant agenda items during the Reformation, in the period after the Reformation the laity disappeared into the background and the clergy again took a prominent place in the church. A sharp distinction became visible between church offices and the rest of the body and the minister's church, also called the *Pastorenkirche*, began its career (cf. Kraemer 1958: 25). This is particularly evident in the Reformed tradition. In the Anglo Saxon countries the situation was a bit different. In contrast to the established churches, the laity played a significant role in Free churches such as the Quaker movement and the Baptist churches. They also had a prominent role in initiating missionary and other movements across all denominations, although in denominations such as the Roman Catholic Church these movements remained under the supervision of the clergy. It is evident that where the established church became structured with little space for the laity to exercise their gifts and partake in the missionary role of the church in the world, the laity, both men and women, found an outlet among others in the missionary movements of the last few centuries, often outside the normal functioning of the established churches (cf. Bosch 2012: 481-483, Kraemer 1958: 27-28).

In the last few decades, undoubtedly fuelled by secularism pervading life driving the church to the fringes of society and calling the church to action, the view that every believer has been given gifts for ministry has become a focal point for many churches and the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers has (again) gained renewed attention.

2.4 Scriptural basis

There are several references in the New Testament that point to the church as a priesthood. Direct references can be found in 1 Peter 2:4-9, Revelation 1:6, 5:10 and 20:6. Beside these direct references, there are also many indirect references that affirm the status of the church as a priesthood. Because the church is a body of believers of which Christ as the Great High Priest is the head, the church shares in the priestly character of Christ. It is also through the body of believers that the priestly work of Christ in the world is now continued. Eastwood (2009a: 26) describes this as: "So the church has a priesthood, and through it the priest reaches out in love and power to all the world. The church which the priest may use for His own purpose is truly His priesthood." Malone (2017), who has explored the

theme of priesthood across the scriptures, divides the theme of priesthood into an individual priesthood and a corporate priesthood. The individual priesthood in his work refers to the priests who are singled out from the collective priesthood to fulfil certain functions and duties, such as was the case with the Levitical priests in the Old Testament but also in churches today where certain believers are singled out to do the work of ministry. The collective priesthood refers to the whole, such as can be found in Exodus 19:6 where the whole people of Israel are called, “a kingdom of priests” and in 1 Peter 2:4-9 where the collective of the believers are referred to as, “a royal priesthood”. In what follows, primarily the status and function of the collective priesthood will be discussed, but attention will also be given to the place of the individual priesthood within the collective.

As mentioned previously, the focus in this part of the study will be on the passage in 1 Peter 2: 4-9. This passage forms part of the first letter written by the apostle Peter around AD 62-63 to Christians who were suffering for their faith as a result of persecution (Carson and Moo 2005: 636, 646-647). The letter depends heavily on the Old Testament and includes eight direct quotations from the Old Testament (Carson and Moo 2005: 640). The body of the letter can be divided into three sections. The first section starts in 1 Peter 1:3 and focuses on the privileges and responsibilities of being God’s people. The second section starts in 1 Peter 2:11 and focuses on the call for God’s people to live holy and submissive lives in a hostile but watchful world. The third and final major section starts in 1 Peter 4:12 and focuses on the correct response to suffering, leadership in the community and the need for a full commitment to the faith (Carson and Moo 2005: 636-638).

The text in 1 Peter 2: 4-9 is part of the first major section in the letter and includes many references to the Old Testament (cf. Achtemeier 1996: 150, Marshall 1991: 65-76). In the passage the apostle Peter writes:

“As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture:

*“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”*

So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

*“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,”*

and

*“A stone of stumbling,
and a rock of offense.”*

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”

In the passage believers are compared to living stones who are being built up as a spiritual house of which Christ is the corner stone. The passage makes a contrast between the believers who have accepted Christ and those who have rejected Him. Those who have accepted Christ are called a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and a people for God's own possession. These are all references to the church, although the common Greek word for church *ekklesia* is not used (cf. Bolkestein 1972: 74-75). Marshall (1991: 66) writes that despite a tendency among evangelical Christians to focus on the conversion of people, 1 Peter 2 gives evidence of one of the, “strongest expressions of the doctrine of the church”. He stresses the emphasis this passage places on (1) the believer becoming part of the church upon conversion; (2) the call on the church to fulfil the functions of the temple; (3) the link between the church and the people of God since the time of Abraham; and (4) Jesus having the most important position in the church. The passage is therefore not (just) about contrasting believers with unbelievers, but has a strong focus on believers becoming part of the church. Bolkestein (1972: 75) attests to this when he writes that it is impossible to believe in Christ without being part of the church. The church and Christ are one and becoming a Christian and joining the church are therefore one and the same event⁴.

Muthiah (2009: 8-9) identifies two important questions that arise from the passage in 1 Peter 2: 4-9. The first question is whether this passage justifies an individualistic understanding of believers as priests which, if answered positively, implies that every individual believer is a priest in his or her own right and can therefore interpret the scriptures for him/herself. This issue, the interpretation of Scripture by the laity, lay at the heart of the Reformation and the rediscovery of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. The second question is related to the first and is whether this passage refers to the status of

⁴ Freely translated from Dutch by researcher.

believers before God, the so called natural priesthood, or to the functioning of believers as priests, or perhaps both.

With regard to the first question, a careful reading of the scriptures confirms that nowhere in the scriptures are believers *as individuals* referred to as priests; it is always in the context of the collective priesthood. It should also be noted that all the Old Testament references that the apostle Peter could have chosen from, he chooses the passage that refers to the believers as a collective of priests and not as individual priests (cf. Muthiah 2009: 8). This is in line with what Minear (1982: 242) has found in his study of 1 Peter 2:4-12 regarding the apostle Peter's use of the metaphor of the church as a house of living stones. Although the text shows that each believer is seen as analogous to a stone and is referred to as a priest, there is only one spiritual house and one priesthood. It is only when all the stones are put together that a house arises. Likewise, it is the collective of believers as priests that form a priesthood. Further confirmation of this collective view of the priesthood can be found with Houwelingen (1997: 83) who writes that the word priesthood contains elements of collectiveness and action, and needs to be understood as a body of priests who are in service to the King: It is always together with other believers that the priestly function is to be fulfilled⁵. The fact that all believers are referred to as a royal priesthood also means that all believers are priests and can therefore serve God. Whereas in the Old Testament the priestly function was restricted to a select group of people, as will be discussed further on in this chapter, the priestly function in the New Testament applies to all believers (cf. Achtemeier 1996: 152, Bolkestein 1972: 76, Houwelingen 1997: 84, Marshall 1991: 75). It is for that reason that use of the term "priest" for only certain people in the church can be misleading and should be modified (Marshall 1991: 75).

With regard to the question whether the passage points to the status of believers before God or to their functioning as a priesthood, theologians seem to differ in their opinion. Some theologians are of the opinion that the priesthood refers to the status of all believers and especially their status as being elect, holy and set apart (cf. Muthiah 2009: 8-9). One of the reasons for this view is that the priesthood of all believers, as was highlighted at the Reformation, meant that the believers could interpret the scriptures for themselves and that every believer could preside at worship. Because none of these functions are found in the text, some theologians are of the opinion that the text therefore does not refer to the functioning of the priesthood of all believers, but to their status (cf. Muthiah 2009: 8-9). Other theologians are of the opinion that the priesthood does refer to the functioning of the believers as priests. This view is often based on verses 5 and 9 that speak of two functions

⁵ Freely translated from Dutch by researcher.

of the priesthood: (1) the offering of spiritual sacrifice and (2) the proclamation of the mighty acts of God, which is likely an expression of the first function (Muthiah 2009: 8-9)

Minear (1982: 242-243) in his study of the metaphors that the apostle Peter uses in the passage, illustrates that the focus of the passage is on the building of a spiritual house. He mentions that the Greek verb for building leaves room for both an interpretation where the believers build themselves into this house and an interpretation where God or the Holy Spirit does the building. Whatever interpretation, there is action and rather than pointing to the passive status of believers as elect and holy, the text points towards action: The stones are moving, they come to the Living Stone and are being built into a house, to be a holy priesthood and to offer spiritual sacrifices. Minear (1982: 242-243) writes that the offering of spiritual sacrifices can be seen as the climax of the passage and that this offering of spiritual sacrifices "...represents a convergence of many separate vocations – of the priesthood and the priest, of the house and its stones, and of the cornerstone to which each stone comes. The story of Jesus remains the prime test of all those vocations; all sacrifices offered by this priesthood must be "acceptable to God through Jesus Christ". Looking at the passage from the viewpoint of the metaphors used, there are strong arguments to plead for viewing the priesthood not just in terms of status but also in terms of function. This is further supported by linking 1 Peter 2:4-9 to 1 Peter 4:7-11 which talks about spiritual gifts. The function of the priesthood is then to use these spiritual gifts (cf. Muthiah 2009: 9).

The text in 1 Peter 2:9 is a direct reference to Exodus 19:5-6 where God instructs Moses to tell the people of Israel:

"Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation". These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."

This passage is part of what Durham (1987: 256) calls: "The Advent of Yahweh's Presence and the Making of the Covenant". It is the passage where God makes a covenant with the people of Israel who have come out of Egypt and have arrived at Mount Sinai. If they will obey Him and keep his covenant, God promises that they will have a special status before Him that sets them apart from all other nations. They will be God's treasured possession, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Hamilton (2011: 304) mentions that the phrase, "a royalty/kingdom of priests" occurs only here in the Old Testament. Further references to Israel as a priesthood can among others be found in Isaiah 61:6 where it says: "And you

will be called priests of the Lord, you will be named ministers of God” which, according to Hamilton (2011: 304) are anticipations of the text in 1 Peter 2:5.

The priesthood is a major concept in the Old Testament that continues into the New Testament. The Hebrew word for priest is *kohen* and appears 740 times in the Old Testament. It refers to someone who mediates between a deity and the people (cf. Botterweck and Ringgren 1974: 66). In the Bible the word *kohen* is used to refer to priests who stand in the service of God but also to pagan priests who stand in service of other gods. In Exodus 19:6 God designates the whole people of Israel as a priesthood, a term which Israel would have been able to understand based on a cultural background that was familiar with priestly institutions (cf. Alexander and Baker 2003: 646). As a *kohen*, Israel was called to live holy lives before God and to mediate between God and their surrounding nations (cf. Anizor and Voss 2016: 32). This indicates that the priesthood of Israel as a whole can be viewed at (at least) two levels. The first level is horizontal and refers to Israel as a people of God who, as a collective priesthood, was called to show the surrounding nations God’s ways and the proper way to worship Him. Hamilton (2011: 304) describes this as the mediatory role Israel was to play between Yahweh and the surrounding nations. Being a priest in this sense means being a bridge-builder between Yahweh and the nations, although the Hebrew word *kohen*, as Hamilton points out, does not have any inherent “bridge-builder” nuances. Kaiser (1990: 416) adds to this mediatory role of Israel that it is part of the fulfilment of God’s promise to Abram that all the nations on the earth would be blessed through him (see Gn 12:3). Fretheim (1991: 212), referencing to Durham (1987: 263), mentions that the phrase “kingdom of priests” means that Israel is called to be a nations that serves and not a nation that rules. Based on this, he writes that it is not just the clergy that are to be “committed to the extension throughout the world of the knowledge of Yahweh”. He finds in this phrase, “a strike against all forms of clericalism that would claim a special status in the divine economy”. The second level is vertical and refers to the people within the community of Israel who are called to worship and serve God and live a holy life (cf. Malone 2017: 128). Hamilton (2011: 304) describes this as the privilege Israel was given to have a relationship with God and to enter into His presence, a privilege that was reserved for the priests. This privilege highlights the importance of Israel’s position as God’s “unique treasure”. Anizor and Voss (2016: 36-37) describe Israel’s priestly role, including both the horizontal and the vertical level, as follows: “... “kingdom of priests” or “royal priesthood” emphasizes Israel’s relationship to God and consequent responsibility to be holy, not only before him (God), but for the community and the world. God’s people are to function as priests in a manner similar to the professional priesthood. In fact, the special priesthood of Aaron and the Levites is supportive of Israel’s corporate priesthood, providing

both the model and the means for its preservation. In the end, then, initiation into the royal priesthood, like initiation into the Levitical priesthood, is initiation into a particular type of relationship with God, his Word, his people and his world.”

Within this royal (collective) priesthood God instructed a religious institution that is often referred to as, “the Levitical Priesthood”. In this priesthood certain people were set apart to serve as representatives of the whole. This priesthood was divided in three levels: the highest level was reserved for the high priest Aaron who represented the people as a whole, the second level was reserved for his sons who fulfilled the office of priests and the third level consisted of the Levites who served in the sanctuary (cf. Bromiley et al. 1986: 877). The Levitical priesthood was reserved for the clan of Levi. This clan was given exclusive rights and responsibilities to function as mediators between the people of Israel and God. According to Alexander and Baker (2003: 651), the function of the Levitical priesthood was to create, maintain and re-establish the divine order by distinguishing between holy/common and clean/unclean. In line with Botterweck and Ringgren (1974: 66-70), they describe various roles that were assigned to the Levitical priesthood such as teaching and reading, boundary interpreters, purifiers, spokespeople for God, judges, participants in warfare, guards and tithe assessors and collectors (Alexander and Baker 2003: 651-654). These examples indicate that the priests played a significant role among the people of Israel. As Alexander and Baker write (2003: 654): “Through the priestly role, Israel saw that Yahweh’s graciousness was not limited to mighty historical acts. God had provided the means of removing the pollution, of purifying the unclean person and of restoring the divinely intended order. It was through the priesthood that this message of grace was mediated.” This dispersion of grace through the priesthood is something that later in history would be applied to the ministerial priesthood, as will be shown further on in this research. Malone (2017: 131-132) points out that the same question Muthiah (2009: 8-9) raised with regard to the priesthood in 1 Peter 2: 4-9, whether the priesthood refers to status, function or both, has been asked with reference to the people of Israel in the Old Testament. Although the first thought may be that a priest refers to one’s status within the community, Malone (2017: 130-131) points out that this should not lead to an abandonment of the functional and missiological commissioning of Israel. He provides six responses that would argue for a balance between status and function. One of these responses is that the Pentateuch gives ample evidence that Israel’s position as being holy before God requires a response to action: the holy priesthood needs to be lived out and Israel is called and commissioned to live in a way that reflects their status as priesthood.

A major change in the understanding of the priesthood came in the New Testament. The gospels show how Christ fulfilled all priestly roles and the book of Hebrews provides a clear portrait of Christ as the Great High Priest who made the Old Testament sacrificial system, including the priestly class, obsolete by becoming the ultimate sacrifice. Just as it was God who installed the Old Testament priesthood, Hebrews 5:5 states that it is God who appointed Jesus as High Priest. There is a pattern of God appointing priests and not men. According to the book of Hebrews Christ's priesthood is also permanent and He continues forever as High Priest. The New Testament provides clear evidence that the Levitical priesthood has made way for the church as a royal priesthood, also referred to as the priesthood of all believers.

This raises the question to what extent elements of the individual and collective priesthood as described in the Old Testament, continue or discontinue in the New Testament. Malone, who has studied the individual priesthood versus the collective priesthood under both the old and the new covenant, has drawn up the following diagram to show how these four elements interact with each other (2017: 182-184):

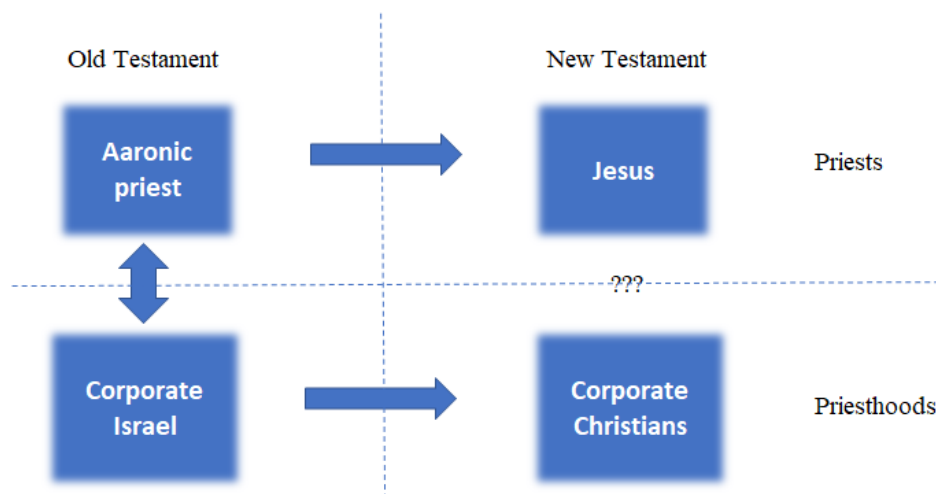


Figure 2.1

Malone (2017: 182) explains that the horizontal arrow in the top half of the diagram (from Aaronic priest to Jesus) is of a different order than the horizontal arrow in the bottom half of the diagram (from corporate Israel to corporate Christians). Where, in accordance with the book of Hebrews, the Aaronic priest under the old covenant has been superseded by Jesus under the new covenant, this is not the same for corporate Israel. The priestly identity of corporate Israel is not superseded by corporate Christians, rather it has been extended to include them as well. Where the top horizontal arrow therefore primarily represents a

discontinuity, the bottom horizontal arrow primarily represents a continuity. With regard to the vertical arrows Malone (2017: 144-146) points out that there is a strong intersection between Israel's corporate and individual priesthood (vertical arrow on the left): The failures of Israel's Levitical priesthood are related to the failures of Israel's corporate priestly functions and they influence each other and there is a mutual dependency. Malone (2017: 167-170, 181-184) is of the opinion that the same cannot be said for intersection between Jesus' priesthood and the priestly function of the corporate Christian. In his view Christ's priesthood is of a different order than the priesthood of believers. Achtemeier (1996: 157) in this context writes: "the attempt to find here a link between the priesthood of the community and Christ as High Priest, whereby the community is to participate in the priestly function of Christ, has no foothold in the letter itself; the only participation in Christ expressly mentioned in the letter is his suffering (2:21-25; 4:13), not in his priestly functions." What Malone seems to stress is that the status and function of corporate Christians are first and foremost derived from the status and function of Israel as a corporate priesthood, rather than from the priestly vocational ministry of Christ as a High Priest. Although there is a relationship between Christ's priestly function and that of the corporate Christians, it is not of the same nature and extent.

2.5 Definitions

Although in this research the term "priesthood of all believers" will be used, there are other conceptual terms referring to the same doctrine. Voss (2016: 3-10) distinguishes a total of eight terms which will now be discussed. Where the first four terms (chapter 2.5.1 – 2.5.4) can be used interchangeably, the second four terms (chapter 2.5.5 – 2.5.8) are not the same and can cause confusion. One of these confusing terms is the ministerial or ordained priesthood, which is an important term in the context of the ordination of women. It is for that reason that this term be discussed more elaborately than the other terms.

2.5.1 Royal priesthood

The term royal priesthood, according to Voss (2016: 4), captures best the biblical language. The term carries in it both a royal and a priestly aspect which are linked to Christ as the Priest-King. In Exodus 19:6 the people of Israel are being referred to as "a kingdom of priests" and the term "royal priesthood" is directly used in 1 Peter 2:9. Further references can be found in Revelation 1:6, 5:10 and 20:6.

2.5.2 Priesthood of the baptised

Felton (2000: 373, 374 and 379) is of the opinion that baptism is the ordination into the priesthood, a view that can be traced back to the early church father Tertullian around AD 220. The idea of baptism being the ordination of the laity can still be found in the orthodox tradition and it is for that reason that the term “priesthood of the baptized” is preferred in this tradition (cf. Voss 2016: 4-5). The strength of using this term lies in the fact that it does not allow for any distinction between ordained and non-ordained believers: every believer who has been baptised is ordained for ministry.

2.5.3 Priesthood of the faithful

This term can be found in Vatican II’s *Lumen Gentium*. It is the traditional Roman Catholic way of referring to the priesthood of all believers, although the term “priesthood of all believers” is now also commonly used in Roman Catholic circles (cf. Voss 2016: 5).

2.5.4 Priesthood of all believers

This term cannot directly be traced back to scriptures and even Luther, often associated with the doctrine, never referred to it as the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. The closest Luther comes to the priesthood of all believers is his reference to the doctrine as, “the general priesthood of all baptised believers” (cf. Voss 2016: 5-6). This term captures all of the above including other terms such as “royal priesthood of the faithful” and the “universal priesthood”.

2.5.5 Melchizedekian royal priesthood

Melchizedek is first mentioned in Genesis 14 where it says that Abram is blessed by Melchizedek, the king of Salem and priest of God most High (cf. Gn 14:18-19). It is also the first time that the word priest is used in the Bible. The next time Melchizedek is mentioned is in Psalm 110. This Psalm makes reference to a king who is also priest and points towards Christ’s royal priesthood. The Melchizedekian royal priesthood therefore refers to Christ and his office as Priest-King. The priesthood of all believers gets to share in this office of Christ as his seed and siblings (cf. Voss 2016: 7).

2.5.6 Levitical Priesthood

This term already briefly explained in chapter 2.4. With regard to the continuation of the Levitical priesthood major streams can be identified in the Catholic tradition (cf. Voss 2016: 8). The first stream, which is represented by, for example, Tertullian, Origen and Luther and forms a minority, sees all believers as priests and therefore the Levitical privileges and

responsibilities apply to all believers. The second stream, which is represented by the majority within the Catholic tradition, sees the Levitical priesthood as a basis for having a special caste within the Christian community with special priestly privileges and responsibilities. Important to mention in the context of this research is that the Levitical priesthood was restricted to men. For those that see the ministerial priesthood as a typological continuance of the Levitical priesthood, this is often used as an argument to prohibit women from being ordained and entering into the ministerial priesthood.

2.5.7 Natural priesthood, priests to creation and soul competency

The natural priesthood is frequently linked to Adam who, before the fall, served as a priest and king (cf. Anizor and Voss 2016: 26-30, Malone 2017: 53-54, Voss 2016: 9). This natural priesthood can be equated to soul competency which means that each believer is competent to stand before God without a mediator and it is seen as an important Baptist contribution to the church (cf. Muthiah 2009: 30). George (2009: 92) sees the distinction between the natural priesthood and the priesthood of all believers in the fact that the first has to do with a person's status and the second with a person's service. Voss (2016: 9) agrees with the distinction George makes, yet implies that the two cannot be completely separated. In reference to Bordeianu (2010) he writes (2016: 9): "...all humans are "priests of creation". If this is true for the natural priesthood, then it is doubly true for the members of the royal priesthood who through faith and baptism have been united with the royal and priestly ministry of Christ." He is of the opinion that a natural priesthood implies that every human will have to give account for his/her actions and therefore the distinction that George makes between status and service, in Voss' view, falls short.

2.5.8 The ministerial or ordained priesthood

The ministerial or ordained priesthood is common in Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions and refers to select groups within the total priesthood that have been set apart and have been ordained as priests, bishops or deacons (cf. Voss 2016: 9). Although the terms priest and bishop are not commonly used in the Protestant tradition, the Protestant denomination does have a similar practice whereby certain individuals are ordained into positions such as pastor, minister or deacon. This practice can also be found in many free churches such as Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal and charismatic churches.

Two important and related terms in the context of the ministerial priesthood are the terms "clergy", to refer to those that have been ordained into ministry, and "laity", to refer to the non-ordained believers. By using these terms, the priesthood of all believers is divided into a ministerial priesthood and a normal priesthood. The word laity comes from the Greek

word *laikos* which is related to the word *laos*. The word *laos* occurs a hundred and forty times in the New Testament and in general is used to refer to a “crowd”, “population” or “people” (ed. Kittel 1967: 51). The word was also used in the early church to refer to a crowd, people, nation and the community of believers (ed. Kittel 1967: 57). Although the exact meaning of the word *laos* is dependent on the context, in the New Testament it never refers to a group of non-ordained believers that is separate from a priestly class. In today’s language, the word laity often has negative connotations such as referring to amateurs or unqualified believers. The biblical use of the word is however filled with dignity and honour and refers to the believers as having been set apart by God (cf. Ogden 2003: 91-92).

The word “clergy” comes from the Greek word *kleros*. The basic meaning of the word is “lot” in the sense of “a lot which is drawn”. An example can be found in Acts 1:26 where the apostles draw a lot to choose a successor for Judas (ed. Kittel 1965: 758, 763). The word *kleros* in the New Testament in general means “the portion allotted to someone” and similar to the use in the Old Testament, refers to a portion that is given to someone by God (ed. Kittel 1965: 763). The word is also used in Colossians 1:12 where it is usually translated as “inheritance”. It is important to note that the word *kleros* in the New Testament is never used to refer to a separate group of believers or to a ministerial priesthood but, as Kraemer (1958: 62) writes, “In the New Testament the word *kleros* when it is used with regard to the new community in Christ is always meant as the body of men and women who share in God’s gift of redemption and glory, which is their “inheritance” (*kleros*), because they are incorporated in the Son. There is no glimmer of an idea of a definite body, called Clergy.”

As mentioned earlier a view that can still be found in among others in the Roman Catholic Church, is that the ministerial priesthood (clergy) is a continuation of the Levitical priesthood in the Old Testament. This view can be depicted as follows:

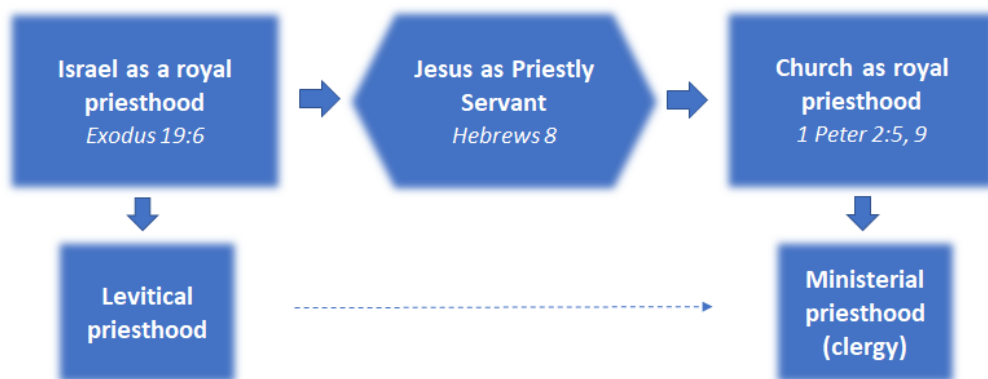


Figure 2.2

In a narrow interpretation the ministerial priesthood refers to the select group within the church that, in line with the picture shown above, has been set apart to fulfil a ministerial and priestly function on behalf of the whole congregation. This select group is seen as mediator between God and the people, to make God's will known to the people. In the wider sense of the word the ministerial priesthood refers to the priestly role that each believer is called to play. Such a view is in line with what Ogden (2003) presents in his book, "Unfinished Business: Returning the Ministry to the People of God". In this book he argues that all believers are called by God to minister. It is also the view that can be found in the document, "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" of the World Council of Churches, where the word ministry in the broadest sense is described as (1982: 17): "the service to which the whole people of God is called, whether as individuals, as a local community, or as the universal Church". Where in the traditional understanding of the ministerial priesthood women have often been excluded from entering this priesthood, it goes without further saying that a wider interpretation of the ministerial priesthood will have significant consequences on the debate around the ordination and role of women in the church and in leadership (cf. Bosch 2012: 483). Before investigating leadership within the priesthood of all believers, it is important to first investigate the purpose and ministry of the priesthood.

2.6 The purpose and ministry of the royal priesthood

It was already mentioned that the metaphor of the church as a royal priesthood is only one of the many metaphors the New Testament uses to refer to the church (cf. Minear 1960, Nel 2015: 27). Although each metaphor will have its specific focus on what the church is, given that it is a metaphor the conclusion must be that the purpose and ministry of the priesthood of all believers is directly related to the purpose and ministry of the church. But what is the purpose and ministry of the church as a priesthood? And who is responsible for achieving this purpose and fulfilling this ministry? Again, it is not possible in this research to do full justice to this topic. Many avenues will be left unexplored and many scholarly works will remain untouched. Moreover, those scholarly works that are referenced might be perceived by the reader as being dealt with superficially. However, as explained before, the purpose of this research is not to provide an in-depth study of the topics under consideration, but to find out if and how the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers has influenced the ordination of women on a practical theological level. This justifies a treatment of the purpose and ministry of the priesthood with very broad strokes of the pen. In the part of the study that follows, the purpose and ministry of the priesthood will be investigated, primarily from the context of 1 Peter 2:4-9. This will be followed by a brief exploration of the

building up of the church and the place of spiritual gifts in the church as described in Pauline passages such as Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12.

The purpose and ministry of the church has gained much attention in the last few decades. Where traditionally the purpose of the church was seen to be the fulfilling of the Great Commission, the focus has shifted from the church to God (cf. Linden 2016: 61). The concept of *Missio Dei*, which has found widespread acknowledgement among churches worldwide, implies that it is God who has a mission and who sends the church into the world to participate in and cooperate with Him in His mission. The church in this context is an instrument in God's hands (cf. Bosch 2012: 400, Guder and Barrett 1998: 4-5, Linden 2016: 61). The result of this is that, as Bosch (2012: 400) writes, "the primary purpose of the *missiones ecclesiae* can therefore not simply be the planting of churches or the saving of souls; rather, it has to be service to the mission Dei, representing God in and over against the world...". That the representation of God in and over against the world is a priestly function has already been shown and, in this context, can be seen as a continuance of the priestly function of the people of Israel. The metaphor of the church as a priesthood of all believers is therefore closely related to the *Missio Dei* and the role and status of the laity are of great importance in the missional church movement.

Based on 1 Peter 2: 4-5, Anizor and Voss (2016: 46-48) write that the apostle Peter mentions three keywords that provide further insight into the church as a priesthood. These words are (1) temple or spiritual house, (2) priesthood and (3) sacrifice. In the verses the apostle Peter compares the believers to living stones who are connected to Jesus, the true Living Stone. As living stones, the believers are being built into a spiritual house, which is an allusion to the temple and the priesthood. Because the church is made up of all believers, the building up of the believers into a spiritual house and holy priesthood as described in 1 Peter 2: 5 is therefore similar to the building up of the church, a topic that has been extensively written about in the last decades by among others Nel (2015). The fact that the believers are "being built into" implies that someone else does the building, which in this case is God Himself, who, together with and through the believers, builds the church (cf. Nel 2015: 15-16). The purpose of this building up according to 1 Peter 2:5 is that the believers are to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God. Anizor and Voss (2016: 47) mention that this primarily relates to the priestly witness of the believers in the world, both in word and deed, and write: "the holy priesthood is to live holy lives before God and the world (1 Pet 3:12), allow their good works to bring glory to God (1 Pet 2:12) and even use wordless good conduct as a means of winning unbelievers to Christ." They (2016: 48) find a further description of the purpose of the holy priesthood in 1 Peter 2:9 summarised as, "to walk in holiness and obedience while abounding in good deeds and

announcing the Lord's mighty works". In other words, the ministry of the priesthood of all believers is to worship and serve God and make Him known to those that do not yet know him. Such an interpretation of the ministry of the holy priesthood is, as was concluded before, similar to the ministry of the priesthood of the people of Israel, as described under chapter 1.2.2. It equates with the meaning of the Old Testament word for priest, *kohen*: someone who mediates between a deity and the people. As a priesthood, the church is to perform a priestly function in this world. The church is created by God and, although God can reach the world without the church, it is His preferred way of working in the world and exists to serve God, serve one another and serve the world (cf. Nel 2015: 66,71). This mediating role of the church between God and the world is also evident with Bosch (2012: 400) who, in reference to Schmitz, writes that the church, "stands in service of God's turning to the world". It is evident that such a view of the ministry of the church supports the wider interpretation of the ministerial priesthood as described in chapter 2.5.8. Instead of the ministerial priesthood only referring to a select group of believers who are set apart to do the work of ministry, this wider interpretation includes all believers and so becomes a synonym for the priesthood of all believers; all believers are called to minister and to fulfil their priestly role in their spheres of influence.

The priestly service is fulfilled by believers allowing God to minister to them and through them to the world. In doing so, the church is being built up. Nel (2015: 17) explains this by saying that building a church happens when the believers use their spiritual gifts and that the church is being built up when (1) believers fulfil their priestly service in the place God has called them, and (2) believers allow themselves to grow in this priestly function through receiving training and equipping. It is therefore through the ministry of the believers that God comes to His people and through them to the world (cf. Nel 2015: 68). For a long time in history this ministry was limited to what happened in the church. Kraemer (1958: 123-124) writes that right from the start the preaching of the Word, Baptism and the Lord's Supper have from the beginning been the essential marks of the church, with the notion that the Word had become corrupted and obscured from the rise of the Roman papacy until the Reformation. He concludes that these three marks are too narrow and that a wider scope is needed to align itself with the mission and purpose of the church. History has shown that a focus on just these three essential marks has led to the laity becoming passive objects in the church instead of active subjects; the ministry of the Word, baptisms and the Lord's Supper were reserved for specialised clergy and as such, not much ministry was left for the laity (cf. Kraemer 1958: 125). This required a broader scope which can be found for example with Nel (2015: 70-71). Acknowledging that traditionally the whole field of ministry

is divided into seven different areas, he has added an eighth element and distinguishes the following ministries in the church that each have the goal to serve the gospel:

1. Preaching (*kerugma*)
2. Worship (*leitourgia*)
3. Care (*paraclesis*)
4. Community (*koinonia*)
5. Teaching (*didache*)
6. Service (*diakonia*)
7. Witness (*marturia*)
8. Leading (*kubernesis*)

Although different lists of the ministries are available and not all theologians would agree on the exact wording of the list as provided above, for the purpose of this research it suffices to say that the ministry of the royal priesthood consists of a wide range of different ministries that are interrelated and are all needed to fulfil the priestly role the church is called to perform. The ministry of the church belongs to the whole people of God (cf. Ogden 2003). Two things need to be added to this. First, although the ministry of the church belongs to the whole people of God, this does not mean that all believers are to fulfil all the ministries. Instead, in line with the New Testament teachings, the church or priesthood is to function as a body in which each believer is assigned a specific place and function as God wills. Second, although the ministries are part of the church this does not mean that they need to take place within the church which usually centres on the Sunday morning service. The priestly role of the church to represent God to the world implies that every believer, as part of the priesthood, has a priestly role to fulfil and that all are called to exercise the ministries as defined above in every area of influence God has given them, both inside and outside the church.

Pauline passages such as 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 provide ample evidence that the place and function of the believer within the collective priesthood is determined by the spiritual gift(s) each believer is given. In practice other factors such as a believer's spiritual maturity, vocational or pastoral experience, education and gender, can also play a role and are at times given more significance than the spiritual gifts. The spiritual gifts, also called *charismata*, are given to every believer upon rebirth by the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Cor 12:7, Rm 12:3, Eph 4:7 and 1 Pt 4:10). Every believer receives one or more spiritual gifts and the Holy Spirit distributes them as He pleases, regardless of gender or spiritual maturity (cf. 1 Cor 12:7,11). Although the New Testament mentions various different gifts, it is generally agreed upon that these lists of spiritual gifts are not to be seen as limited and the gifts are not given to believers to keep for themselves, but to serve each other and to build up the

church (cf. 1 Cor 12:7). It is interesting to note that the Pauline passages in 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 are immediately followed by instructions on how these spiritual gifts are to be used: in a loving and serving attitude that is not focused on self but on the other members of the body and the body as a whole. This shows that the focus should never solely be on the gifts themselves but that the way in which the gifts are exercised and expressed is of equal or maybe even more importance.

An important question when it comes to spiritual gifts is whether these include the ministries mentioned in Ephesians 4:11. Although these ministries are called gifts, they are not referred to as *charismata* but to people within the church who have the task to equip the believers for the works of ministry (cf. Hawthorne et al. 1993: 339, 345). Some are of the view that these ministries need to be interpreted in terms of offices, but when seen in light of the other Pauline passages on *charismata*, it seems best to interpret them as functional ministries (Hawthorne et al. 1993: 345).

The image that arises from these Pauline passages is of the church as a well-oiled machine where every part is working harmoniously together with other parts, so that the whole functions well. Volf (1998: 231) mentions that the parts are interdependent which means that the life of the member of the church must be characterised by mutuality and a giving and receiving. He writes: "The church is not a club of universally gifted and for that reason self-sufficient charismatics, but rather a community of men and women whom the Spirit of God has endowed in a certain way for service to each other and to the world in anticipation of God's new creation." Leadership is an essential part of this way of service. Just because every believer is a priest does not mean that there is no place for leadership or church offices in the priesthood of all believers. Even Luther, who stressed that every believer shares an equal authority with regard to the Word and sacraments, did not rule out the church offices with the priesthood of all believers (cf. Althaus 1966: 323). The ministry of leadership, the church offices and leadership authority will be the focus of the next section of this chapter. This is also the part where the priesthood of all believers has the strongest link with the debate on the role of women, which centres round leadership authority.

2.7 The ministry of leadership in the priesthood of all believers

The ministry of leadership is (again) a topic on which much has been written. It remains important to highlight that in the context of this research it is not possible to do adequate justice to the topic. This part of the study aims to provide a high level overview of leadership in the church. This will be done by first providing some key characteristics of church leadership in the New Testament. This is not an exhaustive and detailed discussion of all the biblical passages dealing with church leadership, but merely an overview of some of

the major themes that can be identified. Given the influence of Luther on the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the significant part he played in revitalising the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, this part of the study will also include a brief treatment of Luther's view on the church offices. Finally, this part of the study will briefly touch on the traditional shepherd-teacher leadership model and the more recently introduced APEST leadership model, before continuing with the topic of leadership authority.

2.7.1 Characteristics of the ministry of leadership in the New Testament

Scholars in general agree that the New Testament does not provide a uniform normative pattern for the church and its leadership structure. Rather, the New Testament shows variety when it comes to how the church was organised (cf. Van der Leer 2014: 41-42). Where God in the Old Testament gave very precise descriptions of how the temple was to be built and how worship and priestly services should be performed, such precise instructions for church order and structure are lacking in the New Testament (cf. Fee 2005a: 242-243). Despite this, the New Testament gives ample evidence that the early church communities had leaders. It will not be denied that the apostles performed a leading role in the early church communities and in various Pauline passages references to overseers, elders and other leading figures in the early church communities can be found. But what kind of leadership was this and what was this leadership based on? This question will be answered by focusing on the *charismata* of leadership and the importance of servanthood leadership.

2.7.2 Charismata of leadership

It was highlighted previously that it is the whole priesthood that is responsible for the ministry of the church and that this ministry is primarily based on the *charismata* which are distributed by the Holy Spirit to believers as He decides. These gifts include leadership gifts, which implies that certain believers will be better equipped than others to provide (spiritual) leadership to the congregation. Traditionally, these leadership positions are also referred to as the ministerial offices, ordained offices or holy orders. The general view is that there are two offices that constitute church leadership in the New Testament: the office of elder/overseer and the office of deacon, which is usually considered a lay office (cf. Erickson 2013: 1000). It is interesting to note that the word office or church office cannot be traced back to the New Testament. How these offices are understood varies per church and denomination. The Roman Catholic Church for example has three levels of holy orders, namely bishop, priest and deacon, whereby the bishop is the one who stands in apostolic succession and can confer all the sacraments. In the Protestant tradition, the ministerial

offices are responsible for leading the worship service, proclaiming the word and administering the sacraments. Common offices in this denomination are those of minister, elders and deacons. The office of elder and deacon are also common in the Baptist tradition which is the tradition in which the empirical research will be conducted, although several other titles are used such as pastor, senior pastor, lead pastor, assistance pastor or reverend, all referring to the same office of elder/overseer. This in line with the general view that *presbuteros*, *episcopos* and *poimen* can be used interchangeably which means that all pastors are elders and all elders are pastors (cf. Erickson 2013: 1000, Piper 1999, Wellum and Wellum 2015: 70, Wring 2005: 191-192). Wring (2005: 191-192) adds to this that in his view each word bears its own nuance: the word elder (*presbuteros*) expresses the dignity of the office, bishop (*episcopos*) denotes the work the elder performed and pastor (*poimen*) describes the elder's function which involves his role as shepherd in guiding, feeding and protecting the church under his charge

The common Greek word for leadership in the New Testament is the word *prohistēmi*. It occurs eight times in the New Testament, all in the Pauline letters, and it is the word that the apostle Paul used in 1 Timothy and Titus when he gives the instructions for the overseers and elders. The word is ambiguous in Greek and can mean either, "to lead/manage/govern" or "to care for/help/give aid to" (cf. Hawthorne et al. 1993: 345, ed. Kittel 1968: 700-701). Based on the use of the word in the New Testament, the predominant meaning of the word is "to lead" and "to care", where the caring can be explained by the fact that in the early church the leaders were to care for the members (ed. Kittel 1968: 701). The word therefore indicates pastoral care, where the emphasis is not on a certain rank or authority, but on the leader's care for other believers (ed. Kittel 1968: 702). In many English Bible translations the word is translated as, "to manage" or "to rule" but the significance of caring as part of this managing and ruling should not be overlooked (ed. Kittel 1968: 703). The word is also used in Romans 12: 8 in the context of spiritual gifts which shows that there is a spiritual gift of leadership. Although some theologians would prefer an interpretation of *prohistēmi* in Romans 12:8 as "giving aid", in combination with other uses of the word in the New Testament, interpreting it as the exercise of leadership is more in line with the New Testament usage of the word (cf. Harrison and Hagner 2008: 188). Another word in the New Testament that can refer to leadership is the word *kubernesis*. The word is used in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and the literal meaning of the word is "to steer a ship". Set in the context of 1 Corinthians 12 where the apostle Paul teaches on spiritual gifts, the gift of *kubernesis* refers to believers who have been given the spiritual gift to act as the helmsman of the congregation and who are concerned with the order, direction and government of the life of the church (cf. ed. Kittel 1968: 1035-1036).

Both the word *prohistēmi* and the word *kubernesis* are used in the context of spiritual gifts and indicate that God gives certain people in the church the gift to govern, manage and rule the congregation. There are however no references in the New Testament that people with these gifts should be ordained into a church office or that church offices are to be limited to people with these gifts. As Carroll (2011: 66) writes: “Within the Pauline congregations there appear to have been differentiated roles based on spiritual gifts or charisms. These however were not formal offices.”

2.7.3 Servanthood leadership

The teaching that the apostle Paul gives on spiritual gifts and church leadership are encompassed by instructions on behaviour within the early church communities. The teaching on spiritual gifts in Romans 12:3-7 for example is immediately followed by a passage on the marks of a true Christian. Likewise, 1 Corinthians 12 is immediately followed by the well-known chapter 13 where Paul teaches that the exercising of spiritual gifts needs to be done within an attitude of love. There is common agreement among scholars that leadership in the New Testament is to be characterised by servanthood (cf. Nel 2015: 162). Such leadership involves the abandonment of self-cultivation, self-preservation and status (cf. Judge 2008: 111), a leadership ideal that the apostle Paul models in his life and reiterates in his writings by avoiding any notion of referring to himself as a leader. Instead, he frequently refers to himself as a servant to both Christ and the Church and uses words such as building and planting to refer to the manual labour of this service; labour that in his time was done by the lower classes in society. Judge (2008: 113) has found that in referring to the people the apostle Paul is working with, he never seems to be interested in their gender or social status. The apostle Paul refrains from using positions or titles and the use of the word leader and instead uses terms like fellow-workers, servants and ministers. Judge (2008: 113) writes: “Paul and his yokefellows work in bonds, not bonds to each other of course, but in the common bond of allegiance and service to Christ. So that the human relations escape the traps of superiority and inferiority by a total subjection of all to a common master who stands above all.” In a society that was built on the appropriate ordering of people according to power and status, of which the Roman patronage system was a prime example, the apostle Paul is presenting a model for the church where all believers are equal before God and where the highest calling is to abandon self and one’s status in order to serve Christ and others. It is in this context that the ministry of leadership needs to be understood and interpreted.

Nel (2015: 143-144), in writing on the ministry of leadership within the church, suggests speaking of leaders in ministry and service leaders rather than church offices and office

holders. He sees the ministry of leadership, just as all the other ministries in the church, as a gift from God to the church and writes (2015: 145-146): “every ministry receives its origin, directive, mandate and authority from Christ” and “All who serve – the minister, elders, deacons and catechists, etc. - are there to obey his (Christ) commands, to serve in his name and to make his words and deeds known.” Nel (2015: 145) rightly points out that there is only One who should lead and rule the church and that is Christ. The purpose of any other form of leadership in the church is therefore to ensure that Christ can exercise His rule and authority over the entire congregation.

2.7.4 Luther’s view on the church offices

Although Luther stressed the priesthood of all believers, he did not intend that there should no longer be church offices. On the contrary, Luther saw the church offices, also called the special offices, as essential and as a sign of the church’s presence (cf. Althaus 1966: 323). Luther described two main reasons for the need for church offices: one from below and one from above (cf. Althaus 1966: 323-324). The need from below arises from the church as a priesthood of believers. Although all believers are in equal standing in this priesthood and can minister the Word and sacraments, this does not mean that everyone should publicly preach and minister; that would only lead to chaos and confusion. Therefore, the church should set apart certain believers that can and will fulfil this function on behalf of the church. The need from above is instituted by Christ Himself. According to Ephesians 4:8-11, gifts are given to believers and God appointed some believers to be apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists and pastors. Luther therefore held to the view that it is God Himself who instituted that only certain believers should fulfil the office of preaching. Althaus (1966: 324) writes: “Luther without hesitation co-ordinates these two derivations of the office of ministry... He sees no contradiction in them.” In Luther’s view, the special offices were needed to maintain the order in the church and the main purpose of the offices was the ministering of the Word to the congregation. As he wrote: “*er sol die Geheimnisse Christ austeilen, das Evangelium lehren und die Kirche Gottes leiten*”⁶ (Abrahamse 2014: 130-131).

In Luther’s view, it is the congregation that calls certain believers to these special offices and, even though they all possess the same authority, delegates this authority to the special office bearer. What marks church offices as different is the public character of the office: those in ministerial offices minister on behalf of the entire church. However, only Christ

⁶ Freely translated by the researcher as, “the office holder will distribute the mysteries of Christ, teach the gospel and lead God’s church”.

ruled the church by means of the scriptures and therefore authority was only to be found in the scriptures, not in the offices (cf. Althaus 1966: 326-327). For this reason Luther was of the opinion that it would be better to speak of “servants” or “ministers” for the special office bearers, rather than of priests. The difference between the clergy and laity in Luther’s view is a difference in function, not a difference in person or authority since the church offices shared in the same content and authority as the rest of the priesthood of all believers.

With regard to ordination, which will be dealt with in the next chapter, Luther saw this as nothing more than a liturgical rite through which the special office bearer, the preacher of the gospel, is called. This call from God comes in two ways: first through an inner direct call from God and second through an outer indirect call from other believers. Luther mentioned that although the call is issued by the church, it is a call from Christ Himself (cf. Althaus 1966: 328-329, 332). The difference with the traditional pre-Reformation was a turn from seeing the offices as sacramental and representing Christ, to a functional understanding of the church offices where they were no longer seen as exclusive.

2.7.5 Shepherd-teachers and APEST

As brief as the treatment of the ministry of leadership in this research is, it cannot be completed without mention of the traditional model of shepherd-teachers and the more recently introduced APEST model. This term, already mentioned in chapter 2.1, refers to the ministries of Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd and Teacher and is based on Ephesians 4:11.

The traditional leadership model is that where the church is compared to a flock of sheep that is in need of a shepherd to lead, guide and protect them. Although Ephesians 4:11-12 states that beside shepherds, God also gives apostles, prophets, evangelists and teachers to build up the body of Christ, the traditional understanding has limited this ministry to that of preachers, pastors and teachers, which has resulted in the appointment of trained pastors whose primary role is to teach, preach and pastor (cf. Smitsdorff and Rinqest 2012: 42-43). This model is still taught in many seminaries and can be found in many pastoral handbooks. In this model, the pastor is the one who has been appointed by God to shepherd His flock, following the example of Jesus as the Great-Shepherd who gave his life for the sheep. It calls for a sacrificial and servanthood leadership where the pastor is intimately involved with his congregation to make sure that their (spiritual) needs are met.

In the context of the priesthood of all believers, the question can be asked to what extent this traditional model is helpful. In the priesthood of all believers all believers are equal in status and authority but differ in their God-ordained function in the body. This is different in the shepherd-teacher model. In this model, the shepherd, although he will move and live

among the sheep, is more than just a sheep with a different role; shepherd and sheep are of a different make and based on his function and position as shepherd, the shepherd has the authority and power to tell the sheep what to do. The traditional shepherd-teacher model therefore keeps the gap between clergy and laity intact: the clergy are seen as the professional leaders and the laity as the ignorant followers. A preacher's handbook on pastoral ministry, counselling and leadership by Adams (1980: 5-9), shows this clearly when it explains the need for pastors by referencing various scriptures that show that sheep are helpless, followers, likely to wander and stray and cannot survive without a shepherd to look after them and guide them.

There have been voices that plead for the transition of the word pastor from a noun to a verb so that, instead of the pastoral ministry being vested in the office of pastor, it becomes a function of the whole congregation (cf. Smitsdorff and Rinqest 2012: 40). This would do away with the traditional understanding of seeing the pastor as *the* shepherd of the congregation and give the ministry back to the whole people of God. Smitsdorff and Rinqest (2012: 40) point out that this would also change the role of the senior pastor from a shepherd who leads and guides and protects the flock, to a more equipping role where his/her primary task is to equip and encourage the congregation to assume their pastoral/shepherding role. In such a view all believers in the priesthood are seen as shepherds in their own right, who are being trained and equipped for this role by a more experienced/trained shepherd and who all share in a calling to bring in the lost sheep.

Missional church proponents such as Hirsch are of the opinion that for the church to become missional again and regain its place in society, the full spectrum of the APEST-roles needs to be put back on the church table and needs to replace the traditional shepherd-teacher model. Hirsch (2012: 21-22) sees these APEST-roles functioning at three levels: the gifting level, the ministry level and the leadership level. Although all believers are gifted and can for example operate in the prophetic gift, not all are called to be prophetic leaders. Likewise, being involved in a certain ministry does not make someone a leader. Hirsch sees a distinct role for APEST-leaders in the church where each is called to build and equip the church in their respective area so that the church as a whole will mature. All five roles need to be equally present at a leadership level to fully represent Christ and ensure that church leadership is balanced and does not become dysfunctional (cf. Hirsch and Catchim 2012: 48).

It is clear that the APEST leadership model is different from the traditional shepherd-teacher leadership model that is still present and followed in many churches and denominations, including the Baptist tradition. In the APEST model the focus is on a leadership team that equips and builds the church in the APEST ministries, whereas in the shepherd-teacher

model the primary focus is on looking after the needs of the sheep. Much more can be said about these models but the scope of this research does not allow for it. It will be clear that both models have consequences for the understanding of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and also how leadership authority needs to be interpreted. If the priesthood of all believers implies that both leaders and the congregation share in the same authority under Christ, does that mean that leadership in the church is to be without any leadership authority? This is the question that will be explored in the next section.

2.8 Leadership authority in the priesthood of all believers

2.8.1 Views on leadership authority

Leadership authority is a difficult term and there is often confusion over what it is and where exactly it resides. Some are of the opinion that a leader carries no authority. Parnell, (n.d.: 10-11) who is part of the Baptist tradition for example writes: “The Head of the Church (Christ) is alive and active and He will not share His authority with bishops, elders and deacons” and “Biblical Church Government is the government of the church by Jesus Christ Himself. Christ doesn’t delegate His authority to church officials”. Young (2011: 107) agrees with this and goes even further by stating that, “the insistence upon authority in pastoral leadership is contrary to the priesthood of all believers”. In reference to Truett he (Young 2011: 117) writes: “any human attempt, even in the name of Christ and the church, to stand between the individual soul and God is to the Baptist mind a ghastly tyranny in the realm of the soul and tends to frustrate the grace of God, to destroy the freedom of conscience, and terribly to hinder the coming of the Kingdom of God”. Pereira (2012: 85) is following the same line by saying that spiritual leadership is a servant-leadership that recognises that the authority of Christ is diffused by the Spirit throughout the body and is not located in those who led. Wellum and Wellum (2015: 70-71) are of a different opinion. They write that congregationalism does not negate the authority of pastors and elders as they lead the church. They recognise three spheres of authority in the church: (1) the authority of Christ, (2) the authority of the congregation and (3) the authority of the elders. The authority of the elders is in their view a divinely ordained authority given to gifted leaders who are called to lead the congregation in the context of a congregation that rules. The authority of the elders is therefore not a ruling in the sense that they can command the congregation what to do, rather their authority depends on what they call “pastoral persuasion”. Thomas (2003: 112-118) makes the same distinction between leadership and rule but leaves out any reference to the word authority. He defines church leadership as the process of imparting vision, managing people and keeping the local church on track. Church rule on the other hand is

the process of making decisions and enforcing it. In his view, God has gifted some to be in leadership and to fulfil the office of overseer/pastor/elder. It is their responsibility to lead and direct the church, not in the sense of being the chief sheep, but in the sense of being under shepherds under Christ. The congregation, by appointing elders and pastors, agrees to follow them because it is God's way of leading the church. Patterson (2006: 251-252) writes that the New Testament church government presents elders as church leaders with substantive, yet limited, authority. In her view, leaders are responsible for caring for people and this can only be done properly when their God-given authority is fully acknowledged.

Nel (2015: 164-165) is also of the opinion that leaders do carry authority, but in his view this authority does not lie in their person or status. He appears to follow the opinion of Towns and Wagner (whom he refers to) that leadership authority lies in and comes from the Word of God. To Nel, the most important question for congregational leadership is not where authority resides, but how leadership authority is understood and exercised.

The above demonstrates the struggle to define leadership authority in the church, especially in the context of a congregational form of church governance. The view where leaders carry no authority but are there to serve the congregation presents the danger that church leaders are not allowed to have any vision but are only there to do what the congregation asks them to do. In this view church leaders are the hired staff to make sure everything in the church happens as the congregation has decided. In the view where leaders do carry authority and provide leadership, the danger is present that the leaders run the show and the congregation becomes a passive consumer that blindly follows the leader and does as he commands. Both practices can be found in churches today.

2.8.2 Definition of authority

The Oxford English dictionary defines authority among others as (1) the power or right to give orders, make decisions and enforce obedience, (2) the right to act in a specified way, delegated from one person or organisation to another, (3) the power to influence action, opinion, or belief, for example based on one's recognised knowledge or scholarship, authoritative opinion or acknowledged expertise and, (4) the power to inspire belief in the truth of something; right to be believed; testimony, evidence (Oxford English dictionary). The word authority often has a negative connotation because there is inequality in power and there are undertones of suppression, control and dominance.

The New Testament has various Greek words that are translated in English as authority, the main ones being: *exousia*, *dunamis*, *authenteo*, *huperoche* and *katexousiazo*. The word that is most often used for authority is *exousia* which, including its derivatives, occurs more

than a hundred times in the New Testament. It is often translated in English as “authority” or “power”. The word *exousia* functions in at least four different ways (Danker et al. 2000: 352-353):

1. *Freedom/right of choice* – This is the freedom of a believer to make decisions without being hindered. This authority comes from God and is given to believers. For example, God gave Paul the *exousia* to preach (1 Corinthians 9:18) and believers have the *exousia* to eat and drink (1 Corinthians 9:4).
2. *Physical or mental power* – This refers to authority in the sense of having the ability or power to perform certain actions. For example, Jesus was given the *exousia* to forgive sins (Matthew 9:6-8) and in Matthew 28:18 says that He has been given all *exousia* in heaven and on earth.
3. *The power of authority and right* - This is an *exousia* that is given to someone to perform actions on behalf of the one who has given that authority. For example, in Matthew 21:23 Jesus is asked who had given him the *exousia* to teach. God also gave the apostles the *exousia* to build up the church (2 Corinthians 10:8). It is used to indicate a right to influence someone or something else.
4. *The power of rule or government* - This refers to a sphere in which the *exousia* is exercised. Examples are the *exousia* of Herod (Luke 23:7) and the command in Romans 13:1 that man is called to submit to the *exousia* (civil governments) that placed over him.

A more thorough analysis of each of the above words would be needed to do full justice to the use of the word authority in the New Testament. However, in reference to the church as the priesthood of all believers, it is especially the first and third meaning of *exousia* that stand out. The first meaning of the word, namely the power of choice, applies to every believer. Every believer as a priest stands under the direct authority of Christ and has been given the right and freedom by God to make choices and obey the commands of Christ in his/her life without being hindered. This is based on for example 1 Corinthians 6:19b where the apostle Paul writes: “you are not your own, for you were bought at a price”. This indicates that every believer belongs to God and that the right to exercise authority over his or her own life is therefore given by God. Referring back to the definitions of the priesthood in chapter 1.4, this type of authority is part of the natural priesthood of every believer. The third type of authority is relevant for the ministerial and priestly role of all believers. It is the right someone has to act on behalf of someone else. In the context of church ministry this right is given to a person by God and by the congregation; it is an authority relationship between God, the believer and other believers in the body which allows them to exercise their gifts and minister to each other and unto God. The difference between servant leaders

and the rest of the congregation, in line with Luther's view, lies in the domain in which this authority is exercised. For office holders, their given authority stretches over the entire congregation whereas for the other believers, this domain of authority is different. As Volf (1998: 247) writes: "...the particular task of officeholders consists in being "publicly responsible for the concerns common to all Christians". This involves not only representing the congregation, but also serving the congregation as congregation; it involves not only acting in the name of the congregation before God, individual members of the congregation, or the world, but also acting in the name of Christ before the congregation as a whole."

2.8.3 Criteria for leadership authority

Carroll (2011: 1-2), agreeing that no community can function without some form of leadership, defines authority as follows: "The authority to lead is the right to do so in a particular group or institution, based upon a combination of qualities, characteristics, or expertise that the leader has or that followers believe their leader has. To exercise authority involves influencing, coordinating, or otherwise guiding the thoughts and behaviour of persons and groups in ways that they consider legitimate." In this definition, in line with what was said before, authority is linked to a right to lead and can therefore never be forced. The difference between leading with and without authority is determined by whether or not the followers have given the leader the right to lead them. Further on Carroll writes (2011: 26-27): "authority is legitimate power" and "to have authority is to use power in ways that a congregation or church body recognizes as legitimate, as consonant with and contributing to the basic beliefs and purposes of the church."

In order to give further meaning to what makes followers give a leader authority, Carroll makes a distinction between what he calls (1) ultimate/primary authority and (2) penultimate/secondary authority (2011: 32-45). The first type of authority is related to the sacred: to God and how He reveals and has revealed Himself in history. Leaders who carry and model the church's core beliefs about God, will be given authority to lead. The second type of authority refers to more specific reasons for believers to give authority to their leaders. Although there are a multitude of secondary sources of authority, Carroll (2011: 35-36) focuses on two sources that are distinct, yet not mutually exclusive and that can even be in tension with each other. The first secondary source of authority (see Carroll 2011: 37-40) is given when the leader is believed to have a special relationship to God. In practice this is often expressed in the leader having sensed a so called inward call from God. The selection of leaders in churches where the primary focus is on calling is, according to Carroll, not based on formal credentials and training but on the person's commitment to God, his/her vision for the church and manifestation of a Spirit-filled life. The

second secondary source of authority (see Carroll 2011: 40-41) is given when the leader can show that he/she has the knowledge and expertise that is necessary to lead the church, for example by having completed formal seminary training. Many modern-day professions are based on whether someone has the required knowledge and expertise.

According to Carroll (2011: 45), a church will grant its leader authority to lead when she believes that he/she represents, interprets and demonstrates the churches' core values and beliefs, has an inner call to accept this leadership position and has the necessary knowledge and expertise. Carroll does not mention spiritual gifts as a criterion for authority, although this might be included in his understanding of the word expertise. He (see Carroll 2011: 45-47) makes a distinction between authority derived from office and authority derived from person. Authority derived from office can be seen in for example the Catholic tradition. In this tradition it is believed that when a person enters an office, he/she is given authority by the laying on of hands. Authority in this situation is directly linked to entering the office. Authority derived from the person is when authority is given based on someone's personal qualities or attributes. In this instance authority is not based on office, but on the trust in the leader. Carroll (2011: 49) comes with the following figure representing the different conceptions of authority:

	<i>Official Authority</i>	<i>Personal authority</i>
<i>Representing the sacred</i>	A Sacramental/ Priestly	B Personal Piety/ Spirituality
<i>Expertise</i>	C Certified Competence	D Demonstrated competence

Figure 2.3

In recent decades there has been a shift towards the congregational form of church governance with an increased focus on the involvement of the laity. Carroll (2011: 51) points out that in the context of leadership this gives an increased weight to the leader's personal authority and writes: "Authority may reside in a position, but unless the person who occupies that position can act legitimately and effectively in the eyes of those around

him, he is not viewed as a leader. It seems that in this model the more a leader occupies each of the squares, the more authority will be given to him/her.

Ogden (2003: 189-190) is of the opinion that leadership positions are always preceded by function. He writes: "The biblical pattern is that a person demonstrates leadership gifts in practice before officially holding a leadership office. Office does not create authority but is the result of authority in evidence." Ogden (2003: 190), based on his interpretation of the New Testament teachings, provides the following formula for leadership authority:

(1) Gifts/Call (Recognition) + (2) Character of Christ = Authority (Leadership)

The formula shows that leadership authority is based on the recognition by the body of believers of the spiritual gifts and call of a person, combined with the person's display of Christ-likeness. Ogden (2003: 190) is of the opinion that when both are present, the church will make room for that person to minister to the body and allow him/her to fulfil a leadership position or office. This immediately shows the danger of current-day practices in churches where pastors are called from outside the church. Although the call process can be performed carefully, the congregation will only be able to really assess the spiritual gifts and character of the leader once he/she has accepted the leadership position. It seems that in these instances the congregation gives the leader authority because of the office he/she has accepted. Authority at first lies in position and only later on, when the pastor starts his/her work in the congregation, will this authority shift to the person. Taking this into consideration, Ogden's model seems to promote a raising up of leaders from within the congregation.

Based on Carroll's and Ogden's work as presented above, the following criteria for leadership authority can be distinguished:

1. Christ like character / spiritual maturity
2. Inner calling
3. Theological training and vocational equipping
4. The person's spiritual gifts / spiritual gift mix
5. The extent to which the leader shares the core beliefs and values of the congregation

These criteria leave room for both a hierarchical structuring of the church where the leaders stand "above" the congregation and a more horizontally structured church where the leaders stand "among" the congregation or perhaps even "under" the congregation. In this context it is also worth distinguishing between what Carroll (2011: 53) calls asymmetrical and symmetrical authority. In asymmetrical authority (see Carroll 2011: 53-63) there is an unequal division of power between parties. This has traditionally been the case with the

clergy and the laity. Through ordination the clergy were set apart from the laity and gained authority over the laity. Asymmetrical authority is also what is implied in the shepherd-teacher model that was discussed earlier: in fulfilling the shepherd function, the shepherd stands in authority over the sheep and has the power to make them do what he wants them to do, which should be in their own interest.

In symmetrical authority (see Carroll 2011: 63-66) on the other hand, everyone has equal access to power and everyone has an equal right to exercise this power. This type of authority is not common and, as Carroll (2011: 65) mentions, whenever leadership roles are formalised there is a tendency to move away from symmetrical authority. In churches where the leadership roles are seen as functional instead of a positional, symmetrical authority has room to exist. In such churches the focus is on communion instead of institution and each member exist to serve the others, under the direct headship of Christ. Carroll (2011: 65-66) explains that this is the type of leadership the apostle Paul envisioned, despite being strongly influenced by the patriarchal culture of his time which was hierarchically structured. All Christians, including those with leadership roles, shared equally in the spiritual gifts and in the power of the gospel that God gives to all through the Holy Spirit. Symmetrical authoritative leadership is the type of leadership where the clergy lead in cooperation with the laity, each from his or her own place of calling, gifting, expertise and spiritual maturity and where, under the authority of Christ, the body as a whole is able to perform its priestly function without there being any subheads.

Based on these interpretations of leadership authority and in order to address some of the urgent challenges the church is facing, Carroll (2011: 71) proposes a reinterpretation of pastoral authority as *reflective leadership*. This type of leadership is modelled after the life and work of Christ who called people into a new relationship with God (meaning) and with each other (belonging), and who empowered people to share in his ministry (empowerment). Carroll (2011: 76, 81) writes that the church likewise is called to be a community where people find meaning and belonging and are empowered to live as God's ambassadors to the world. A community where all, both clergy and laity, have an important part to play. The difference between clergy and laity, as has been pointed out, in this model lies in function where the clergy's primary locus of ministry is the gathered community and the laity's primary locus of ministry lies outside the church. In this model, both clergy and laity have the same access to the power of God which is the basis for their authority. The reflective model of leadership that Carroll proposes is where the clergy are open to having their authority questioned: they are able to reflect on their actions and adjust and adapt where needed and include the congregation in this process. As he writes (2011: 125): "Pastors agree to use their particular knowledge and experience for the good of the

congregation or individual member. They treat the laity not as dependent clients, but as people who bring their own gifts, insights, resources, and reflective capacities to the setting. They make themselves vulnerable to the congregation's questioning and critique, and they are willing to reflect publicly on the meaning of their counsel and advice" and "...the reflective leader has substituted the typically asymmetrical authority relationships for which the professional model has been criticized for a relatively symmetrical model where there is considerable mutuality and sharing in the resolution of the messy issues of practice." It goes without saying that such leadership requires more than making sure the leader has certain qualifications and degrees.

2.9 Summary

In this first part of the theoretical framework the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers has been explored. It has been shown that the priesthood is a major theme in the scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation. The chapter highlighted that where in the Old Testament God-ordained a special priesthood within the people of Israel, this came to an end through the redemptive work of Christ. The New Testament only knows one priesthood and does not support a distinction between a normal and ministerial priesthood, also referred to as clergy and laity. The historical development of the doctrine showed that the early church followed this view until the third century when Cyprian divided the priesthood of all believers into a normal priesthood and a ministerial priesthood whereby it was believed that the ministerial priesthood was given special powers and acted in the same authority over the congregation as Christ. This situation continued until the time of the Reformation when Luther (re)discovered the priesthood of all believers and the sacramental view on the church offices was, in the Protestant tradition, replaced by a more functional view on the church offices.

The chapter then showed that although the entire priestly ministry belongs to the entire priesthood, this does not mean that each believer is to fulfil all ministries. Rather, the place and function for each believer is to be based on their God-given gifts and calling. This part of the study then zoomed in on the ministry of leadership within the priesthood of all believers. In line with Luther's view, the priesthood of all believers does not exclude or clash with leadership positions in the church. Based on the Pauline writings it was shown that the spiritual gift of leadership and servanthood leadership are important biblical concepts for modelling church leadership. Two leadership models were highlighted, both based on Ephesians 4:11: the traditional shepherd-teacher model and the APEST model. The question was asked whether the first model is helpful when interpreted in the context of the priesthood of all believers. The last part of the chapter focused on leadership authority. It

became clear that this is a difficult concept especially in the context of a congregational form of church leadership. Carroll's work on leadership authority was shown to be very helpful because it provides a model for leadership authority that does not clash with a congregational form of church governance or with the priesthood of all believers. Symmetrical authority and a reflective form of leadership authority were important aspects in this context.

The process through which church leaders enter into a leadership position or office in the church is commonly referred to as ordination. Traditionally this process was reserved for only men and this is still the practice in many churches today. The ordination of women in the church, including the role of women in church leadership, will be dealt with in the next chapter which forms the second part of the theoretical framework for this research.

3 The ordination of women

3.1 Aim of the chapter

The aim of this chapter is to provide the second part of the theoretical framework for the empirical research. The problem statement in chapter 1 was formulated as follows:

Is the church's view on the ordination of women into church leadership influenced by how the church understands and implements the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers?

In the problem statement two key concepts were identified, the first being the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the second being the ordination of women. The first concept was discussed in chapter two. The aim of this chapter is to explore the second concept, the ordination of women. This will be done by:

1. Introducing the topic and highlighting why the ordination of women is such a widely debated topic.
2. Discussing different views on the practice of ordination and providing a brief overview of the historical development of the practice of ordination in the church.
3. Discussing and evaluating the scriptures that are frequently used to support a doctrine of ordination.
4. Defining the gender debate and discussing and evaluating the key scriptures and arguments that are commonly used in this debate.
5. Evaluating the ordination of women in the light of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, as discussed in chapter 2.

The areas mentioned above are broad and widely researched. As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the aim of this research is not to provide an in-depth theological discussion of each of the topics under consideration. Instead, the aim is to provide a theoretical framework that provides a sound basis for the empirical research which focuses on the relationship between the priesthood of all believers and the ordination of women. It should therefore again be noted that what follows will in no way do full justice to all that has been written and said on the ordination of women, especially from a biblical theological perspective. Many avenues will remain unexplored and rather than going deep, the topics will be discussed with broad strokes of the pen that aim to provide sufficient insight in each topic, without getting lost in the details.

In the introduction to this chapter the term ordination will be explained and some important questions regarding ordination will be highlighted. This will be followed by an examination

of the ordination of women. It will be demonstrated that the ordination of women is a debate that mainly started in the twentieth century and that it is a practice on which many denominations disagree. To show the extent and complexity of the issues underlying the ordination of women, seven main areas will be highlighted that the Faith and Order Committee, a committee of the World Council of Churches that seeks unity among churches, identified as part of a study among different churches of different denominations.

Different views on ordination and an overview of the historical development of the practice of ordination will be discussed in chapters 3.3 and 3.4. For the historical development of the practice of ordination, the work of Ferguson (1960, 1961) will, among others, be used. He has explored the practice of ordination from the early church till the fourth century. The purpose of this part is to show how the practice of ordination is directly linked to the institutionalising of the church and how there are similar developments with what was discussed in chapter 2.3 on the development of the priesthood of all believers. This part will be kept relatively short and will present only the key views and developments related to the practice of ordination. For a more detailed historical overview, more detailed studies done in this area are readily available. .

In chapter 3.5 the scriptures frequently used to support a practice of ordination will be examined. It is again important to stress that this is not a full biblical theological examination; the purpose and limitations of this research do not require nor allow space for this. The focus will be on those key passages in the Old and New Testament that are commonly referred to in the context of ordination, and on different scholarly views on these passages. For a more in-depth analysis of these passages or a full biblical theology of ordination, readers are advised to consult other scholarly works.

In chapter 3.6 the practice of ordination will be placed in the context of gender. The chapter will start by defining the gender debate and the opposing views in this debate. The key arguments that support a universal functional submission of women to men will then be further discussed; this includes the use of the word *kephalē* and Pauline passages in 1 Corinthians 11:1-16, Ephesians 5:21-33, 1 Timothy 2:8-15 and Galatians 3:26-29. Again, this will not be a full (biblical) theological discussion. For each key item, it will be explained what the issue is about and various scholarly views will be presented. Acknowledging the wide variety of works available on this topic, in the context of this research the discussion will be kept to a high level so not to get lost in the exegetical issues of the Pauline passages that are key in the debate on gender in the church. Other arguments used by complementarians to support their view, such as the maleness of the apostles, a divinely ordained male authority in the creation account and an eternal functional subordination in the Trinity, will be briefly touched on at the end of this chapter.

3.2 Introduction

Ordination is a common term in ecclesiology and refers to the practice whereby certain believers are set apart for special service in the church, such as in the role of priest, bishop or pastor. The term ordination comes from the Latin word *ordinare*. The root of the word is *ordo* which means order, class or rank, and the act of ordination therefore in the general sense refers to an arrangement into orders, ranks or classes (Bromiley et al. 1986: 840, Oxford English dictionary). In an ecclesiastic context, the exact form and meaning of ordination is subject to different interpretations which makes the term complex and a willing topic for theological debate (cf. Bromiley et al. 1986: 839-840, Hinson 1981: 485). Differences in interpretation centre round questions such as: What is the purpose of ordination? What happens during the act or ordination? Who should be ordained? Who has the task of ordaining? And, is ordination for a lifetime or only for a specific and limited time period? How ordination is understood is directly linked to one's view on the priesthood of all believers and, as part of that, the ministry of leadership and the church offices. Volf (1998: 221) affirms this when he writes: "an entire ecclesiology is always reflected in a certain understanding of office, that is, of what officeholders are to do in the church and how they are to become officeholders." The becoming of office holders is what is commonly referred to as ordination.

Part of the question, "who should be ordained" is whether this includes women. The ordination of women is a twenty-century debate that primarily focuses on the ordination of women into church offices or positions where they have the authority to minister the Word and sacrament (cf. Bromiley et al. 1986: 847). Dependent on the church denomination, this refers to ordination into positions such as bishop, priest, reverend, minister, pastor or elder. The first woman ever ordained was in a Congregational Church in the United States of America in 1853 (cf. Bromiley et al. 1986: 847). Until then women had been restricted from being ordained, mainly because of the tradition of apostolic succession: because Christ only appointed twelve *male* apostles, the Catholic Church believed that in order to not break the unity and catholicity of the church, ordination should be restricted to men (cf. Bromiley et al. 1986: 847). After the first ordination of a woman, more women followed and by the end of the nineteenth century women in the United States of America had been ordained in churches such as the Disciples of Christ, the Methodist Protestant Church, some Baptist churches and the Congregational church (cf. Bromiley et al. 1986: 847). In the United Kingdom the first woman was ordained in 1917, also in a Congregational Church. As of then, more countries followed and it became more accepted that women could be ordained in the church. Most Anglican churches today ordain women into positions of deacon, priest and increasingly bishops. The Roman Catholic Church still holds to the view that women

should not be ordained. This view can also be found in other churches such as the Pentecostal, Evangelical, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches (cf. Bromiley et al. 1986: 847).

In the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (hereafter: NGK) in South Africa the ordination of women was tabled at the general meeting in October 1990 (Sinode van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk 1990). Based on the report of an ad hoc committee, the Synod concluded that according to the scriptures there was no hierarchical relationship between the church offices and the congregation, nor between church offices such as that of deacon, pastor or elder. The Synod also concluded that the authority of the office of pastor or elder⁷, according to the Synod, did not lie in a person but in Christ so that even if the scriptures would teach that women are to be submissive to men, this would not mean that women could not fulfil the office of pastor or elder. Acknowledging differences of opinion in the NGK on the issue, the Synod was of the opinion that “*by die lig wat hy tans het, dat die oorwig van getuienis daarop dui dat die Bybel nie toelating van die vrou tot die leer en regeeramp uitdruklik verbied nie*”⁸. Based on this view, the Synod opened the way for women to be ordained into the office of pastor or elder and placed women and men on an equal level in the ministry of the church, although it was up to the local churches to decide how to implement this. It is not surprising that even after the Synod opened the way for women, it took considerable time and effort to implement this new “rule” in church practice.

The situation within the Baptist Union of South Africa (BUSA) was already highlighted in chapter 1. It was shown that the topic was (again) tabled at the 2016 Assembly and that the BUSA refrained from taking a stand on the issue of the ordination of women, given the differences of opinion in the associated churches and the fear of disunity within the Baptist Union.

A more global development on the ordination of women can be seen with the World Council of Churches. The Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches is assigned with the task to promote unity between churches by using their theological expertise to deal with theological questions that currently divide churches. Since its first world conference in 1927, the topic of the ordination of women has been on the agenda, although it was not until the founding of the World Council of Churches in 1948 in Amsterdam, that the topic would again be raised (cf. Parvey 1980: 22). At the 1974 meeting

⁷ Referred to in the report as among others “*die ampte van predikant en ouderling*”.

⁸ Freely translated by researcher as, “in light of what the Synod currently knows, the Synod is of the opinion that the majority of biblical evidence does not prohibit women from fulfilling the role of pastor or elder in the church”.

of the Faith and Order Commission in Accra in Ghana, a Community of Women and Men in the Church Study was recommended. This Community of Women and Men in the Church was a programme of the World Council of Churches that, as part of the Faith and Order Commission and in cooperation with the Sub-unit on Women in Church and Society, studies among others the Ordination of Women in Ecumenical Perspective. In 1979 the Community of Women and Men in the Church Study of the World Council of Churches held a consultation in France called, "Ordination of Women in Ecumenical Perspective" where the participants represented Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican, Old Catholic and Roman Catholic churches. As a result of this consultation, the Faith and Order Committee issued a paper in 1980 called "Ordination of Women in Ecumenical Perspective – workbook for the Church's Future" (Parvey 1980).

Among the churches present at the consultation, different positions on the ordination of women could be found (see Parvey 1980: 7-10). There were those that promoted the ordination of women, those that were against the ordination of women and those that had not yet decided or were still in the process of finding out what they believed the correct position on the issue should be. Interestingly enough, during the consultation meetings it became clear that in many churches women were participating in many areas of ministry that according to the established models were not open to them and many churches were therefore forming new models to meet practical needs (see Parvey 1980: 10-11). With the goal of seeking unity between churches, the Commission was aware that any unity on the issue of the ordination of women would have to start with the acknowledgement of the full humanity of women (see Parvey 1980: 21), something that until the nineteenth century was not a widely held belief as will be shown later in this chapter. Based on the meetings, the Commission identified seven main areas in the debate on the ordination of women (see Parvey 1980: 29-38). A brief overview of these areas will be given to show the extent of the debate on the ordination of women and of the role of women in the church in general:

1. Biblical hermeneutics and anthropology (see Parvey 1980: 29-31). This area evolves around the question whether the scriptures teach that God issued a universal principle in which women are to be subordinate to men. Where both sides in the debate (for and against the ordination of women) claim to hold to the authority of the scriptures, they differ in how they interpret the key scriptures that deal with the role of women in marriage and in the church. Related to this is how man and woman are viewed in the image of God: does being made in the image of God only refer to gender equality in essence and being, or also to gender equality in roles and functions?

2. Diversity of ministries and priesthood (see Parvey 1980: 31-32). The Commission found that although churches agree that there is a need for a variety of church ministries, they differ in their view on how these ministries need to be ordered and structured. Where churches tend to agree that both men and women are equally gifted for ministry, they differ in their interpretation and practice of the priesthood of all believers. The main question in this context centres on the representative role of the priest: Is the ordained acting *in persona ecclesiae* or *in persona Christi*? Churches that see the ordained as acting *in persona ecclesiae* in general favour a priesthood that is both male and female, in order to represent the community of believers. Many churches that see the ordained as acting *in persona Christi* tend to hold to a male priesthood, based on the belief that Christ is the head of the church and that He is male.
3. The nature of women and its implications for the roles of men and women in the church (see Parvey 1980: 33-34). This area in the debate focuses on men and women made in the image of God and what the implications of this are. Some churches are of the opinion that the equal giftedness of men and women implies an interdependence and that there are no role distinctions. Other churches hold to complementarity whereby God gave different roles to men and women, based on their gender. In this view men are seen to be more suitable for the role of priest and leader and women more suitable for the role of mother and helper.
4. The influence of society and community (see Parvey 1980: 34-35). Science has had a great influence on reflections on the nature of men and women and has challenged the traditional view where women were seen as being complementary and supportive to men because they were weaker and lacked the ability to reason. New life styles and marriage and work relationships today enforce new reflections on traditional role models in marriage, society and church. The ordination of women is also seen to be a matter of justice for women and a sign of God's present and future reign. In many churches, masculine powers still control the symbols, rites, sacred acts and teaching offices and women are primarily receivers, responders and implementers of male power and decision making.
5. Contemporary pastoral practices (see Parvey 1980: 35-36). In many parts of the world there are not enough male pastors or priests available. This fact is then used as an argument for the ordination of women. It is a confirmation of the fact that much of the ministerial work in reality is already being done by women. Another pastoral consideration is that in order to be a more healing church for women, pastoral leadership needs to become more sensitive to women's needs and therefore include both genders. A third contemporary practice that the Commission identified

in this area was that many women are already taking and assuming positions in the church where they are deeply engaged in ministry and are in positions of authority. It seems illogical that women, although being allowed to hear people's confessions, then have to wait for a priest to come in to give absolution for sins.

6. Tradition and the challenge of responsibility and renewal (see Parvey 1980: 36-37). Some churches see the ordination of women as a sign of the Holy Spirit's renewal in the church. The voice of tradition is however strong and there is no precedent for the ordination of women. The Commission found that the context in which the church finds itself also influences how the church views the ordination of women.
7. Unity (see Parvey 1980: 37). Some believe that allowing women to be ordained, threatens the unity of the church. Others argue that unless women are fully included in all areas and level of ministry, the church is committing an act of disunity against human kind.

These seven areas show the extent of the debate on the ordination of women and that it is wider than just the interpretation of Scripture. As the Commission found, the voice of tradition is firm and has dominated the practice of ordination for many decades.

3.3 Views on ordination

A first distinction of views on ordination can be found with Bromiley et al. (1986: 841-842) who distinguishes four main juridical views on ordination, which will be discussed in what follows. The difference between these views lies in where the power to ordain lies, a topic that is related to ecclesiology, more particularly the congregational structures and the place and view of the church offices within these structures. Bromiley et al. (1986: 841-842) describe the four views as follows:

1. Enfeoffment. Enfeoffment refers to the medieval feudal system where someone was given land in exchange for service. In this view, ordination is the conferring of power upon the ordained by an *ordinator* in whom authority to ordain is vested by God Himself. Through this ordination, the ordained is given admission into a church order and can become an *ordinator* himself. This view has been the dominant view on ordination from about the fourth century until the time of the Reformation. It can still be found in denominations such as the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church.
2. Delegation. In this view the whole congregation holds the power to ordain. Ordination in this view is understood as the act through which the congregation assigns certain tasks and functions to the ordained, together with the power or

- authority to fulfil these on her behalf. This view can be found in many Congregationalist churches such as in the Baptist tradition.
3. Recognition. This view holds that a person's calling to ministry, including the power and authority to do this, is given by God. Ordination is no more than a public recognition of the ministry God has given to the ordained. This view leaves room for all believers to be ordained since all have a ministry to fulfil. The view can be found in for example the Pentecostal churches and also again in the Baptist tradition.
 4. Calling of the church. In this view ordination is seen as the act by which the church calls and empowers certain believers to administer the sacraments to them. The view has been dominant in the Reformed tradition and in Lutheran-Melanchthonian churches. The whole ordination or calling process, consists of (1) the selection of a candidate to lead the church, (2) assessing and seeking confirmation whether or not this person is capable and suitable, and (3) the ordination or installation of this person in the church.

A second distinction of views on ordination is that between instrumental and expressive ordination (Bromiley et al. 1986: 843). In the instrumental view of ordination it is believed that by the laying on of hands and through prayer, special gifts are given by the Holy Spirit to the ordained which make the ordained a gift to the church for life. In the expressive view of ordination, it is believed that the ordination does not add anything to the ordained, but that the act of ordination shows the recognition of the church that the ordained is given a specific task or function within the church.

A third distinction of ordination is that between absolute and relative ordination (Bromiley et al. 1986: 845). Absolute ordination means that the person who is being ordained, is ordained for life. It is a once and for all ordination into the offices of bishop, priest or deacon, even if the ordained would step down from such an office. This in contrast to relative ordination where ordination is linked to a specific assignment. In the expressive view on ordination, every time the believer takes up a different assignment, for example a ministry in a different parish, the person needs to be ordained again

3.4 Historic development of the practice of ordination

The development of the practice of ordination is directly linked to the institutionalisation of the church which led to the separation of clergy and laity under Cyprian in the third century, as already discussed in chapter 2.3. It was also Cyprian who, by speaking about the *ordines* and the *plebs*, contributed to the understanding of ordination as the way into an *ordo*, a class that was seen as distinct and superior to the *plebs* (Suggit 1978: 36). Ordination became the practice that separated clergy from the laity and even further divided the clergy

into separate classes (cf. Hinson 1981: 485). By the fourth century, the word *cheirotein*, which in the Greek New Testament was used in the sense of electing and appointing believers for specific tasks or ministries (cf. Bromiley et al. 1986: 840), was used primarily to refer to the installation and formal appointment of believers into the church orders (cf. Ferguson 1961: 27).

Early historical evidence of the ordination rite can be found in the Apostolic Tradition by Hippolytus around the beginning of the third century (cf. Bromiley et al. 1986: 843, Hinson 1981: 487-488, St Amant 1988: 6). The rite described by Hippolytus included among others the laying on of hands by the appropriate persons and a prayer of consecration by one of the bishops. Although the whole people were involved in selecting candidates for ordination, the actual ordination could only be done by a bishop to safeguard apostolic succession. Ferguson (1961: 24-26) distinguishes the following four important elements of ordination towards the end of the fourth century: (1) the election of the ordained by the people as an act of the divine will, (2) the ratification by the clergy, (3) the laying on of hands by the bishop(s) in combination with prayers and (4) an inaugural usurpation. By the fourth century the separation of the priesthood of all believers in clergy and laity and the practice of ordination as the way to be admitted into the order of the clergy were firmly established in the church. However, where at first the divine election of the ordained was seen as a task of the whole people, by the fourth century this divine selection was carried out by (specific) clergy (Ferguson 1961: 26).

It is important to note another significant shift in the practice of ordination during the first centuries of the church. Where in the early church the appointment or ordination of certain believers implied that they took on new responsibilities and were appointed to fulfil a certain ministry task, by the middle of the third century it was believed that through the act of ordination the gift of the Spirit was conferred upon the ordained which made him essentially different from the non-ordained. Through ordination, the ordained entered the priesthood which was seen as the way in which Christ indwelt his church. Thus, the ordained himself became a dispenser of salvation and it was believed that there was a transferral of authority that happened during the act of ordination, which worked a sacramental change in the person and made the clergy different from the laity *in essence* (cf. Bromiley et al. 1986: 842, Hinson 1981: 485). Because ordination became a sacrament in the church, the administration of the sacraments was reserved for the ordained ministry. That the Catholic Church still holds to this view can be seen in article 1538 of the Catholic Catechism (Vatican n.d.: article 1538) which reads: "Integration into one of these bodies in the Church was accomplished by a rite called *ordinatio*, a religious and liturgical act which was a consecration, a blessing or a sacrament. Today the word "ordination" is reserved for the

sacramental act which integrates a man into the order of bishops, presbyters, or deacons, and goes beyond a simple election, designation, delegation, or institution by the community, for it confers a gift of the Holy Spirit that permits the exercise of a "sacred power" (*sacra potestas*) which can come only from Christ himself through his Church. Ordination is also called *consecratio*, for it is a setting apart and an investiture by Christ himself for his Church. The laying on of hands by the bishop, with the consecratory prayer, constitutes the visible sign of this ordination."

The Protestant Reformation brought a change to the traditional institutional or sacramental view on ordination. By reclaiming the priesthood of all believers, which denied that salvation was dispersed through the clergy, Luther turned to what is called an expressive view on ordination. As discussed in chapter 2.7.4, Luther's view on the priesthood of all believers did not deny the existence of church offices, but rather than seeing these as positions that created a separate ministerial priesthood, he viewed them as functional. Ordination in Luther's view was nothing more than, "a liturgic rite through which the preacher of the gospel is called" (Althaus 1966: 328). Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox churches continued with the traditional sacramental view on ordination from the time of the Reformation. Lutheran and Reformed churches turned to the expressive view on ordination. More radical groups such as the Quakers denied the practice of ordination altogether (cf. Hinson 1981: 485).

The debate on ordination has continued since the Reformation and is still one of the elements that separates churches. The World Council of Churches, a council already referenced to earlier in this research, has issued a paper in 1983 on Baptist, Eucharist and Ministry called, "The Faith and Order Document". In the third section (World Council of Churches 1982: 16-30), dealing with ministry, the document provides ample space for the place and form of ordination and the ordained ministry in the church. The document aims to tackle a major impasse in the ecumenical debate on ordination which Eagan (1984: 263) describes as, "the steadfast refusal of the episcopal churches of the "catholic" tradition to recognize the ordained ministries of the Reformation churches and the bias of non-episcopal churches against episcopacy." It again highlights that ordination is directly related to one's view on the church offices. The Baptist tradition, having emerged from the Radical Reformation, has always upheld the principle of the priesthood of all believers and has strongly opposed any distinction between clergy and laity. Where some of the early Baptists abandoned the whole practice of ordination, a view that can also be found with Charles Spurgeon later in history, this is not the view that has dominated the Baptist tradition. Ordination is a practice that is part of the Baptist tradition, but the interpretation of it stands in stark contrast to that of the Catholic tradition. In the Baptist tradition, ordination is not

seen as a sacrament or ordinance that ensures apostolic succession, confers a special authority upon the ordained and creates a separate priesthood. Rather, ordination is the process by which the church acknowledges a gift already given to the ordained (cf. St Amant 1988: 13).

3.5 Ordination in the scriptures

3.5.1 Ordination in the Old Testament

The Hebrew Old Testament does not have a specific word for ordination. The word translated as ordination in English versions of the Old Testament refers to different Hebrew words that describe practices of setting apart and consecration of individuals for God's service, and to the institution of laws, principles and observances (cf. Brisco 2002: 159). The ordination of selected individuals for service to God is however often traced back to the Old Testament. Examples of Old Testament passages that can be seen as precedents to the contemporary practice of ordination include (1) the consecration of Aaron and his sons as priests in Exodus 28-29 and Leviticus 8-9, (2) the ordination of the Levites in Numbers 8:5-22, and (3) the appointment of Joshua by Moses through the laying on of hands in Numbers 27:18 (cf. Brisco 2002: 159-160, Hinson 1981: 486, St Amant 1988: 3). These scriptures will now briefly be discussed, not with the aim to give an in-depth analysis of scriptures dealing with ordination, but to show why these scriptures are used to support a doctrine of ordination and to highlight some of the similarities with current-day ordination practices. For a more biblical theological discussion of these passages it is advised to turn to Bible commentaries and other works referenced.

3.5.1.1 The ordination of Aaron and his sons in Exodus 28-29

In Exodus chapters 28 and 29 God gives Moses instructions around the priestly garments and the consecration service for Aaron and his sons in order to serve Him as priests. Hamilton (2011: 495) places the chapters in a bigger section called, "how to build the tabernacle". The chapters 28 and 29 in his view deal with the process of, "turning a person into a priest". Kaiser (1990: 469) explains that the instructions given to Moses in Exodus 28:41 are further explained in chapter 29 and implemented in Leviticus chapter 8, and that all passages focus on the installation of Aaron as high priest and his sons as ministering priests. The scope of this research does not allow to further explore the building of the tabernacle and the priesthood within this setting in detail. It suffices to say that the ordination needs to be seen in the context of the tabernacle which, as Fretheim (1991: 272)

states, centres around God's purpose to move from dwelling on the mountain to having for Himself a dwelling place among the people.

A careful reading of Exodus 28 and 29 shows that the office of priest was hereditary and restricted to men. Where the scriptures provide ample examples of people that were divinely called by God, for example Abraham and Moses, this is not the case for the priesthood; this office was entered by consecration. Through a consecration ceremony Aaron and his sons were made ready for, and entered into, the priestly office that required holiness and purity. Hamilton (2011: 499) highlights the many materials that were needed for the consecration service, such as priestly garments. He identifies three main elements of the consecration service: The first is the washing of Aaron and his sons (cf. Ex 29:4; Lv 8:6), which can be seen as symbolic for the removal of sin and impurity (cf. Hamilton 2011: 499). The second element is the robing of Aaron and his sons, and the third element the anointing which Hamilton sees as a "supernatural endowment, an anointing with oil" that provides "what is not there". Similar elements are highlighted by Kaiser (1990: 469-470) regarding the important role Aaron and his sons were to perform in the worship of God. He (1990: 469) writes: "The consecration of Aaron and his sons in an act of ordination only stresses the seriousness and central mission they had been given in the whole act of worship of our holy God".

The passages referred to above show that for all three elements Moses is the mediator between the persons to be consecrated and God, and acts as a priest. Other elements that can be highlighted from reading Exodus 28 and 29 are the fact that the consecration service took place in full view of the whole people (cf. Lv 8:3) and the various offerings "without defect" that were to be made (cf. Ex 29), including the offering of the ordination ram (cf. Ex 29: 31-34). The Hebrew word usually translated as "ordination" in for example Exodus 28:41 and Exodus 29:9 carries in it the meaning of "filling the hands" (cf. Friedrich 1974: 426). It is important to be aware of the different theological interpretations of this word but in light of this research it is not considered necessary to give further attention to this.

Durham (1987: 349) places the passage in the context of "Yahweh's Instructions for the Media of Worship" (Ex 25:1 – 31:18) and highlights the importance of the priestly garments. He (1987: 389) sees these garments as, "the central point of all the instructions concerning the media of worship" and finds in them a double symbolism: they not only point to the authority that the priests carry, but also to the importance of the confession of the priests as the source of that authority. The garments in Durhams' view communicate the message that, "Yahweh is here, we are his, and we must both know this and show this" (1987: 389-390). At the end of his analysis of Exodus 29 Durham (1987: 397) writes: "The summary of

chap. 29 and of all the chapters of instructions preceding it states clearly that through the knowledge of Israel that he is present, Israel is to know that Yahweh is their God.”

3.5.1.2 The dedication of the Levites in Numbers 8

The cleaning and dedication of the Levites can be found in Numbers 8:5-23. The text shows the significance of the priestly role of the Levites among the people of Israel and, as Allen (1990: 765) mentions, moves the focus from the priests to the Levites. The Levites can be seen as the helpers of the priests and a comparison of the ordination of Aaron and his sons with the ordination of the Levites highlights various differences between both ceremonies. For example, where the priests were made holy, the Levites were made clean; where the priests were washed and anointed, the Levites were sprinkled; where the priests received new garments, the Levites washed theirs; where blood was “applied” to the priests, it was waved over the Levites (cf. Allen 1990: 766). Another important difference is the practice of laying on of hands by the people. Where the ordination of Aaron and his sons did not include the laying on hands by the people, the ordination service of the Levites did (cf. Nm 8:10). Allen sees in this an identification of the people of Israel with the Levites. He (1990: 767) writes: “The Levites had come from among the people; now they were standing in their place before the Divine Presence” and “the Levites were substitutes for the nation.” The placing on of hands in this view points to the representative and substitutionary function of the Levites. Budd (1984: 93) is of the view that the laying on of hands can, “give expression to the idea in v 16 that the Levites are given to Yahweh by the people in place of the firstborn.” This carries in it the idea of consecration rather than identification or substitution. Budd (1984: 94) sees the significance of the Levitical priesthood as crucial to the well-being of the people of Israel and writes: “Theologically the section continues the theme of the importance of ministry, particularly in the light of divine holiness. Those engaged in holy work have to be properly prepared and set apart for their responsibilities in a significant and specific way. Through these rites the Levites are distinguished from the rest of the community, and the importance of such ministry for the community’s well-being is duly stressed.”

Brisco (2002: 167), in exploring Numbers 8:5-22 in relation to the practice of ordination, highlights that the laying on of hands, “was part of a dedicatory ceremony that created a distinct priestly group in Israel to perform specific religious tasks”. He goes on to say that, “The ritual actions were in fulfilment of specific commands given to Moses rooted in the Exodus experience and the redemption of the firstborn. Because Levitical status was hereditary, the ceremony was not repeated.” Parratt (1969: 213) sees three important parallels between the laying on of hands in the passage in Numbers and in Acts 6:6 and

13:3, two passages that will be further discussed in chapter 3.5.2. First, the entire congregation is involved in the laying on of hands. Second, through the laying on of hands certain individuals are set apart to fulfil specific functions and third, there is no mention of transfer of Spirit or power. The consecration of the Levites became an important pattern for later Rabbinic and Christian ordination practices and also for the early church. It is a practice that can still be found with for example the Roman Catholic Church. Article 1593 of the catechism of the Catholic Church (Vatican 2017: article 1539), in the section on the sacrament of the holy orders which includes the rite of ordination, reads: "The chosen people was constituted by God as "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." 6 But within the people of Israel, God chose one of the twelve tribes, that of Levi, and set it apart for liturgical service; God himself is its inheritance.⁷ A special rite consecrated the beginnings of the priesthood of the Old Covenant. The priests are "appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins."."

3.5.1.3 The commissioning of Joshua (Numbers 27:18-23)

The third Old Testament passage that is frequently referred to in the context of ordination can be found in Numbers 27:18-23. In this passage the Lord instructs Moses to take Joshua, in whom was the Spirit, and (1) make him stand before the priest and the whole congregation, (2) lay his hands on Joshua, (3) commission him in their sight, and (4) invest Joshua with some of his own authority. Parallel passages in Deuteronomy 31:7-8, 14-15, 23 and 34:9 provide further insight in the succession of Moses by Joshua. Although Joshua was already filled with the Spirit (cf. Nm 27: 18), this was apparently not sufficient to take on the task: It was important that Joshua was commissioned in the sight of the whole congregation and before the priest and that through the laying on of hands, Moses was to confer some of his own authority onto Joshua. Brisco (2002: 160-161) mentions that the account makes clear that it was God who chose and commissioned Joshua and that this divine choice and not human preference was the foundation of all leadership positions in Israel. He continues by saying that the laying on of hands, in Hebrew *yad samak*, was the central part of the ceremony. This phrase is used twenty-five times in the Old Testament and can have different meanings including conferring a blessing, the resting of hands on an offering and in the context of instituting someone into an office (cf. Brisco 2002: 162, Friedrich 1974: 428-429). Theologians have difficulty on deciding what the exact meaning of the laying on of hands is, which should lead to caution in basing a doctrine of ordination on these texts (cf. Brisco 2002: 163).

One of the questions that arises from Numbers 27:18-23 and that possibly has influenced the practice of ordination in later Rabbinic and Christian circles, is whether anything besides

leadership was transferred from Moses to Joshua during this laying on of hands (cf. Brisco 2002: 163). The verse in Numbers 27:22, where God commands Moses to invest authority on Joshua, has led some to believe that through the laying on of hands by Moses, God gave a special gift to Joshua that came with his new responsibility. This seems to be Allen's view (1990: 945) when he writes that the laying on of hands is the, "visual representation of the transfer of power while Moses was still alive (cf. the laying on of hands in the NT, Acts 6:6)" and "Some of Moses' authority was to be given to Joshua that the people might begin to obey him (v.20)." Likewise, Friedrich (1974: 429) writes that the laying on of hands by Moses on Joshua is, "a rite of transfer, since Joshua is thereby endued with the power he would need to discharge the office". Joshua already had the Spirit, but was now given the "majesty" of Moses. The text itself does however not provide sufficient information to know this for sure. What is clear is that through the laying on of hands, Joshua was set apart in the sight of the whole congregation for a specific task and the laying on of hands might be nothing more than to indicate who was to receive Moses' authority (cf. Brisco 2002: 164).

3.5.2 Ordination in the New Testament

The general consensus among theologians is that the New Testament does not provide clear evidence for a doctrine of ordination and that the biblical evidence for this practice is considered scarce (cf. Hinson 1981: 485, Peacock 1958: 262-263). Although the Greek New Testament does not have a specific word for ordination, there are various passages that speak of the election or appointing of certain individuals and that are used in support of a doctrine of ordination. Example of such passages are the selection of Matthias (Ac 1:26), the appointment of the twelve (Mk 3:14), the appointment of elders (Ac 14:23), the setting apart of Paul and Barnabas (Ac 13:2) and the appointment of Titus as Paul's travel companion (2 Cor 8:19). The Greek word used in Acts 14:23 and 2 Corinthians 8:19 is the word *cheirotomia* that is sometimes translated into English as ordained. The literal meaning of the word is "choose, elect by raising hands" in the sense of choosing, appointing and electing (cf. Arndt et al. 1979: 881). The word is only used in Acts 14:23 and 2 Corinthians 8:19 and is the word that in the fourth century was used to refer to ordination in the sense of appointing certain individuals into church offices and separating the clergy from the laity (cf. Ferguson 1961: 27). It is however clear that this later understanding of ordination is not what is implied in these two passages and reading such a view of ordination into these passages, is beyond what the text allows (cf. Peacock 1958: 262).

Peacock (1958: 263) highlights that it is important to distinguish between ordination and the practice of the laying on of hands in the New Testament. This laying on of hands, together with prayer, has always been an integral part of ordination ceremonies in the history of the church. New Testament Scriptures on the laying on of hands are often used in support of a theology of ordination (cf. Ferguson 1960: 25, Hinson 1981: 486, Muthiah 2009: 75). However, as Peacock (1958: 263) writes, this does not mean that when the New Testament speaks of the laying on of hands it automatically refers to ordination. The rite of the laying on of hands is used twenty-four times in the New Testament and linked to the coming of the Spirit (cf. St Amant 1988: 4). Jesus often laid hands on people for healing and so did the apostles for people to receive the gift of the Spirit. This does not mean that these gifts can only be received through the laying on of hands. Of the twenty-four references to the practice of laying on of hands, there are only a few that could suggest a practice of ordination, although the words “appointment” and “commissioning” might be more suitable than the word “ordination” in these instances (cf. St Amant 1988: 5). These passages are:

1. Acts 6: 6. Based on complaints from the Greek speaking Jews that their widows were overlooked, the community chose seven men to serve in the community. Following this selection of men, verse 6 reads: “These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.”
2. Acts 13:3. Saul and Barnabas are set apart for the work that God is calling them to and are sent out through the laying on of hands by several people in the church in Antioch. The verse reads: “Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.”
3. 1 Timothy 4:14 and 2 Timothy 1:6. The apostle Paul is writing to Timothy who was overseeing the church in Ephesus. In the first passage the apostle writes: “Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you”. The second passage is along the same lines and reads: “For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”
4. 1 Timothy 5:22. Again the apostle Paul is writing to Timothy. He writes in verse 22: “Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.”

The passages above give evidence of the practice where certain individuals in the church were set apart and appointed for specific ministries and tasks through the laying on of hands and prayer by either the whole church, or a select group of people in the church, usually the leaders. The men in Acts 6: 6 are frequently seen to have been the first deacons

in the church, although this is a much disputed fact (cf. Bock 2007: 262). Bock (2007: 262) mentions that the laying on of hands, “indicates a recognition of God’s call for this task”; it is therefore not to be understood as a formal ordination into church ministry. Peterson (2009: 235) is of a similar opinion and writes that Acts 6:6, “should not be understood in terms of postbiblical ideas of ordination” and “The text does not suggest that the apostles authorised the seven to be their successors, as Moses commissioned Joshua (Nu. 27:15-23; Dt. 34:9).” He sees the appointment of the seven not as an ordination into a church office, but as a commissioning for a specific function. Friedrich (1974: 433) is of a different opinion. He identifies the laying on of hands with the equipping of power for the person being ordained. The passage in Acts 6:6 in his view is an institution of the seven in their office, an event that is, “confirmed by the highest authority in the church”.

The passage in Acts 13: 3 is part of the section where Barnabas and Saul are separated from the larger congregation by the Spirit for His work. Although the passage is set in the context of what is likely congregational worship (cf. Bock 2007: 439), the passage does not make any mention of church offices. Instead, the apostle Paul and Barnabas are sent away from the church to engage in a new missionary ministry. Bock writes (2007: 440): “laying on of hands points to the establishing of connection and is used in commissioning and healing. This is not a call into a new office, as their role was already defined before the call. Rather it is an identification with this specific “work” to which God has called them.” A similar view can be found with Peterson (2009: 376-377).

The passage in 1 Timothy 4:14 speaks of a gift that was given to Timothy through the laying on of hands. It is not clear what this gift was and whether this relates to his ministry, his baptism or perhaps his suitability to join the apostle Paul in his ministry tasks (St Amant 1988: 5). Köstenberger (2006: 538) sees in the passage a similarity between Paul laying hands on Timothy and Moses laying hands on Joshua (cf. Nm 27:18-23). Friedrich (1974: 433) places the passage in the context of church offices. He is of the view that the pastoral letters present the reader with, “a clear picture of Christian ordination as it was adopted by the Palestine churches from the Jewish Christian church in Palestine”. For Friedrich the laying on of hands is more than just a sign or a commissioning for a specific function or task. The laying on of hands in his view also serves, “to pass on the gift with which God equips the office bearer” (Friedrich 1974: 433), a view that can also be found with Knight III (1992: 370-371). Mounce (2000: 262) opposes this on the basis of 1 Timothy 1:18 where he finds clear evidence that Timothy already possessed spiritual gifts.

With reference to the passages above on the laying on of hands, Peacock (1958: 263) writes: “There remain only four or five passages in Acts and the Pastorals where there may be a reference to ordination. Even here, however, if the word ordination is to be employed

only where there is some concrete evidence that the imposition of hand sets an individual apart for a ministry in which he has not previously engaged or provides him with gifts which he did not previously possess, we will probably have to conclude that there is no evidence for ordination in the New Testament. If, on the other hand, by ordination we mean the act of the church by which the individual is installed or set apart to a special service or ministry recognised by the church through the act of imposition of hands, we will probably conclude that there is in these passages a reference to ordination.” What Peacock highlights is that the answer whether these passages warrant a theology of ordination depends on how ordination is understood. According to Peacock, the passages do not provide support for a view of ordination whereby a believer is set apart from the other believers and, through the act of ordination, receives a special gift. The passages do provide support for interpreting ordination as the act whereby the congregation recognises and acknowledges a believer’s spiritual gift(s) and divine calling and sets him or her apart to fulfil this calling. Such a view is in line with what was discussed in the previous chapter on the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the ministry of leadership within this doctrine.

Following on what was mentioned before, many scholars are of the opinion that the biblical basis for ordination in the sense of appointing believers into church offices is doubtful or not present (cf. Hinson 1981: 485, Muthiah 2009: 74, Peacock 1958: 26). Muthiah (2009: 77) for example writes: “Nowhere is the laying on of hands tied to installation into a hierarchical office. While these passage have been used to argue for a theology of ordination that is reflective of a hierarchical ecclesial structure, such a usage reads back into the texts an understanding of office that simply did not exist in that time.” Peacock (1958:265) mentions that if ordination is an important element in the life of the church, then why is there no mention of it in passages such as Acts 1:26 and 2 Corinthians 8:18 and in reference to the bishops and deacons in the pastoral letters? It seems that although the New Testament is used in support of a theology of ordination, the actual evidence is very scarce.

3.6 Ordination and gender

3.6.1 Defining the gender debate

The question who should be ordained is part of the wider gender debate. The role of women in the church has been the subject of discussion for many centuries and is ongoing. Where certain denominations have allowed women to enter into church leadership positions and thus be ordained, for example the Protestant churches, others such as the Roman Catholic Church and many churches in the Baptist tradition are still restricting leadership and thus

ordination to men. This wider debate on the role of women in the church centres on the question if there are any aspects of church leadership restricted to men and therefore not open to women, strictly on the basis of one's gender. Those who find themselves on the complementarian side answer this question positively based on the three premises that (1) God instituted a principle of male headship and female submission in marriage and in the church, (2) this headship needs to be interpreted as "having authority over" which means that women are to be submissive to men and are not allowed to exercise authority over men, and (3) this principle of male headship is a divine order that needs to be universally applied because it was established by God in creation and is modelled after the Trinity where Jesus is believed to be eternally functionally subordinate to the Father (see Grudem 2015, Piper and Grudem 2006a).

The gender debate is often heated and emotions can run high. It is not uncommon for each side in the debate to accuse the other of being unbiblical and of compromising the authority of the Bible. In the preface of Piper and Grudem's (eds. 2006b) influential book supporting the complementarian view, the following can be found on the role of women in the church (Ligon Duncan and Stinson 2006: xi): "At the core of this topic lies the fundamental issue of biblical authority. If we write off, ignore, or distort the Bible's teaching on gender roles, then we are bound to do so with everything the Bible teaches." Stackhouse (2005: 56), who is of the egalitarian view, on the other hand writes: "When society was patriarchal, as it was in the New Testament context and as it has been everywhere in the world except in modern society in our day, the church avoided scandal by going along with it – fundamentally evil as patriarchy was and is. Now, however, that modern society is at least officially egalitarian, the scandal is that the church is not going along with society, not rejoicing in the unprecedented freedom to let women and men serve according to gift and call without an arbitrary gender line."

For complementarians the thought of feminism entering the church is a major point of concern as is evident with Ligon Duncan and Stinson (2006: xii) who state: "Pagan ideas underlie evangelical egalitarianism, based, as it is, on ideas borrowed from cultural feminism. Egalitarianism must always lead to an eventual denial of the gospel." Behind the complementarian view lies a genuine concern for the sexual turmoil and gender confusion that is evident in current society and the belief that the loss of a God-given (gender) identity is the reason for the increase in divorce, homosexuality, sexual abuse, promiscuity, suicide and many other sinful practices (cf. Piper 2006: 33). According to complementarians, a return to the God-ordained role differences between men and women can turn this tide and help men and women understand what it means to truly be a man or woman.

The key scriptures used in the gender debate to restrict the ordination and role of women in the church are Galatians 3:28, 1 Timothy 2:11-15, 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 and 14:34-36. For headship in marriage, the key passages are Ephesians 5:21-33 and 1 Peter 3:1. Theologians on both sides of the debate agree that the passages provide many exegetical challenges and that the interpretation is not as straight forward as is sometimes claimed: the many books and articles that have been written on the abovementioned key passages give ample evidence of this. Padgett (2011: 3) writes that it is not uncommon among evangelicals to focus on interpreting four to five sections of Scripture as the source for a particular take on gender roles. In his view pure exegesis cannot solve the debate and what is needed is a much larger Christian understanding of ethics, biblical interpretation and philosophy of ministry. Hübner (2016: 99-100) states that while both complementarians and egalitarians uphold the “obscure-in-light-of-clear” hermeneutical principle, complementarians compromise this principle when it comes to the treatment of 1 Timothy 2:9-15. He writes (2016: 100): “...those who forbid women pastors on the basis of 1 Timothy 2:12 illegitimately give the passage the weight of a “clear” text while ignoring the implication of its notorious difficulties”. It is clear that the interpretation of the scriptures used in the debate are not as straight forward as some claim it to be. A broader perspective is needed. Grenz and Kjesbo (1995: 142) argue that our view on the position of women is more than just biblical interpretation: In its deepest part it reveals our understanding of God, who we are as man and woman made in the image of God and God’s plan and purpose for the church in this world. They write (1995: 142): “Because of the underlying theological commitment at stake, we cannot expect to settle the question of women in ministry by appeal to specific biblical texts. Rather, we must move beyond isolated passages of Scripture to speak about broader theological themes. Positions taken on this issue reveal one’s deeper theological understanding or fundamental vision about the nature of God, the intent of God’s programme in the world and who we are as the people of God”.

As mentioned in chapter 3.1, the scope of this research does not allow for a detailed discussion of the full debate on the role of women in the church. The introduction to this chapter already showed the extent and complexity of the debate. To understand what underlies the question of ordination of women, two main views on the role of women in general will be described. Although these views do not directly speak of the ordination of women, they are what underlies the question whether or not women should be ordained. The first is the complementarian view which holds that God instituted a divine order of male authority and female submission. This view can be divided in an ontological submission and a functional submission, and stands in contrast to the egalitarian view which holds that under the new covenant, God instituted a mutual submission between men and women.

This section will then continue by evaluating the key scriptures and arguments used in the debate and present various scholarly views on these scriptures. The focus will be on those parts that speak of “authority”, given its direct relationship with what was discussed in chapter 2.8 around leadership authority.

3.6.2 The submission of women to men

For a long time in history it was believed that women had to be submitted to the leadership of men because of their femaleness. Such a view is characteristic for patriarchal societies where men are seen as stronger and more rational than women and for that reason need to be in leadership over women. Wood (2017: 13-14) for example writes: “In a patriarchal society, men are viewed as naturally superior, stronger and more rational whereas women are viewed as naturally weaker, intellectually and rationally inferior, emotionally unstable and incapable of being involved in politics (Lerner 1993:4). Therefore, men were designed by God to be dominant (Lerner 1993:4). Men, being more rational, explain and regulate the world and have control over a woman’s sexuality and her reproductive functions. Women sustain daily life and are responsible for the continuation of the human race and have no rights over men. Only men can act as a go-between with God and humans; women can only mediate with God through men (Lerner 1993:4)”. This view can be traced back to philosophers such as Plato (428 – 347 BC) and Aristotle (384 – 322 BC). Plato made a sharp distinction between body and soul. The soul in his view was immortal and the only part capable of comprehending ideas. The body was mortal and nothing more than the “vehicle” of the soul (cf. Ferguson 2003: 334). Plato believed that the soul was only implanted in man (cf. Wood 2017: 2). Aristotle, following on Plato’s dualistic worldview, believed that women because of their femaleness, were inferior to men and therefore needed to submit to men. He was of the opinion that women were incapable of reasoning (cf. Judge 2008: 117). Because of this belief that souls were only implanted in men, it is not surprising that women became associated with the body and all its evil desires.

The early church existed in a time where the dualistic view on soul and body was still evident and had also crept into the church. The first letter to the Corinthian church shows sufficient evidence of the apostle Paul’s teachings that aimed to correct the view that because the soul was saved, the deeds of the body did not matter. For example, with respect to the sexual immorality in the church in Corinth (cf. 1 Cor 6:12-19), the apostle Paul corrects the Corinthian dualistic view of body and soul by saying that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit; it is therefore not less valuable or holy than the mind. Wood (2017: 3), who has explored the beliefs of the church fathers regarding women, has found that both Latin and Greek church fathers such as Tertullian, Cyprian, Jerome, Augustine,

Clement of Alexander, Origen and Chrysostom, built on the views of not only Plato and Aristotle, but also on the scriptures such as the creation account and the New Testament passages. Augustine for example was of the opinion that the image of God is found in the mind that is capable of reasoning. In his book on the Trinity, Augustine (1968: XIV: 4, 6) writes: “but we must find in the soul of man, i.e., the rational or intellectual soul, that image of the Creator which is immortally implanted in its immortality”. Augustine said that the minds of women were often distracted to the lower things and because of this, they were not the image of God. He saw this as one of the reason why women should cover their heads in worship (cf. Sumner 2003: 61). Because reason was connected to maleness, femaleness became connected with the body including all its emotions and sexuality. The early church fathers and Jewish rabbi’s considered the whole body as sexual which was a necessary evil caused by the fall. A woman’s biological status therefore made her inferior to men (cf. Leene 2013: 132, 135). This lower status is also evident in a well-known prayer in the Jewish prayer book that says: “Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, who has not made me a women” (cf. Ferguson 2003: 78).

The inferiority of femaleness to maleness was further supported by how the early church fathers interpreted Genesis 3, which tells of how sin entered the world. Women, because of their association with Eve, were held responsible for the fall and for sin entering the world (cf. Piper and Grudem 2006a: 72, Sumner 2003: 61-62, Wood 2017: 3). The church father Tertullian (155 – 240 BC) for example wrote (Tertullian n.d.: Book 1, Chapter 1): “And do you not know that you are (each) an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age: the guilt must of necessity live too. You are the devil’s gateway: you are the unsealer of that (forbidden) tree: you are the first deserter of the divine law: you are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God’s image, man. On account of your desert—that is, death—even the Son of God had to die”. This view that Eve was responsible for the fall was supported by scriptures such as 1 Timothy 2:14 where Paul writes: “and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor”. In Augustine’s view this meant that Adam was not deceivable but Eve was, because of her smaller intelligence (cf. Sumner 2003: 223). Based on such beliefs, it is no surprise that the early church fathers believed that women needed to be under the authority of men. After all, men were made in the image of God and had the ability to reason and therefore make Godly decisions. Women, who were of less value, were too emotional, sexual and more prone to being deceived.

Although this first view on the relationship between men and women was believed for a long time in history, there will not be many theologians today who will still support this view. From about the nineteenth century onward, influenced by the progress in science, the

thought that women were in some way weaker and less perfect than men, slowly disappeared. Theological support for the equality of men and women was found in for example Genesis 1:27 which reads that God created both male and female in His image (*Imago Dei*) and that both male and female are therefore of equal value and standing before God. Holmes (2015) writes that when it became clear that the view of universal ontological submission of women could no longer be held, the complementarian argument for universal male headship needed new support. He writes that complementarians were left with two options: the first option was to turn to a more egalitarian view on the role of women, which is the option the English Free Churches choose in the early twenty century. The second option was to find new arguments to defend their view. Holmes is of the opinion that complementarians have done this by turning to what in this study will be called, “a universal functional submission”. In this view a distinction is made between essence and function. The argument is that although men and women are equal in being they differ in function, and because these functional differences were ordained in creation, they are therefore considered universally applicable. An example of this view can be found with Piper (2006: 35) who writes: “when the Bible teaches that men and women fulfil different roles in relation to each other, charging the man with a unique leadership role, it bases this differentiation not on temporary cultural norms, but on permanent facts of creation”. It is this view that is defended by complementarians in the current debate on the role of women. Because of their belief that the Bible teaches that God has ordained the leadership role in the home and the church to men, women are restricted from entering into church leadership positions and offices. The ordination of women into church offices or functions, according to this view, is not biblical.

3.6.3 Headship - *kephalē*

Crucial in the debate on the role of women in the church is the interpretation of the Greek word *kephalē*. The word is used over seventy times throughout the New Testament, most often referring to the upper part of the body that contains the brain. In the figurative meaning, the word can refer to a person with a superior rank or, in the case of things, the uppermost part or the end point (cf. Danker et al. 2000: 541-542). The word is used metaphorically in 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 where the apostle Paul compares the Corinthian church with a body consisting of various parts of which the *kephalē* is one among many other body parts. The word *kephalē* is also used in reference to Christ and the Church (cf. Eph 1:22, 4:15, 5:23 and Col 1:18, 2:10, 2:19): Here Christ is presented as the *kephalē* with the church as His body. The question is how this needs to be interpreted. Hawthorne (1993: 378) sees this metaphor of Christ as the head and the church as the body as a

useful way to describe the relationship between Christ and the Church and to point to the, “uniqueness and importance of Christ”. He is of the opinion that the apostle Paul’s reference to Christ as the head has a Christological focus rather than an ecclesiological one. Kittel (ed. 1965: 680) emphasises the unity-aspect between Christ and the Church. He is of the opinion that underneath these passages lies a gnostic redeemer myth and based on that, he writes: “To describe Christ as the Head of the Church against this background is to emphasize the unity between Christ and the Church. He is the Head which has its body in the Church, and which is thus present in the earthly and bodily form in the Church. And the Church is the *kephalē* which has its Head in Christ, and which is present in heavenly form in Christ. The Head is not present without or apart from the body, nor the body without or apart from the Head. The Church is the earthly body of the heavenly Head”. It is however clear that Christ as the head of the church also points to Christ’s superior rank and His supremacy. Ephesians 1:22 reads: “And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head (*kephalē*) over all things to the church”. The verse shows that Christ as the head is superior, but also that the church gets to share in this superiority and authority “over all things” because of its bodily relationship with Christ (cf. Klein 2006: 61).

In translating the word *kephalē* as head it has connotations of having authority over someone and being able to make decisions that can overrule any decisions of the submitted person. This is the meaning that complementarians such as Grudem give to the word. Grudem (2001: 64) is of the opinion that *kephalē* needs to be understood as “authority over”. He has done extensive research on the meaning of the word and started what Johnson (2006: 23) calls, “the battle of the lexicons”. Grudem’s major research in 1985 on the use of the word *kephalē* in ancient Greek literature concluded that the meaning of *kephalē* is best translated as “authority over”. Grudem claims that this was a well-established meaning of the word in the New Testament period (1985: 59). A major challenge to Grudem’s study came from Cervin. He (1989: 85-112) concluded that in most of the instances where Grudem is of the opinion that the correct translation of *kephalē* is authority over, a meaning of *kephalē* as pre-eminence is a much better fit. Although this meaning of the word *kephalē* is not listed as a possible meaning in common New Testament Greek lexicons (cf. Arndt et al. 1979: 431, Danker et al. 2000: 541-542, Grudem 1985: 40), there are solid arguments to translate *kephalē* as pre-eminence, beginning or source (cf. Johnson 2006: 21). In the context of this research it would go too far to explore these in further detail; this study will suffice by pointing out that both authority and source/beginning are seen as a possible interpretation of the word *kephalē* in 1 Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:23.

In this context it is also worth mentioning Sumner's opinion. She (2003: 150-151) points out that where Grudem in his research tries to prove that the word *kephalē* should not be interpreted as "source", he overlooks the fact that in most of the instances where the word is used, it is not used as "authority over", but in the literal sense of the word, namely to point to an actual head; of the 2,336 examples of *kephalē* that Grudem has examined (Grudem 1985), in 2,287 instances the word refers to an actual physical head. Sumner (2003: 150-151) emphasises the importance of metaphors and prefers an interpretation that leaves the mystery of metaphors (including the mystery of headship) intact, rather than trying to break it down in clear cut definitions as some theologians have the tendency to do. Although much more can be said about the biblical use of metaphors and the Pauline metaphor of the head and body, the context of this research does not allow for it. Important for now is to point out that both passages contain many exegetical challenges. For that reason one should be careful to construct a doctrine on the role of women primarily on these passages.

The word *kephalē* is much debated in Pauline writings such as 1 Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:23 where the apostle uses the word in the context of the relationship between men and women, and where the context suggests multiple meanings for the word (cf. Hawthorne et al. 1993: 375). These scriptures will now be discussed. The main aim in what follows is to show that the passages often used to support a functional submission of women to men contain many exegetical challenges and that they are not as straightforward as some make it believe to be. For a more in-depth analysis of these passages reference is made to the many scholarly works that are widely available.

3.6.4 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

In 1 Corinthians 11:3 the apostle Paul writes: "But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God." The verse is part of the wider passage of 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 that speaks of the Christian women in Corinth and whether they should wear a head covering when praying and prophesying in the Assembly. This passage is part of the letter the apostle Paul wrote to the church in Corinth that was founded by the apostle himself (cf. Ac 18, 1 Cor 1:1-2). The letter contains various corrective teaching on topics such as division in the church, sexual immorality, marriage, food, the Lord's Supper, idolatry, the use and place of spiritual gifts, worship and the resurrection (cf. 1 Cor 3, 6-12). There is evidence that the letter we know as 1 Corinthians was preceded by another letter (cf. Carson and Moo 2005: 422). The letter is likely written in response to reports from, "some from Chloe's household" (1 Cor 1:11) when the apostle Paul was in Ephesus (cf. Carson and Moo 2005: 422). Textual issues with the letter concern mainly 1 Corinthians 14: 33b – 35 (cf. Carson and Moo 2005: 442-

443), a text that is also used as support for the complementarian view on the role of women in the church (cf. Carson 2006: 152-153). The passage quoted above is part of a section that contains three issues that have to do with the public meeting of the church (cf. Mare 1976: 254). The first is the issue of head covering for women, the second the Lord's Supper and the third the exercising of spiritual gifts (cf. 1 Cor 11:2 - 14:40). The church in Corinth met in various houses and consisted largely of Gentile believers (cf. Hawthorne et al. 1993: 173). The letter provides ample evidence that the believers struggled with various "ungodly" attitudes which were likely influenced by a dualistic worldview where body and soul were regarded as separate (cf. Hawthorne et al. 1993: 174). In such a worldview the soul, including the mind, was held in high regard and seen as eternal, immaterial and capable of partaking in the divine and spiritual matters. The body was seen as material, mortal and nothing more than a necessary evil that kept the soul captive. The disregard for the body and its practices is evident in among others sexual immorality, issues around marriage, food and outward appearances (cf. 1 Cor 5:12-20; 7; 8; 11). In this context it is not surprising that the apostle Paul is using the metaphor of a physical body when he speaks of the church and how this church should function. Where the Gentile believers regarded body and head (mind/soul) as separate, the apostle Paul is teaching that there is no such separation in the Christian worldview. He stresses the union within the body and between the body and the head and how in Christ it is all held together.

As much as theologians may disagree over the correct interpretation of word *kephalē* in this passage, they do agree that the passage in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 contains many exegetical challenges (cf. Fee 2005c: 142-143, Payne 2009: 109, Schreiner 2006: 124-125, Verbrugge 2008: 350). This has however not kept theologians such as Schreiner (2006: 125) from using the passage to restrict the ordination of women and even stating that despite the exegetical challenges, "the central thrust of the passage is clear". The focus of what follows will be on the use of the word *kephalē* in this passage, acknowledging that it is impossible to offer a full biblical theological treatment of the text and all the interpretations that have been presented.

The issues around *kephalē* centre around among others the following questions (cf. Fee 2005c: 144-145): did the apostle Paul try to correct the behaviour of both men and women or only women?, does head covering refer to a veil or shawl or to letting the hair down or hanging loose?, was this head covering always to be in place or only when they prayed or prophesied?, does the apostle refer to the relationship between all men and all women or only to husbands and wives?. Theologians have given different answers to the questions above and based on that, come to interpretations of the passage that result in both complementarian and egalitarian views.

The word *kephalē* is used nine times in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16. The word is used metaphorically in verse three for three sets of relationships: Christ/every man, man/woman and Christ/God, which introduce what the apostle Paul is going to say about the Corinthians' physical *kephalē* (cf. Fee 2005c: 145). What theologians agree on is that the apostle Paul in this passage is addressing a socio-cultural issue in the church in Corinth that had to do with the head covering of women and that was causing disunity and disrespect in the churches; it therefore needed to be corrected (cf. Fee 2005c: 145, Mare 1976: 255). Some are of the opinion that the issue centred around the wearing of a veil or shawl by women (cf. Schreiner 2006: 126, Verbrugge 2008: 351, Witherington III 1995: 232-233), others that it had to do with how women wore their hair (Payne 2009: 141-173). Both customs, the wearing of a shawl or veil and the way women wore their hair, had a cultural meaning attached to it. For example, for women to let their hair hang loose could be a sign of mourning or be related to adultery. For women to not wear a shawl or veil in the church service could be sign of disrespect (see Mare 1976: 255-256, Witherington III 1995: 232-235). Arguments in favour of interpreting the head covering as indicating how men and women wore their hair, can be found in the verses 14-15 of the passage, which speak about a person's hair (cf. Payne 2009: 148, 168).

Whatever the exact issue is remains unclear and, in the end, is also not of that much importance for this study. The significance of this passage to the gender debate is whether the apostle Paul is addressing a cultural issue at a particular church in a particular time, or whether he is laying down a divine order of male authority and female submission in (particularly) the church. It is primarily the metaphorical use of the word *kephalē* in verse three, combined with the references to creation (v 8-9) that have led to the importance of this passage in the gender debate (cf. Fee 2005c: 149). Complementarians such as Schreiner (2006: 127) favour an interpretation of the word *kephalē* (v 3) as "authority over" and apply it to the man/woman relationship (v 3) in the context of marriage and the church. Because of the reference to the relationship between Christ and God (v 3) and the references to the order of creation (v 8-9), this headship of men in the church is, according to complementarians, to be universally applied. Much can be said about the complementarian and particularly Schreiner's analysis of the passage leading to this conclusion, but space does not allow for this. Where the passage is primarily addressing the wearing of head coverings by women in the Corinthian church (cf. Verbrugge 2008: 352), in Schreiner's view (2006: 137-138) the primary message the apostle Paul is addressing is that if women are not in submission to the authority of men, expressed in the wearing of a head covering, they are, "negating the distinction between men and women that God has ordained from creation", where women were created to fulfil a supportive role

to men. Schreiner (2006: 138-139) cannot uphold the principle that women in today's time still need to wear head coverings in church, however he fails to explain how women in the present day need to show their submission to men in church. Although Schreiner's analysis is done carefully, one cannot escape the thought that his interpretation of the word *kephalē* as "authority over" in verse 3 has highly influenced his interpretation of the rest of the passage.

Witherington III (1995: 238), although affirming that an interpretation of *kephalē* in verse 3 as "authority over" is most likely, does not come to a complementarian interpretation of the passage. He (1995: 238) writes: "Paul clearly believes in a hierarchy of God and Christ over human beings. Whether he also affirms a male human hierarchy in Christ, that is, in the Christian community, seems doubtful in view of vv. 11ff and in view of the fact that he is quite comfortable talking about women as his co-workers, as fellow servants of God, and possibly even as *apostoloi* (Rom. 16:7)". Verbrugge (2008: 354) in his analysis of verse 3, writes that *kephalē* can mean "prominence, leadership, or source". He favours an interpretation of "pre-eminence" which in his view means that women are to "acknowledge the pre-eminence of men in the male-female relationship (or at least the husband-wife relationship) in that culture". He goes on to say that "prominence in a relationship does not mean submission or subordination; certainly it does not carry that meaning in the relationship between the Father and the Son, and it should not mean that between men and women in the church". In the view of Verbrugge (2008: 354) the apostle Paul is addressing a specific issue at the Corinthian church in this passage. Where the apostle is trying to uphold his teaching in Galatians 3:28 where it says that "in Christ there is no male or female", the situation in the church in Corinth, whatever this is, is calling for a correction that may go against the apostle's very own convictions of equality between men and women. The authority of men thus needs to be applied to a specific situation at a particular time in history.

Fee (1987: 499) sees the metaphorical use of the word *kephalē* in verse 3 as, "an attempt on Paul's part to remove the problem from the "head" literally by putting it into a broader context of relationships" and although the literal problem of the head covering came first "...Paul has used the word metaphorically at the beginning to set the literal problem into a larger theological framework". Fee (1987: 502) is of the opinion that nothing in verse 3 gives evidence of the apostle laying down a hierarchical structure of authority and points out that the only use of the word *exousia*, which is the common word for authority (see chapter 2.8.2), is in verse 10 where it refers to a woman's own authority. Fee (2005c: 154-155) finds significance in the fact that the word *kephalē* in verse three is mentioned without making mention of the counterpart, the body. Because of this, he is of the opinion that the

best interpretation of *kephalē* in this verse is “source”. His reading of the passage is that man is the source of woman, referring to the creation account where Eve was formed out of Adam. Fee (2005c: 158-160) comes to the interpretation that certain women in the church in Corinth were disregarding the differences between men and women (which expressed itself among others in the way they covered their head) in a way that was against the “cultural markers” of that time and brought shame on both herself and her husband, the one on whom, in that culture, she was dependent and to whom she was responsible. The apostle Paul’s intent is to not let go of these cultural gender distinctions.

3.6.5 Ephesians 5:21-33

In the context of gender issues in the church, it is also important to investigate the passage in Ephesians 5:21-33. A parallel passage can be found in Colossians 3:18-19, but that passage will be left out of further discussion. The passage in Ephesians 5:21-33 is part of what is known as the letter to the Ephesians. There are strong arguments to ascribe the letter to the apostle Paul, most likely written in the early 60-ies AD when he was in prison (cf. Carson and Moo 2005: 480-487, O’Brien 1999: 57). Unlike other Pauline writings, the letter does not seem to have been written for a specific purpose (cf. Carson and Moo 2005: 490-491, O’Brien 1999: 51) but that does not mean that the letter has no central message. O’Brien (1999: 58) views the central message to be, “cosmic reconciliation and unity in Christ”. The main issue with the text is that some manuscripts lack the words “in Ephesus” in chapter 1:1, which could indicate that it may have been a circular letter. This view finds support in the belief that the apostle, after having ministered at the church in Ephesus for many years and where he had many friends, would not have written a rather impersonal letter. There is not enough evidence to decide for sure who the letter was meant for, but manuscripts and the improbabilities of other views favour the view that the letter was meant for the church in Ephesus (cf. Carson and Moo 2005: 488-491, O’Brien 1999: 47-49).

Although many different structures of the letter to the Ephesians can be found, the letter can be divided in two main sections: chapters one to three and chapters four to six (cf. O’Brien 1999: 66, Roberts 1983: 16-17). Where the first section is more general and deals with the blessing and riches of grace, the second section is more practical and deals with the Christian walk where, as O’Brien (1999: 67) points out, there is again a strong underlying admonition to maintain the unity in the church. Chapter four starts with the apostle Paul addressing the whole body of believers. He urges them to behave in the way that is in line with their new status as a follower of Christ, stresses the importance of unity, and continues by urging them to “walk in love” and take care in how they live their lives (chapter 4:1 – 5:21). In verse 21 he tells them to “submit to one another out of reverence

for Christ". This verse is immediately followed by three passages that each deal with a specific relationship: (1) the relationship between husbands and wives (chapter 5:22-33), (2) the relationship between children and parents (chapter 6:1-4), and (3) the relationship between slaves and masters (chapter 6:5-9). After addressing each of these, he returns to addressing the whole body of believers (chapter 6:9-24). This shows that the apostle's passage on the specific relationship between husband and wife is part of a broader context that deals with how a believer is to live a Godly life.

The text in Ephesians 5: 22-23 normally reads that wives have to submit to their husbands because the husband is the head (*kephalē*) of the wife even as Christ is the head (*kephalē*) of the church. The cut between verse 21 and 22 in many current Bible translations is however arbitrary and unfortunate. The word *submission* is not present in the original Greek verse 22. Verse 22 leans on verse 21 and the verses should therefore not be separated (cf. Lincoln 1990: 352, Payne 2009: 279). This leads immediately to the question how the submission of wives to husbands (v 22) is to be seen in the light of mutual submission (v 21). Knight III (2006: 168) states that mutual submission in verse 21, "defines the larger context and sets the tone..." without ruling out "specific and different roles and relationships to which husbands and wives are called in the verses addressed to them." For complementarians such as Knight III, the passage provides evidence of male authority in both marriage and the church. He (2006: 169) interprets *kephalē* as authority over and in his analysis of the passage he (2006: 169) writes: "Where leadership is an ingredient of the situation, as in marriage, the woman should submit to that leadership (headship) of the man. Similarly, for example, in the family of God, the church, where leadership is involved, Paul insists that women not take on that role but submit to the leadership of men (cf. 1 Tm 2:11, 12; 1 Cor 14:34ff)." Knight III (2006: 177-178) finds support for the divine order of male headship in the reference to the creation account in verse 31 and in 1 Corinthians 11. It has already been discussed that 1 Corinthians 11: 2-16 is a highly disputed passage and reading a divine order of male hierarchy in Ephesians 5:24 goes beyond what the text allows.

Payne (2009: 279) is of the view that the call to mutual submission (v 21) is in line with other verses in Ephesians (cf. 4:2; 4:25 and 4:32); verse 22 can therefore not be interpreted in a way that goes against the general call to all believers to submit to each other. He (2009: 289-290) favours an interpretation of the word *kephalē* as "source" and comes to an interpretation of the passage that calls husband and wife to submit to each other, but also calls husbands to be the, "source of life, love, and nourishment" for their wives.

Roberts (1983: 160-161) in his analysis of the passage mentions that although wives are called to submit to their husbands, this should never be interpreted in the sense of the

husband dominating and controlling his wife. Rather, marriage is a place where both husband and wife make room for each other and where a wife may expect her husband to submit to her as well. There is a biblical mandate for husbands to put their wife's interest above their own. However, despite the context and mitigating circumstances in which the female submission according to Roberts is to be seen, he (1983: 161) does conclude that a husband is the head of his wife and his family and that this headship, although he does not use the word "authority", implies male leadership and female submission in marriage. A similar view can be found with O'Brien (1999: 411-414) who also concludes that the passage, rather than addressing a contemporary custom, gives evidence of a divine order of male leadership and authority in the family, which is grounded in the creation account and is therefore universally applicable. Theologians such as Marshall (2005: 186-190, 204) and Lincoln (1990: 354-394) are of the opinion that the apostle's call to wives to submit to their husbands was a contextual command that needs to be seen in the context of the patriarchal Roman household codes where women had a submissive position. The apostle instructed Christians to behave within these structures so that the relations in the churches would not be upset, a command that is still applicable today (cf. Lincoln 1990: 360). Stackhouse (2005: 63) mentions that the reason the apostle Paul calls for the submission of wives to husbands is to not hinder the furtherance of the gospel: in a society where women were expected to submit to their husbands it might cause offence to unbelievers if they saw that believing women all of a sudden no longer submitted to their husbands because of their freedom in Christ.

Based on the above, the difference between theologians in the above does therefore not necessarily lie in the interpretation of the word *kephalē* as "authority over" but whether the passage needs to be interpreted in its cultural context or not and whether it prescribes a divine order of male headship and female submission. Sumner (2003: 151-152) points out that the word *kephalē* in most instances needs to be interpreted literally, namely referring to a physical head. She is of the opinion that theologians incorrectly link the headship of the husband to the submission of the wife. She (2003: 161) identifies the following word-pairs in Ephesians 5: 22-33:

1. A wife is to *submit* to her own husband in everything, a husband is to *sacrifice* himself for his wife (verse 22 and 25)
2. A wife is the *body* of her husband, a husband is the *head* of his wife (verse 28-29 and 23)
3. A wife is to see to it that she *respects* her husband, a husband is to *love* his own wife as himself (verse 25 and 33)

Sumner's analysis above highlights what is often overlooked by many theologians, namely that submission is not correlative to headship as is often assumed, but to sacrifice. The word-pairs show that the apostle Paul is equally addressing husbands and wives in this passage (cf. Eph 5:22-23, 25-28) and asks them to behave, "out of reverence for Christ" (cf. Eph 5:21). This is in line with the wider passage and other Pauline writings where he urges believers to display the behaviour that is in line with the new life they have found in Christ. Taking Sumner's analysis as foundational for interpreting the passage, a very plausible reading of Ephesians 4:22-33 could be that, rather than talking about male headship and female submission, Paul is urging the church in Ephesus to maintain the unity and peace and for both husband and wife to behave in a way, within the context of a Roman patriarchal society, that would not upset the unity. In this view, the apostle Paul was trying to correct secular leadership structures and authority patterns that had entered the church and was stressing mutual submission and an attitude of being willing to sacrifice oneself for the other (cf. Lincoln 1990: 356-365).

3.6.6 1 Timothy 2:11-15

The passage in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 forms a key part of what is known in Dutch as the "*zwijgteksten*"⁹. It sits at the centre of the debate on the ordination of women (cf. Belleville 2005: 205, Payne 2009: 291). In this passage the apostle Paul writes: "11 A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. 12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. 15 But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety."

The passage is part of the apostle Paul's letter to Timothy who was overseeing the church in Ephesus (cf. 1 Timothy 1:1-3). The letter was likely written from Macedonia in the middle of the AD sixties (cf. Carson and Moo 2005: 571-572) and together with the letters 2 Timothy and Titus is part of what is commonly referred to as the Pastoral Epistles. With regard to this pastoral character of the letter, Köstenberger (2006: 489) writes that rather than seeing Timothy's role in the church in Ephesus as that of the permanent pastor, Timothy needs to be seen as the apostle Paul's delegate who was temporarily assigned to the church to deal with certain issues. The beginning of the church in Ephesus, which was founded by the apostle Paul, is recorded in Acts 18:19 – 20:1. The city of Ephesus was

⁹ The literal translation of the word *zwijgteksten*, as translated by the researcher, is "silencing scriptures". They refer to the Pauline passages where women are commanded to be silent.

known for the temple of the Greek goddess Artemis, was a centre of pagan worship (cf. Köstenberger 2006: 490). It is to be expected that many of the Gentile believers who joined the church, will to some degree have been involved or associated with the Artemis worship and the temple rituals. The letter to the Ephesians and the letters to Timothy, who at that time was overseeing the church in Ephesus, give evidence of many issues and challenges facing the church of which the most important seems to be the influence of false teachers (cf. Köstenberger 2006: 491). Other issues that can be found in the letter centre around women, young men and widows, the church organisation - including the role of bishops and deacons -, and money.

The wider passage of 1 Timothy 2: 8-15 places the “*zwijgtekst*” in the context of church (cf. Köstenberger 2006: 509, 513, Moo 2006: 182). Theologians agree that 1 Timothy 2: 11-15, presents many exegetical challenges (cf. Belleville 2005: 205) and a first reading leaves many readers puzzled and faced with questions such as: How are women saved through child bearing (v. 15) whereas in other parts of the New Testament the apostle Paul keeps stressing that salvation is by faith alone? How can the apostle Paul instruct women to be silent in the church (v. 12) whereas in other passages he allows women to prophecy and pray in church? What does the apostle mean by saying that Adam was not deceived (v. 14); does Romans 5:12 not teach that sin entered the world through Adam? And, if women are not allowed to teach men, does this mean that Priscilla was sinning when she explained the scriptures to Apollos (cf. Ac 18:26)? Besides these questions the text also poses other exegetical challenges such as (1) the use of the word *authentheo* (v.12) which is only used once in the scriptures, (2) whether the conjunction *oude* (v.12) is meant to separate or merge the word “teach” and “authority” (cf. Payne 2009: 337), and (3) what significance needs to be attributed to the fact that “Adam was created first” (v. 13). These challenges have however not withheld complementarians such as Moo (2006: 180) from using the text as one of the foundational building blocks in a doctrine preventing the ordination of women. Moo (2006: 180) is of the opinion that the text clearly shows that (1) Christian doctrine should not be taught to men by women and (2) women should not exercise authority over men. Because of the reference to the creation account (v. 13 and 14), these instructions are universally applicable and normative for all believers in all churches at all times. Egalitarians such as Belleville (2005) and Payne (2009) are of the opinion that the passage needs to be interpreted in its cultural context: They believe that the apostle was addressing specific issues in a specific time and church instead of laying down a blue print for church leadership that is applicable to all churches in all places and at all times.

Space does not allow for answering all these questions and for giving an elaborate overview of all the textual and exegetical issues in the text. The focus in this part of the study will be

primarily on the word “authority” in verse 12, because the ordination of women centres around leadership authority and the word *authentheo* is given a key role in formulating a doctrine on the ordination of women (cf. Hübner 2016: 41). The aim of this part is to show that interpreting the text is not as straight forward and as easy as some in the gender debate claim it to be. For more insight in the issues underlying the passage and their influence on the gender debate, the study refers to other scholarly works such as those referenced.

One of the major issues in the text is the use of the Greek word *authentheo* translated in verse 12 as “authority”. The word is a *hapax legomenon* and other uses of the word outside scriptures are scarce (cf. Hübner 2015: 16). Hübner (2015: 16, 2016: 43-44), who has compared the meaning of the word according to various standard lexicons and other studies, lists various possible meanings such as “dominate”, “have authority over”, and “assume a stance of independent authority”. There is evidence to assert that in the apostle Paul’s time the word had “some notion of self-oriented authority, exercise of power, or action”, but despite many studies having been carried out in this area, none of them provides conclusive evidence whether its use in 1 Timothy 2:12 has a positive or a negative tone (Hübner 2015: 17-18).

It is interesting to note that the common word for the apostle Paul to have used to indicate authority would have been *exousia* (cf. chapter 2.8.2). This has led scholars such as Payne to believe that the apostle Paul did not use the word arbitrarily but that it needs to be seen in combination with *didaskein* (teaching) in verse 11. Payne (2009: 395-396), based on his study of the word *authentheo*, favours a translation of “assuming authority over” and is of the opinion that the most natural reading of the verse is as follows (Payne 2009: 396): “I am not permitting a woman to teach and (in combination with this) assume authority over a man”. He interprets the command contextually whereby the apostle Paul is telling specific women in the church in Ephesus to stop teaching men in a way in which they are domineering, assuming authority or exercising authority over men. Belleville (2005: 223) also believes the two words are connected, but in her view the apostle Paul is not prohibiting women from *all* teaching, but only from teaching that tries, “to gain an advantage over the men in the congregation by teaching in a dictatorial fashion”. This is among others based on her study of the word *authentheo*, where she finds “to dominate” or “gain the upper hand” the best translations of the word in the context of 1 Timothy 2:12 (2005: 217). Other scholars believe that *authentheo* and *didaskein* are closely related but need to be kept separate (cf. Moo 2006: 187). Moo (2006: 186) favours an interpretation of the word *authentheo* of “authority over” and believes that a correct interpretation of verse 12 imposes not one, but two restrictions on the ministry of women that were already mentioned before and centre around women being forbidden to teach men Christian doctrine and to exercise

authority over men in the church (2006: 187). It is essential for complementarians such as Moo to link *didaskein* (teaching) specifically to the word *andros* (men) because the Bible provides ample evidence of women teaching (cf. Tt 2:3; Pr 31:26; Eph 4:11; 2 Tm 2:24, 4:2), being given the command to teach (cf. Mt 28:19-20) and receiving the spiritual gift of teaching (cf. 1 Cor 12: 1-31; Rm 12: 6-8). Where to Moo (2006: 186) this link is “grammatically unobjectionable”, many other theological studies prepared on this passage show that not everyone agrees with this.

Hübner (2015: 18) sees a connection with verse 11 where women are called to “learn quietly with all submissiveness”. He is of the opinion that the apostle Paul is calling the women in the church in Ephesus to be humble and to stop their ungodly attitude and inappropriate behaviour. He finds support for this view in the fact that the apostle Paul in the whole of chapter 2 corrects ungodly behaviour. He (2015: 20) writes: “the context indicates that some Ephesian women were behaving in a particularly ungodly manner as they were taught by other (predominantly male) Christians...they were disruptive...or overly assertive instead of submissive students...”. Acknowledging the complexity of the relationship between *authenteo* and *didaskein*, based on his research, Hübner (2015: 21) follows Payne in concluding that it is likely that both words convey a single concept.

The above shows that scholars differ on the correct interpretation of the word *authenteo* and whether or not it needs to be seen in conjunction with the word for teaching, *didaskein* and thus speaks of “authoritative teaching”. A correct understanding of the word will depend on an accurate knowledge of the situation the apostle Paul was addressing in his letter, something which can no longer be known for certain given our distance in time, geography and culture. The question can therefore be asked whether it is doctrinally sound to use this passage as a central text in constructing a doctrine that restricts the role and ordination of women in the church. No study should be done in isolation of the context in which it was written. As Hübner (2015: 23) writes, “internal studies conducted for no other purpose than to affirm the traditional interpretation (ed: complementarian) are hailed as nails in the egalitarian coffin but remain dubious or self-rebutting. Cries for context only come home to roost and ultimately threaten to unshackle the scared chains of “gender roles”. Hermeneutical stability ends up not so stable at all”.

3.6.7 Galatians 3:28

The text in Galatians 3:28 is often quoted in the gender debate and frequently used by egalitarians to point to the new creation order and equality between men and women in all aspects of kingdom ministry. Here the apostle Paul writes: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ

Jesus". The passage is part of the apostle Paul's letter to the believers in (most likely) Southern Galatia and was written around AD 48, although there are arguments for a later date around AD 52-57 (cf. Carson and Moo 2005: 457-465). The letter was written in response to the news that the churches in Galatia were turning away from the pure gospel: Jewish "Christians" had come into the church and were teaching that Christians were to obey the Jewish Law, especially practices such as circumcision, observance of the Sabbath and food laws (cf. Carson and Moo 2005: 465-468). The most important contributions of the letter to the Galatians are the strong focus on justification by faith alone and the implications of this for Christian living, and (2) the importance of the Holy Spirit to enable believers to live a Christian life (cf. Lewis Johnson Jr 2006: 156-157). Fee (2005b: 174) expands on this by saying that the letter testifies to the apostle Paul's life's calling, namely that Jew and Gentile under the new covenant are, "one people of God in Jesus Christ" and that for Gentiles to share in this status, they don't have to take on the Jewish identity as some false teachers were teaching.

Longenecker (1990: 150-151) acknowledges that the structure of Galatians 3:26-29 is rather complex when he writes: "First there is what appears to be a "sayings" statement regarding the status of "all" believers as being "sons of God" because they are "in Christ"(v 26); then there is what is probably a confessional portion used in support of that statement and highlighting the new relationships that exists "in Christ" (vv 27-28); and finally there is a concluding statement as to what all this means for the issue raised by the Judaizers regarding Gentile Christians' relationship to Abraham (v29)". In his view (1990: 159) the main thrust of the passage is the shift from being "under the law" (cf. Gl 3:19-25) to being "in Christ" (cf. Gl 3: 26-29), and to show the effects of this new position on spiritual, societal and cultural relationships. Where the passage is often used in the gender debate, it is interesting to note that Longenecker makes no reference to gender in his analysis of the text.

The text in Galatians 3:28 needs to be seen in the larger context of the purpose of the law (cf. Lewis Johnson Jr 2006: 157) but theologians differ in their view on how this verse needs to be interpreted. Complementarians are in general of the opinion that the verse means that in Christ, Greeks, slaves and women have also become sons of God through faith in Christ. In other words, they believe that the verse refers to the status of believers before Christ. Piper and Grudem's (2006a: 71-72) answer to the question whether Galatians 3:28 takes away gender as a basis for role distinction in the church, is for example as follows: "The context of Galatians 3:28 makes abundantly clear the sense in which men and women are equal in Christ; they are equally justified by faith (v. 24), equally free from the bondage of legalism (v. 25), equally children of God (v. 26), equally clothed with Christ (v. 27), equally

possessed by Christ (v. 29), and equally heirs of the promises to Abraham (v. 29)". Theologians such as Piper and Grudem (cf. Piper and Grudem 2006a: 82-84) are of the opinion that Galatians 3:28 refers to the equal status of all believers before God, but that it leaves intact the (in their view) divinely ordained role differences between men and women. Letting go of role differences between men and women is in their view necessary to stop the tide of homosexuality and gender confusion entering the church, which an egalitarian interpretation of Galatians 3:28 would not achieve. Lewis Johnson Jr (2006: 158) is also of the opinion that Galatians 3:28 refers to a believer's standing before God. However, he weakens his support for this view when he acknowledges the contextual relevance of this verse and writes (2006: 58): "the apostle seems to have in mind the morning prayer of Jewish men... in which the men thanked God that they were not born a Gentile, a slave or a woman" and "The three distinctions, important for Jewish life, are declared by Paul to be invalid in Christ". He is of the opinion that the apostle was rejecting the Jewish view where Greeks, slaves and women are "limited in certain spiritual privileges open to Jewish males". His application of the verse is however not consistent when he (2006: 159) later concludes that the distinctions between Jew/Gentile and slave/master are to be interpreted in their context and are therefore no longer relevant, but that the distinction between men and women are to be interpreted in light of Genesis 1:27 and other Pauline passages such as 1 Corinthians 11 and 1 Timothy 2. He also contradicts himself when he writes (2006: 160): "it must be remembered that in this context Paul is not speaking of relationships in the family and church, but of standing before God in righteousness by faith", whereas a little earlier he placed the verse in the context of Jewish life at that time.

Other theologians are of the opinion that the implications of Galatians 3:28 go further than just referring to a believer's status before God. They find in the passage proof that under the new covenant, Jews and Greeks, slaves and masters and men and women are equal in standing but also in their ministry opportunities and responsibilities in the Kingdom of God. Payne (2009: 79) for example argues that if the verse was just referring to a believer's status, verse 28 would first of all be redundant because the apostle Paul had already made a believer's status before Christ clear in verse 26, and second does not make any sense because it would imply that some held the view that Greeks, slaves and women could not be saved, a view which no one held. By taking the closely related parallel Pauline passages in Colossians 3:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:13 and their immediate contexts into account, Payne finds evidence that both apply to practical issues in the church and aim to break social barriers between different groups of people. In reference to 1 Corinthians 12:25 where the apostle Paul stresses the importance of unity in the body, Payne (2009: 81) writes: "to exclude any of these groups from full participation and ministry opportunities in

the church would be to create just such a division in the body". Based on these parallel passages, Payne (2009: 81, 85) comes to the conclusion that Galatians 3:28 must not be separated from the practical life of the church; the apostle Paul's teachings on the spiritual gifts (cf. 1 Cor 12:4-11) show that all believers, whether Jew, Greek, slave, master, man or woman, have equal opportunity and responsibility to minister in accordance with God's calling and gifting. In his (Payne 2009: 86) view, Galatians 3:28 is therefore more than, "just a theoretical comment about individual salvation", but a serious appeal made by the apostle Paul to the believers to make sure that societal structures would not become the norm for the church. Based on Galatians 6:15 where the believers are referred to as "a new creation", Payne (2009: 104) further concludes that, "central to this new creation is the new "Israel of God" (Gal 6:16) that gives no privileged status to Jews over Gentiles, free persons over slaves, or to men over women. They are all one in Christ Jesus..." and "All now live in Christ, freed from control by the principalities of the world and heirs of God's promises to Abraham. No one is a second-class citizen or excluded by ethnic-religious background, economic status, or gender from any position or privilege in the church".

Fee (2005b: 179) follows this so called new creation theology where all believers are now "in Christ". One of the radical implications of this new creation in his opinion is that ethnicity, status and gender are no longer separating factors in this new creation, even though they may still be operative in society. Where Christians are called to serve Christ within cultural and societal structures, these structures and roles should not be given significance. Fee (2005b: 185) concludes by saying: "the new creation has brought in the time where the Spirit's gifting...should precede roles and structures, which are only a carryover from the old order that is passing away".

3.6.8 Other major areas of discussion in the gender debate

It was mentioned before that the gender debate that underlies the ordination of women is complex and broad and remains an ongoing topic of discussion. A few of the key scriptures used in support of a doctrine on the ordination have been discussed and it is clear that this discussion has only scratched the top of the iceberg. Much more can be said and highlighted when it comes to gender issues in the church. Beside the scriptures mentioned above, three other major issues in the gender debate that restrict the ordination of women will now be highlighted, without going into too much detail. For more information on each of these issues, there are ample other (biblical) theological works available.

3.6.8.1 The maleness of the apostles

The argument often used to prevent the ordination of women is the fact that Christ choose twelve *male* apostles. Borland (2006: 113) for example writes: “Jesus’ recognition of role distinctions for men and women is demonstrated by His choosing of only men to serve as His apostles with their primary tasks of preaching, teaching and governing. Women, however, served in other important capacities, such as praying, providing financial assistance, ministering to physical needs, voicing their theological understanding and witnessing to the resurrection”. The question is whether the maleness of the twelve apostles is to be normative for church leadership. Theologians such as Spencer (2005: 133-140) answer this question negatively and argue among others that if maleness is an abiding precedent, then why not also apply this to the racial and political status of the apostles? A possible explanation that is given for the reason why Jesus choose an all-male eldership is that the twelve apostles represent the twelve tribes of Israel (cf. Kung 2005: 3, Leene 2013: 225-227, Spencer 2005: 135). In this context, the maleness of the twelve apostles points to the importance of the new covenant being founded on the old covenant and, besides representing the twelve tribes, also points to the twelve patriarchs. This would also explain why the apostles had to be Jewish.

The word apostle means, “someone who is sent” and one of the criteria the apostle Paul gives for being an apostle, is being an eyewitness to the resurrection. The Bible shows that women were part of the large group of followers of Jesus that spent time with Him and were taught by Him. All these were sent out by Him to proclaim the good news of the gospel and nowhere in the Bible is this action of proclamation restricted to only men. The apostleship of women is further supported by the resurrection account which reads that it were women who were eyewitness to the resurrection and subsequently commissioned to “go and tell the brothers”. Spencer (2005: 140) writes: “As apostles sent by God, the twelve Jewish men looked back to the old covenant, whereas the multi-numbered women and men looked forward, beyond the resurrection to the new covenant. When scholars disqualify women from church leadership by using the twelve male apostles as precedents, they ignore the significance both of their number (twelve) and their Jewishness, and they dismiss the importance of women’s functioning as “apostles” and of Junia’s being titled an “apostle””.

3.6.8.2 Functional hierarchy in the Trinity

A more recent issue in the gender debate, especially on the topic of headship, is of a Christological nature: In order to fit the patriarchal model of female submission, complementarians see in the Trinity proof for the eternal subordination of the Son to the Father. Grudem (2006: 457) for example writes: “the orthodox doctrine has always been

that there is equality in essence (ontological) and subordination in role (functional) and that these two are consistent with each other". Grudem (2006: 457) refers to the Nicene Creed in 325 AD and sees this subordination of the Son to the Father as being consistent with the apostle Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 11:3 where it says that, "the head of Christ is God". If the headship of men in marriage and in the church can be proven to be analogous to the headship of God in the Trinity, it would explain why a social institution such as slavery had to be abolished but an institution of male authority and female submission in marriage and the church needs to remain in place. That the role of women in the church has influenced the current debate around the Trinity is evident in for example the bundle of essays published in 2015 under the name "One God in Three Persons" (Ware and Starke 2015). In the preface of the book it is clear that the book is written not just with the doctrine of the Trinity as such in mind, but also to counteract evangelical feminism by proving that there is hierarchical authority in the Trinity. As Gons and Naselli (2015: 195) write: "the heart of the gender debate has become the heart of the Trinity debate". The debate on the Trinity is a complex and technical debate that has every danger of becoming speculative and going beyond what is biblically sound. Much critique has come against this relational understanding of the Trinity and its use as support for a universal functional submission of women to men. Some of these critiques are the division of the divine will, the inseparable divine operations and the role of the Holy Spirit. Added to this is the understanding of *perichoresis*, a word that was originally used to identify the two natures of Christ but in today's day is primarily used in connection with the Trinity and the church. Volf (1998: 208), who describes *perichoresis* as, "a mutual internal abiding and interpenetration of the trinitarian persons...which determines the character both of the divine persons and of their unity", uses a *perichoresic* understanding of the Trinity to determine relationships at an ecclesial level (see Volf 1998: 208-213). Leene (2013: 63-65, 194-197) has done a similar but more extended exercise by looking at the gender issue in the church from among others a *perichoresic* understanding of the Trinity. Nel (2015: 136-137) also makes mention of *perichoresis* in the context of developing a missional church. It will not be surprising that using a *perichoresic* understanding of the relationships in the Trinity to define the relationships in the church, will have a significant impact on the gender debate. It is beyond the scope of this research to further explore and elaborate on this. For more insight in the Trinity as part of the gender debate, Holmes' work "Classical Trinity: Evangelical Perspective" (2014), the bundle of essays "One God in Three Persons", edited by Ware and Stark (2015), the dissertation by Leene (2013) on Trinity, anthropology and ecclesiology in the context of the ordination of women and Volf's (1998) book "After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity" are good places to start.

3.6.8.3 A divine order of male headship and female submission in creation

The functional submission of women to men in both marriage and in the church is according to complementarians universal because it can be traced back to the creation account. This is primarily based on Genesis 2:18-23 where Eve is created after Adam and is said to be Adam's "helper". Based on this passage, complementarians believe that God made the man the head and leader and the woman the follower and helper (cf. Ortlund Jr. 2006: 99). Another argument used to support male headship in the creation account is the fact that Adam names the animals which is interpreted by complementarians that he (Adam) exercised authority over them. Because Adam also named Eve, this is then also seen to imply an authoritative relationship (cf. Hess 2005: 89). Adam is given a place of primacy and Eve is portrayed as the weaker partner and temptress (cf. Parvey 1980: 27). Much critique has come against using the creation account to support male headship in marriage and in the church. One of these counter-arguments relates to the word translated as "helper" in Genesis 2:18. The Hebrew word for "helper" is in Scripture often used to refer to God who is the "helper" of Israel (cf. Hess 2005: 86). It will give no doubt that in these references, God is not the submissive helper that is under the authority of Israel. Hess (2005: 86) writes that these references provide clear evidence that the word translated as "helper" can "refer to anyone who provides assistance, whatever their relationship to the one whom they aid".

A plain reading of the creation account does not show direct evidence of a hierarchical authority structure between men and women in both marriage and in the church. Sumner (2003: 225-227) in this context for example points out that interpreting 1 Timothy 2:12 as a universally applicable principle because God-ordained this in creation, is not correct. If the prohibition of women to teach or be in authority over men was ordained in creation, it follows that women should never allowed to teach men, whether it is in the church or anywhere else. She (2003: 227) writes: "If her teaching him per se upsets the order of creation, then her teaching him anything must also be regarded as wrong" and "it's illogical to believe that it's wrong to defy the order of creation only in "the household of God". That's tantamount to saying it is wrong to commit adultery on Sunday morning in the church, but it's perfectly acceptable at any other place and during any other time of the week". Sumner highlights an important aspect: it seems that complementarians, rather than taking the creation account as the foundation for gender roles in the church, have taken the few (disputed) Pauline passages on the role of women in the church as the foundation for gender roles and, in order to find support that these passages need to be applied to all churches in all places and times, have interpreted the creation account in such a way that it fits their view and presuppositions.

3.6.9 Mutual submission between men and women

Much attention so far has been given to the complementarian view and the arguments underlying this view. This study will now briefly highlight the arguments underlying the egalitarian view that holds that there is no hierarchical authority between man and woman. When it comes to church leadership, including the practice of ordination, in this view gender is not a determining factor to decide who should be ordained into certain church offices or functions. Payne, an egalitarian who has done extensive exegetical and theological study on the position of men and women in the letters of the apostle Paul, has found twelve axioms that in his opinion firmly establish that men and women have a full equal standing. What follows are a brief description of some of these twelve axioms Payne has identified, which support the view why women should not be denied access to leadership positions in the church. A full description of each of these axioms can be found in chapter three of Payne's book (2009: 69-76). It is important to note that this section will suffice by mentioning the axioms without discussing or evaluating them. The main purpose of what follows is to highlight the egalitarian reasoning on gender roles in the church.

- *Man and women are equally created in God's image.* Scriptures such as Colossians 3:10 and 2 Corinthians 3:18 show that under the new covenant, all believers are being renewed and transformed after the image of God. Gender is not a distinguishing factor to the believer's being in the image of God and their being in Christ. This is in line with Genesis 1:27 where it is written: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" and Genesis 5:1b-2: "When God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. Male and female He created them, and He blessed them and named them man (Adam) when they were created". Both scriptures show that God created both male and female in His image (*Imago Dei*) and this is also what the apostle Paul teaches when it comes to the believers. This means that God is also both male and female, and so are Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- *Male and female equally receive the creation mandate and blessing.* Genesis 1:26-30 makes no distinction between man and woman when it comes to the mandates that God has given. This joined authority over everything the earth produces and all living creatures is echoed by the apostle Paul in passages such as 1 Corinthians 10:23-30 and 1 Timothy 6:17, where he writes that everything in creation can be enjoyed by both men and women alike.
- *The redeemed – male and female – are equally "in Christ".* Romans 10: 13 reads that "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" and verse 12 makes clear that there is no gender distinction or special requirements for men or women

for salvation. All believers, men and women, are equally “in Christ” and have an equal standing “in Christ”. This truth is confirmed in 1 Corinthians 11:11 where the apostle Paul writes: “woman is not separate from man, nor is man separate from woman in the Lord”.

- *The nature of church leadership as service applies equally to male and female.* Church leadership is based on spiritual gifts and a serving attitude and not on earthly power and wisdom. This is based on the fact that the apostle Paul often uses the word *diakonia* (service) and *doulos* (slave) to refer to his own ministry and other followers of Christ. Because church authority does not lie in a person or office, but in the scriptures, church leadership needs to be inspired by the Holy Spirit who gives the spiritual gifts that are needed for leadership. Leadership authority is therefore not attached to a person or office, but is dependent on the inspiration and guiding of the Holy Spirit. That this inspiration and guiding includes women is, according to Payne, evident in the way the apostle Paul includes and writes about the women that he was working and ministering with.
- *Mutual submission in the church presupposes the equal standing of women and men.* Payne bases this on Ephesians 5:21 which reads that men and women are to submit to each other. This is in line with scriptures such as Galatians 5:13 where it is written: “serve one another in love” and Romans 12:10 where it says: “honour one another above yourselves”. These scriptures are not gender specific and therefore apply to all believers. This requires an equal standing of both men and women and is in line with the requirements for church leadership as described above.
- *Mutual submission in marriage presupposes the equality of men and women.* Ephesians 5:21 gives the general command for believers to submit to each other. This is followed in verse 22 and onwards by focusing on the specific relationship between husbands and wives where the apostle Paul, by saying that the wife should submit to the husband and that the husband is to sacrificially love his wife, explains what such mutual submission should look like. Payne has found further evidence for such mutual submission in marriage in 1 Corinthians 7:1-16 where both husband and wife have an equal say in abstaining from sexual relations, and where the apostle Paul highlights the mutuality in spiritual relations. In a society where household tables gave authority to husbands, masters and parents, the apostle Paul promotes an egalitarian view where in Christ, believers are to submit to each other. This is in contrast to proponents of the complementarian position who see a difference in authority between the man’s call to sacrificially love his wife, and the

wife's call to submit to her husband. In the complementarian view, the husband is in authority over his wife, but has to make sure that he does this lovingly and sacrificially.

- *The oneness of the body of Christ presupposes the equality of men and women.* The apostle Paul frequently writes against divisions in the body. The unity of the church is a theme that can be found in many of his letters. This unity does not mean that all believers have the same place in the body, but it does mean that there is no hierarchy or competitive ranking. Also, Ephesians 4:12 makes clear that all members, both men and women, are responsible for the building up of the body and ministry. There is no distinction between genders.
- *The priesthood of all believers presupposes the equality of men and women.* Payne focuses this axiom on the teaching ministry that, according to 2 Corinthians 3:12-18, 1 Corinthians 14:26 and Colossians 3:16, is something that belongs to both men and women. The priesthood of all believers does not make a distinction between genders. Both men and women have an equal standing in the priesthood and share equally in the priestly duties.
- *The gifts of the Spirit manifest the equality of men and women.* All believers, men and women alike, have been given one or more spiritual gifts that are to be used "for the common good". Spiritual gifts like prophecy and teaching are not restricted to only men and, as Payne (2009: 74) writes, "who dares to oppose the Spirit giving women gifts and guiding women into ministry as he chooses"?
- *Liberty in Christ presupposes the equality of men and women.* In Galatians 3:28 the apostle Paul writes that in Christ there is no male or female because all are one in Christ. Both men and women have a newfound liberty in Christ which applies to all areas of life, not just the righteous standing before God.

3.7 Ordination, gender and the priesthood of all believers

The theoretical framework so far has discussed the priesthood of all believers in chapter 2 and the practice of ordination and, more specifically the ordination of women, in chapter 3. Before continuing with the empirical research it is important to highlight some of the findings when it comes to the relationship between the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the ordination of women. Without going into too much detail or repeating what has already been said, the following can be said:

1. The priesthood of all believers refers to both the status and function of believers and makes no gender distinctions.

2. Where in the Old Testament the priesthood was reserved for the male Levites, in the New Testament that system has been done away with: all believers, men and women alike, are part of the same priesthood and are responsible for the works of ministry.
3. The New Testament ministry is based on spiritual gifts and servanthood. Both are given to both men and women alike, as the Holy Spirit decides.
4. Within the church God gives certain people the spiritual gift of leadership. These gifts are given to both men and women. The scriptures do not give evidence that people with these gifts should be ordained into church offices. The scriptures give evidence of a functional understanding of the gift of leadership.
5. The common New Testament word for authority is *exousia*. All believers have the same (potential) authority under the Lordship of Christ. One of the meanings of the word *exousia* is that it is a right that is given to someone to perform actions in a certain domain on behalf of the one who has given that authority. It is this type of authority that is relevant for the ministerial and priestly role of all believers and thus in the context of church leadership.
6. Leadership authority, based on Carroll's study and in the context of the priesthood of all believers, is determined by a combination of spiritual gifts, spiritual maturity, inner calling, experience and knowledge. Gender is not a qualifying criteria.
7. Based on the above, authority lies in a person and not in an office and is ensured under the direct authority of Christ himself; an authority that can be found in the scriptures.
8. The scriptures do not provide evidence that the laying on of hands or the setting apart of believers is linked to an installation into a hierarchical church office. Rather, scriptural evidence points to a recognition of gifts and calling and a setting apart of believers for a particular ministry or missionary task.

Coming from the perspective of the priesthood of all believers as shown above, this study highlights the following on the ordination of women in light of what has been discussed above:

1. The priesthood of all believers points to an egalitarian interpretation of Galatians 3:28. Where in the Old Testament priesthood there was a distinction between male and female, this distinction has been done away with under the new covenant. All believers, both male and female, are priests and as such are responsible for the works of ministry. Even if Galatians 3:28 would only refer to the *status* of believers

- “in Christ”, the priesthood of all believers shows that men and women are also equal in *function*.
2. The priesthood of all believers makes clear that church leadership is not an office or position, but a function within the body of believers. The spiritual gift of leadership is given to both men and women. This would point to an egalitarian interpretation of the key scriptures used in the gender debate.
 3. The common word for “authority” in the context of the priesthood of all believers is the word *exousia*. In the gender debate the words for authority to support the view that leadership authority is to be restricted to men, are the words *kephalē* and *authentēo*. The most common use of the word *kephalē* is to refer to a literal head. Translating the word as “authority over” is disputed. The word *authentēo* is a hapax legomenon and the translation of the word is therefore uncertain. The question can be asked why the apostle Paul, if he wanted to lay down a divine order of male leadership in marriage and church, did not use the common word for authority, namely *exousia*.

The priesthood of all believers does not provide any gender restrictions in the church. That only comes in when four to five Pauline passages that are highly debated and disputed are taken into account. These passages, when interpreted in a complementarian way, are like an unexpected and illogical roadblock on the path of the ordination of women when set within the context of the priesthood of all believers. This chapter has shown that the complementarian interpretation of these passages is not as straightforward and clear as it is often claimed to be. No theologian would deny that the Pauline passages need to be interpreted in its context, but time, geographical distance and distance in culture make it difficult in the present to fully understand these contexts and therefore know for certain what the apostle Paul was trying to communicate. Based on this, care should be taken when building a doctrine on the ordination of women solely on the biblical interpretation of such highly disputed and exegetically challenging scriptures. Conclusions should only be drawn when taking a broader perspective into account. The priesthood of all believers is such a broader theological theme. What the theoretical framework of this thesis has shown is that when coming from the perspective of the priesthood of all believers, the biblical interpretation of the scriptures on the role and ordination of women would favour an egalitarian view.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter the practice of ordination and specifically the ordination of women was explored. The chapter started by showing that the ordination of women is primarily a twenty-century debate that, despite its leading to the ordination of women in certain denominations, is still an ongoing topic of discussion. The report of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches showed the extent and complexity of the debate. In chapter 3.3 various views on ordination were discussed and it was shown that the view on ordination is dependent on how a church is structured and how the church offices within a particular structure are viewed. Chapter 3.4 explored the practice of ordination through church history. It became clear that the developments in the practice of ordination were highly influenced by the separation of the priesthood of all believers into a normal priesthood and a ministerial priesthood during the time of Cyprian in the third century. Where the New Testament gives evidence of an expressive and relative view on ordination, during Cyprian's time the view turned to an instrumental and absolute one. The Reformation brought a change to this and the renewed functional view on the church offices required a different interpretation on the practice of ordination. In the present day there is a wide variety in how churches view ordination and what it accomplishes. The Baptist, Eucharist and Ministry paper of the World Council of Churches gives ample evidence of this.

In chapter 3.5 the main scriptures used to support a doctrine of ordination were discussed and evaluated. Although the scriptures gave evidence of a practice whereby certain believers were appointed and set apart for a certain task and ministry, often accompanied by the laying on of hands, it was shown that it is difficult to trace the practice of ordination as it was established in the early church back to these scriptures. It was concluded that the scriptures do not support a view on ordination that sets the clergy apart from the laity, but that ordination needs to be seen in the sense of a "setting apart" for a specific task or ministry. Such a view on ordination is in line with what was discussed in chapter 2 with respect to the priesthood of all believers.

In chapter 3.6 ordination was placed within the wider gender debate. It was shown that the debate on the role of women, including the ordination of women into church leadership, has come from a long tradition where women were believed to be inferior to men because of their femaleness. It was primarily from the nineteenth century onward that the belief that both men and women were created equally in the image of God, started to gain attention and improve the position of women in society. The voice of tradition in the church remains however strong. Two major views on the role and ordination of women were discussed and the arguments underlying each view were highlighted, including a presentation of different

scholarly views and interpretations. The discussion centred on the words *kephalē* and *authenteo*, two words both usually translated as “authority” and, in the context of the gender-scriptures, crucial in the support of a doctrine of male authority and female submission in both marriage and the church. It was further shown that the key scriptures and other arguments, such as a functional hierarchy in the Trinity and in the creation account, present many exegetical challenges and are not as straightforward as some voices in the debate claim it to be. Time, geographical distance and distance in culture make it difficult for current-day readers to fully understand the contexts in which these Pauline passages were written and it was mentioned that care should therefore be taken in constructing a doctrine of male ordination based on these passages.

In chapter 3.7 the ordination of women in light of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers was evaluated. It was concluded that the priesthood of all believers does not present any gender restrictions and that the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers would point to an egalitarian interpretation of the key scriptures in the gender debate.

4 Empirical research

4.1 Aim of the chapter

The problem statement of the research was formulated as follows:

Is the church's view on the ordination of women in church leadership influenced by how the church understands and implements the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers?

The particular research questions were:

- 1) How is the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers understood and implemented in the life of the local church? Does the church hold to a distinction between clergy and laity? If yes, what distinguishes the clergy from the laity?
- 2) How is the practice of ordination understood and implemented in the life of the local church? Does the church ordain its leaders and/or its members? If yes, what does the church see as the purpose of this ordination?
- 3) How does the church view the ordination and role of women in church leadership? Is gender an issue in the church? If yes, what are these gender distinctions based on and how are these placed within the context of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers?

The aim of this chapter is:

- 1) To (further) define the qualitative research.
- 2) To describe the process of how this qualitative research was set up and conducted, including the sample selection.
- 3) To provide an overview of the questions for the full structured interviews.
- 4) To present the data gained from the interviews.
- 5) To analyse, evaluate and interpret this data.

4.2 Qualitative research further defined

Qualitative research was already described in chapter 1.10. It is the type of research that collects descriptive data such as people's spoken or written words and their observable behaviour (cf. Taylor et al. 2016: 4). The aim of such data is to gain understanding of why people do what they do, as can be seen with Osmer (2008: 49-50) who writes: "*Qualitative* research seeks to understand the actions and practices in which individuals and groups engage in everyday life and the meanings they ascribe to their experience". This is also

called the *verstehende* approach, a term that is linked to the German philosopher Weber and means “understanding” (cf. Taylor et al. 2016: 4). Qualitative researchers study social phenomena in order to understand the motives and beliefs that underlie people’s actions. It is evident that qualitative research therefore has to be done in a social setting and cannot be done in for example a secluded laboratory. The researcher in qualitative research becomes the research instrument through which all descriptive data is filtered (cf. Staller 2010: 1160). This immediately shows the danger of qualitative research: the gathered data is observed and interpreted by the researcher who bring himself or herself as a person into the process and who can influence the outcome. It is important for a researcher to be aware of this.

According to Marshall and Rossman (2016: 2-3) the characteristics of qualitative researchers are:

- 1) They view social worlds as holistic and complex.
- 2) They engage in systematic reflection on who they are in the conduct of the research.
- 3) They remain sensitive to their own biographies/social identities and how these shape the study (i.e., they are reflexive).
- 4) They rely on complex reasoning that moves dialectically between deduction and induction.
- 5) They conduct their inquiries systematically.

It was already mentioned in chapter 1.10 that qualitative research in general will be less formalised than quantitative research. This does however not mean that it lacks any design and deserves to be critiqued as being, “soft, subjective, and unscientific” (cf. Osmer 2008: 50). Rather, as Maxwell (2012: 214-215) also points out, it means that qualitative research will require a more flexible and less rigid design. The different phases of the research, such as observation, description, analysis and reflection, can be going on simultaneously and influence each other rather than following a strict sequential order. The researcher may also need to adjust or reconsider design decisions during the course of the research due to developments in the field. Osmer (2008: 50), rather than seeing quantitative and qualitative as two separate strategies of research, sees them on a continuum with on one end qualitative research and on the other end quantitative research where, “there are many intermediate points on this continuum that combine quantitative and qualitative strategies in a variety of ways”. In what follows, the design of the qualitative research will be described. This will be done by following the four components as identified by Osmer (2008: 53). These components are (1) the people under investigation, (2) the data gathering methods, (3) the researcher conducting the research, and (4) the steps to carry out the project in time. These

steps are to a large extent identical to the steps Maxwell (2012: 234) defines which are (1) the research relationship with the participants, (2) sampling and sources of information, (3) data collection and (4) data analysis. These components will now be discussed and the process of the empirical research will be explained

4.3 The participants and the researcher

Maxwell (2012: 234) calls this, “negotiating a research relationship”. Because the researcher in qualitative research is often the research instrument, it is important to be aware of how relationships between researcher and participants may influence the empirical research and affect other parts of the research design.

In the proposed research design in chapter one, it was mentioned that the empirical research would be conducted with pastors of ten local Baptist churches that are part of the WPBA. Interviews will be conducted with each of these pastors in which a pre-determined set of questions will be asked. Although the researcher is a member of a local Baptist church that is part of the WPBA, she does not know of many of the other churches or pastors within the WPBA. Because the researcher is also not an accredited minister within the WPBA, nor at this stage intends to become one, there is no personal interest that might influence the research and make the researcher less objective.

4.4 Sample selection

4.4.1 Sampling defined

Sampling happens when the researcher takes the entire potential participant population and from this group selects a smaller group among which the empirical research will be conducted (cf. Fritz and Morgan 2010: 1303). The process of sampling is important because the researcher, even though he or she will not research the entire population, does want to be able to draw conclusions that apply to the entire population. For sampling it is important that the researcher has a certain prior understanding of what is included in the population under study. It is for example important to know whether the population is homogenous or diversified, or if there are any material limitations to keep in mind such as distance or the cost of collecting data.

There are various ways to sample. Two common ways to distinguish between sampling are probability sampling versus non-probability sampling, and random sampling versus non-random sampling (cf. Fritz and Morgan 2010: 1304). In probability sampling each individual has a non-zero chance of being selected. It requires that the researcher has access to the

entire population. This type of sampling is often used in quantitative research and can include the use of statistical methods. However, it can also be as simple as using a random number table to select the sample. For non-probability sampling, the researcher does not need to have access to the entire population and not every person has an equal chance of being selected. The sample can still be representative of the entire population, but the extent to which this is the case is difficult to determine (cf. Fritz and Morgan 2010: 1304-1305). Random sampling is usually the first choice for more quantitative research. For qualitative research it might be that non-random sampling is the preferred method because the focus of the research can be on specific people or situations because of the information they can provide (cf. Rapley 2013: 50). Other types of sampling include but are not limited to:

- Convenience sampling. In this type of sampling the researcher chooses participants that are easily available. It is part of the non-probability sampling and is usually non-random (Fritz and Morgan 2010: 1304-1305).
- Quota sampling. In this type of sampling the researcher sets a quota for the number of participants in each category, for example men or women or age categories (Fritz and Morgan 2010: 1305).

For qualitative research there is yet another category of sampling which is neither a probability sample nor a sample of convenience. Maxwell (2012: 235) calls this the purposeful sample. In this type of sampling the researcher purposefully selects certain individuals and situations because of the information they can provide. This type of sampling can enhance the representativeness of the sample. It can also be used when it is important to select those participants and situations that are essential for the theories that underlie the study, or that have developed since (see Maxwell 2012: 235).

4.4.2 Sample selection

As outlined in chapter 1, this research is conducted under the pastors of local Baptist churches associated with the WPBA. For this purpose, the WPBA provided the researcher with the “Western Province Baptist Association Directory 2018”. This document contains among others a list of all churches in the WPBA, including the names and contact details of their pastors. The full list contained 133 churches, further divided into ten regions. The number of churches per region was as follows:

Region	Number of churches	Region	Number of churches
1	15	6	16
2	18	7	10
3	20	8	10
4	5	9	9
5	17		13

Table 4.1

Because of the nature and scope of this research, the sample was a sample of convenience. In setting the sample, the following aspects were taken into consideration:

- Distance – there are regions that are quite a distance away from where the researcher lives.
- Safety – there are regions where safety is a concern for a female researcher.
- Number of churches – the more churches in a region, the higher the chance of finding willing participants.

Based on these factors it was decided that the sample would be selected from regions two and three: these regions are in a reasonable driving distance, are in generally safe areas and contain a fair amount of churches.

The total number of churches in these regions is 38. The sample was set as follows:

- Step 1 - Full list of churches, sorted alphabetically by name in Excel.
- Step 2 - Using the a-select() function in Excel, each row was given a unique and random number.
- Step 3 - This table was then sorted from low to high.
- Step 4 - The first ten churches of this list were selected for the sample. When pastors of these first ten churches were not willing or able to cooperate, or when it was not possible to get hold of the pastor, the next church on the list was selected and contacted.

If a church had more than one pastor on the list, the first pastor was selected for the interview. In the case of two churches, the interviews were held with the associate pastor. In one instance this was due to the fact that the senior pastor was on sabbatical. In the other instance this was due to the fact that the senior pastor fell ill on the day of the interview and the associate pastor was willing to step in. All pastors agreed to participate in the empirical research via phone and email and provided a signed letter of consent.

All pastors who were interviewed were English speaking, although this was not always their first language. The interviews were conducted in English. All interviews were recorded on a recording device and transcribed. Where possible the transcription is a word for word record of what the pastors said. However, when sentences were not correctly formulated or adequately finished, the recording of the interview was transcribed in such a way that the transcript was readable, without adding any thoughts or interpretation to the given answers. Also, if a pastor would divert in his answers and tell anecdotes or incidents that did not contribute to the research, these were not included in the transcripts. Copies of the recordings and the full transcriptions are kept by the researcher for the prescribed archiving period.

Although the researcher did not specifically ask the pastors for their age, based on what they shared in the interviews, their years of pastoral experience and their appearance, it was clear that all pastors were over forty and had a minimum of 10-15 years of experience in pastoring local churches. All pastors, including the two associate pastors, had received theological training and were accredited Baptist ministers. Of the ten pastors, nine had received their theological training via a South African Baptist Seminary or similar institution. One pastor, because of his nationality, had received his theological training outside of South Africa.

In what follows, the churches will be referred to as C1 to C10 and the pastors of the churches as P1 to P10, whereby P1 is the pastor of C1. This allows to refer to individual pastors while at the same time ensuring confidentiality and anonymity of the information provided.

4.5 Method of research and data collection

According to Osmer (2008: 54), the research methods are, “the specific procedures used to gather and record data”. The data for this research was collected via interviews. Osmer (2008: 62) points out that there are two decisions that influence the interviews: (1) the level of structure and (2) the type of questions. In this research, one-on-one face-to-face interviews with the pastors of the churches were conducted. The interviews were fully structured: a list of pre-determined questions was composed, sent to the participants and used as the guideline for the interviews. The questions were open-ended. In order to allow the participant the freedom to elaborate and prevent it becoming a robotic interview, the interviews were flexible and allowed the participant the freedom to divert (slightly) into related areas. A list of sub-questions was prepared that could be used to gain a deeper understanding of the topic at hand.

An important aspect of data collection methods is the relationship with the research questions. The interview questions are the method via which the researcher aims to provide the answers to the research questions and they will generally be more focused and specific than the research questions. By asking the right set of interview questions, the researcher tries to collect the data that will contribute to answering the research questions. Although it is advised to use a variety of methods and sources of information, given the limitations of this research, the data will be collected solely via interviews. In setting the questions, the researcher tried to anticipate as best as possible how the interviews could work out in practice. In line with the research questions, the interview questions were divided into different categories which will now be presented and whereby the questions are continuously numbered from one onwards.

4.5.1 Questions category 1: General information regarding the church.

The questions in this category aimed to provide general information about the church, that would provide the context for the other categories of questions and answers. The question in this category was:

1. Can you tell a bit about the history and make-up of the church and how long you have been pastoring in this church?

It was ensured that the answer would, to a minimum, contain the following information:

- The years of existence of the church.
- The period the pastor/interviewee had been involved as a pastor of the church.
- The number of members of the church.
- The leadership structure of the church.
- An overview of the ministries the church is involved in.
- A broad description of some of the demographics of the church such as culture, social status and age.

4.5.2 Questions category 2: The priesthood of all believers

The purpose of this category of questions was to gain insight in how the pastors interpret the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, especially in relation to the position and authority of leadership (clergy) within the congregation (laity). Do the pastors make a distinction between the priesthood of all believers and related, but different, terms such as the natural priesthood of a believer, the Levitical priesthood and the ministerial priesthood? Is there consistency between how the priesthood of all believers is understood in theory

and how it functions in the life of the church? Are all members of the church functioning as priests or is it just a select group? The questions in this category were formulated as follows:

2. The priesthood of all believers is one of the important Baptist principles. What, in your understanding, does this doctrine mean?
3. A general description of the ministry of the priesthood of all believers is “to represent God to the world and the world to God”. This priestly service includes the building up of the church which happens through the ministries of the church. In the church that you pastor, who is responsible for the building up of the church and how is this done in practice?
4. A common distinction in churches is the distinction between clergy and laity. How do you view these two terms in the life of the church you are part of? Is there in your view a distinction between clergy and laity? If yes, what distinguishes them from each other? If no, how is this visible in the church that you pastor?
5. What are the qualifying criteria for entering into a church ministry? Spiritual gifts, experience, calling, gender?
6. How would you describe the relationship between the congregation and yourself/church offices in terms of authority and position? Do you see yourself as being placed:
 - a. Above the congregation (in authority over)
 - b. Under the congregation (at their bidding/service)
 - c. Within the congregation (same level)
 - d. Other...
7. Where in your view lies the authority to fulfil a particular ministry? In the scriptures, the person, the position itself, ...?

4.5.3 Questions category 3: The practice of ordination

This category of questions was related to the practice of ordination in the local church. The aim was to find out how the pastors understand ordination and how this practice functions in the life of the church. The questions also aimed to provide further information on the pastors' views on the distinction between clergy and laity and the setting apart of believers for ministry. Further questions were asked on the practice of ordination in the context of the priesthood of all believers, to investigate how these two are linked. The interview questions were formulated as follows:

8. Pastors in churches associated with BUSA are usually on the list of “ordained pastors”. What in your view does it mean to be an ordained pastor? How would you describe “ordination”?

9. Does the church that you pastor practice ordination? If yes, who is ordained and what are key elements of the ordination service? Were you ordained as a pastor? If no, what was the reason for this?
10. Which one of the following describes ordination in your view the best:
- a. During ordination, the Holy Spirit distributes a special gift/power upon the person that makes him set apart from the rest of the congregation (refers to enfeoffment)
 - b. Ordination is the act where the congregation assigns certain tasks and functions to the ordained. The ordained receives the power and authority from the congregation to fulfil these on her behalf (refers to delegation)
 - c. Ordination is a recognition of the gifts and ministry God has given a believer (refers to recognition).
 - d. Ordination is where the church calls someone to be in authority over them and to minister the sacraments (word, baptism, Eucharist) to them (refers to calling).
11. How do you see ordination and being an ordained pastor in relation to the principle of the priesthood of all believers? Are they in line with each other or do they contradict each other?

4.5.4 Questions category 4: The ordination of women

The aim of this category of questions was to find out what the views on the role of women in church leadership are. Do the pastors (and the churches) hold to a complementarian or an egalitarian view on the role of women in church leadership? If the pastors hold to a complementarian view, how does this reconcile with how they understand the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers?

The answers given by the pastors were then placed in the context of the priesthood of all believers and any other information provided so far. For this category of questions, although questions had been formulated beforehand, the study allowed the freedom to ask additional questions. For example, if the church happened to have a full male leadership yet the pastor answered that the church did not have an issue with women being in eldership, further probing would take place during the interviews to find out what causes the difference between theory and practice, being aware that this might require further research.

The questions in this category were formulated as follows:

12. How do you view gender in the context of the priesthood of all believers?
13. What is your view on the ordination of women and can you explain what underlies this view?

14. Are all leadership offices in the church that you pastor, open to both men and women?

4.6 Data analysis and interpretation

Osmer (2008: 56-57) identifies the data analysis and interpretation as the third step in research projects, after the data collection and the data transcription. The presentation of the data in this part of the chapter aims to answer two questions: (1) what is happening and (2) why is this happening? The descriptive and interpretative part of the research will therefore both be dealt with in this chapter. According to Osmer (2008: 56), this step usually starts by a thorough review of all the gathered data, in this case the transcriptions of the interviews, to “gain a sense of the whole”. After the data has been grouped into smaller units – in this research that was done beforehand by grouping the questions into different categories – the researcher can then identify patterns or themes which Osmer (2008: 56) describes as: “It is a matter of closely looking at specific chunks of data, forming categories that capture similarities and differences, and the looking again at the same or new data”.

Maxwell (2013: 236-239) mentions that there are three main groups of strategies for analysing data; those that categorise, those that connect and those that use memos and displays. In this study, in line with the problem statement, the categorising strategy, whereby data is thematically analysed, is the preferred strategy. Part of this categorising strategy is to identify subcategories or themes within the categories of question that were pre-defined, that will later help with analysing the data. These are subcategories or themes that arise from the data and that the researcher could not have known in advance (see Maxwell 2013: 237). As Maxwell (2013: 237) writes regarding these subcategories: “They implicitly make some sort of claim about the topic being studied – that is, they could be *wrong*, rather than simply being conceptual boxes for holding data”.

The set-up of the data analysis in this part of the chapter will be as follows: Per category the question will be stated, followed by a presentation of the empirical data belonging to that question. This is the descriptive part. This empirical data per question will then be evaluated *and* interpreted, by first grouping the empirical data into broader themes or concepts to gain a good insight into “what is happening”, and second by interpreting the empirical data per broader theme or concept to gain insight in “why is this happening?” At the end of each category of questions the most important findings will be summarized. This will then serve as input for chapter 5 where the empirical data will be related to the problem statement as defined in chapter 1, and where a strategy for action will be provided to answer the question, “what now?”

In what follows all pastors, whether male or female, are referred to as male. This is to protect the anonymity of the female pastor who was part of the interviewees.

To enhance the readability of what follows, every category will start on a new page.

4.6.1 Category 1: General information regarding the church

4.6.1.1 Question 1

The question was formulated as follows: “Can you tell a bit about the history and make-up of the church and how long you have been pastoring this church”?

4.6.1.2 Question 1 – Presentation of the data

This was an easy question to start with. It provided a basic understanding of the church and her background and make-up. It also helped the interviewees to ease into the interview. Instead of presenting the data per church, a presentation per type of information is preferred since it makes it easier to highlight differences between the churches.

The general information about each of the ten churches can be presented as follows:

Sample number	Number of years the church has been in existence	Membership of the church in numbers of people (approximate)	Number of years the interviewee has been a pastor in the church
C1	134 years	350	10 years (as associate pastor)
C2	45 years	1,000	10 years
C3	13 years	125	13 years
C4	85 years	250	15 years
C5	40 years	35	6,5 years
C6	110 years	50	3 years
C7	20 years	450	16 years (as associate pastor)
C8	25 years	40	3 years
C9	50 years	120	20 years
C10	32 years	50	10 years

Table 4.2

All churches with a membership of 250 or more had more than one senior pastor. Of the ten pastors who were interviewed, five were not able to draw a full time salary from the church and had another, often full time, job besides pastoring a church.

The leadership functions of the churches, including the genders represented, can be shown as follows:

Sample number	Pastors (in brackets male/female)	Elders	Deacons	Other
C1	Senior (m) Associate (vacant)	3 elders (3m)	6 deacon couples (6m/6f)	Church council: senior pastors + elders + ministry leaders
C2	Senior (m) Associate (m) 5 pastors (2m/3f)	Senior pastor (m) Associate pastor (m) 9 elders (7m)	6 deacon (m)	Church council: 4 elders + 3 deacons
C3	4 pastors/elders (m)		10 deacons (7m/3f)	
C4	Senior (m) 2 pastors (2m)	Senior pastor (m) 2 pastors (2m) 1 elder (m)	4 deacons (4m)	Church deaconate: pastors + elders + deacons and their wives
C5	Senior (m) Teaching elder (m)	No (formal) eldership	4 deacons (m/f)	
C6	Senior (m)	2 elders (2m)	2 deacons (2m)	
C7	Senior (m) 2 Associate pastor (1m and 1f)	Senior pastor (m) Associate pastor (f) 5 elders (m)	19 deacons (17m, 2f)	Church council = eldership
C8	Senior (m)	3 elders (m)	No deacons	
C9	Senior (m)	No elders	No deacons	Church council: senior pastor + ministry leaders
C10	Senior (m)	No elders	No deacons	Church council: senior pastor + admin functions

Table 4.3

The ministries of the church were to a large extent similar, albeit dependent on the membership numbers and demographics of the church. These factors influence the

available finances to run a ministry. The main areas of ministry that were mentioned by the pastors are:

- Preaching and teaching (10 churches)
- Bible study / discipleship groups (10 churches)
- Worship team (10 churches)
- Prayer / intercession (4 churches)
- Sunday School (10 churches)
- Youth / young adults (9 churches)
- Women's ministry (9 churches)
- Men's ministry (4 churches)
- Outreach ministry such as evangelism and social action (8 churches)
- Cross border missions (1 church)

In all churches the ministries had a leader or leadership team. In three instances these ministry leaders were part of the church council, as shown in table 4.2 above.

4.6.1.3 Question 1 - Analysis and interpretation of the data

4.6.1.3.1 Differences in leadership structures

The presented data shows that there is no unified structure of church leadership. Although similar leadership elements can be found in all churches, for example all have a senior pastor, at other levels there are significant differences. The following can be highlighted, with in between brackets the churches it concerns:

- Three of the ten churches do not have a formal eldership (C5, C9 and C10).
- Three of the ten churches do not have deacons (C8, C9 and C10).
- Five of the ten churches have a church council in place but the make-up of this council varies per church (C1, C2, C7, C9 and C10).
- One of the ten churches has a church deaconate in place that consists of all the elders, pastors and deacons and their wives (C4).
- One of the seven churches that have elders in place explicitly placed the pastors and elders at the same level and referred to them as "pastor elders" and "preaching elders" (C3). In the other six churches there is a distinction between the pastor(s) and the elders (C1, C2, C4, C6, C7, C8).
- In five of the seven churches that have elders in place, all pastors are (automatically) elders (C1, C3, C4, C6 and C8).

- In one of the seven churches that have elders in place, the pastors are not automatically part of the eldership team (C2).
- In one of the seven churches that have elders in place, one (female) pastor is part of the eldership as a pastor, but not in the function of an elder (C7).

During the interviews it became clear that the structure of the leadership is influenced by the size and social demographics of the church. This determines the availability of resources both in terms of finances and people. C2 for example, given its size and geographic position in a more affluent area, has a salaried pastoral team of six pastors which means that many hours are poured into the building up of the church. Pastors of smaller churches such as C5 and C6 that are positioned in less affluent areas usually have a full time job on the side. The amount of hours that can be spent on the building up of the church is therefore significantly less.

With regard to the absence of an eldership team, one of the pastors (P9) said that this was because there was a lack of Godly and mature men in the church. It will be clear that in this instance the pastor was of the opinion that eldership should be restricted to men. In this context it is interesting to refer to what was highlighted in the paper issued in 1980 by the Faith and Order Committee called “Ordination of Women in Ecumenical Perspective – workbook for the Church’s Future” (Parvey 1980). The paper showed that one of the arguments that speaks in favour of the ordination of women is that in many parts of the world there are not enough male pastors and priests available and most of the work in the church is being done by women (see Parvey 1980: 35-36). This was also evident in church C9 where, due to the lack of men in the church, the women were doing most of the work of ministry and were part of the church council, that consisted of the pastor and the ministry leaders. It appears that in these instances the term “elder” or “pastor” refers to a position and title, rather than being interpreted as a function. It will be clear that this has major consequences for the debate on the ordination of women in especially Congregational Church structures such as in the Baptist tradition where there is a functional understanding of the church offices.

What is also interesting is that, despite the traditional understanding in the Baptist tradition that the titles pastor and elder are interchangeable (cf. Erickson 2013: 1000, Piper 1999, Wellum and Wellum 2015: 70, Wring 2005: 191-192), not all churches follow this consistently. Especially in the churches where there are female pastors, pastors are not automatically elders. P2 highlighted that there is the understanding in the church that elders are for the spiritual oversight of the church. The question can be asked whether this role is not also for the pastors, especially in light of Wring’s view (2005: 191-192) that the difference between elders and pastors is a difference in nuance: the word elder

(*presbuteros*) expresses the dignity of the office and pastor (*poimen*) describes the elder's function which involves his role as shepherd in guiding, feeding and protecting the church under his charge.

Last, although not on a pastor or elder level, the presence of deacon couples (C1) is worth mentioning. It is gender driven and only allows women into leadership when they are married to a man who is deemed qualified to fulfil the role of deacon. Such a practice appears to be a practical solution to include women in leadership, but there is little to no biblical support for this. Neither a complementarians nor an egalitarian interpretation of the scriptures supports such a practice.

4.6.1.3.2 Male dominated leadership

The data also shows that the pastorate and eldership of all churches is predominantly male. Only two of the ten churches have female pastors (C2 and C7), but never in the position of senior pastor or associate pastor. In these two churches the female pastors were excluded from being an elder. In the churches that have deacons in place (C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7), the deaconate is also predominantly male. One of the ten churches has an equal number of male and female deacons (C1) which can be explained because the deacons are married couples. It is only from the level of ministry leadership that there is more balance between male and female leadership. At this stage of the research it is not clear whether this is caused by a complementarian view on the ordination of women.

4.6.1.4 Summary of category 1

There are significant differences in leadership structures. The questions in this category aimed to provide general information about each church and its leadership structures and ministries. The presented data showed significant differences between the churches, not just in terms of available resources and size of the pastorate, but also in terms of leadership structures and gender involvement at the levels of pastor, elder and deacon.

Gender is a determining factor in leadership structures. The data has provided evidence that gender appears to be an determining factor for the differences in leadership structures. It explains the absence of elders in one of the ten churches and also explains why the two churches that have female pastors make a distinction between pastors and elders, a distinction that is not in line with the traditional Baptist understanding that pastors and elders refer to the same office. The data highlighted that the role and ordination of women is a topical issue that churches solve in different practical ways. The male

dominated leadership could be caused by a complementarian view on the role of women but at this stage of the research this cannot yet be affirmed; further research is needed.

4.6.2 Category 2: The priesthood of all believers

4.6.2.1 Question 2

The question was formulated as follows: **“The priesthood of all believers is one of the important Baptist principles. What, in your understanding, does this doctrine mean?”**

4.6.2.2 Question 2 – presentation of the data

The answers that were given can be grouped around the following themes:

- Direct access to God. The pastors who included this theme in their answer all pointed out that the priesthood of all believers means that every born-again believer has direct access to God and that there is no other mediation then through Christ (P1, P2).
- Equal gifting. The pastors who included this theme in their answer highlighted that the priesthood of all believers is a level playing field where all believers have received the Holy Spirit, are equally gifted and can equally hear the voice of God (P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10).
- Priestly function and ministry. The pastors who included this theme in their answer highlighted that the priesthood of all believers implies that all believers have a responsibility to function as priests and to minister to each other and to the world; it is not just the clergy in the church who are responsible for the work of ministry. (P2, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10).

P4 mentioned that the function of a priest is first of all to be in a healthy relationship with God. He found that the priesthood of all believers is sometimes understood to mean that the church is a democracy where the church as a whole has the final say. In his view biblical decisions in the church should be made by the spiritually mature, and by those who are in a healthy relationship with God and in that sense, function as a priest.

P6 included in his answer that the priesthood of all believers means that both men and women should have equal opportunity to minister in whatever area in the church God is calling them to. He says that if God can use a woman as an instrument to bring himself to earth (he referred to Mary who gave birth to Jesus), how much more can and will He not use women to take part in extending His Kingdom?

P9 mentioned in his answer that although all believers have received spiritual gifts and God can call believers wherever He needs them, He will never go against His order. He mentioned that there is the “privilege” of serving God and the “position” of serving God; a

position in his view is not higher or more important, but part of the order God has ordained in the church. It was not quite clear what he meant by the difference between privilege and position, but later on in the interview it was evident that P9 is of the opinion that despite the priesthood of all believers implying all believers are priests, there is a certain ordering in the church that limits certain positions to only men.

4.6.2.3 Question 2 – Analysis and interpretation of the data

4.6.2.3.1 *Natural and ministerial priesthood.*

It was surprising to find that only two out of the ten pastors made an explicit reference to the first part of the Baptist understanding of the priesthood of all believers, namely the direct access to God which refers to the natural priesthood (Baptist Union of South Africa 2015: 258). Eight of the ten pastors immediately referred to the second part of the Baptist understanding of the priesthood of all believers, which is the sharing in the reconciling work of Christ and which refers to the ministerial priesthood. The data shows that the majority of the pastors share the opinion that the church is not meant to be a one-man-show, but that the priesthood of all believers implies that all believers have a priestly and ministerial role to fulfil.

The immediate reference to the ministerial priesthood could point to the fact that for most pastors the ministerial aspect of the priesthood of all believers, especially the involvement of the laity, is an important topical theme and that they are aware of the need for the active involvement of the laity in the *Missio Dei*. Christofides and Meiring (2012: 2) wrote in their research on the role of the laity in the Baptist tradition that, “the BUSA has been reluctant to empower its laity, and this has resulted in a decline in activity and service by local churches in this denomination...”. They also pointed out that the growth of churches associated with BUSA has shown a significant drop since 2002 (see Christofides and Meiring 2012: 3-5) and that “more people have become ‘spectators’ rather than ‘participators’ in the local congregation of the BUSA” (Christofides and Meiring 2012: 6). One of the possible reasons they provide for the passivity of the laity is “an inadequate understanding of the priesthood of all believers by the clergy, as well as the laity” (2012: 2). Although much more can be said about this, for now it is sufficient to conclude that the crucial role of the laity in the church and the *Missio Dei* seems to be acknowledged by the pastors. To which extent they are able to put this in practice is a different question that will probably need more specific research.

4.6.2.3.2 Equality in status and function.

Not one pastor made an explicit distinction within the priesthood of all believers that would place certain believers in a different relationship or position before God in essence or function. Most of the pastors stressed that all believers, both men and women, are equally gifted and called to ministry. It is interesting to note the apparent contrast between the ministerial understanding of the priesthood of all believers where, as the data showed, both men and women are equally gifted and called to serve God as priests, and the male dominance in the leadership of the churches as was shown in chapter 4.6.1.2. If both men and women are equally gifted by God and equally called by God to fulfil their ministerial roles, it would be expected that both men and women were equally represented in all areas of ministry in church, including leadership roles. The answer to this question will have to be established further on in this chapter.

4.6.2.4 Question 3

The question was formulated as follows: **“A general description of the ministry of the priesthood of all believers is “to represent God to the world and the world to God”. This priestly service includes the building up of the church, which happens through the ministries of the church. In the church that you pastor, who is responsible for the building up of the church and how is this done in practice?”**

4.6.2.5 Question 3 – presentation of the data

This question aimed to gain a high level insight into the process of building up the local church – how was this congregation built and who did the building? The empirical data can be presented as follows:

P1 mentioned that the building up of the congregation was achieved on two levels: at a pastoral level and at a member level. The pastors, according to P1, are the shepherds that have been gifted and called by God to shepherd the flock. Their primary role is to care for the flock and build it up spiritually, which is primarily done through preaching and teaching the Word. The members are also gifted by the Holy Spirit but they need the pastors to help them identify their gifts and grow in these gifts, so that they can use them for the benefit and building up of the church.

P2 made a different distinction. In his view the building happens formally through the church ministries and programmes, and informally through relationships within the church. He mentioned that although it is the primary function of the elders and pastors to build up the church, it is also the responsibility of all members of the church who build the church when

they minister to each other. One of the issues he identified in the church is that members often see the pastors and elders as the ones responsible to train, equip and build them up. They seem to miss the point that the purpose of this equipping is that it enables the believer to then go and equip others.

P3 was of the opinion that the building is the task of the elders. When people enter the priesthood it is the task of the elders to identify where the person is at, help them identify their gifts and help them grow spiritually. The building is primarily done through the preaching of the Word and in making sure that people are part of small groups which, in this case, were led by the elders in the church. When the believers reach a certain level of maturity they are then encouraged to become involved in the ministries of the church.

P4 was quite firm in saying that, “edifying and building is a function of the leader, the called man of God”. As the senior pastor he saw it as his role to equip the elders, who are then enabled to equip the ministry leaders, who are then equipped to equip those they lead. He said, “we need to fulfil the great commission and my role is to equip the saints to do this”. The primary means of doing this was via the church programmes. He expressed a certain frustration around the lack of zeal with some of the leaders to be actively engaged in the equipping of the church.

P5 also referred to himself as the shepherd and overseer of the church, responsible to guide the church. He saw it as his task to get everyone in the church involved in the work of ministry because God speaks through everyone and can use anyone.

P6 started by saying that the building up of the church, “is the responsibility of the body of believers”. He used the analogy of the sheep and shepherd and said, “It is the sheep that give birth to the lambs. I am the shepherd of the sheep. When they give birth, I must take care of that and rear that lamb to become a sheep”.

P7 answered that the building is the responsibility of the pastoral team. This is done via the preaching and teaching of Gods Word to the congregation, for example through the Sunday preaching and the weekly Bible studies led by the pastors. Through these activities the church will grow “in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ”. P7 believes that the pastor of a church is called to be the shepherd who needs to take care of the welfare of the sheep.

P8 also saw a central function for himself in the building up of the church; it is his job to build up the overseers, leadership and church staff so that they in turn can build up others in the church. The building happens through him meeting and sharing God’s vision for the church with them. He further mentioned: “I want to give the church back to the people”. His way of doing this was to create space for people to come forward to do the things that they

feel God is calling them to do. This will of course need to align with God's vision for the church.

P9 also mentioned that the building starts with the pastors and leaders in the church. They need to pray and be equipped in the Word themselves first, before they can equip the church through the preaching and teaching.

P10 stated that, "my function is a leadership and teaching function". He sees himself as a "pastor to the pastors" and added that the leaders in the church have a pastoral role, which means that they are to care for the spiritual well-being of those that they minister to. His answers showed that he sees himself to be the overall responsible for the building up of the church, and as the one who has a central role to play in all that happens in the life of the church.

4.6.2.6 Question 3 – analysis and interpretation of the data

4.6.2.6.1 Responsibility for building up the local church

None of the pastors pointed to God as the One ultimately responsible for the building up of the church. All of the interviewees to some extent or the other expressed the view that the building up of the church is first and foremost their task. There is a clear top-down approach to who is responsible for the building up of the church, whereby the primary means of building is seen to be the preaching and teaching function. For most of the pastors the building up of the church appears to be primarily measured by the involvement of the laity in the church ministries: once believers have become spiritually mature and have recognised their spiritual gifts, they are expected to become involved in the church ministries.

Nel (2015: 17) writes that building a church happens when believers use their spiritual gifts both individually and together with the leaders in the church, whose task it is to train and equip the believers for service. The church is being built up when (1) believers fulfil their priestly service in the place God has called them to, and (2) believers allow themselves to grow in this priestly function through receiving training and equipping. Among the interviewees there is the dominant view that the building up of the church is achieved via a top-down approach where the pastor equips and envisions the leaders who in turn equip and envision the believers in the church. Most of the pastors see the church as a group of believers who need to be trained, equipped and continually spurred on to become active and do the work of ministry. It was noticed that in the interviews there was often a mention of 'us' (leaders) and 'them' (the members) and in some instances a certain frustration to get the members into action. When probing a little further it became clear that, for many

pastors, the way to get the laity active is to get them involved in the ministries of the church. It seems that, in line with what Gibbs and Coffey (2001: 89) conclude, many church leaders still fail to recognise that for the laity their primary area of ministry lies outside the church in the world. Equipping the church is about equipping the laity to fulfil their call to ministry in these areas outside the church. Perhaps this explains the perceived passivity of the laity within the church? Whereas the primary area of ministry for the laity lies outside the church, the church leadership might be focusing on their involvement within the church, which could lead to a disconnect between what the laity feel called to do and what the clergy expect them to do. As Smitsdorff and Rinquest (2012: 44) write in their research on leadership in the church, "The primary responsibility of Christian leaders must be preserved, and that is to equip members for *the ministries to which they have been called*¹⁰". In line with the above, these ministries to which the laity are called will predominantly lie outside the church rather than within the church.

Preaching and teaching is seen as central to building the church and, in the majority of the churches, as the responsibility of the pastor(s) and leaders. The central role of preaching and teaching in the building up of the church is confirmed by Linden (2016) who has established a clear link between the building up of the church and hermeneutical and contextual preaching. One of his findings in this regard was that although pastors take the preaching seriously, "50% of the interviewees conceded that they did not have adequate time to properly engage in textual interpretation.." (see Linden 2016: 268-269). If the preaching and teaching is so crucial to the building up of the church then this finding is quite concerning.

4.6.2.6.2 Shepherd leadership model

In the interviews the term "shepherd" was mentioned various times. It became evident that most of the pastors see themselves as the shepherd of the congregation, which is a title that was not used when referring to the eldership or elders. Among the pastors there is the strong belief that they are called by God to shepherd the church and look out for the sheep. Based on this belief the senior pastors, as (under)shepherds, seemed to be of the opinion that they have a more significant role to play in the building up of the church than the elders, ministry leaders and other believers. They take this role very seriously.

The question can be asked whether shepherding the church and building the church is one and the same function and responsibility. Ephesians 4:11-12 states that in addition to shepherds, God also gives apostles, prophets, evangelists and teachers to build up the

¹⁰ Italics added by researcher

body of Christ. The traditional understanding has limited this ministry to that of preachers, pastors and teachers, which resulted in the appointment of trained pastors whose primary role is to teach, preach and pastor (cf. Smitsdorff and Rinquest 2012: 42-43). Based on their research, Smitsdorff and Rinquest plead for a reinterpreting of existing conventional leadership models to equipping paradigms, where the function, role and responsibility of the leaders is primarily to equip and empower the laity to whatever area of ministry they are called. Leadership in an equipping paradigm should be viewed as functional where pastors are fellow-workers. In such a paradigm, leaders no longer see themselves as the primary workers in the ministry and the laity as those that support their ministry, but as ministers to other ministers, as fellow-workers and colleagues in ministry (Smitsdorff and Rinquest 2012: 44-46). The interviews highlighted that many pastors still operate in the traditional framework where there is a strong responsibility for the senior pastor as God's appointed shepherd for the church. It is possible that because of this traditional leadership framework, there has not been enough focus on the other Ephesian 4:11-12 leadership functions that are given to the church, resulting in a lack of building the church bottom up instead of top-down.

With reference to what was said above about preaching being seen as the primary way to build up the church, something Linden in his research (2016: 73-78) affirms, the question can be asked what the effect of an equipping leadership paradigm would be on the traditional understanding of church, which evolves around the Sunday morning meeting with a central role for the pastor and for the preaching of the Word. Can it be that an equipping leadership paradigm would require a shift from the traditional Sunday morning sermon, that is usually seen as a one-way stream from God via the pastor to the congregation, to more equipping forms whereby the congregation is equipped to read the scriptures for themselves and where the congregation as a whole tries to discern the will of God for the church? The scope of this research does not allow to further elaborate on this. Suffice to say for now that the traditional shepherd leadership model, together with the central function of the preaching and teaching, points to a special position for the pastor as shepherd instead of, as Smitsdorff and Rinquest (2012: 40) write, "When leaders understand that shepherding is a function of the entire community of faith, they may be mobilised to assume the equipping function advocated in Ephesians 4:12 as a central and strategic leadership responsibility".

4.6.2.7 Question 4

The question was formulated as follows: **"A common distinction in churches is the distinction between clergy and laity. How do you view these two terms in the life of**

the church you are part of? Is there in your view a distinction between clergy and laity? If yes, what distinguishes them from each other? If no, how is this visible in the church that you pastor?"

4.6.2.8 Question 4 – presentation of the data

The researcher was aware that the terms clergy and laity might not be common terms in the Baptist tradition and therefore allowed these terms to be equated with a two-class system of pastors/elders (clergy) and other believers (laity). The empirical data is as follows:

Seven of the ten pastors answered that although in their view there should be no distinction between clergy and laity - all believers need to be involved in the work of ministry - in practice the distinction is still there (P1, P2, P4, P5, P6, P8, P10).

Four of the ten pastors included in their answer that many people in the church still see the pastor as the one who is responsible to do the work of ministry, whose prayers carry more weight and that when he is in the room, he should take the lead (P1, P2, P4, P6)

Seven of the ten pastors expressed the desire to see the gap between clergy and laity narrowed (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P10).

Four of the ten pastors in their answer referred to practices they see around them, where pastors take advantage of their position within the congregation and deliberately allow themselves to be placed on a pedestal (P4, P5, P9, P10).

One of the ten pastors (P7) believed that there is a difference between the senior pastor of the church and the rest of the church. In the view of P7, only some are called to be pastors and preachers and not all are given the same gifts. Just as in the Bible where God often calls one person out to lead, so in the church God calls one person to shepherd the church and be the senior pastor. That person has a special position in the church and is different from the laity or even from the associate pastors.

P1 mentioned that one of the ways in which his church is trying to narrow the gap between clergy and laity is by giving more leadership responsibility to the laity and allowing them to do the work of ministry. P2 mentioned that the terminology that is used in churches is not helpful in narrowing the gap between clergy and laity. In his view terms such as "full time ministry" and "full time staff" are not helpful because all believers should be in "full time ministry". The only difference is that for pastors and other church staff this full time ministry happens primarily within the church, whereas for other believers this usually happens outside the church.

P2 and P8, who both were pastoring churches that had the financial means to employ a pastoral team and staff, mentioned that this contributes to people making a distinction between “them” (employed pastors/staff) and “us” (believers). In their view, because the pastors/staff are employed by the church, people see them as the ones responsible to do most of the work of ministry. This can create a passivity in the involvement of the believers in the church.

P4 mentioned that the distinction between clergy and laity is a distinction in responsibility. His responsibility is greater than the responsibility of the people he serves. This is similar to the answer of pastors P8 and P10 who mentioned that the distinction between clergy and laity is in function. P10 mentioned that, because of his training and calling, he has a different function that distinguishes him from the other believers. P6 mentioned that for clergy there is the tendency to denigrate the people in the church and not acknowledge the call that there is on their lives, unless they are needed to help with the work of the ministries in the church.

P9’s answer made it clear that he tries to stay away from any elevation of himself in the church. He stressed the need for all believers to be involved. Although he did not elaborate on how the distinction between clergy and laity expressed itself in the church that he leads, he did mention that being a pastor is a certain position in the church that is different to the rest of the congregation; not to control and dominate the church, but to serve the church.

4.6.2.9 Question 4 – analysis and interpretation of the data

4.6.2.9.1 Gap between clergy and laity

In line with what was already established under the previous question, the difference between clergy/laity, pastor/church member and professional/amateur is still present in the churches. Pastors are often seen to be the religious specialists who have a special position with God: their prayers are believed to carry more weight and what they say carries a special anointing and authority, as much as the pastors expressed a desire to see this gap closed. But is any distinction between church members and leaders wrong? It is clear that the pastors don’t believe they have a special relationship or status before God, they just have a different function and responsibility within the church and as long as it is a difference in function, it might not be a problem.

A reason for this gap between clergy and laity might be, as was already referred to above, the traditional shepherd leadership model that can be found in many Baptist churches. Most of the pastors have the strong belief that they are *the* (main) shepherd of the flock. This view is also what is taught at the Baptist Seminary in courses such as pastoral leadership

where a (future) pastor is equipped for preaching, pastoral care and any other task that is needed to shepherd and look out for the welfare of the flock. This analogy of a shepherd and his flock immediately gives rise to certain suppositions: a flock normally has one shepherd and the shepherd is altogether different from the sheep. It is a shepherd's responsibility to protect, lead and guide the flock and it is the responsibility of the sheep to follow the leading and guiding of the shepherd. The analogy of sheep and shepherd supports the notion that the sheep are lost without a shepherd and sheep in general are not known as very smart creatures. Such a view on the role of the pastor makes a distinction *in essence* in the church and distinguishes the pastor from the other members in more than just function. After all, who has ever seen a shepherd who in fact was a sheep and only distinguished himself from the other sheep because of the staff he held in his hands? Where the interviews highlighted that the pastors seem to want to operate on the same level as the congregation, the analogy and traditional education of the pastor as being the shepherd of the congregation appears to make this difficult.

All of this can contribute to the perceived gap between pastor and church, where the pastor is seen as the professional and the church members as the amateurs who are prone to wander off and therefore need guidance. In this context the question can be asked if it is helpful to keep using the word shepherd for the pastoral function, or whether a term such as servant leader is more helpful to cover the gap between clergy and laity. This would also resolve the apparent tension between the shepherd/sheep analogy and the principle of congregationalism, which implies that when the sheep come together they can directly discern the voice of God without the need of a shepherd.

As mentioned in chapter 2.7.5, there have been voices to give back the ministry to the people of God by changing the word pastor from a noun to a verb (cf. Smitsdorff and Rinquest 2012: 40). It would change the role of the senior pastor from a shepherd who leads and guides and protects the flock, to a more equipping role where his/her primary task is for the congregation to assume their pastoral role (see Smitsdorff and Rinquest 2012: 40). Instead of seeing the church as a flock of sheep, the view would be that the laity are all "shepherds-in-the-making", whose primary call is to go into the world to bring in the lost sheep. This is also the type of leadership Nel (2015: 17) promotes for the building up of the church when he refers to Ephesians 4 and writes that, "it is the function of the special ministries to help the other believers (each with their own gift[s] granted by God for service) by training them to do what God expects them to do with their gifts to build the congregation".

As mentioned above, Nel (2015: 17) refers to the leaders in the church as those with special ministries whose task it is to train and equip other believers for service. However, traditional

church models have clericalised the church and have placed most of the responsibility for ministry in the hands of the pastor. Instead of church leaders being equippers and empowers, many Baptist churches are still predominantly “shepherded” by a senior pastor who sees it as his primary role to preach and teach. The data confirms what Christofides and Meiring (2012: 3,6) conclude in their research done within the BUSA, that there is a lack of clarity in Baptist churches about the roles of leaders and laity, and, that many of the laity are still more spectators than participators. What the data above shows is that although pastors do have a genuine desire to activate the laity and to give the ministry back to the church, they appear to find it difficult to break out of traditional shepherding leadership models and move to a more equipping and empowering leadership model. In such empowering leadership models it is recognised that the area of ministry for most of the laity will lie outside the church rather than within the church. One of the implications of this is that theological education, instead of equipping the individual pastor to do the work of ministry, needs to focus more on an equipping of pastors to enable them to train and empower the laity in their congregation (cf. Smitsdorff and Rinquest 2012: 47).

4.6.2.9.2 *Shepherd leadership model*

The shepherd/sheep leadership model also appears to give a separation within the leadership of the church. The interviews highlighted that the senior pastors see themselves as different from the rest of the eldership and from the other believers. They see themselves as more responsible for leading and guiding the church than others. Various reasons can explain this. It is for example possible that this is caused by the fact that (1) elders are usually elected from within the congregation whereas pastors are usually called from outside the congregation, (2) pastors usually have received theological training and are accredited by the Baptist Union and such criteria are not set for eldership positions, (3) the pastorate is often seen as a full time position especially in churches where the pastor is employed by the church, whereas eldership roles are usually voluntary positions that are less time consuming than the pastorate. The scope of this research does not allow to further elaboration on this. For now it suffices to say that the shepherd leadership model appears to promote, rather than narrow, not only a gap between the clergy and laity but also within the clergy.

4.6.2.9.3 *Terminology*

The data highlighted that there is still a difference of perspective between those in full time ministry and the rest of the church. This affirms the gap between secular and sacred. Being involved in ministry seems to imply that one is involved with and active in one of the church

ministries. Despite the desire to get the laity more involved the interviews showed at times a certain frustration among the pastors: people today are busy and because they are not always able or willing to take on voluntary positions in the church, most of the work in the church is left to the pastor (and his team). It was interesting to find what P6 said about the clergy not fully acknowledging the full potential of the laity and only calling on them when they need help with the ministries of the church. There appears to be a disconnect between the clergy's perspective on ministry and the laity's area of ministry. This affirms what was said before that, in line with what Gibbs and Coffey (2001: 89) conclude, many church leaders still fail to recognise that for the laity their primary area of ministry lies outside the church, in the world.

4.6.2.10 Question 5

The question was formulated as follows: **“What in your view are the qualifying criteria for entering into a church ministry?”**

4.6.2.11 Question 5 – presentation of the data

Almost all answers given to this question included the same elements:

- Spiritual gifts (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P10).
- Spiritual maturity, consistency between scriptures and lifestyle (P2, P3, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, P10).
- Calling, being called to a specific area of ministry (P3, P4, P6, P7, P10).
- Training and equipping (P1, P3, P6, P8, P10).
- Experience (P10).
- Passion and enjoyment – does the person enjoy what they are doing and are they passionate about it (P5, P8).
- Not one pastor included gender as a qualifying criterion for certain areas and roles of ministry.

P2 and P8 mentioned that an important qualifying criterion for ministry is an ability to love and relate to people. P2 also mentioned that the qualifying criteria were the same for every area of ministry, but because a pastor carries more responsibility than for example a children's worker, the level of spiritual maturity, theological training, operating in the spiritual gifts and experience that are required for a specific role and function, can and should be different.

P4 mentioned that the scriptures give clear criteria for elders, bishops, pastors and deacons and deacon wives. The most important criterion is living exemplary lives as followers of

Jesus Christ. P6 mentioned that in his view, calling was the primary criterion for ministry. He said that if someone sensed a call from God he would never deny that calling. He did add that having a sense of calling does not automatically mean that the person would be allowed to fulfil a particular role or ministry. There is a process of discerning the right timing and coming alongside someone to help and equip them to follow what they sense God is calling them to.

4.6.2.12 Question 5 – analysis and interpretation of the data

The qualifying criteria that were mentioned show that when it comes to the priestly role of the believer, there is no difference between believers. Spiritual gifts, spiritual maturity and a sense of calling were the top three criteria required for ministry. Gender was not mentioned.

The general view, in line with Ogden (2003: 190), is that when there is a recognition by the body of believers of the spiritual gifts and call of a person, combined with the person's display of Christ-likeness, the church will make room for that person to minister to the body and allow him/her to fulfil a leadership position or office.

4.6.2.13 Question 6

The question was formulated as follows: **“How would you describe the relationship between the congregation and yourself/church offices in terms of authority and position? Do you see yourself as being placed (A) Above the congregation (in authority over), (B) Under the congregation (at their bidding/service), (C) Within the congregation (same level) or (D) Other?”**

4.6.2.14 Question 6 – presentation of the data

The answers that were given varied and during some of the interviews, as the interviewees were talking, new thoughts and perspectives seemed to come to their minds. It was clear that this was a difficult question to answer. The empirical data can be presented as follows:

A - In authority over

Of the five pastors (P1, P2, P7, P9, P10) that chose this option, only P1 and P9 chose this as their only option. P1 explained that it is important *how* a pastor receives authority over a congregation. When a leader is raised up and called from within the congregation, the authority that this pastor is given by the congregation is already “earned”; the congregation has recognised the gifts, calling and spiritual maturity and expertise of the person and based on that, gives him the authority to lead them. That is different when a pastor is called

from outside the congregation. In that situation the congregation gives him the authority to lead based on his position; that pastor will still have to “earn” that authority in practice. P9 mentioned that because God has ordained a certain order in the church, as a pastor he is in authority over the church because of his position and the privilege that was given to him. He did add that this was to be a servanthood leadership and that, in that sense, he was also under the authority of the church.

B - Same level of authority

Of the eight pastors who chose this option, five chose this as their single option (P3, P4, P5, P6, P8) and three pastors (P2, P7 and P10) included it as one of their options. P3 and P4 pointed to the servant-leadership. Leaders are not meant to “lord over” people but to serve them. This serving is performed from among and within the congregation. Both P3 and P4 mentioned that they share in the same (authority) level as the other believers; the difference between them and other believers is a difference in function and/or responsibility. P5 mentioned that ultimately it is God who is in control over all believers. There should not be a hierarchy in authority where God is at the top, followed by the pastor and then the rest of the church. All believes, clergy and laity, are in equal authority under God.

P6 referred to the congregational principle which means that it is the congregation who makes the decisions in the church. He included in his answer that although he shares the same authority as the rest of the believers, when there is a 50-50 vote he does have the final say in matters because of his “central role”. P8 mentioned that he has been placed *among* the congregation under the authority of Jesus Christ to lead them and encourage them. At times that means he has to correct them and at times it means he has to push them, but in the end both he and the rest of the congregation are all under the direct control of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God gives leaders to the church with a particular gift to work among them and lead them in the right direction.

C - In authority under

None of the pastors chose this option as their sole option. Only P2 and P10 included this option in their answer.

D - Two of more of the above

P7 was of the opinion that option A and B apply: as a senior pastor who is called to be the shepherd of the flock, there are times when it is needed to exercise authority and make a decision that will affect other people. P7 expressed that although he sees himself among the congregation and as sharing in the same authority, it is the congregation who often places him in an authority position over them.

P2 and P10 were of the opinion that all options (A, B and C) applied. P2 explained that as a senior pastor he has the responsibility to spiritually oversee and watch over the church. Because of that he has authority “over” the church which comes with his function; it is therefore a *functional* authority over the congregation. At the same time he is also part of the church and a child of God. In that sense he shares in the “same” authority as all the other believers. Because he is called to servanthood leadership he is also “under” the authority of the church. With regard to the options presented he said, “I could never separate the three”.

P10 mentioned that it is healthy that there is a mix. He sees himself as equal in ministerial authority and believes in inclusive leadership. However, there are times, especially when it comes to the administrative and business side of the church, that he needs to take authority and make the decision. On the other hand, there are also times when the elders give guidance but it is the congregation who makes the decision. He mentioned that the danger of the congregational principle, especially in churches with strong families who have been part of the church since it was founded, is that they are the ones who make all the decisions and the pastor is at their bidding. In his view the congregational principle clashes with the biblical image of the pastor as the shepherd. The congregational principle implies that the shepherd follows the sheep whereas it is the sheep who should follow the shepherd.

4.6.2.15 Question 6 – analysis and interpretation of the data

4.6.2.15.1 Negative connotation.

For many pastors the term authority has a negative connotation and some of the pastors were hesitant to solely choose the option “authority over”. Associative words that were mentioned included terms such as “using your position to exercise power”, “making the final decision”, “lording it over” and “controlling”.

The reason for this is evident. Church history and also recent developments such as the “Me too” movement which did not leave the church unharmed, provide ample evidence of church leaders misusing their authority and power to the detriment of those they lead and the church at large. But there is nothing new under the sun: even the Old Testament speaks of shepherds that were abusing their position (cf. Ezk 34): every believer can be led astray by seeking status, power and money and shepherd leaders are no exception. Some pastors in the interviews gave examples of other pastors in especially poorer communities who abuse their position to control their congregation and, while they drive around in big cars, the people in the congregation struggle to make ends meet. The result is that where leadership authority is a biblical concept that is meant to be something good - Jesus never

seemed to have an issue with talking about authority or acting with authority - most pastors seemed to want to stay away from using the word when it came to their functioning as leaders.

4.6.2.15.2 Difficult concept

In line with what was concluded in chapter 2.8.1, leadership authority is a difficult concept to define within the life of the church and, as mentioned, some of the pastors struggled to answer this question. Carroll (2011: 23) provides a possible reason for this when he writes: “an emphasis on egalitarianism and shared ministry is yet another contributor to the current confusion about authority and leadership in the church. It is an important emphasis, but it joins the perception of the historicity of beliefs, the changed social location of religion, and voluntarism in leading clergy to question their authority for leadership in the church’s ministry”.

The interviews (again) highlighted the traditional shepherd leadership model. Where the majority of the pastors desire to operate at the same level of authority as the congregation and share in the work of ministry, they find it hard to reconcile this with how they see their responsibility as the (called) shepherd of the church. How can a shepherd lead his flock when he or she does not have authority over the sheep? Christofides and Meiring (2012: 3) affirm this confusion when they highlight that items such as congregationalism and the role of leaders is something that has been under the spotlight of BUSA in recent years and that, “there is no real understanding of the role that leaders should play and the role that the laity should play”. It appears that where the Baptist principle of congregationalism calls for equal authority and an egalitarian approach to ministry, leaders appear to find it difficult to reconcile this with the calling of a shepherd and to define their leadership authority in relation to the rest of the congregation.

The difficulty with defining the relationship between the church offices and the congregation is also evident in the calling process of pastors, something P1 highlighted. When leadership authority is seen as a right that is given by both God and the believers and is based on spiritual gifts, character and expertise, there is a natural “authority over”; the congregation recognises that certain believers are more gifted, experienced and called in a particular area of ministry, and, because of that recognition, will submit to that authority. However, when pastors are called from outside the church, a common practice in the Baptist tradition, they are placed in the position of senior pastor without having “earned” the right to exercise authority over the congregation. Instead of there being a natural authority, it is a positional authority that yet needs to be proven. This would support for a church practice of raising

up of leaders from within the congregation rather than a practice of “hiring” (calling) shepherds from outside the congregation.

4.6.2.16 Question 7

The question was formulated as follows: **“Where in your view lies the authority to fulfil a particular ministry? In the scriptures, the person, the position itself, ...?”**

4.6.2.17 Question 7 – presentation of the data

Again, authority appeared to be a difficult concept. Most of the pastors understood this question to mean where they got their authority from and the logical answer was: From God or the scriptures. The general view was that they were set apart by God to pastor a church and that, as the appointed shepherd, they are called to minister under the authority of the scriptures. The authority therefore lies in the Word of God and the empowerment by the Holy Spirit to do the work of ministry. The answers given to this question can be grouped as follows:

- Scriptures - P2, P3, P4, P6, P8, P9, P10
- Person – P1, P2, P5, P6, P10
- Position – P1, P2, P10
- Other – P7

Eight of the ten pastors are of the opinion that the authority for a leader comes from the scriptures. They are called to minister in accordance with the Word of God and therefore, whatever they say or do needs to be in line with the Word of God. P3 for example said: “Authority to lead must come from Jesus and must be scriptural...what I do is based on the Scripture and God decides what He allows me to do in the church. It is His calling and anointing and authority for that ministry”.

P1, in line with what was mentioned under question 4, said that for a pastor who is called from outside the church the authority lies in position: the pastor is called to fill the function of senior pastor but the congregation has yet to recognise his spiritual maturity, spiritual gifts and ministerial expertise in practice. For pastors who are called and raised up from within the congregation the authority lies in the person and is the sum of, by the congregation *recognised*, spiritual maturity, spiritual gifts and ministerial expertise.

P2 mentioned that the authority lies in scriptures, the person and the position. He explained this as follows: a pastor is called to operate under the authority of the scriptures. But his authority also lies in his spiritual gifts, spiritual maturity and his calling. The church recognises that and places that person in a position. That position then comes with a certain

authority within the church. P2 added to this that although some people would say, “you are in a position so you are in authority”, what matters most is how someone got into that position. In his view, the process leading up to placing someone in a leadership position should be done carefully with much prayer, with a sense of God’s calling and with a recognition and validation that the person is ready to fulfil the position. It is not a matter of applying for a job.

P5 mentioned that the authority for ministry came when God placed the call for ministry on his life.

P6 mentioned that authority lies in a person and is the result of God’s call, the spiritual gifts He gives and the spiritual maturity of the person who is called. It therefore lies in a person. However, any ministry needs to be carried out in line with the scriptures and therefore the authority for ministry also lies in the scriptures.

P7 said that the authority to minister lies in prayer. As the leaders pray, they will know what they should do and be given the authority to act in accordance to God’s will. In a way this can be classified under “scriptures” and therefore this study will treat it as such instead of a separate category.

P8 said, “my authority is never in myself but is only found in God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit”. He viewed himself as an ambassador of Christ to advance the Kingdom of God who is not there to do his own will, but to do the will of the One who sent him. Authority for him therefore lies in the scriptures.

P9 pointed out that unless the authority lies in the Word of God, the church is at risk of following the ways of the world; truth can only be found in the Word of God.

P10 in his answer included scriptures, person and position. The authority of a leader first comes from the scriptures because all authority is in Jesus Christ. As people minister, they do so under the authority of Jesus Christ, which is the scriptures. However, the authority also lies in the person because authority has been given to each person. And it lies in position; there are times in the life of the church when you have to make a decision because of your position.

4.6.2.18 Question 7 – analysis and interpretation of the data

4.6.2.18.1 Scriptural authority

Eight of the ten pastors said that their authority lies in and comes from the scriptures, the Word of God. Their answers are in line with what Nel (2015: 165) writes in reference to Towns (1990: 215): “when a pastor realises he is an under-shepherd, receiving his authority

from the Word of God, he gives authoritative leadership to his church. When the pastor localises power in his personality, he gives authoritarian leadership to his church". Authority in this view does not lie in a person but is seen as God's authority being channelled through the pastor to the congregation, to accomplish His purposes. The pastor is merely a vessel. This is however very confusing in light of the ordination of women in the church which, as was shown in chapter 3, centres on male authority. If leadership authority comes from the Word of God then the ordination of women should not be an issue for the very reason that any authority they might exercise comes directly from the Word of God and not from them as a woman. It would be God using any vessel, whether male or female, to exercise His direct authority over the church.

The Scriptural authority that the pastors are referring to can be placed under the "representation of the sacred" category in Carroll's model of authority conceptions. It is the leader representing the word and will of God to the people they lead. As Carroll (2011: 33) describes it: "It is not the pastor's or priest's power that she or he exercises; rather it is the power of God interpreted through preaching, teaching, leading and personal example". But does authority only lie in the scriptures as P4, P8 and P9 seem to believe? According to Carroll (2011: 45) a church will grant its leader authority to lead when she believes that he/she represents, interprets and demonstrates the churches' core values and beliefs, has an inner call to accept this leadership position and has the necessary knowledge and expertise. This implies that authority, although exercised under the Lordship of Christ and coming from the Word of God, at the same time cannot be seen separate from the leader as a person. It is the leader who needs to be spiritually mature, adequately equipped and trained, and who needs to have received a call to ministry leadership in order to represent the sacred adequately. Referring to chapter 2.8.3, leadership authority should to some extent or another cover all four squares. It therefore lies in Scripture, person and position all at the same time, as the answers of P2 and P10 and, to a lesser extent, P1, P3 and P6 confirmed.

The researcher again noticed a hesitancy among the pastors to place any authority in them that would draw attention to them as a person, probably for similar reasons as already stated under chapter 4.6.2.15.1.

4.6.2.19 Summary of category 2

The involvement of the laity is important. All pastors have an understanding of the priesthood of all believers that encompasses both the natural priesthood and the ministerial priesthood of every believer. There is the general consensus that all believers stand directly before God and that all have a role to play in extending the Kingdom of God. The ministerial

priesthood, seen in the light of the crucial role of the laity in fulfilling the mission of the church, is of high importance to the pastors: they realise that the church is not a one-man-show.

The central role of the senior pastor in building up of the local church. The building up of the body is seen to be primarily the role of the senior pastor/pastorate of the church, supported by the eldership. None of the pastors referred to God as the ultimate Builder of the church. There is a top-down approach to building the church and the building is seen to be primarily ensured through the preaching and teaching, a function that is one of the tasks of the pastor(s). Reference was made to the traditional shepherd leadership model that, together with the importance of the preaching function in the building up of the church, explains why pastors see themselves as being the main person responsible for the building up of the church. It was highlighted that equipping leadership paradigms, based on the fivefold ministries in Ephesians 4, might provide ways to make the building up of the church a shared function of the whole church instead of a function of mainly the pastors.

There is a gap between clergy and laity and the shepherd leadership model. Within the priesthood of all believers there is a perceived gap between the clergy and laity, although there was a genuine desire among the pastors to see this changed. The interviews showed that there is the sense of “us” (leaders) and “them” (members), which goes both ways. The traditional shepherd leadership model was referred to as a possible cause of this gap between the clergy and laity and even between the pastors and elders: a shepherd is different to the sheep in more than just function. Terminology plays an important role in this gap, not just the analogy of shepherd and sheep, but also by referring to pastors as those in full time ministry. A correct understanding of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers places all believers in full time ministry, the only difference between them is the area where they are to fulfil their priestly role.

The criteria for ministry are not gender related. All pastors more or less provided the same criteria needed for ministry. It needs to be noted that for the majority of the pastors the ministry of the believer is seen as his/her involvement in one of the ministries within the church.

Leadership authority within the congregation is difficult to define and position. Most pastors struggled with answering how they viewed their place of authority in the church, and there seemed to be a preference to stay clear from “being in authority over”, possibly because of historical and more recent examples of abuse of leadership positions in the church. Five pastors choose “authority over”, eight pastors “same authority” and two pastors “authority under” (some pastors included more than one option in their answer). There appears to be a tension between the shepherding role which implies an “authority

over”, the servanthood leadership style and the principle of congregationalism which both imply a same level of authority or an “authority under”.

The general view is that authority comes from the scriptures; nine of the ten pastors included this option in their answer. Again, there seemed to be a tendency to not want to draw attention to them as a pastor and to stay away from positional or personal authority. Five pastors to some extent or another made reference to authority residing in scriptures, person and position all at the same time.

The priesthood of all believers does not distinguish between genders. In the context of the priesthood of all believers, gender was not mentioned as a qualifying criterion in any of the questions. All pastors were of the view that the priesthood of all believers means that there is a level playing field within the church where believers are equally gifted and called to the work of ministry. This with the exception of P9 who, without making reference to gender, did say that, despite the priesthood of all believers, God instituted a certain “order” in the church to make sure that everything would run smoothly.

4.6.3 Category 3: The practice of ordination

4.6.3.1 Question 8

The question was formulated as follows: “**Pastors in churches associated with BUSA are usually on the list of “ordained pastors”. What in your view does it mean to be an ordained pastor? How would you describe ordination?**”

4.6.3.2 Question 8 – presentation of the data

Most pastors were familiar with the term ordination and made a distinction between the ordination at the Baptist Union level and the ordination in the local church. All the pastors, when answering this question, used the word “recognition” in some way or another to explain what ordination in their view is. The answers given can be grouped as follows:

- Ordination is the process in which the denomination (Baptist Union) recognises somebody as having the gift, skills and theological training for exercising the pastoral role in the denomination (P1, P2, P5, P7, P8, P10).
- Ordination is the recognition of the calling of God on a person’s life, which is affirmed by the congregation (P2, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, P10).

P1 made a distinction between ordination and induction. He explained that in his view ordination is the process through which the denomination (Baptist Union) recognises that someone has the gifts, the skills and the education to exercise a pastoral ministry in the denomination. This happens after someone has spent a number of years studying, followed by interviews with delegates of the Baptist Union who try to assess whether the candidate for ordination (1) has a sense of calling from God and (2) has done the required theological training. If this is positive, the candidate receives an ordination certificate at the Baptist Union Assembly. Induction in his view is the process where the local church calls the ordained pastor to fulfil the pastoral role. Whether this person is capable and the right person to do this, will have to show in practice.

P2 explained that where traditionally men were ordained as pastors by the Baptist Union, this changed when women started to be trained via the Baptist Seminary. The reason was that in the traditional Baptist understanding, the terms pastor and elder are interchangeable and by ordaining women as pastors, the Baptist Union would indirectly endorse women as elders. This issue was solved by changing the word ordination at the Baptist Union level to accreditation, and leaving it up to the local church to decide which accredited minister, whether male or female, to ordain into the local pastorate. P2 was also of the opinion that ordination only happens once and that it is for life. He was ordained by the Baptist Union

and subsequently in the first church that called him as their pastor. When he left that first church and accepted the call to pastor another church, there was an induction service but, in his view, this was not an ordination.

P9 was of the opinion that ordination is for spiritual oversight and accountability. He explained this by saying that too many people in his culture start a church and call themselves pastor because of the status and power that is associated with it. The practice of ordination, especially the two year preparation period where the potential pastor is assigned a mentor, in his view helps to prevent just anyone from becoming a pastor.

4.6.3.3 Question 8 – analysis and interpretation of the data

4.6.3.3.1 Ordination as recognition

All pastors agreed that ordination in the Baptist tradition needs to be interpreted as a recognition. During the interviews the pastors also used the word ordination to refer to what happened at a denominational level. This difference between the ordination at a denominational level and the ordination at a local church level is worth elaborating on. Within the BUSA this ordination is referred to as a “recognition for ministry” (Baptist Union of South Africa 2015: 271). This recognition can be for (1) a fully accredited ministry, (2) a probationer ministry or (3) a student ministry. To be included on the ministerial list of the BUSA, a candidate must be a member of a church associated with the BUSA, have a call to pastor a local church or another ministry that will extend God’s Kingdom and give evidence of, “adequate theological training and vocational equipping” (Baptist Union of South Africa 2015: 271).

If ordination is seen as a recognition, then what happens at a denominational level can be referred to as ordination. In this context ordination can be interpreted in the absolute sense, meaning that a person remains ordained until their name is removed from the ministerial list; a process for which certain criteria are in place (see Baptist Union of South Africa 2015: 274-275). The BUSA handbook shows that it does not make any gender distinction in who can be ordained: both men and women can be recognised for ministry at the level of the BUSA and can therefore be included on the ministerial list.

A possible and likely reason for the ordination at the BUSA level is to protect the associate churches from bad officers, something that was particularly highlighted by P9. By having candidates go through a preparation period, the BUSA makes sure that before someone can accept a call to pastor a local Baptist church, a first selection has taken place that ensures that candidates are trained in accordance with the Baptist understanding of the scriptures and that their motives for ministry, for as far as this can be assessed, are Godly.

Local churches are however free to appoint whomever they want, whether this person is on the ministerial list or not.

Ordination at a church level, as the pastors answered, happens every time they accept a call to pastor a local church. This ordination is more in line with the view of Volf (1998: 249) that ordination is to be seen as “a public reception of the *charismata* given by God and focusing on the local church as a whole” and “ordination is the act of the entire local church led by the Spirit of God”. Such recognition at a local church level can be seen as a relative ordination – it is the recognition that on top of the previous recognition for ministry by the BUSA, the pastor has received a particular call for a particular ministry at a particular church.

4.6.3.4 Question 9

The question was formulated as follows: **“Does the church that you pastor practice ordination? If yes, who is ordained and what are key elements of the ordination service? Were you ordained as a pastor? If no, what was the reason for this?”**

4.6.3.5 Question 9 – presentation of the data

All ten pastors were ordained or accredited by the Baptist Union and are on the ministerial list that is published in the yearly Handbook of the Baptist Union. For all ten pastors there had been an ordination service where - in the presence of the congregation, delegates of the Baptist Union and sometimes other (external) pastors -, they were ordained as the pastor of the church. The service in most cases included a question and answer session - where the person to be ordained is asked to adhere to certain foundational beliefs - followed by a kneeling where delegates of the Baptist Union or other pastoral leaders lay hands on the person to be ordained and pray for him (or her).

In most churches, believers that step into eldership, the deaconate or other ministerial leadership functions are also ordained (recognised) in a church service. The difference with the ordination service for senior pastors is that in these instances there are no delegates from the Baptist Union or other external leaders present, and that there is often more than one person who is being ordained, dependent on the number of people stepping into leadership.

4.6.3.6 Question 9 – analysis and interpretation of the data

4.6.3.6.1 *Special and unique character*

In all instances it was clear that the ordination service was a special occasion that includes the invitation of delegates from the BUSA. It gives evidence that the calling of a senior pastor to the church is seen as an important event in the life of the church and that the senior pastor is going to fulfil a very special function (or position?) in that church. In the presence of both the local congregation and the denomination, the pastor takes on the responsibility of leading the church.

With reference to what was mentioned under category 2, it is evident that this practice emphasises the traditional shepherd leadership model where there is one person at the top, no matter how much pastors intend to make their leadership a servanthood leadership. The special service for just the senior pastor highlights the uniqueness and special place this role is given in the life of the church. The previously referred to equipping leadership model - based on Ephesians 4 which implies that God gives not just shepherds but also apostles, prophets, teachers and evangelists to the church – would open up the current “once every X year” special ordination service for the senior pastor, to more people in the church, based on their gifts and calling. There would be a more frequent recognition of leadership gifts and callings in the church.

4.6.3.7 Question 10

The question was formulated as follows: **“Which one of the following describes ordination in your view the best: (1) During ordination, the Holy Spirit distributes a special gift/power upon the person that makes him set apart from the rest of the congregation (refers to enfeoffment), (2) Ordination is the act where the congregation assigns certain tasks and functions to the ordained. The ordained receives the power and authority from the congregation to fulfil these on her behalf (refers to delegation), (3) Ordination is a recognition of the gifts and ministry God has given a believer (refers to recognition) or (4) Ordination is where the church calls someone to be in authority over them and to minister the sacraments (word, baptism, Eucharist) to them (refers to calling)?”.**

4.6.3.8 Question 10 – presentation of the data

The answers to this question varied and were dependent on how the pastor understood ordination. All pastors agreed on recognition but they added elements of the other views.

Option 1 (enfeoffment) - Five of the ten pastors included this option in their answer (P2, P6, P7, P8, P10). Given that this is the traditional Roman Catholic view on ordination, a further probing took place during the interviews to find out what exactly the pastors meant by including this option in their answers. P2 was of the view that during the ordination service, more particularly during the laying on of hands, something is being transferred onto the person being ordained. The pastor referred to Timothy who, when the elders laid hands on him, received a prophetic word and a gift was given to him. Based on that passage he was of the view that there is a unique work of the Holy Spirit taking place when Timothy was set apart and prayed for. P6 explained that when he was ordained, something happened during the service that to him was a physical sign from God affirming that He had set him apart and had anointing him for pastoral ministry. P8 answered that during the ordination there is the setting apart for the ministry that God is calling the person to do; the Holy Spirit places something unique upon the person who is ordained as a pastor.

Option 2 (delegation) - Four pastors included this view in their answer (P2, P7, P10). P2 and P7 explained that when they were ordained into the pastorate, they received power and authority from the congregation to perform certain tasks and functions on their behalf. P10 explained that in his view, delegation is a part of the ordination process. Via delegation of tasks and functions, the congregation recognises the gifts and calling in the pastor whom they called.

Option 3 (recognition) - All pastors except P6 included this option in their answer. It is the recognition by the congregation of the gifts and the calling of God upon the life of the person whom they call to minister to them as a body.

Option 4 (calling) - Six pastors included this option in their answer (P2, P5, P6, P7, P8, P10). The overall reason was that calling is a very important part of the ordination process because it is the congregation who calls someone, often from the outside, to become their pastor. P2 replied that this view in his understanding was the Roman Catholic understanding of ordination, but did not deny that ordination does have to do with calling.

4.6.3.9 Question 10 – analysis and interpretation of the data

4.6.3.9.1 Confusion

It was surprising to find that four of the ten pastors included option A into their answer since this is considered to be the traditional Catholic view, where a special gift is transferred on the person being ordained that literally separates him from the rest of the priesthood of all believers (Bromiley et al. 1986: 841). However, in line with what was discussed in chapter 3.5.2, there is no common agreement among theologians if something is passed on through

the laying on of hands. Views vary from it signifying nothing more than a recognition of God's call for a particular function (Bock 2007: 262), to an equipping with power of the person being ordained (Friedrich 1974: 433).

All of the answers showed that the pastors related ordination primarily to themselves as the senior pastors of the church: they had received a call and anointing from God to "enter the ministry", were called by a church who recognised their gifts and calling to fulfil this ministry among them and, because of this calling, were delegated certain tasks and responsibilities such as preaching and teaching the Word.

4.6.3.10 Question 11

The question was formulated as follows: **"How do you see ordination and being an ordained pastor in relation to the principle of the priesthood of all believers? Are they in line with each other or do they contradict each other?"**

4.6.3.11 Question 11 – presentation of the data

During the interviews the question was added whether, in the context of the priesthood of all believers and the fact that most pastors viewed ordination as a recognition of gifts and calling, all believers at some stage in their life should be ordained. This from the understanding that all have received spiritual gifts and all are called to fulfil a priestly function and extend the kingdom of God.

None of the pastors believed that the practice of ordination clashed with the doctrine of all believers, regardless of their view on ordination as described under 4.6.3.8. Ordination is regarded as a recognition of a person's gifts, calling and expertise that needs to be seen in a functional light.

Seven of the ten pastors (P1, P2, P3, P5, P8, P9, P10), when asked the question, mentioned that based on their understanding of the priesthood of all believers and the view that ordination is a recognition of the gifts and calling on a believer's life, agreed that from this perspective all believers would qualify for ordination. P4 and P7 were of the opinion that ordination in the church is only for people that have received a specific call from God to pastor a local church; they highlighted the special position of the senior pastorate and that although everyone is called to use their gifts, ordination is only for those that are called to fulltime ministry (*ed.*: the pastorate).

P2 gave evidence of a broader and more inclusive view ministry in the church. He mentioned that just because he has a full time job as the senior pastor of a church, this does not make him any different or more special than other believers. He explained this as

follows: All believers form one body in which each has a different function. For some their place of ministry lies within the church and for others outside the church. Just because his ministry lies within the church, this does not mean that only he should be ordained. He mentioned that he was considering also ordaining people into secular or other non-church related jobs and ministries.

P10 agreed with the statement that in the context of the priesthood of all believers all would qualify for ordination. He qualified this however by saying that it would only apply to those that have a willingness to give themselves to the ministry God is calling them to fulfil. P10 also mentioned that ordination for all is the essence of congregationalism which is one of the important Baptist principles. However, as he added, many churches in the Baptist tradition still hold to the traditional leadership model where there needs to be someone in charge.

4.6.3.12 Question 11 – analysis and interpretation of the data

All pastors agreed that the practice of ordination does not clash with the priesthood of all believers. They view ordination as a recognition whereby certain people are set apart to fulfil a specific function in the church based on criteria such as their spiritual gifts, calling, training and spiritual maturity. It is a functional understanding of the offices.

When asked whether this means that everyone should be ordained, the researcher noticed that for some pastors this question made them think outside traditional ordination practices. Whereas most of them indicated that in the context of the priesthood of all believers all should be ordained, it was evident that this is not what is happening in the churches. It was again highlighted that many pastors work within the traditional leadership model of shepherd/flock where there is a special and unique position reserved for the senior pastor. The *Missio Dei* concept however shows that the ministry of the laity needs to be interpreted broader than being involved in the ministries of the church, which could result in a different interpretation and application of current ordination practices in the church.

4.6.3.13 Summary of category 3

Ordination as recognition. All pastors understand ordination to be a recognition for ministry which, in the Baptist tradition, happens at a Baptist Union level (accreditation for ministry) and subsequently at a local church level through a call process. The ordination at the BUSA level ensures that the pastors on the ministerial list have shown evidence of spiritual maturity, gifting and calling and have been educated theologically. Although it cannot be guaranteed, it is a mechanism that can stop people with ungodly motives from taking on a pastorate, a practice that is evident in many South African (often

underprivileged) communities. Ordination at BUSA level in this sense is absolute and ordination at a congregational level relative.

The special character of the ordination service of pastors. The ordination service is a special service where the (potential) pastor is ordained as the pastor/shepherd of the church. This service includes the presence of delegates of the Baptist Union, other senior pastors, the laying on of hands and prayer. It is a special and unique service that is reserved for the pastorate and that is in line with the traditional shepherd leadership model where God appoints (usually) one shepherd to take on the delegated responsibility of leading His church. It was already highlighted that an Ephesians 4 based equipping leadership paradigm would likely reduce the unique and special character of the ordination service for senior pastors and lead to a more frequent recognition of leadership gifts and callings in the church.

It was interesting to note that all pastors applied ordination primarily to their position as pastors and to the special and unique position they fulfil in the church and in God's Kingdom as those who are in full time ministry. This category of questions again highlighted the special position that is given to the senior pastor of the church: he is seen as the leader who, because of his calling, anointing, gifting and education, is set apart from the rest of the congregation. The process where senior pastors are usually called from outside the church through a special call process possibly further contribute to this.

Ordination as recognition fits with the priesthood of all believers. In the view of the pastors the priesthood of all believers does not clash with ordination. Although the majority of the pastors admitted that, based on the view that ordination is a recognition of spiritual gifts, maturity, calling and expertise, it would mean that the church should ordain all believers at some point in their lives regardless of where their area of ministry is, it was clear that this is currently not happening. Ordination in practice is reserved for those that enter leadership positions such as pastor and elder in the church.

Gender is not a qualifying criterion for ordination. Not once in this category of question was gender mentioned as an important aspect of or something to take into account with regard to ordination. In the context of the priesthood of all believers where, as shown in the previous chapter, all believers are on a level playing field, the general view is that ordination in a church is a recognition by the congregation that sets a person aside to fulfil a particular function in the church.

4.6.4 Category 4: The ordination of women

4.6.4.1 Question 12

The question was formulated as follows: “**How do you view gender in the context of the priesthood of all believers?**”

4.6.4.2 Question 12 – presentation of the data

All pastors unanimously agreed that *in the context of the priesthood of all believers*, there is no gender distinction. Some of the answers provided were:

- Both men and women have received the Holy Spirit, who gives the same gifts to both men and women (P1, P2, P3, P7, P8).
- Both men and women are priests and are able to serve God in any capacity that He calls them to (P2, P4, P6, P8).
- It is God who calls people into ministry and He can call both men and women to be pastors. God does not look at gender (P4, P5, P6, P7).
- We all have the same call to go and make disciples and in that sense are all equal before God in ministry (P10).

P1 mentioned that when the priesthood of all believers is practised in the context of congregationalism, it means that it is the congregation (both male and female) that can discern what the will of God is and that they do not need a pastor or an eldership to give them spiritual leadership and direction. In his view, in many churches the priesthood of all believers is only practised up to a certain level, often to the level of deacons. From that level upwards, traditional leadership structures take over and the church reverts back to the Old Testament model where only certain priests are allowed to fulfil certain functions. He said: “if all those things which I just claimed (referring to his answers to the previous question about the priesthood of all believers and ordination) are true, then I have no problem with women as leaders, deacons, pastors, elders or preachers. That is my personal view”.

P9 was of the opinion that although the priesthood of all believers implies that all are equal and can be called to minister as God pleases, God will never call a woman for the pastorate because the Bible teaches that this position is for men only. His view is the traditional complementarian view that holds that the husband is the head of his wife and that this relationship is analogous for the relationship between men and women in the church.

4.6.4.3 Question 12 – analysis and interpretation of the data

The data confirms what was found so far, that the priesthood of all believers does not make any distinction between genders. If some were of the view that (certain) church offices should be restricted to men only, the supporting arguments would not come from their understanding of the doctrine from the priesthood of all believers.

It was expected that for this question a possible distinction would be made between the natural priesthood and the ministerial priesthood because, as was shown in chapter 3.6.6, the text in Galatians 3:28 is usually interpreted by complementarians applying only to the natural priesthood (cf. Lewis Johnson Jr 2006). Only one pastor (P2) made reference to the text in Galatians 3:28. He applied it to the natural priesthood and mentioned that it means that there are no longer gender differences when it comes to people's value and standing before Christ. He had not made up his mind yet whether this also needed to be applied to the ministerial priesthood, being aware of the New Testament Scriptures on the role of women. However, he confirmed that in the context of the priesthood of all believers, gender is not an issue.

4.6.4.4 Question 13

The question was formulated as follows: **“What is your view on the ordination of women and can you explain what underlies this view?”**

4.6.4.5 Question 13 – presentation of the data

All pastors except P2 and P9 were of the (personal) opinion that when it comes to the ordination of believers into the pastorate or eldership or any other leadership position, it does not matter whether that person is a man or a woman: it is God who calls and gifts people and it would be wrong for men to interfere with this. Although these pastors were aware of the New Testament Scriptures that are often used to restrict women from certain leadership roles in the church, they were of the opinion that these scriptures needed to be interpreted in their context and that they therefore did not constitute universal role differences between men and women in the church. Two pastors (P4, P10) said that they could not find a clear directive in the Bible that prohibited women from fulfilling positions as pastors or elders. The New Testament Scriptures that are often used in the debate are in their view not clear directives that prevent women from certain functions in the church.

P1 was of the view that the issue with the role of women lies in the hermeneutics and not in the authority of the Bible. Claiming that allowing women to fulfil leadership roles in the church is departing from seeing the Bible as the ultimate authority for one's life is therefore

not correct and is elevating one's own cultural suppositions to being biblically authoritative. He explained that when the apostle Paul wrote the passage on the role of women, it was with the purpose to not hinder the furtherance of the gospel in a patriarchal culture, a view similar to that of Stackhouse as presented in chapter 3.6.1.

P2 answered that he had not made up his mind yet. He responded that the church that he was part of was currently investigating the scriptures regarding the role of women as elders. Although, in the context of the priesthood of all believers, he could not find any reason why women should not be elders, he was aware of certain Scripture in the New Testament that seemed to disqualify women from the position of eldership and that instituted the headship of men. Acknowledging that he comes from a complementarian background, he is currently investigating his position and is open to the leading of the Holy Spirit in this matter.

P7, although of the opinion that women could be called to any function in the church, did add that the Bible often gives examples of how God calls man to leadership. In that context, a male pastor was to be preferred over a female pastor. However, he did not have an issue with female pastors.

P9 was of the opinion that all roles in the church were open to women, except the pastorate. His view was based on a complementarian interpretation of the scriptures. The pastor explained that because of the analogy the Bible in his understanding makes between the church and marriage - that a man is the leader of his household and head of his wife -, so a man is also to lead the church as the household of God. For a woman to fulfil a leadership role in the home and the church would be unnatural and against the order that God has ordained. It is only when men are not available or not willing that God will use women.

4.6.4.6 Question 13 – analysis and interpretation of the data

4.6.4.6.1 Predominantly egalitarian view

Given the findings in category 1, where the pastorate and eldership are dominated by men, the study expected to find a predominantly complementarian view among the pastors. Surprisingly, seven of the ten interviewees were of an egalitarian view, although it needs to be noted that this does not mean that it is also the general view of the church the pastor was pastoring.

It was also surprising that hardly any of the pastors in their answers referred to any of the New Testament Scriptures that underlie the gender debate. Possible reasons for this could be:

- Because eight of the ten pastors expressed the view that in the context of the priesthood of all believers' gender is not an issue, perhaps they saw no need to go into further detail.
- In line with what was mentioned in chapter 1.2.1.2, it could be that there is a general lack of knowledge around the issues and scriptures underlying the gender debate.
- Because most of the pastors are male, it could be that the ordination of women is not of much personal interest to them (there is no "personal" gain in it).
- Because the researcher is female and has studied the topic extensively, it might have been intimidating to go into too much detail.
- The topic is not urgent for them or their church at the moment.

4.6.4.6.2 Contradiction

It is interesting to notice the difference between the data presented under this question and the data that was presented under question 12. It appears that pastors who hold to the complementarian view, find no problem in applying the gender neutral ministry principles following from doctrine of the priesthood of all believers – which applies to all believers in all churches at all times and all places – while at the same time applying a different set of gender principles that contradicts and limits the former principles. They seem to be of the view that where the priesthood of all believers applies to both men and women in all areas of ministry, God has decided, for whatever reason, that for women the priesthood only applies up to a certain level of church leadership. It is similar to providing both men and women with a passport to travel, but then telling women that they are not allowed to leave the country.

4.6.4.7 Question 14

The question was formulated as follows: **"Are all leadership offices in the church that you pastor, open to both men and women?"**

4.6.4.8 Question 14 – presentation of the data

This question represented the view of the church and can therefore be different from the perspectives given under question 13. The answers per type of leadership function were as follows:

- *Senior pastor* - In four of the ten churches the function of senior pastor is restricted to men only (C1, C2, C7, C9).

- *Associate pastor* - Of the four churches (C1, C2, C7) that have associate pastors, the general stance is that when the church restricts the senior pastorate for men, this also applies to the role of associate pastor.
- *Pastors (not being the senior/associate pastor)* – In two of the ten churches this is restricted to men (C1, C9).
- *Elders* - In four of the seven churches that have an eldership, this is restricted to men only (C1, C2, C3, C7, C9).
- *Deacons* – Of the churches that have deacons both men and women to fulfil these functions with the qualification that in C1 women are only accepted in this function if they are married to a man who is a deacon.
- *Ministry leaders* - In all churches these functions are open to both men and women.

According to the constitution of C2, the senior and associate pastor are automatically part of the eldership. Because the eldership is restricted to men, it follows that the positions of senior and associate pastor are therefore also restricted to men.

The general view of C3 is that women can be established as elders. However, as P3 pointed out, because one of the current (male) elders is against women elders, the eldership at the moment does not include any women.

4.6.4.9 Question 14 – analysis and interpretation of the data

4.6.4.9.1 Difference personal view and church practice

In line with what said under the previous point, there is a difference between theory and practice. This can be presented as follows:

Sample number	Pastoral view on the ordination of women	Church view on the ordination of women	Inclusion of women as pastor or elder
C1	No restrictions	Pastors – men only Elders – men only	None
C2	Currently undecided	Senior/ass pastors – men only Pastors – men and women Elders – men only	2 female pastors
C3	No restrictions	Pastors – men only Elders – men only	None
C4	No restrictions	No restrictions	None

C5	No restrictions	No restrictions	None
C6	No restrictions	No restrictions	None
C7	No restrictions	Senior/ass pastors – men only Pastors – men and women Elders – men only	1 female pastor
C8	No restrictions	No restrictions	None
C9	Pastorate (pastor/elder) to be restricted to men	Pastors – men only Elders – men only	None
C10	No restrictions	No restrictions	None

Table 4.4

The table shows that in three of the ten churches (C1, C3, C7) there is a discrepancy between the pastor's personal view on the ordination of women and the church's view. When the pastor's view and the church's view do align and there is no restriction on the role of women – something that applies to C4, C5, C6, C8 and C10 –, in all these churches, despite the church apparently being open to the ordination of women as pastors and elders, there are no women ordained as pastors or elders. There is a gap between theory and practice.

This raised the question how it could be that, if this was the dominant view, most of the churches are led by male senior pastors and have a full male eldership. The researcher probed a little further and asked some of the pastors to whom this applied what the reason could be why so few women are functioning as elders or pastors in the Baptist tradition. Some of the answers included:

- 1 The (complementarian) voice of tradition is strong within the BUSA. If a pastor gives evidence of a different and more egalitarian view on the role of women, he runs the risk of being accused of no longer holding to the authority of the Bible and of being theologically unsound.
- 2 Many people in Baptist churches still hold to the traditional view that women should not be elders or pastors. For pastors it is easier and more comfortable to go with the status quo than to stir the church up over the issue.
- 3 The eldership is divided over the issue and including women in the eldership team would cause issues and lead to disunity at a leadership level.
- 4 The BUSA is very accommodating and does not take a stand on the issue; it is a unified Union that is afraid that speaking out for and promoting the ordination of

women in local churches would lead to (complementarian) churches leaving the BUSA.

One pastor suggested that men fear that women want to, “take over and run the show”. However, in his view most of the women just want to do the work of ministry and work alongside the men. He said, “I hope this debate is going to stop”.

Another reason for the discrepancy between theory and practice could be the predominantly male leadership at both congregational and denominational level. Even though pastors may have an egalitarian personal opinion, a change in leadership structures ultimately needs to be initiated and effected on a leadership level and, as highlighted above, there are many factors working against this: (1) there is a real fear that people will be leaving the church and/or churches leaving the BUSA, (2) women are not represented at leadership level and therefore have no direct voice in the decision making around the issue, (3) there is no direct personal gain in it for the current male leaders, (4) the number of women that would apply for ordination is limited and, on top of that, (5) the BUSA has other urgent items to tackle (see Christofides and Meiring 2012), something that will also hold true for many of the local churches. The difference between theory and practice is therefore not surprising.

4.6.4.10 Summary of category 4

The priesthood of all believers does not distinguish between genders. In the context of the church being a priesthood of all believers, all pastors agree that there is no distinction between genders when it comes to who should fulfil what ministry in the church. Any gender distinctions that are applied in a church context do not follow from the application of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers.

A predominantly egalitarian view. Of the ten pastors, seven expressed a (personal) egalitarian view on the ordination and role of women in the church and did not see any clear directive in Scripture to restrict the pastorate or eldership to men. Of the three pastors who expressed a more complementarian view on the ordination of women, the main argument was that the Bible teaches that man is the head of woman in both the home and the church. In their view, these scriptures override the priesthood of all believers. They did not see this as a theological issue. The pastors did not give evidence of an extensive knowledge of the arguments underlying the debate. The pastors who expressed an egalitarian view supported this from the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and stated that the New Testament Scriptures around the role of women need to be contextually applied. The pastors who were either undecided or held to a complementarian view, mentioned that God-ordained men to be the head of women but did not give further details.

Discrepancies between views on the role and ordination of women and the actual practice. Where seven pastors expressed an egalitarian view, this only applied to five churches. However, in none of the churches were women ordained as senior/associate pastor or elder. There is a discrepancy between the pastor's personal view, the general view of the church and the actual practice. Several reasons were highlighted but further research would be needed to confirm this and gain more insight into the underlying causes.

5 Summary and conclusions

5.1 Aim of the chapter

In chapter 1.8.5 it was explained that for this research Heitink's (1999: 238) basic elements of practical theological studies, namely observation, description, analysis, reflection and suggestions for change, would be followed. By comparing various models, it was shown that similar elements to Heitink's can be found with Osmer (2008: 4), who identifies four tasks in Practical Theology. These four tasks are (1) the descriptive empirical task which answer the question, "what is happening?", (2) the interpretative task which answer the question, "why is this happening?", (3) the normative task which answers the question, "what should be happening?" and, (4) the pragmatic task which answers the question, "how should we respond?"

In the chapters two and three this study has provided the theoretical and normative framework. In chapter four the descriptive empirical and interpretative parts were presented. This means that there is one task left to do, which is the pragmatic task which includes the elements of reflection and suggestions for change. Or, phrased in Osmer's terms, the last question to be answered in this research is the question: What now? Where do we go from here?

The aim of this chapter is to deal with that question. This will be done by:

- 1) Repeating the problem statement and research questions (chapter 5.2).
- 2) Evaluating the data in relation to the problem statement (chapter 5.3).
- 3) Proposing of a practical strategy of action (chapter 5.3).
- 4) Providing an answer to the problem statement (chapter 5.4).

5.2 Problem statement and research questions

In chapter 1.3 the desire was expressed to explore how the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers was understood and implemented in a local church and if this had an influence on the church's view on the ordination of women in church leadership. The problem statement was formulated as follows:

Is the church's view on the ordination of women in church leadership influenced by how the church understands and implements the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers?

The supposition of this study was that the understanding and implementation of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers has an effect on how the church sees the ordination of

women in church leadership. In order to find the answer to the problem statement, the following research questions were formulated:

1. How is the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers understood and implemented in the life of the local church? Does the church maintain a distinction between clergy and laity? If yes, what distinguishes the clergy from the laity in her view?
2. How is the practice of ordination understood and implemented in the life of the local church? Does the church ordain its leaders and/or its members? If yes, what does the church see as the purpose of this ordination?
3. How does the church view the ordination and role of women in church leadership? Is gender an issue in the church? If yes, what are these gender distinctions based on and how are these placed within the context of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers?

The relevance of this study, as mentioned in chapter 1.5, was believed to include:

- Providing insight on how the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is understood and implemented at a local church level by the leadership.
- Providing insight on how the leadership of the local church interprets the practice of ordination and what it achieves.
- Providing insight on how the leadership of the local church sees the role of women in church leadership and what this is based on.
- Exploring if there is a relationship between how the local church understands and implements the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and the position of the church on the ordination of women in church leadership.

In order to answer the research questions, ten semi-structured interviews with pastors of local churches associated with the Baptist Union of South Africa (BUSA) were conducted. It was highlighted that the view of the pastors might not necessarily be the same as the view of the church or the wider church denomination, but given the scope of the research and the fact that it was a first exploration, this was not considered a problem.

5.3 Reflection of the data in relation to the problem statement

5.3.1 Category 1: General information regarding the church

5.3.1.1 Research question

The first category of questions, which centred on gathering general information of the churches that the pastors are part of, did not follow directly from the research questions. The aim of this category of questions was to provide a foundation for a better understanding of the context in which the pastors operate, and to help with the analysis of the data that would follow further on in the interviews.

5.3.1.2 Reflection on the data

There are significant differences in leadership structure. Significant differences between the local churches, not just in terms of available resources and the size of the pastorate, but also in terms of leadership structures and gender involvement at the levels of pastor, elder and deacon were found. The empirical data showed that where the full pastorate of the ten churches combined consisted of about 25 pastors, only three of these pastors were female and never in the position of senior or associate pastor. Of the seven churches that had an eldership, in all instances these were fully male. It was only at the level of deacon that more women were included, but again the majority of deacons were male.

Gender is an influencing factor in leadership structures. The data showed that gender appears to be an influencing factor for the differences in leadership structures. It explained the absence of elders in one of the ten churches and also explained why the two churches that have female pastors make a distinction between pastors and elders. In the analysis of the data it was pointed out that such a distinction is not in line with the traditional Baptist understanding which holds that pastor and elder are terms referring to the same office.

5.3.1.3 Conclusion

The conclusion that could be drawn from this category of questions in relation to the problem statement was that the leadership of the churches is very male dominated. It is possible that this is caused by a complementarian view on the role and ordination of women into positions such as pastor and elder. At this point of the research that could however not be confirmed yet. The remainder of the empirical research was to provide further evidence for that.

5.3.1.4 Strategy for action

Given that this question was to set a foundation, a strategy for action is not applicable at this stage of the research.

5.3.2 Category 2: The priesthood of all believers

5.3.2.1 Research question

The research question was formulated as follows: **“How is the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers understood and implemented in the life of the local church? Does the church maintain a distinction between clergy and laity? If yes, what distinguishes the clergy from the laity in her view?”**

5.3.2.2 Reflection on the data

The involvement of the laity is important. The data showed that all pastors have an understanding of the priesthood of all believers that encompasses both the natural and the ministerial priesthood of every believer. There was a general consensus among the pastors that all believers stand directly before God without any other mediator than Jesus Christ, and that all have a role to play in extending the Kingdom of God. The data highlighted that the ministerial priesthood, seen in light of the crucial role of the laity in fulfilling the mission of the church, was of high importance to the pastors. All pastors were of the view that the church is not supposed to be a one-man-show.

The central role of the senior pastor in building up of the local church. The data further highlighted that the pastors are of the view that the building up of the body is seen as primarily their responsibility as the senior pastor/pastorate of the church, with support of the eldership and other leaders. The empirical data gave evidence of the pastors holding to a top-down approach to building up the church. It was interesting to find that none of the pastors referred to God as the ultimate Builder of the church. The primary means of building the local church was seen to be the preaching and teaching; a function that is one of the tasks of the pastor(s). Frequent reference was made to the traditional shepherd leadership model that, together with the importance of the preaching function in the building up of the church, could explain why pastors see themselves as being the main person responsible for the building up of the church. The study highlighted in the analysis of the data that an equipping leadership paradigm, based on the fivefold ministries in Ephesians 4, might provide ways to make the building up of the church a shared function of the whole church instead of a function of mainly the pastors.

Gap between clergy and laity and the shepherd leadership model. The empirical data also showed that in all ten churches there was a perceived gap between the clergy and laity, despite a genuine desire of the pastors to see this changed. The interviews provided evidence that there is the sense of “us” (leaders) and “them” (members) that goes both ways. The traditional shepherd leadership model was again referred to in the interviews. The study further highlighted that because a shepherd is different from the sheep in more than just function, it is possible that this contributes to the gap between the clergy and laity and even between the pastors and elders. It was also highlighted that terminology plays an important role in maintaining the gap; not only by referring to the pastor as a shepherd and to the congregation as his sheep, but also by referring to pastors as those that are “in full time ministry” and to the congregation as those that are “not in ministry”. It was concluded that a correct understanding of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers places all believers in full time ministry; the main difference between them and the pastor of the church is the area where they are to fulfil their priestly role.

The criteria for ministry are not gender related. All pastors more or less provided the same criteria that, in their view, are needed for ministry. Gender was not once mentioned as a distinguishing factor.

Leadership authority within the congregation is difficult to define and position. The study showed that leadership authority was a difficult concept to define for the pastors. There appeared to be a tendency among the pastors to not want to refer to themselves as those “being in authority over”. Historical and more recent examples of abuse of leadership positions, both in global and local contexts, will no doubt have contributed to this. The preferred view of the pastors on leadership authority was for them to be among the congregation and serve her. The study however highlighted that there appears to be a tension between the shepherding role which implies an “authority over”, the servanthood leadership style which implies an “authority under” and the principle of congregationalism which implies an “equal authority”.

Nine of the ten pastors were of the opinion that their leadership authority resided in the scriptures. Again, there seemed to be a tendency to not want to draw attention to themselves as a pastor and to stay away from referring to any positional or personal authority. Five pastors to some extent or another made reference to authority residing in scriptures, in person and in position. In reference to the leadership authority model by Carroll, the study showed that leadership authority can and perhaps is preferred to lie in the scriptures, the person and position *all at the same time*.

5.3.2.3 Conclusion

The conclusion of this part of the research, in relation to the research question, is that although the pastors have a sound understanding of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, in that it makes no distinction in the ministry role of both the clergy and the laity, the (full) implementation of this understanding in the life of the local church is proving difficult. The traditional shepherd leadership model that the pastors apply to their leadership style is a possible and likely contributing factor to this.

5.3.2.4 Strategy for action

The research done by Smitsdorff and Rinquest that was referenced before in this research (see chapter 2.7.5) highlighted that there is a need for a transition of a traditional shepherd leadership model to a more equipping leadership style that can help the church move forward in light of some of the current challenges it faces. Smitsdorff and Rinquest (2012: 47) concluded among others that theological seminaries, instead of primarily focusing on training the (future) pastors for their own ministry, should also train (future) pastors to enable them to train the individuals in their congregation.

Given the findings of this research, the following strategies of action are proposed:

- Assess to which extent the theological seminaries associated to the BUSA have included a more equipping leadership style for (future) pastors and ministers - in line with the research findings of Smitsdorff and Rinquest referred to above.
- Assess what the BUSA is currently offering in terms of training, equipping and helping local pastors to transition from the traditional leadership and church models to newer, more equipping leadership models. Christofides and Meiring (2012: 8) concluded in their research that, “without a greater emphasis on strengthening, educating and equipping churches, the churches under the banner of BUSA will be faced with troubling consequences”. Nel’s (2015) book on the building up of local churches gives a solid outline of how to reform and transform local churches. This is not something that pastors can (always) do on their own without assistance from outside the church. Some ideas on how the BUSA can assist local churches are:
 1. The BUSA can organise regular conferences and fora on existing and preferred leadership models in the local churches. This will bring current leadership challenges to the forefront and highlight the need for change.
 2. The BUSA can offer “consultants” that can help local pastors and churches with building up their congregation and help lead them in and through processes of change.

3. The BUSA can organise ongoing leadership trainings for pastors where they get exposed to recent studies done in the field. This will equip and help them to lead the church into the future. These trainings can focus on for example the personal development of the pastor as a leader and also equip them with further leadership skills.

5.3.3 Category 3: The practice of ordination

5.3.3.1 Research question

The research question was formulated as follows: **“How is the practice of ordination understood and implemented in the life of the local church? Does the church ordain its leaders and/or its members? If yes, what does the church see as the purpose of this ordination?”**

5.3.3.2 Reflection on the data

Ordination as recognition. The study showed that all pastors understand ordination to be a recognition for ministry and that this recognition happens (once) at a Baptist Union level (accreditation for ministry) and subsequently at a local church level through a call process. The study further showed that all pastors applied ordination primarily to themselves and to the unique position they fulfil in the church and in God’s Kingdom, as those being “the shepherd” and those “in full time ministry”. Although the pastors see the ordination as an event that sets them apart *functionally* from the rest of the congregation, the special service, which often includes the presence of outside delegates, highlights the special position of the clergy in relation to the laity. The process where senior pastors are “hired” from outside the church through a special call process possibly contributes to this. Although ordination is understood to be a recognition of calling for ministry, spiritual gifts, competence and spiritual maturity - which implies in the context of the priesthood of all believers that this could therefore be applied to the laity as well -, the study showed that in practice the ordination is reserved for the pastor and to a lesser extent for other leaders in the church, such as elders and deacons.

Gender is not a qualifying criterion for ordination. Not once in this category of question was gender mentioned as an important aspect of, or something to take into account with regard to ordination.

5.3.3.3 Conclusion

In relation to the research question it can be concluded that ordination is understood to be a recognition for ministry, which is based on divine calling, spiritual gifts, maturity and competence. It can also be concluded that ordination is first and foremost applied to (senior) pastors and to a lesser extent to elders and deacons. The purpose of ordination is a public recognition and, in theory, a *functional* setting apart. In the context of the priesthood of all believers it would be expected that such an understanding of ordination would then equally be applied to the laity, regardless of whether their area of ministry lies inside or outside the church. Similar as with Saul and Barnabas in Acts 13:2 who were “ordained” into a task that lay outside the local church.

5.3.3.4 Strategy for action

Following on the recommendations given to narrow the perceived gap between clergy and laity as identified under chapter 5.3.2, this study proposes that the practice of ordination in the church is reevaluated. This with the aim to look for ways to bring the practice of ordination more in line with the priesthood of all believers; a practice which implies that both clergy and laity have an equally important role to play in the mission of the church. Broadening the practice of ordination to more people in the church could also lead to more space being reserved in the Sunday service for people to report back on their individual and daily “missions”. Instead of the focus of the service being on the preaching of the Word by the pastors, this could mean result in that more space is reserved in the service for the members to testify of and report back on what God is doing in their lives and ministry (whether inside or outside the church). There is no doubt that this will increase the faith of the believers and spur them on to seek similar ways to allow God to work through them in their particular areas of ministry. The building up of the church, instead of it being the primary responsibility of the pastor ensured through preaching and teaching, then becomes a more shared responsibility where everyone brings a word or testimony for the benefit of the whole church.

5.3.4 Category 4: The ordination of women

5.3.4.1 Research question

The research question was formulated as follows: **“How does the church view the ordination and role of women in church leadership? Is gender an issue in the church? If yes, what are these gender distinctions based on and how are these placed within the context of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers?”**

5.3.4.2 Reflection on the data

The priesthood of all believers does not distinguish between genders. The research showed that in the context of the priesthood of all believers, all pastors agree that there is and should be no distinction between genders when it comes to ministry.

A predominantly egalitarian view. The study showed that, in spite of the earlier indication that the male dominated leadership in the churches might be caused by a complementarian view on the role and ordination of women, there was a predominantly (personal) egalitarian view among the pastors. Of the three pastors who expressed a more complementarian view, the main argument was the traditional view that the Bible teaches that man is the head of woman in both the home and the church. In the view of these (complementarian) pastors, such an interpretation overrides all that was concluded before about gender in the context of the priesthood of all believers. The pastors who expressed an egalitarian view explained this primarily from the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and from a belief that the New Testament Scriptures around the role of women need to be applied contextually. None of the pastors gave evidence of an extensive knowledge of the arguments underlying the gender debate, but it must be noted that this was also not specifically asked for in the interviews.

Discrepancies between views on the role and ordination of women and the actual practice. The research showed that where seven pastors expressed an egalitarian view, this only applied to five churches. In none of these (egalitarian) churches were women ordained as senior/associate pastor or elder. The data highlighted that there is a discrepancy between the pastor's personal view, the general view of the church and the actual practice. Possible reasons for these discrepancies are:

- The (complementarian) voice of tradition is strong in the churches and in the BUSA. If a pastor gives evidence of a different and more egalitarian view on the role of women, he (or she) runs the risk of being accused of no longer holding to the authority of the Bible and of being theologically unsound. It is then safer, despite one's personal view, to not speak out and keep silent on the matter.
- Many people in Baptist churches still hold to the traditional view that women should not be elders or pastors. For pastors it is easier and more comfortable to go with the status quo rather than to stir up the church over the issue.
- The eldership is divided over the issue, and including women in the eldership team would cause issues and disunity at a leadership level.
- The BUSA is very accommodating and does not take a clear stand on the issue; it is a unified Union that is afraid that speaking out for and promoting the ordination

of women in local churches would lead to (complementarian) churches leaving the BUSA.

5.3.4.3 Conclusion

It is again important to highlight that because the research question was formulated at a church level and the interviews were held with pastors of these churches, the views presented by the pastors may not adequately reflect the views of the (whole) churches.

It can be concluded that there is a discrepancy between theory and practice. Where the majority of the pastors and half of the churches appear to hold to an egalitarian view on the role and ordination of women, this is not expressed in practice. Fear appears to be a major underlying cause for this. It can also be concluded that any gender distinction in the practice of ordination is not based on a certain understanding of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers: all pastors acknowledged to some extent or the other that the priesthood of all believers implies that all ministry in the Kingdom of God is equally open to all genders. Any gender distinction is therefore based on other criteria, that appear to clash with the priesthood of all believers.

5.3.4.4 Strategy for action

Acknowledging that in the Baptist tradition the BUSA cannot dictate the associated churches on what to do, there is a more active role for the BUSA to play when it comes to the role and ordination of women in the church. Without having to promote a complementarian or egalitarian view, there is a definite opportunity for the BUSA, especially given that the role and ordination of women is a current issue for the BUSA (see chapter 1.2.1.2), to:

- Present local churches and church leaders with more information on what underlies the gender debate. Pastors of local churches are busy and do not (always) have the time to research the topic for themselves.
- Ensure that in discussion fora at a BUSA level, where the topic of the role and ordination of women is discussed, there is equal opportunity for both egalitarian and complementarian pastors to freely express their opinion. It should be ensured that everyone feels safe to express their view without fear of accusations being made by fellow brothers (and sisters, although there are not many sisters included in these meetings).
- In line with the suggestion made under 5.3.2.4, special “consultants” from the BUSA could help local pastors and churches who are of a predominantly egalitarian view,

to implement this in practice and carefully navigate such a process, which is known to have the ability to split churches.

5.4 Answer to the problem statement

The problem statement was formulated as follows: **Is the church's view on the ordination of women in church leadership influenced by how the church understands and implements the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers?**

Based on an analysis and reflection of the empirical data, the answer to this question is "yes", again acknowledging the fact that the interviews were done with the pastors and that their view might not necessarily represent the view of the local church or the denomination as a whole. It is however important to stress that, because of the differentiation in the problem statement between "understanding" and "implementing", the practical outworking of the church's view on the ordination of women can be totally different than the view the church holds.

Based on their *understanding* of the priesthood of all believers, all pastors came to an egalitarian view: from the priesthood of all believers it follows that all leadership positions are equally open to both men and women. There is however a gap between the understanding and implementation of the priesthood of all believers, a gap that is likely caused by among others the traditional shepherd leadership model and the subsequent special position of the pastor in the church. Based on the (current) *implementation* of the priesthood of all believers, where the primary responsibility for the building of the church is assigned to the senior pastor, the current male dominated leadership structure strongly suggests that the church's view on the ordination of women in leadership is complementarian.

5.5 Concluding remarks

The researcher, as a woman, was positively surprised to find many pastors expressing an egalitarian view on the role and ordination of women within a (Baptist) tradition that is known for its complementarian view. At the same time she was saddened to find that expressing this view, and, even more important, implementing this in practice, meets much resistance and is to a large extent influenced by fear of disturbing the unity in the church and in the wider denomination. Fear should never be a reason to keep silent; it was through Martin Luther's public nailing of his 95 beliefs on the church door, that God ushered the church into the next era and in a way *allowed* and *used* the splitting of the Catholic Church for the extension of His Kingdom. (*this is not to say that splitting a church is something to aim for;*

it is merely to point out that fear should never be a reason to hold back and that believers can trust God to be more than able to take our faults and mistakes and use them for His good).

Various research studies executed within the Baptist tradition in the last decade, some already referred to in this thesis, have highlighted the need for change in the Baptist churches and in the wider denomination. This research has shown that the role and ordination of women needs to be part of such change. Change is however never easy, especially when it is, in Quinn's (1996: 3) words, a "deep change" that "requires new ways of thinking and behaving". Such change requires a letting go of the *old* that is known and comfortable to many, while at the same time embracing the *new* that is to a large extent unknown, uncomfortable and that will undoubtedly lead to many doubts and fears. Yet, the research studies show that it is precisely such a "deep change" that is needed within the BUSA and its associated churches. Quinn (1996: 3) writes that this type of change, "distorts existing patterns of action and involves taking risks". It is therefore not surprising that anyone promoting or pushing for such change meets resistance, because it calls for a reevaluation of the entire entity, from its identity and purpose to its day-to-day actions and procedures. And yet, even if churches are brave enough to embrace change, it does not end there as can be seen with the NGK in South Africa.

The NGK in South Africa opened up the ordination of women in 1990, being fully aware that the local NGK churches were divided over the issue. Further reports show that even by the Synod taking this egalitarian stand in 1990, the actual ordination of women as pastors in the NGK still faced many issues and struggles. A report of an ad hoc committee on "*vrou in die amp*" in 1999 showed that although the ordination in the local churches was open to women "*sy bly op die agtergrond as dit by leierskap kom*¹¹" for reasons such as scepticism and discrimination of women (Ad Hoc Kommissie. 1999: 1,6). The researcher is not aware what the current situation in the NGK in South Africa is, but it is clear that even if a denominational body speaks out in favour of the ordination of women, similar to the abolishing of apartheid in 1994, for something to actually change in practice takes a lot of time and effort and is not achieved overnight.

This research has shown that among the majority of the pastors who participated in the empirical research there is an openness to the ordination of women. At the same time, given the predominantly male leadership within the BUSA and its associated churches, it is evident that there is still a long way to go for these views to be implemented in practice.

¹¹ Freely translated by the researcher as "it is still behind when it comes to leadership".

The role that the BUSA is willing and able to play in this process will prove to be crucial in the coming time.

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