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**PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS AFTER BURIAL: A CHALLENGE OF
CLERGY**

By

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DECLARATION

I, Ntiti Jacob Sefatsa, declare that this dissertation, which I submit for the Degree of Master's in Theology (in the area of Practical Theology) at the University of Pretoria, is my original work. I have never submitted this work for a degree at this University, or any other University. All the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated, and acknowledged by means of complete references, within the text.

Signature (Student)

Date:

.....

Signature (Supervisor)

Date:

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my late parents, Benjamin Sekhaloane Sefatsa and Annah 'Matseliso Sefatsa, my late sisters, Violet Lebohang Sefatsa and Grace 'Mammali Sefatsa. May the good Lord continue to grant them eternal rest.

I would like to include all the widows who have been pastorally neglected by their pastors and pastoral care-givers. In addition, to all pastors who are dedicated to being effective shepherds of the flock. I salute you servants of the Almighty God.

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To all of you I say Khotso!



GLOSSARY

Clergy: A body of all people ordained to perform pastoral or sacerdotal functions, especially in the Christian Church. In this research, pastor will be used interchangeably with clergy.

Church: A community of believers, congregation or a parish. For the purpose of this research, the church refers to the African Methodist Episcopal.

Widowhood: The state or period of being a widow or widower.

Culture: The ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.

Rituals: A solemn ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to a prescribed order.

Cleansing A practice in which a widow officially ends the mourning period by removing the black clothes and is washed in a river.

Story telling: Describes the social and cultural activity of sharing stories, sometimes with improvisation, theatrics or embellishment.

Narrative: A spoken or written account of connected events.

Pain: Uncomfortable feeling that tells you something may be wrong.

Pastoral Care: Consists of helping acts, done by representative persons, directed towards the healing, sustaining and nurturing of persons whose troubles and concerns arise in the context of daily interactions and ultimate means and concerns.

Healing: The process of making or becoming sound or healthy again.

Negligence: Is a failure to take reasonable care to avoid causing an injury.

Cultural practice: Is the manifestation of a culture or sub-culture, especially in regards to the traditional and customary practices of a particular ethnic or other cultural group.

Trauma: A deeply distressing or disturbing experience.

ABSTRACT

Pastoral neglect of widows sounds like a misconception to those who have never experienced it; however, it is one of the subjects that the church has swept under the carpet for years. The church has arrived at a period where we cannot hide the neglect perpetrated by pastors and pastoral caregivers. The challenge is that, pastors do not neglect the Basotho widows deliberately, but some of the African cultural practices hinders them to journey with the widows during their mourning period. These cultural practices become a stumbling between those who are to pastorally care for the Basotho widows and them. On the other hand, the widows feel rejected and neglected, thus, some of them stop coming to church services. The church has not helped these pastors to be able to journey with the widows during their mourning period.

The research seeks to investigate why pastors are challenged when caring for the Basotho widows. The aim of the research is to highlight the African culture that hinders pastoral care of the widows in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The research will not only highlight the challenge faced by pastors and come with a model of care of the Basotho widows but will suggest a healing method for the neglected widows. This healing method will assist pastors and pastoral caregivers to pastorally journey with the widows.

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PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS AFTER BURIAL: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

This study is a result of the challenge that the researcher encountered, when dealing with the Basotho widows in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The researcher observed that the trauma and experiences of her loss of husbands to the Basotho widows were still real. It was evident in the researcher's observation that widows relive traumatic loss after the burial of their husbands. The healing process has not begun in their lives, at this stage. What was even more revealing was that the church had not made any efforts to journey with them after the burial; instead, they are isolated from normal participation in church activities due to certain rituals that they must follow for the whole year. The above challenge caused the researcher to embark on a methodology that will assist pastorally to care for widows.

The researcher had a widow who visited him for pastoral care after she had an unpleasant experience in the church. She had been away from church for months ever since her husband's burial. It transpired that the last time she came to church was four weeks after her husband's burial; she came several times and stopped coming. In the interim, her class leader brought up her non-attendance to the attention of the pastor in charge. It was at this point that the request was made through the class leader, to make an appointment, so that I can visit to pastorally find out what was happening in her spiritual journey.

In the meeting, the widow raised her encounter the last time she attended church; which made her uncomfortable and felt unwelcomed. This led her to stop attending church. On that day she attended church after her husband's burial, the deacon instructed her, to sit at the last pew in the church, because she was wearing mourning clothes, despite the fact that the church was not yet full. When she asked why, she was told that her clothing signifies that she is mourning and has bad luck, so she is not allowed to sit amongst other congregants.

She thought this behaviour or treatment will change, but overtime it got worse. In one instance, she was asked to be the last to receive the Holy Communion, to avoid mixing with other congregants. One of the church ushers advised her to stop coming to church until she

has finished her process of mourning. This further highlighted to the widow that the cultural practices also play a role in church. In her mind, she thought the Church was a place where she will be pastorally cared. The research will explore some of the ways, in which widows are oppressed in families, and the Church, due to cultural practices, thus making it difficult to pastorally care for them.

During the conversation, she pointed out that she lives under strict rules in her own house, because of her in-laws. She is expected to observe cultural practices as a mourning widow, which further imprison her. These cultural practices include the following:

- The fact that she cannot be seen in the street after sunset.
- She cannot do her shopping at the nearby mall freely, because people are scared to walk behind her.
- When using public transport, she is expected to sit at the back seat, so that she does not mingle with others.
- That she cannot give anyone something directly on hand. Whatever has to be handed over by her has to be placed on the floor, and the other person will pick it up from the floor.

She was disappointed by the treatment she got from the church, a place she thought will pastorally care for her. Her expectation was that the church would be more empathetic to her situation and deal with her differently. However, the treatment from the ushers proved to her that there was no difference between family's structures, the Church, and how the community and the church abuse widows. She also thought that the church was a place of comfort, encouragement and love especially to congregants like herself, however her expectations were not met. It became evident to her that the church lived by earthly social norms without love and compassion.

When the pastor, class leader and congregation have been told about the passing on of her husband, they were all there for her. Daily prayer sessions were organised and everyone gave her support. She knew that there are people who cared for her. On the day, she buried her husband she had people around her, other calling her, while others forwarded their messages

of hope and encouragement. That was the last she heard from them. She thought the reason for the silence after the burial was to give her space. However, she realised that they are not coming back. She felt that she needed the pastor and fellow congregants more after funeral.

The above story clearly suggests that there is a need for pastoral care after bereavement. This research will help the researcher to have a model that will help and encourage pastors to continue journeying with widows, especially after they had buried their husbands, despite all the cultural practices prevailing.

The researcher agrees with this widow on her point that after burial, widows need “After Care” or post-bereavement counselling. After listening to her story, the researcher realised that as a pastor, the researcher was unable to assist her because the researcher did not have a method of caring, and the cultural beliefs were a hindrance. Widows are neglected and even oppressed in our time. Masango states that; “The enjoyment of life is part of living as much as *Ubuntu* is part of humanity” (Masango 2006:930). Most of these cultural rites are meant to cleanse the widow of perceived defilement related to the death of her husband and to neutralise and or counter the effects of ritual danger embedded in widowhood.

This research does not claim to come up with an answer to this challenge however; it seeks to suggest a caring method that will assist pastors experiencing this cultural challenge of caring for widows.

1.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The above story raises several questions that will help research challenges faced by widows because of culture practices. The researcher is challenged by the fact that the pastors and pastoral care-givers are able to care for widows during funeral preparations up to the day of the funeral. However, after the burial, pastors do not have a caring method to pastorally care for the widows because they succumb to cultural beliefs, and practices that hinders pastoral care. This encounter with the widow exposed how ill equipped the pastors and pastoral care-givers are, and how culture has influenced them, when it comes to caring for widows. She was not the first widow in the church, but she was the first case that was brought to the fore, which highlighted the extent of the plight of widows within the church. This exposed how the church further extends the pain of widows.

1.2. RESEARCH QUESTION

- What is it that causes the pastors and pastoral care-givers to pastorally care for the Basotho widows after they had buried their husbands?
- Are there cultural practices that are observed during the time of bereavement that hinders pastoral care?
- Are widows, who wear black clothes, full of curse or bad luck that prevents pastors to pastorally care for them?
- How to pastor to Basotho widows during their mourning period?

1.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

The research falls within pastoral care, because it deals with challenges faced by pastors or pastoral caregivers who are hindered by cultural practices to pastorally care for the Basotho widows. The researcher believes that this research will contribute in Pastoral Care as a field of study, and will provide information on how to pastorally care for widows. Social action or pastoral care ministries within the church that are supposed to care for the widows will also benefit from the information generated and recommendations brought by this study.

1.4. AIMS/ OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research aims to highlight the trauma and loneliness suffered by the Basotho widows in their time of grief due to cultural practices. The objective of this research is to come up with a methodology of caring that will assist pastors and pastoral care-givers to pastorally care for widows even with the oppressive cultural practices and system. This process will also help pastors to care for those oppressed by cultural practices.

1.5. RESEARCH GAP

Research has been conducted in other fields like Psychology, Criminology, and Anthropology however little has been done in Theology. Other students did the following research:

From Theology, research was done on the traumatic experience that causes women wearing black garments to be excluded from the body of Christ (Matsaneng A.S 2009), Pastoral care

of the families of the deceased clergy (Matlou D. 2014), about Women as widows (Lopata H.Z 1979) and Basotho cultural views and practices concerning widows: A pastoral challenge (Bikitsha E. 2019). In Psychology, the following topic was researched, black urban widows: the experiences of coping with bereavement in a transitional society (Masebolao D.P 2011). In Criminology, the needs of widowed person in a system their children in a grieving process (Smith L 2008). In other fields, most focus is on widowhood because of HIV and AIDS and urbanisation. The researcher's contribution to this field will be researching on pastors who are pastorally not caring for widows after burial, with the aim of helping and equipping them.

1.6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research will follow qualitative research, which will be based on questions to interviewees and questioners.

1.6.1. Sampling

A representative sample will be drawn from which data will be collected. The sample will consist of:

- Pastors
- Widows

Samples will be approached asking for their consent to use data collected for the purpose of this research.

1.6.2. Data collection

Qualitative research method will be used to collect data in this study. This will help to follow and gain insight of a life of a widow who feels neglected due to cultural practices that are oppressive. It will allow the researcher to reach the inner experience of the participants and to determine how meanings are formed in their worldview. This will help the researcher to discover rather than to only test the variables.

Data collection will be in a form of in-depth interviews where-by one-on-one interviews are used. In these interviews, structured questionnaire will be used to encourage participants to share their stories and experiences of lack of care for widows after the grave due to cultural

practices that hinder pastoral care. The questionnaires will be in simple language. (See appendix A for questions) Participants will also be encouraged to share their ethical or moral view of this subject.

In the interviews conducted, narrative approach will be used to journey with the participants as they share their stories. The researcher will come into the interview assuming a point of not knowing, allowing the participants to be the expert in their story. The role of the researcher in these interviews will be to journey with the participants.

1.6.3. Questionnaires

Two different forms of questionnaires will be used. The first one will be for the widows, and the second one for pastors.

- 20 Clergy will be interviewed through a questioner. The researcher is interested to find out whether they have encountered such a challenge and their role in dealing with it.
- 10 Widows will be interviewed through a questioner. In these interviews, the researcher will find out the impact of being neglected after the church had taken time to be with them after the death of their partners, yet forget them after their partners had been buried.

1.6.4. Caring Theories

Methodologies of Pollard in Positive Deconstruction, Gerkin's Prophetic Method. These theories were chosen because of the following reasons:

- In Positive Deconstruction Theory, Pollard suggests that if you need to reconstruct anything, you do not have to change everything. You only need to take out parts that are non-functioning and replace them with parts that will enhance the performance of the object you are dealing with.
- After the causes of not giving pastoral care to the widow have been identified, the researcher can apply the shepherding theory, which will assist in providing

on-going pastoral care for the widows, in a form of group or individual counselling and be prophetic to highlight their situation.

- The Prophetic method will enable the researcher to enter into the space of widows and understand the impact of culture to them then be in a position to be their voice.

1.7. CHAPTER OUTLINE

1.7.1. Chapter 1: Introduction and Background of the Study

1.7.1.1. Introduction

The researcher was challenged by what happened to a widow who lost her husband when she was left alone to heal after she buried her husband. The researcher who is widow's pastor in a congregation of the Basotho speaking congregants in the Ekurhuleni District of Gauteng Province, could not journey with her during her time of need as a widow because of not knowing what and how to do it. It happens to be a challenge in the church hence this challenge prompted the research. The model will be used in the church by pastors and pastoral caregivers to pastorally care for the widows after burial.

1.7.1.2. Problem Statement

When the church through pastors promotes compassion and love neglects its members, in this case Basotho widows after they had buried their husbands because of not knowing how to journey with them. The same Basotho widows are ill-treated by some of their family members, the community and the church.

1.7.1.3. Research Gap

Healing from the bereavement is part of a pastor's role. Waruta and Kinoti noted "...it is the responsibility of the church minister to be available when God's people are suffering and help them towards the motivation of their wholeness" (2008:5).

1.7.2. Chapter 2: Research Methodology

This chapter will provide an outline of the research methodology applied by the researcher when investigating the hindrances of culture towards pastoral care of Basotho widows.

1.7.3. Chapter 3: Literature Review

The researcher will look at literature on Western and African definition and treatment of widows with special focus on how culture hinders pastoral care. The researcher will also highlight Biblical background of widowhood and guidelines on how the early church was supposed to care for widows.

1.7.4. Chapter 4: Cultural Practices That Hinders Pastoral Care of Basotho Widows After Burial

The following will be investigated: the lack of pastoral care due to cultural beliefs to widows after the burial of their husbands. Also, the impact of these cultural beliefs to both the Basotho widows and the pastors.

1.7.5. Chapter 5: Presentation of Data In Case Studies

Interviews and group discussion will be conducted including appendix of questionnaires. Analysis of interview will be done using stories of widows and answers from the pastors.

1.7.6. Chapter 6: Healing Method

In this chapter, a caring method and a method of healing will be developed.

1.7.7. Chapter 7: Research Findings

This chapter will give a brief overview of the research findings, outlining a brief overview of the study and what it set out to achieve.

1.7.8. Chapter 8: Findings, Recommendation And Conclusions

In this chapter, a summary of the study will be given. The findings of the research will also be discussed based on the method used in chapter two.

CHAPTER TWO

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the background to the study, problem statement, sub-research questions, and objectives of the study and definition of terms. This chapter gives an overview of the strategy to be used to conduct the research and gather data for analysis and interpretation. It will explore the nature of qualitative research and its epistemological foundations. It will highlight the research methodology that was applied by the researcher when investigating the neglect of widows after burial by the pastors due to culture. It will also outline the sampling, data collection and data analysis methods employed in this research. Finally discuss the ethical issues such as the welfare of the research participants.

2.2. THE NATURE OF THE RESEARCH

The study will explore the nature of qualitative research and its epistemological foundations. It will apply grounded theory because data collected will be used to formulate a caring theory that will be used to effectively care for the widows. The sample will consist of widows and pastors at African Methodist Episcopal Church within the Ekurhuleni District. Data collection technique to be used in this study will be in-depth-interviews and questionnaires. These techniques will help the researcher in order to ask the right and relevant questions that will assist in the research.

Narrative therapy as a qualitative method will be the most suited method employed to collecting data in this research. Data collected will be analysed and different caring methods will be employed in order to suggest an efficient method that will be used to care for widows. Finally, the study will highlight preliminary findings. The above-mentioned terminologies will be discussed briefly.

2.3. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The study will explore the trauma experienced by the Basotho widows after their husband's burial. The researcher will seek to establish how pastors and pastoral care-givers, can pastorally care for the Basotho widows in their time of grief. Patton explains, "Qualitative

methods permit the evaluator to study the selected issues in depth and detail. Approaching fieldwork without being constrained by predetermined categories of analysis contributes to the depth, openness, and detail of qualitative inquiry” (Patton 1990:13). This is what the researcher seeks to achieve with this study.

Creswell defines qualitative research as “inquiry into social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers and analysed with statically procedures, in order to determine whether the predictive generalization of the theory hold true.” Creswell further defines qualitative research as “an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words and detailed views of informants which is conducted in a natural setting” (1994:2).

This study seeks to find meanings to inform the researcher`s understanding of the world, to uncover people`s motivation to act in a particular way and explore people`s attitudes that inform certain behaviour. The researcher seeks to come up with a pastoral care model that will help pastors to journey with the Basotho widows after they had buried their husbands. This is what makes qualitative research the best-suited methodology for this study.

2.4. EPISTEMOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Qualitative research uses a particular way to understand the world; therefore, it will be helpful to be start by looking at the epistemology that underlies this research. Epistemology is a Greek word that means theory of knowledge. It is the branch of philosophy, which is concerned with the nature, scope, and the limitations of knowledge (Mason 2006:16). Epistemology is “a philosophical belief system about who can be a knower” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2011:4; Klenke 2008:16). It can be described as the relationship between the knower and the known (Klenke 2008:16; King & Horrocks 2010:8).

The Epistemological view is the relationship of researcher to reality and the road they follow in search of the truth. As the study of knowledge, epistemology addresses questions like: what is our knowledge of others? How is knowledge acquired? And how do we know what we know? (McLeod 2001:3). Epistemology is about issues having to do with the creation and dissemination of knowledge in particular areas of inquiry. Epistemological foundations will assist the researcher in creating knowledge that will assist in understanding the position

pastors and pastoral care-givers, find themselves when having to deal with caring for the Basotho widows.

Mowat and Swinton state that “knowledge of the other occurs when the researcher focuses on a particular individual or group and explores in-depth the ways in which they view and interact with the world” (2007:33). The above statement reflects the researcher’s aim of attaining an in-depth understanding of the challenge faced by pastors and pastoral care-givers, who find themselves unable to journey with Basotho widows after burial.

The essence of epistemology is fundamental to how we think and acquire knowledge. A sound epistemology is necessary for the existence of sound thinking and reasoning. According to Swinton and Mowat “the epistemology of qualitative research relates to the particular theory of knowledge that underpins this approach” (2007:32). Epistemology as a source of generating knowledge is also parallel to qualitative research in that it contributes a lot in collecting data from human experiences on the ground. It is essential in this regard to look at epistemology as a mode of inquiry for this research.

2.5. GROUNDED THEORY

Grounded theory is a qualitative research method that was developed during the 1960s by two sociologists named Barney Glazer and Anselm Strauss in 1967. Their concern was that: “theories used in research were often inappropriate and ill-suited for participants under study”. This research method believes that theories should be “grounded” in data from the field, in the actions, interactions and social process of people” (Creswell 1998:63). Data collected will thus be used to develop theories.

Grounded theory looks at specific information and derives theories and reasons for that particular phenomenon. In this research, grounded theory is essential because the researcher will look specifically for information that will be used to develop theories that will help pastors and pastoral care-givers to journey with the Basotho widows after they had buried their husbands.

2.6. DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

The research will employ different methods of collecting data such as:

- Sampling
- In-depth interview
- Questionnaires
- Narrative therapy

2.6.1. Sampling

In this study, the sample will be selected according to a specific criterion. The researcher will use the church register to derive a list of pastors and widows from the African Methodist Episcopal Church within the Ekurhuleni District. From the same register, the researcher will acquire a list of burials conducted within the church. From the list, he will get the names of widows and their addresses. Those Basotho widows will be contacted to get their approval to be part of the research. The following will form part of the sample:

- Ten widows.
- Twenty pastors.

All data collected and responses will be analysed and issues that cause pastors to be ineffective in journeying with widows after their husband`s burial will be identified.

2.6.2. In-Depth Interviews

The research is of a qualitative nature thus the researcher will use in-depth interviews as a method of collecting data. It is believed that in-depth interviews are also called “semi-structured” interviews or informal interviews. There is no specific order when in-depth interviews are done. The respondent may jump from one subject to the other. While the interviewer has a list of questions to be asked, the wording and sequence of the questions depend on the answers that the respondent gives. The researcher intends to approach interviewees with an open mind and avoid coming into the interview with pre-conceived ideas. This will assist the researcher to construct reliable and authentic theories of caring.

It is generally believed that in-depth interviews as a data collection technique **are** suitable for grounded theory research. Gibbs “is of the idea that formulated theories should arise from

the data collected and should be supported by the data, then only can the outcome quantify as grounded qualitative theory” (2007:57). The author is of the view that by conducting in-depth interviews in different communities on a wide range of participants, the model of pastoral care, which is constructed by the author, can be accepted as qualitative in nature.

The researcher will conduct in-depth interviews with the pastors to hear their stories of how they journey with the Basotho widows after burial of their husbands. Basotho widows will also be interviewed in order to gather information on how pastors and the church at large journey with them in their time of grief and how they would like to be assisted in that situation. After these interviews, case studies will be analysed in chapter four.

2.6.3. Open-Ended Questionnaires

In order to get as much information as possible, the researcher approached the study by using the most commonly used and acceptable techniques. One of the research tools to be used in this research will be open-ended questionnaires. This will be the method that will be employed when gathering data from the pastors. The researcher will attempt to bring uniformity when drafting questions so that that the output could be reliably evaluated. However, the responded have the flexibility in answering the questions. The questionnaire will endeavour to achieve the following:

- Collecting information as the pastoral care-givers. Gather information on how they journey with the widows after they had buried their husbands.

In the context of this research, the participants that will be interviewed will be approached with open mind. This devoid the research from pre-conceived ideas in order to construct reliable and authentic theories regarding pastoral care.

Once the researcher has gathered information from this empirical study (based on people’s real experiences and scientific experience), the researcher will then design a model that would help, in caring for pastors and the pastoral care-givers.

2.6.4. Narrative Method

Narrative method is one of the methods of gathering data that is suitable for this research. As a method, narrative research begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told

stories of individuals or cultures. In this form of research, “the researcher studies the lives of one or more individuals through the telling of stories. The information collected from these stories is then re-told by the researcher into a “narrative chronology” in order to provide the meaning of experiences” (Bloomberg & Volpe 2012:34).

Life is about stories. The people are who they are because of the stories they hear. Christians are Christians because of the stories of Jesus Christ they heard. “Each person is a collection of stories” (Dinkins 2005:11). Murray states, “That according to narrative theory, we are born into a storied world, and we live our lives through the creation and exchange of narratives” (2003:112),

A narrative can be defined as an organized interpretation of sequence of events. This involves attributing agency to the characters in the narrative and inferring causal links between the events. “In the classic formulation, a narrative is an account with three components: a beginning, a middle and an end” (Murray 2003:113-114).

As the study will be interviewing the participants, which are the Basotho widows, they will be telling their lived stories. This will assist the research in gaining knowledge that will be useful in answering our research question. Bloomberg & Volpe explains narrative research in this manner; “As a method, narrative research begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals or cultures. In this research, the researcher studies the lives of one or more individuals through the telling of stories. The information gleaned from the story or stories is then retold or “re-storied” by the researcher into a “narrative chronology” in order to provide the meaning of experiences” (2012:34).

The study opted for narrative method because it is coming from a not-knowing mind set. The experiences as will be expressed in the lived stories of the widows will be the source of knowledge. Fee & Stuart share the same sentiment as Bloomberg & Volpe when they say, “Narratives are stories—purposeful stories retelling the historical events of the past that are intended to give meaning and direction for a given people in the present” (2003:90).

The Basotho widows as they will be narrating their stories, they will tell about their experiences, which will help us (pastors) in giving us direction on how to help and minister to other widows in similar situations. “The narrative method of story-analysis and the

interpretation of stories have many advantages for counselling” (Beeselaar 2011:105). The advantage of narrative method is that it utilizes the power of people’s personal stories to discover the life purpose of the narrator. One other advantage is that it separates the person from the problem and encourages people to rely on their own skill in order to solve their own problems. The narratives of the interviewees will be used to encourage them to solve their own issues.

Some believers within the church (the body of Christ) seem to believe that widowhood is a problem. Through negative conversations, some of the widows heard that they are a problem and they began to believe and perceive themselves as such. Narrative therapy will be useful in helping the widows to externalize the problem. Narrative therapy according to Steyn, “seeks to separate the person’s identity from the problem the person is experiencing; hence, the person is not the problem” (Steyn 2010:59). Narrative therapy and externalization are inseparable. “Externalization is the decision to face the pain caused by privileging negative stories and conversations” (Wimberly 2003:28). Some of the widows have experienced negative conversations. Consequently, they are suffering. Some do not even consider coming to church because they think that they are a problem. Wimberly defines externalization this way; “Externalization refers to the process of reflection that helps persons look at ways their recruitment takes place and the impact that recruitment has on growth and development. A point of externalization is to lessen the impact of negative conversations and promote the more positive conversations through exploring one’s recruitment” (Wimberly 2003:28).

Negative conversations have negative impact on people. It is the duty of pastors and or pastoral caregivers to help people in externalizing negative stories. Wimberly went on to explain; “Negative conversations produce negative evaluations of ourselves. The experience of continually being in positive conversations with others will facilitate and build positive self-esteem within us. Positive conversations help us to evaluate ourselves in positive ways. Our social involvement and discourse with others provide us with opportunities to take into ourselves either bad or good sources of self-evaluation, particularly in the early phases of our lives” (Wimberly 2003:17).

As the interviewees will be telling their painful stories of feeling neglected, abused and ostracized, the researcher will offer them a respectful listening in the process of helping them

externalize the challenge. Steyn cited Schön, Gower and Kotze when they explain, “in the counselling process we listen with many ears. We listen to the words spoken. We listen the way in which the words are spoken – softly, loudly, or hesitantly. We listen to the obvious meaning of words and sentences, and we listen to their possible meaning” (Steyn 2010:66).

The study will listen with many ears to the interviewees believing that listening is important for their healing. Beeselaar cites Paul Tillich when he says, “The first duty of love is to listen” (Beeselaar 2011:37). Pastoral caregivers should be active listeners (James 1:19). Dinkins explains the importance of listening in this manner: “The function of the leader is to receive the word through listening in conversation. When the sacred word, Scripture, is spoken to listening ears, it heals and provides direction for the community. The sacred word is much too large for the mouth. It belongs to the narrative life of the whole community. It is part of the palaver (spoken word) of the community that is liberated through the ministry “with large ears” that cares for the word by caring for the stories of the people and the stories of the people of God in Scripture. In suggesting that we listen with large ears, I mean that we help people as we facilitate the telling of their stories. When they tell their stories they both receive and give help in a communal context. Both the telling of stories and listening to stories form a reciprocal dynamic of community building. If there are no stories, there is no community” (Dinkins 2005:25).

Pastors and pastoral care-givers should listen to the Word of God to show that they love Him, and they should as well listen to the stories of the people around them to show that they care for and about them. By sharing stories and listening to the stories of others, a community is being built. Dinkins comments; “Although narrative conversation is the oldest and the most fundamental way that pastors help people, few pastors counsel from a narrative perspective” (Dinkins 2005:16).

The focus in this study will be on the live stories of the Basotho widows and pastors. This study will be asking relevant questions in order to facilitate the telling of the stories.

2.7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

According to White, “qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organizing the data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among the categories”

(2003:72). Qualitative analysis is a systematic process of selecting, categorizing, comparing, synthesizing and interpreting to provide explanations of the single phenomenon of interest. White states several cyclical phases of data analysis, which will allow continuous discovery, especially in the field but also throughout the entire study to identify tentative patterns. The phases are as follows:

- *Categorizing and ordering of data after data collection*
- *Qualitatively assessing the trustworthiness of data, to refine patterns*
- *Writing a synthesis of themes and or concepts” (2003:73)*

After data had been collected, researcher transcribed the data for easier interpretation and analysis. The researcher will analyse the data using the following elements: coding, segmenting and developing categories and themes. According to Maree (2007), “coding is the process of reading carefully through your transcribed data, line by line and dividing it into meaningful analytical units. Coding is also defined as marking the segments of data with symbols, descriptive words or unique identifying names” (2007:9).

The researcher will transcribe the data from the video tape into notes, and codes will be developed out of it by marking segments with category names. After the data had been coded, the researcher will classify such codes or units into segments. The researcher will then group together segments with common meanings from each research site and themes will be developed. Themes will then lead to the findings and conclusion that responded to the research questions.

In-depth interviews will be conducted. These interviews will be based on previous theoretical and research constructs combined with professional experienced (psychologist and sociologist) in the field of social issues.

In this study, the Basotho widows and pastors will be interviewed, their stories will be listened to; and interacted with. The interviewees will be used as living books; they will be handled as literature. The nature of this study is underscored by the use of interviews, published and unpublished books and theses, journals, and electronic sources. “Because interviews will be employed, the experience of the interviewees (the participants) will be the source of knowledge” (Punch 2000:3).

2.8. METHODS OF PASTORAL CARE

The researcher will employ the following pastoral care modes that will assist with journeying with pastors as he attempts to create a caring method for them. The researcher will explore three methods of pastoral care, namely Charles Gerkin (1997) shepherding model, Nick Pollard (1997) positive deconstruction model and Edward Wimberly (1999) claiming God, reclaiming dignity. The above-mentioned methods are explained below:

2.8.1. Gerkin`S Shepherding Model

The element of Shepherding was needed in order to help pastors care for or shepherd the flock through their leadership. Shepherding in Africa is common and a known method of Caring for the flock. The common entry is shepherding which will help pastors and pastoral care-givers to connect with widows and pastorally care for them as members of the flock. African people respect shepherds.

A shepherd is someone who cares for the flock by not only leading them to graze in a good place, but also providing security and being willing to die for the flock. This pastoral model of Gerkin was applied to the study: "Pastors are Shepherds of the flock. The New Testament depiction of Jesus as the Good Shepherd who knows his sheep and is known by his sheep (John 10:14) has painted a meaningful normative portrait of the Pastor of God's people. The better, lively exemplars of the pastor as the shepherd of Christ's flock have been those of our ancestors. They exercised their shepherding skills in order to empower people and offer care of those who were being neglected by the powerful of their communities.

When death strikes and a woman loses her husband her life changes. This change is not only within her family but also within her community and her church. This change brings along the feeling of despair, neglect and abuse. The shepherding model as a caring model requires that pastors should account for those in their care and not toss them out of the church. The pastors and pastoral care-givers need this approach of shepherding. Gerkin continues to speak of the Old Testament biblical structure of leadership, which consists of the three-fold functions: Priests, the Prophets and the Wisdom. For example, Priests in the Old Testament provided ritual liturgical celebration for the community. Prophets were the mouthpiece of God in challenging injustices practiced against the poor and the marginalized. Wise men and women

dealt with matters, which may not have been religious, but contributed to the wellbeing of the community.

This method can enhance our research by helping journeying with the pastors to empower them with methods that will enable them to journey with the Basotho widows. This method is essential however, it lacks a way for pastors to enter troubled souls of the Basotho widows and assist on the problem they are facing. This is where Pollard's method of positive deconstruction aids this research. The process is positive because this deconstruction is done in a positive way in order to replace it with something better. This process is "deconstruction" because I am helping people to deconstruct what they believe in order to look carefully at the belief and analyse it" (Pollard 1997: 44).

2.8.2. Pollard's Positive Deconstruction Model

Positive deconstruction as postulated by Pollard can be of help as we work and talk with pastors and class leaders of our church. Pollard describes positive deconstruction as follows "the process of Positive deconstruction is done in a positive way in order to replace it with something better" Pollard has this parable. "When I was an undergraduate, I bought my first car. It had a good chassis and most of the body works was Ok. However, that was about all that could be said in its favour. The engine was worn out, the gearbox crunched pathetically and the suspension was broken. It just about got me around, but it was not good. Sometime later, I heard about another car of the same make and model. It contained many new parts, which were in good condition, but unfortunately, it had been written off in an accident. I immediately bought it and set about taking both cars completely apart. I looked carefully at each part to see whether it is any good. If it was, I kept it. If it wasn't, I threw it away. Eventually, I put all the pieces together, started it up and found I now had a very good car. There wasn't actually much left of my original car. Some parts were good enough to keep most of them were now replaced." (Pollard 1997:44-45).

The above statement shares a way of dealing with human beings so that they reconstruct their lives. This process is helpful. In other words, the old car is the way the pastors, pastoral care-givers and some members of the congregation think about widows. Pastors and pastoral care-givers including some members of the congregation treat widows as outcasts even in the church. This treatment emanates from cultural and traditional practices that overflow to the

church. Pastors and pastoral care-givers have a responsibility of sitting down with widows after burial to listen to their needs and stories. The Positive deconstruction method, when applied, will create a new way of caring. The two methodologies will help pastors and pastoral care-givers to enter into the space of widows after burial. The method of caring, put forward by Pollard, leads one to conclude his thinking through applying research design that will finally guide pastors and pastoral care-givers to pastorally care for widows. Further ways of working with the pastors and pastoral care-givers would be through interviews. The researcher as indicated before will use qualitative research.

Pollard states that, “If I am to help people who are not interested in looking at Jesus because they are quite happy with what they believe, I must first set about understanding what it is that they believe. I must do everything I can to understand their world view. Only then shall I know what kind of questions to raise with them” (1997:47). This is why the researcher needs to spend time with the sample so that he can be exposed and understand their worldview.

2.8.3. Wimberly’s Model Of Claiming God Reclaiming Dignity

Gerkin’s method of shepherding will be helpful in this study. On the other hand, the reader should keep in mind that the study endeavours reclaiming a dignity of the dignity of widows. This is where Wimberly’s model of claiming God reclaiming dignity will come handy. Wimberly uses the biblical figure named ‘Job’ as a model for privileging God conversation. He explicates, “From the book of Job, we can glean a model by which persons can come to a fuller understanding of their worth and value. This model is a process of discovery through conversation first with others and finally with God. As pastoral counsellors we often take the role of one of the friends (although, we hope counsellors are more insightful), helping the person externalize various cultural conversations clearing the way for a fresh encounter with God” (Wimberly 2003:30-31).

Job suffered afflictions, but in his suffering, he did not turn against God. In his suffering, he privileged God conversations. Suffering is harmful when we become hardened and reject God; when we withdraw from the help others can give; and when we reject the fact that God can bring good out of calamity. Job 19:25-26 says; “I know my redeemer lives, and that at the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God...”

At the heart of the book of Job comes this ringing declaration of self-assurance: “I know that my redeemer lives.” In the ancient Israel, a redeemer was a family member who bought a slave’s way to freedom or who took care of a widow. Faced with death and decay, Job still expected to see God—and he expected to do so in his body. Job was confident that at the end God would be on his side. In this enquiry, the study will use the experience of Job to encourage the widows, pastors and pastoral care-givers to understand that they are to converse with God in difficult times. To those rejected by the community and their church, in this case widows, it is advisable not to despair, but to realise that they are rejected by their communities but not by their God. Wimberly uses Job as a model to show us that we are capable of surviving the worse if we privilege God conversation. The advice is this; do not despair because those who supposed to shepherd you do not care for you.

It is the pastor’s pastoral duty to heal the wounded. The wounded in this case are the widows. Wimberly explains; “The major task, then, of therapy is to free human beings from the negative stories into which they have been recruited early in their lives so that they can find the authentic ways to story their experiences that they can give their lives more meaning and vitality” (2003:96).

It is the responsibility of pastoral care-givers to recruit the suffering into positive conversations so that they can be that which God wants them to be. God created people in His image and likeness (see Genesis 1:26). Now, the image of God in the people is distorted. For people to regain that image of God, conversation with God is a prerequisite. Wimberly writes; “For us to be fully human, conversation with God is necessary. And for us to have a truest sense of our worth and value, we need look at the living God as revealed in Scripture” (Wimberly 2003:18).

The study believes that it is a duty of pastors and pastoral care-givers to pastorally care for widows as revealed in Scripture. By pointing both pastors and pastoral care-givers to God, they will be able to facilitate the program of making sure that widows feel welcomed to participate in worship service without fear or being ridiculed. Pastors and pastoral care-givers should collaborate with God in bringing about sacred identity formation. Wimberly explains; “Sacred identity formation from its inception is what God does partnering with us. It is the way we are led by to sort a variety of cultural conversations and internal conversations about

our human worth and value until we can prioritize God conversation the way Job did. Our faith community assists in this process of sacred identity formation by offering fellowship and cues to what privileging God conversation is like. Thus, sacred identity formation is a process of internalizing God conversation and our faith communities play vital roles in this process” (Wimberly 2003:10). In collaborating with God, pastoral caregivers should help the suffering to internalize God conversations. Faith communities play vital roles in helping people to internalize God conversations. They do so by encouraging one another with Scriptures. Jeremiah 29:11 says, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (NIV). “This is one of the Scriptures the caregivers will need to understand to allow those who are hurting to experience God’s grace” (Beeselaar 2011:115-116).

2.9. PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

In this chapter, we are investigating the methodology, to be used in this study as well as pastoral care models suggested in caring for the widows by both pastors and pastoral caregivers. The study is determined to employ qualitative methodology. The researcher will as well use narrative method because the study will have to interpret the stories of the interviewees and some biblical passages of Scriptures; hermeneutics is unavoidable in this enquiry. The study will follow a postmodern method of reasoning. Shepherding model proposed by Gerkin will be utilized as a caring model. Since Gerkin’s model of shepherding does not say anything about regaining the image of God, the study will as well employ Wimberly’s model of reclaiming God reclaiming dignity.

Gerkin’s shepherding method will be used in teasing out the methodology that the researcher intends to use. The element of Shepherding is needed in order to help priests care for, or shepherd, the flock through their leadership. A Shepherd is someone who cares for a flock not only leading them to graze in good places, but also by providing security and showing a willingness to die for the flock.

The New Testament depiction of Jesus as the Good Shepherd who knows his sheep and is known by his sheep (John 10:14) has painted a meaningful normative portrait of the Pastor of God’s people.

This means that, as pastors we have a duty to give ourselves time to listen to the problems faced by our congregants in particular widows. In some families, churches as in denominations and communities when a woman loses her husband through death life changes. A widow does not only suffer the trauma of losing her husband, she suffers loneliness due to cultural and religious rules that restrict her from having contact with people because of her “status”. Rituals are forced upon her life. There are new rules she has to live by in her house and the community she lives in. The major challenge is when these rules and rituals are also experienced in the place of worship. Widows are neglected and not supported after they had buried their husbands especially financially. The Shepherding model as a caring model requires that pastors should account for those in their care, and not reject them because they have sinned or seen as having sinned.

According to the Prophet Ezekiel, a Shepherd is the one who leads, guides nurtures, heals, seeks the lost, and brings the scattered sheep in one place with the reason of protecting them from harm (Ezekiel 34:12). Consequently, it is up to us as Pastors to nurture and heal the widows as we journey with them.

This process of “deconstruction” will be helpful to the researcher, as it will help in deconstructing what culture and tradition brings into the church, and thus rendering pastors unable to pastorally care for the widows. The research will positively help pastors to get ready to journey with the Basotho widows.

CHAPTER THREE

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will explore literature that reveals how widows are being treated after the burial of their beloved husbands. It will focus on the African and Western perspectives as well as how culture dictates and hinders pastoral care. This research will seek to investigate psychological and social implications as well. It will also attempt to interview the custodians who are preserving African culture, especially in terms of rules that follow burial. The Old and New Testament will be consulted to compare and refute culture, should it be established that injustice is practiced. It may present custodians the opportunity to review and deconstruct certain cultural practices that compel widows to experience emotional and psychological pain.

Widows are victims to great losses. Losing a husband is just the beginning of all losses. Their husband's families may come to claim property, which would leave them homeless. Widows are stigmatised as bad luck. This research will seek to remind or educate members of the clergy that widows ought to be respected according to the Word of God.

3.2. EXPERIENCES AND LOSSES OF WIDOWS FOLLOWING BURIAL (MOST AFRICAN CULTURES)

3.2.1. Shock

Both the African and Western widows share the same or comparable experiences of shock, trauma, and pain, though the management of this pain and trauma may differ because of some of the expectations from the African culture. The western will be different as it offers services where they will be helped in order to heal.

3.2.2. Emotions

The Basotho widow may show her emotions and this is expected of her, but she will not be allowed to make decisions. "The woman is perceived to be unable to make any concrete decision. Decisions are imposed on her, mostly by her family in-law" (Kapuma 2012:63). The

researcher agrees with Kapuma who focussed on widows in Malawi, that widows are expected to have one person who will be helping her on the arrangement of her husband's funeral. Even the Basotho widows are given this help, though this help is not a choice but what is forced to her. Decisions will be taken on her behalf because it is believed that now; she is too traumatized to take thoughtful decisions. Whereas, the European widow will be the one taking decisions on matters that have to do with her late husband's funeral service. She will notify the people of how the body of her late husband should be treated, whether to be buried or to cremate. Her in-laws will wait for her pronouncement; if older children are available, she will make her decision with them.

3.2.3. Ritual After Death

When death befalls, a Mosotho widow will be expected to change her daily life style immediately. She will be introduced to the African cultural practices of the family and or of the clan that she did not even know they exist at some instances. She will be expected to remain in the bedroom away from social activities. Her movements are limited and she is assigned a woman who will be her aid. In other clans or tribes, she will be expected to change her clothes to those that show that she is in mourning. Whereas, with the European widows, the life of the new widow is challenged a bit. She is not restricted to move around in making sure that the funeral preparations are on point. She will be going wherever she wants to go without causing a stare. This shows that the European widows do not have cultural set of practices to follow.

3.2.4. Family Members

John Jusu, points out "in much of Africa, a woman's identity and support has come primarily from male members. The death of a husband meant the loss of that identity and support, and that loss frequently caused suffering, unjust treatment, and hardship for widows and orphans" (2012: 367, African Study Bible). For a grieving woman to lose her identity is certainly very cruel and devastating. To lose one's identity may mean losing the relationship that was once secured while the husband was alive. This is the time when widows who are poverty stricken are in need of much assistance. Psychological, emotional and financial help from families will bring comfort and relief to poor widows.

3.2.5. The Community

The community is being very unfair to the Basotho widows in several ways. If she is traveling by “bus”, she has to find a seat at back. It is so much like being excommunicated from the rest of other commuters. Shopping in the “Mall” also presents a problem, because African people consider it “bad luck” to walk behind a widow who is identified by her attire (black clothing).

3.2.6. The Church In “African Context”

The Church, the body of Christ, is the least expected in practicing discrimination among its people, especially with widows who are grieving. It is no better than the community when it is going to consider widows as “bad Luck”. Requesting them to sit at the back of Church and not with other congregants and not permitting them to partake of the “Holy Communion” simultaneously with the congregation is definitely discrimination.

3.3. A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON TREATING OF WIDOWS

3.3.1. Widows in the Old Testament

The Hebrew word for widow is “*almanac*”. According to Merrill C. Tenney & J.D. Douglas (1987:1064) Widows are special to God and are given special care (Psalm 68:5; 146:9; Proverbs 15:25). From early times, they wore a distinctive dress. The Hebrews were commanded to treat them with special consideration and were punished if they did otherwise (Exodus. 22:22).

Instead of mistreating widows and causing them all kinds of discomfort as in some cultures, more particularly some African cultures, the Hebrews in the Old Testament were warned not to ill-treat widows but to be considerate to them. There were repercussions to those who did not abide by the Mosaic Law because God Himself was the defender of widows.

3.3.1.1. Excess To Glean From Fields

Merrill C. Tenney points out that “Widows were permitted to enter fields to glean grapes, grain and olives that were dropped (Deuteronomy 24:19-21). She also participated (14:29) in the third-year tithe along with the fatherless and the stranger.” (Tenney 1975:928). It is amazing how widows were cared for; even to provide for themselves by gleaning in the fields of other farmers without being accused of theft. In today’s life, a widow can be trespassing if

she entered any one's field without permission. A practical example of gleaning without permission can be found in the book of Ruth in the Old Testament, where Ruth went to glean to provide for herself and her mother in law Naomi (Ruth 2:1-3).

3.3.1.2. The Right To Remarriage For Younger Widows Without Children

The ideal future for a young Mosotho widow without children was to remarry. A close relative from her late husband's side had the first option. A brother or the next of kin of a deceased man should under certain circumstances marry the widow. This was known as a "levirate marriage" (Deuteronomy 25:5-10).

3.3.2. Widows in the New Testament

The Greek word for widows is "chera". Very much like the Old Testament, the New Testament church also expressed great care during the Apostolic times (James 1:27). The Apostolic church was well organised in caring for their needs. The Apostle had stipulated rules that would guide those responsible for widows. Younger widows should not be put on the list of care. They are encouraged to remarry, have children and manage their own homes (1Timothy 5:14). Those who should be placed on the list must be over sixty, who were faithful to their husbands, known for her good deeds in terms of rearing her children, showing hospitality.

Children or grandchildren are instructed to take care of their widowed mother or grandmother. This is very much in line with practicing the Christian religion; it is pleasing to God (1Timothy 5:4). If support were not available from that source, the church should care for them. In such cases, the women were called widows who are really in need.2021

3.4. A WESTERN PERSPECTIVE ON WIDOWS

European widows are not subject to rules applied in African or Indian cultures. The colour of their attire is African – Black, Indian – White. The European widows do not seem have a certain kind of attire. It is observed that they continue with life the usual way in terms of dress.

3.4.1. Old Age Homes Are Provided For Rich Widows

The old aged European widows have a huge advantage because of their financial background. Those who had saved and planned for the olden days of their lives repeat the results after they had buried their husbands. Even those who did not save for their old age do have an advantage. Their advantage emanates from them having either children or relatives that place them into these old aged homes. The homes support these widows and their new life becomes easier in these. Whereas with the African old aged widows the story becomes different. Theirs is to either remain alone in their homes or be cared for by their relatives. In their homes, they are in danger of abuse from their neighbours or thugs who steal from them and others end up being raped and killed. In their homes, these old aged African widows end up being referred to as “witches” by members of their communities. These accusations at some point results in these old aged widows being surrounded, attacked and killed by mobs.

3.5. CEREMONIES AND PERIODS OF MOURNING

3.5.1. Mourning period

A Mosotho widow will not have a choice as to how long she wants to mourn for her husband, but those elders assigned will be the ones informing her of the duration of this period. This will happen either the night before the burial or the same day after they had buried her husband. She will be given twelve months of mourning and these twelve months will depend on how she carries herself in response to the cultural practices imposed on her. Failure to observe every practice given will results in the extension of the period. The western has no stipulated time of mourning. It is believed that this period is personal. The widow will decide alone on how and for how long she will mourn for her late husband.

3.5.2. Cleansing Ceremony

This cleansing ceremony happens after a Mosotho widow had completed her twelve-month mourning period. During the mourning period, the widow will be drinking herbal medication specially made for widows. A known herbalist will mix this medication commonly known as “*sangomas*” or “*dingaka*” (traditional doctors). The purpose of the herbal medication is to clean her blood. The last hurdle is the ceremony. A cow will be slaughtered and part of the it’s blood and gall will be used by women who are going to help the widow to bath or wash

her body. She will be taken to the river in the early hours of the morning and this ceremony always happens in wintertime. She will then be expected to bath with that cold water with the help of other women. Then she will be given new set of clothing to symbolise the fact that she is now cleansed. The western widows do not go through such challenges.

The next chapter will deal with cultural practices that hinders pastoral care and thus giving a challenge to pastors.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. CULTURE AND RITUALS THAT HINDERS PASTORAL CARE OF THE BASOTHO WIDOWS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus on the lack of pastoral care to the widows due to cultural beliefs zooming at the Basotho nation in the Ekurhuleni District. Also, the impact of these cultural beliefs to both the widows and the pastors. According to Dlukulu (2010:57) and Volkan and Zintl (1993:51), death rituals have an important psychological significance for African people. During that period, mourners need time and space to grieve which is one of the reasons that most cultures and religions have funeral rites to address and meet that need. Some of these rituals are important as they help the family to come to terms with the death of the deceased and accept it whilst involved in planning the funeral, viewing the body, memorial services and accepting condolences from friends, relatives and the community at large. These rituals differ from culture to culture, ethnic groups and clans although there are also similarities amongst them.

Getrude A. Kapuma on her PhD theses emphasised the challenges of these cultural practices by saying: "It is important to note that these cultural practices place heavier and more burdens on widows, in comparison to widowers. Many of these practices are also emotionally, physically and or financially harmful to the widow."

4.2. DEATH AND FUNERAL RITUALS

When the news of the death of the husband is shared with the wife, the wife is expected to cry in a loud voice as per the Basotho culture. Her cry is a sign of sorrow and pain. The following are the words or some of the words the new widow will be using: "*Jo, ka rare ka le bona, la moepa-molelle, monyolosa-thaba. Oho! Hoja khole e teng e leketlang leholimong, le 'Na ke ne ke tla itsoarella ho nyolohela teng.*" This statement means: "What a tragedy, it is an uphill. If there was a rope hanging from heaven, I would use it to be with my loved one." Then representatives will accompany this new widow from her in-laws to her parent's residence. The aim is to go inform her parents and her family that she has lost a husband. Then a necklace made out of weeds is weaved or created for her. This process is known as "*Thapo*". This necklace is a sign that she has lost a husband. After she has been given a

necklace, she is then sent back to her in-laws or her home to start the mourning process. Akujobi states; “That mourning rituals in African culture complicates widowhood to the extent that African women fear the immanent experience of becoming a widow.” (2009:2457). The researcher agrees with Akujobi that African culture makes life difficult for widows in such a way that widows in most cases fear for their new acquired life and status. Widows go through much hardship that stems from the society, the husband’s family and from tradition.

Adebowale (2015:113) states that; “These cultural practices in African societies have worsened the situation for widows as it exposes them to indiscriminate abuses”. There are cultural practices in African communities that have rendered the life and situations of widows to be vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Widows, due to some of these cultural practices become victims of isolation and discrimination.

A study by Kotzé *et al.* (2012:742) revealed that South African mourning process is shaped by discursive practices of both traditional culture and gender practices of bereavement. Much as culture has its own values, ideas, beliefs and practices with regard to death. Manyedi (2001:33, 46) stresses that coping with the death of the husband could have been easier if the widow was within a culture that accepts and acknowledges death as a natural way of completing the life cycle that God created. The researcher agrees with Manyedi’s view of acknowledging death as a natural way of completing the cycle of life.

Almost every African family occasion requires a unique ritual performance. For example, when a baby is born, a teenager enters into manhood or a man and woman marry, certain rituals are performed to grace the event. This is not unusual when it comes to death. Mourning rituals are carried out from the day of death, after the burial and throughout the year. These rituals differ from one ethnic group or clan to another. For instance, rural widows observe mourning rituals slightly differently from urban widows and the same applies for Christian and non-Christians. Because of the multitude of these mourning rituals, this chapter will mainly focus on those that are most common amongst Basotho widows. The aim is to show what possible effect they might have on the grieving process of the Mosotho widow, and how they come to hinder the pastoral care.

4.3. THE IMPACT OF DEATH TO THE WIDOW

The reactions to trauma and grief cannot be isolated from the impact of death. Death causes grief and it is traumatic to the family hence the manifestations of the trauma and grief

reactions is eminent. Death does not only disrupt personal emotions, physical and psychological status but also the social environment. A family is an interdependent social system where members intimately interact with one another. The surviving spouse tries to comfort her children and meet their daily demands while she is confronted by her own grief and needs. According to Oladayo, "Death is a universal human experience", (Oladayo, 2014:54). We all experience death in the same way but the impact differs because of different social, relational, cultural and religious orientation. Therefore, though death is a universal experience the impact is not universal but unique to each individual. When death strikes, people enter into different psychological and emotional modes. These modes may take various forms according to families and according to how the deceased has departed.

Death is one of the life stressors on its own. Death may yield other crisis episodes in the family. The crisis may be compounded, if the deceased was a breadwinner as it means there will be an economic crisis faced by the widows. The economic crisis together with relational crises may cause a lot of stress and grief in the family. "The occurrence of death though inevitable can be significantly disruptive and upsetting to the family system and the network of relationship of the dead person" (Gelcher, 1986:56).

These disruptions deprive the widow physical close relations with the person they love. Subsequently the untimely socio-relational disruptions because of death cause profound bereavement to the widows. There is a huge change in the life of a widow. Death also changes the family structure and the relational patterns. The widows are left agonizingly confused, trying to restore the family equilibrium both individually and relationally.

Kremer's perspective on death is "How we perceive death affects the way we live, how we live affects the way we die and how we die gives new meaning to the way others can live" (Kramer, 1988: 12). In the researcher's view of Kramer's narrative on death, is that everyone is an architect of his or her own destiny. Everyone is responsible in giving meaning to his or her own life. Kramer further suggests that death be viewed from the following focal points:

- "Physical (the irreversible loss of brain waves, central nervous system, heart and breath functions).
- Psychological (the life of quasi-consciousness, living as if already dead), and

- Spiritual (the death or transformation of old patterns, habits, roles identities and the birth of a new person)” (1988:12).

These three focus areas enable us to understand the idea that death affects the total being as in spiritual, psychological and physical. In the first stage of physical death, all the body functions cease to operate. In the second stage of psychological death, the soul departs from the body. The third stage, which is spiritual death, is when the spirit returns to the Maker who gave it. In some families, death causes not only grief, but also produces profound disorders. The social change caused by the death of the loved one is irrevocable and the grief that follows is real.

✓ Grief

Grief is often a general reaction to death or sometimes loss. Apparently, one of the most difficult realities we are faced with in life is loss. Loss brings pain and subsequently pain brings grief. This reaction happens particularly if a person has lost something or someone within which there are strong bonds. Grief and loss should be understood as part of the journey of life. The grieving person in this case, the widow will pass through the grieving process quicker if there is more support. Accepting the grief speeds up the healing process. Bowlby describes grief as “the sequence of subjective states that follow loss and accompany mourning.” (Bowlby, 1960:11)

Therefore, grief is the process that follows a loss. Grief is an interpersonal process and is mostly unique to an individual. Bowlby’s definition of grief summarises the aspect of personal experience. After a loss and individual experiences grief, the feeling is individualized. Marrone says, “For human beings, grieving reactions are actually only the beginning of the much longer and larger process of mourning. Grief reactions, such as shock, protest, sadness, yearning and depression, help to recognize the loss and prepare us for the work of mourning,” (Marrone, 1997:108). Marrone’s definition inculcates the immediate reaction to loss and prolonged grief. Grief affects any one at least once in a lifetime.

Grief mostly disrupts one’s thinking ability and causes emotional confusion. At the time of grief, the emotions are like a roller coaster because of being unstable. Several psychologists suggest that a grieving person should go through the grieving process before a person can

begin working on mourning. On many occasions, this process of grief is driven by a person's denial of the loss or reality of the situation. Different psychological scholars claim that this reaction is a natural response to loss. Grief is a complex emotion that is not often understood by people, especially if you have not experienced it before. Sometimes a person does not know that he/she is grieving. However, unresolved grief is often an unfinished issue in people's lives. It can underlie anger, acting out, and depression, and it can cause problems in other areas, such as physical health, emotional well-being, job performance, or a romantic relationship. Debra Holland further defines grief as, "a profound feeling of sadness and pain caused by an important loss, change, crises, or failure, either actual or perceived" (Holland, 2011:3).

T.H.S. Setsiba in her article attests to Debra Holland's definition by saying that "grief is the tense emotional response. Associated with the loss of the significant person, often precipitated by death of the loved one," (Rosenblatt *et.al.* 1976). Donna Dickinson, M Johnson and Jeanne Samson Katz share Debra Holland's view when they say, "Grief is essentially an emotion that draws us toward something or someone that is missing." (Donna Dickinson, Malcon Johnson and Jeanne Samson Katz, 2000:325). All the cited articulations point to one aspect, that grief is an emotional instability caused by the loss one experiences. Grief following bereavement by death is aggravated if the person lost is the person to whom one would turn in times of trouble. "Faced with the biggest trouble she has ever had; the widow repeatedly finds herself turning toward a person who is not there" (2000:327).

Generally, several people experiencing these negative emotions find it hard to get words that would describe their feelings or emotions. The quality of attachment determines the intensity of grief.

Inherent within family structures is that every individual has a role to play. Losing one player means huge adjustment. Carol Staudacher says, "even if you could anticipate the death of your husband, or friend. Or child, you could not have anticipated all the feelings the loss brought" (Carol Staudacher, 1987:4). As death comes uninvited and mostly untimely so does grief. That makes it hard to prepare for it.

Grief represents humanness just as love does and grief has no predecessor. The grief resulting from loss divides life into two segments i.e. life before the spouse passes on and life after the

spouse has died. When the spouse was still alive, people identified the woman with her spouse. They called her Mrs. Mokoena, Mother Mokoena, 'Mme Mokoena, etc. Now death has robbed her of her identity and subtracted part of her.

Basotho widows, just like any human being, experience grief because of the loss of their husbands due to death. Widows unfortunately, will not attend a counselling session before they bury their husbands. The pastor and members of the congregation made sure that they pay the widow a visit before the burial for praying. These prayer visits have limitations, as they do not even give the widow an opportunity to tell of their feelings during this period. Sermons that are prepared and delivered deal with death not what the widow is experiencing at that moment. There are grieving stages that resonates from Kubler Ross's study. These stages are responses to every day loss that people experience.

- ✓ Denial: At this stage, a person does not accept the death approaches. In this stage, the world becomes meaningless and life is useless. The person at this stage becomes numb. The person uses this stage to protect himself or herself from experiencing the gravity of the loss. At this stage, it is difficult to accept that your loved one is gone. Denial is one of the ways in which some mourners fight the gravity of the pain of the loss of their beloved. Therefore, grief is in essence used as anaesthesia. At this stage you began to heal, denial also begins to fade, and feelings you were denying begin to surface. However, if a person does not move from this stage, he or she will remain stuck in shock and denial. This is generally a reactionary move when a person receives unexpected news particularly sad news.

4.4. ON THE EVE OF THE FUNERAL

African people have different rituals of welcoming the deceased person at home. For example, if a person died of an accident, they have a process of getting his or her spirit to unite with the body. The Basothos will perform the following ritual;

The day before the funeral, the body of the deceased is brought back into the house, in the afternoon, at home. Once the body arrives, they will have a short prayer. Culturally, the body of the person who has died in an accident is not brought into the house rather is passed by the street and is told that this has been your home, but now we are taking you to your resting

place. Where the coffin will be placed, and candles are lit the whole night in assisting the brightness of the path of the deceased to travel on. On this day, those religious and Christian faiths mostly conduct “*moletelo*” (night vigil). In the Basotho culture, this “*moletelo*” (night vigil) had two reasons besides praying. The “*moletelo*” (night vigil) was to guard the body of the deceased from being eaten by rats and to disturb the witches (*baloi*) from tampering with this body.

The widow at this point is having a number of people around her for comfort (*Matsheliso*) and support. Her local pastor and members of the congregation have organised a prayer session. The widow might not be part of the session but will be able to hear the whole proceedings of the night vigil. Through scripture and hymns, the widow will feel encouraged to face the world and the new life she is going to live without her husband.

4.5. ON THE DAY OF THE FUNERAL

Before the coffin could be taken out of the house, the elders to view the body and pay their last respects will give the family. In several cultures, it is believed that this action help in bringing closure to the surviving persons. However, that statement may not be true to every person. Some people become very sick before they pass on and that may compromise their facial outlook. When such a corpse is viewed, some are now left with an unbearable picture of their loved one. This may aggravate the grief instead of relieving it.

In other cultures, the first-born child lies across on the door while the coffin is passed over him. It is believed by Basotho that this process will prevent the death from coming back into the family anytime soon. The body is carried, and the feet has to face west as a sign of getting out of his home. This “feet first” movement is also performed in the church, if there is a service in the sanctuary. Thus, the church confirms or condones the dictates of culture. This also means he will not “return” and haunt surviving people at home. The clan poem (*seboko*) will be recited as the body is carried to the hearse. The process will be followed until the grave. All the above is helping in the process of grieving. The reader needs to note that as this process is performed; the widow is covered with a blanket, and is allowed only a small opening to see where she is going. This ritual may isolate the widow even further from the environment and closing the last chapter with her husband. After the woman has lost her primary attachment, she is now isolated from the society through a morning ritual. The pastor and congregation

are leading with the committal and their participation at this time gives the widow hope that she has support from her local church.

From the cemetery, the mourners wash their hands at the gate and some religious groups will sprinkle mourners with holy water. It is assumed that this ritual removes the bad luck and cleanses the persons. The water, after the washing of hands is used to clean the shovels that were used at the graveside. Then these shovels are placed safely until after seven days when a ceremony to properly cleanse them is organised.

The widow is then given black clothes (*sefifi*) to wear, as a sign of mourning. These clothes will be worn for one year. She is then instructed by elderly women on her new journey in life, especially on how to conduct herself while on the mourning process (*bohlohali*). These clothes are regarded as a symbol of respect for her late husband. The researcher has a challenge of the period of mourning. Widows are given twelve months, whereas widowers and children are given lesser periods. This African part of the culture, when analysed, is very oppressive to women, and the researcher agrees that it is not helpful in the healing process for women, and it hinders pastoral care. The researcher will highlight some of the reasons in the preliminary findings.

4.6. MOURNING AND MOURNING RITUALS

According to Rosenblatt and Nkosi (2007:77-78), most African widows begin their mourning with what is called “a sitting”. The widow sits in a designated place, usually the bedroom, with elderly women where people come to express their condolences and prayers. The widow is given a blanket to cover herself. All furniture is taken out in their bedroom, except for the mattress on the floor where she sleeps. In most cases, the mattress is put on the floor without the base as a symbol of grief and respect for the deceased. In some rural areas, she can even sleep on a mat as part of tradition. During this “sitting”, a widow cannot leave the bedroom except to go to the bathroom. If she needs anything, she has to ask someone to bring it to her. According to Idialu (2012:69), she is not expected neither to talk freely to people, loudly nor to scream, as this will be interpreted as if she is joyful about the death of her husband. Far more restrictions are placed on widows than on widowers. They endure the most humiliating rituals in relation to dressing codes, eating foods, ostracism, discrimination *etc.* (Sossou, 2002:202).

During the week of the burial, the in-laws or the widow's family would buy a mourning cloth for the widow to wear on the day of the funeral and afterwards. Although Western people at funerals, black, blue, also wear black clothing or purple dresses, Africans commonly wear those most in order to identify widows in South Africa. The colour of the mourning cloth depends on the in-laws. This cloth would be taken to the tailor to design a dress called "*Rou*". There are different names for this dress like "*ukuzila*" in Zulu (Rosenblatt & Nkosi, 2007:69). However, the most common name used for this mourning garment amongst Africans in South Africa is "*Rou*". *Rou* is an Afrikaans word to describe mourning or grieving. Basotho calls this dress "*thapo*" (rope); this is in replacement of the rope "*Thapo*" of the olden times.

According to Manyedi (2001:70), she has to wash it separately at night and does not hang it for people to see. Should the dress be torn, she is not expected to mend it. This means that this is the only dress she will wear for this period. This dress will lose its colour because of being washed or the sun and the widow will be expected to wear it nonetheless.

Rosenblatt and Nkosi (2007:78) state that the "mourning garment" is compulsory for the African widow as it is a symbol of respect for her late husband, her families and the community. In the Basotho culture, she is still a married woman and not regarded as single. Therefore, it is a sign of mourning and a measure to stop men from flirting or bothering the African widow with sexual advances. To the widow the "*Rou*" acts as a self-disciplinary measure to remind herself of her status as a widow and new leadership role she has to assume at home in the absence of her late spouse. A widow's hair is shaved or cut off after the funeral. The reader needs to note that and in some cultures; she is smeared with cow dung and cannot wash that day mainly to remove bad luck (*sefifi*). At this stage, the "*Rou*" indicates to the family and whole community that the African widow is ritually unclean at the death of her husband (Idialu, 2012:8).

That is why Letsosa and Semanya (2011:2) and Manyedi (2001:68) stress that it is traditionally unbecoming for an African widow to engage in any intimate relationship with any male partner, as she will transmit impurities that can cause illness. Manyedi (2001:68) further states that because of her ritual uncleanliness, it is culturally believed that her blood is too "hot" and still one with the deceased therefore, she cannot indulge in such an act. If she can be tempted and does engage in such an act, it can be culturally dangerous to both parties and can lead to a fatal sickness called "*boswagadi*". The researcher agrees with Manyedi even though in the

Basotho culture the disease is called “*makgome*”. “*Makgome*” is a sexual disease that affects mainly a male who intercourse a widow after the death of her husband.

It is believed that the sickness can affect the man by painful swelling of the feet, tummy and the skin becoming pale. It can be fatal if not treated. To prevent death, the male will have to go to an herbalist that will give him “*lipitsa*” (herbs) to cleanse him. Then he will be expected to have the same “*lipitsa*” (herbs) that is used by the widow for the period of mourning.

Mourning the dead is a universal practice, which is mediated by religious and cultural practices in different societies. Mbiti suggests that mourning involves the core beliefs and customs, spiritual practices, and certain expected behaviours that will be symbolic of mourning the death of a loved one (Mbiti *et al* 1969). Mourning is the process of expressing one’s grief. Mourning is influenced by social and cultural factors that the griever is exposed to. In the process of mourning the griever attempts to reorganize his or her life following the loss of the loved one. Palmer in his PhD thesis argues that mourning is affected by the following:

- The age of the deceased
- Manner in which he has died
- Nature of the attachment the mourners enjoyed with the deceased.
- Fear and uncertainty of the future without the deceased.
- Realization of shuttered dreams and unfulfilled expectations which too many it results in shuttered dreams and unfulfilled expectations.

As part of cultural mourning procedure of the Basotho, the widow is expected to sit on the floor and she is not allowed to leave except going to the rest room. Anything she requires she must ask someone to bring. During the process of mourning, the widow is not allowed to intermingle with people even to go to the weddings. She will wear black as a symbol of her mourning. In many communities, wall pictures are over turned and reflective materials like mirrors are covered. This may isolate the woman from the progressive support structures of other women.

Participating in the family rituals and being in a mourning environment that is cohesive and supportive catalysis the healing processes. The widow experiences the same treatment in the worship services. Her cultural mourning procedure that is imposed by the family and the society is also used or observed by the church. The researcher is challenged on how to respond to the church that alienates widows within the body of Christ. The grieving process is going to be interrogated with the purpose of highlighting the hindrance to pastoral care for the widows.

4.7. GRIEVING PROCESS

Elizabeth Kubler Ross' stages of grieving are a response to every day loss that people experience. The following are the stages:

- Denial: at this stage, a person does not accept the death approaches. In this stage, the world becomes meaningless and life is senseless. The person at this stage becomes numb. The person uses this stage to protect herself from experiencing the gravity of the loss. Bowlby and Parkes say at this stage it is difficult to accept that your loved one is gone. Denial is one of the ways in which some fight the gravity of the pain of grief and it is in essence used as anaesthesia. The widow due to strict cultural activities would be in this stage and no one will notice because she is not supposed to seek for help. She has to be in doors all the time conversing a little with those around her but not about how she feels but how do we bury your husband. At this stage, pastoral care is most needed as to start a new journey with the widow.
- Kubler Ross says that at this stage you begin to heal, denial also begins to fade, and feelings you were denying begin to surface. However, if a person does not move from this stage, he will remain stuck in shock and denial. This is generally a reactionary move when a person receives unexpected news particularly sad news.
- Anger: When the loved one passes on, the surviving persons feel abandoned, and as a result, they get angry. At this stage, a person becomes angry towards the possible separation. Anger has no limits. That means it can extend to other people like doctors, your family members and sometimes your parents who died. Others get angry also with God. The frustration because of the loss breeds' anger. Some even ask questions

like, where was God when my spouse died. The feeling of abandonment may lead to severe pain, feelings of abandonment, and betrayed. This anger indicates the intensity of your love for the deceased. This stage correlates with the phase Bowlby and Parkes call yearning and searching. The bereaved is searching for answers while she is aware that the planned future together is no longer possible. When death lingers, you start to plead with God. A person at this stage is angry with herself as though she could have done more to save the loved one. Some may even feel guilty about the situation.

- **Bargaining:** Kubler Ross says that bargaining may take a temporary truce. A person makes secret covenants with himself or with God to prolong the life of the loved one. We want life to return to what it was. Some people may even bargain with the pain. Eventually when a person dies, we lose everything and move to the stage of depression. If the stage of grief is not dealt with and resolved, the person may have intense feelings of guilt or anger that can interfere with the process of healing.
- **Depression:** After bargaining, our attention moves separately into the present. This depression looks like it will last forever. Depression after a loss is often seen as unnatural. The loss of the loved one is depressing. A person experiences sorrow as death approaches and worse when it strikes. David Malouf in his master's thesis says, "The person mourns the past and the future." (Malouf, 2014:35) Bowlby and Parkes indicate that the person at this stage is in despair while also is emotionally disorganised. The bereaved gets depressed because she realizes that the wheel of life cannot be turned back. Bowlby and Parkes suggest that if we do not progress from this stage, we will be consumed by anger and depression and our attitude towards life will remain negative and hopeless. A number of people who are depressed have a problem with sleeping. They have a poor appetite and just feel tired and have no energy do anything.
- **Acceptance:** this is desirable step as the end is near. This stage is about accepting the reality that our loved one is physically gone and recognising that the new reality is the permanent reality however, we accept it. We learn to live with it. We learn in the processes that we cannot replace what we have lost, but we can make new connections, new meaningfulness, and new inter-dependencies. According to Parkes

and Bowlby, the person at this stage starts to emotionally reorganize and recover from the loss. Acceptance is vital if one is to move towards recovery. At this stage, then we listen to our needs. As the widows' family undergoes these stages, it learns to heal and finally finds closure. Not only will the bereaved find closure it also assists the caregivers to journey with the bereaved family without pushing them to accept reality with internal anger or while it is still denying the reality of loss.

These phases may not follow each other in all people. However, death affects all of us but each person is unique and our level of attachment to the deceased differs. Integrating death into general life experiences is essential for the healing process. Kubler Ross' stages fit in every person's grieving situation and again it confines feelings into the five stages. Grieving may take different forms in different people and does not have a specific order. Painful experiences breed negative emotions, which come like a wave and take different directions in different people. Grieving people do not react the same way to grief. The grief stages as outlined by Kubler Ross have also omitted cultural and religious variance.

The five cries of grief as articulated by Merton P. Strommen and A. Irene Strommen (1986:98) are not variance to Kubler Ross' stages of grief. H. Norman Wright (2014:36) amplified these cries as follows;

- ✓ "I hurt"- This cry can bring you to your knees. It comes and goes for many years. People use several ways to deny the pain of grief. Denial diminishes the capacity of the soul to grow bigger in response to pain. As grief moves through several stages of denial, each stage brings home the reality of the loss a bit deeper. This amount of energy required in order keeping denial operating, and it drains us and ultimately it damages us emotionally. Denial blocks out the unthinkable and brings with it fear of the unknown.
- ✓ "I want"- There is a cry of longing. This comes from the sense of emptiness and loneliness that exists because of the loss of a loved one.

- ✓ “I need”- This cry is for supportive love. One of the worse experiences is to feel that you are alone, isolated in a world full of people. Those in grief have a specific need for love and support.
- ✓ “I don’t understand”- The hardest lesson of all is to accept what one cannot understand and still say, “God, though art love. I build my faith on that love.” This is a cry to accept what has happened, but often the desire to comprehend is overwhelmed.
- ✓ “What does it all mean?”- A final cry is the cry for significance, the desire to see something good eventually come out of this loss. It is a process of transforming grief into growth.

It is the researcher’s view that grief experience raises emotional questions most of which cannot be answered. This is the result of the disruption of the mind and confusion caused by the severity of the pain. Hence, these unanswered questions evoke tears and the grieving person wrestles to get meaning from the loss and the pain.

However, Holland provides grief reactions, which further elucidate Kubler Ross’ grief stages. Worde (2002:87) and some clinicians disputed Kubler Ross’ theory citing that grief should be perceived as a series of tasks rather than stages. The tasks include accepting the reality of the loss, working through the pain of grief, adjusting to an environment in which the deceased is missing and emotionally relocating the deceased and moving on with life. This is because the views that loss involves stages, tasks or “letting go” of affectionate ties is facing intensive criticism by those who view connection with the deceased as an ongoing process.

It is the researcher’s view that though grief may not necessarily follow any rigid pattern as alluded to by Kubler Ross but their contribution remains vital in understanding the griever and interpreting the grieving process.

4.8. CLEANSING PERIOD

At the completion of her long term of mourning, the Mosotho widow has to be sent to her father’s home, “*ho hlatsuo*a” or “*ho hloboliso*a” or “*ho khaola thapo*” i.e. to be “purified” or “stripped off the mourning”.

Both families will be notified on time of the day and month of the ceremony in particular the uncle of the widow. The uncle is expected to bring a cow. The purpose of this cow is to permit the uncle to take the clothes of the deceased (*“ho hapa”*). Where the uncle is unable to bring in a cow because he does not have, the clothes of the deceased will be shared (*“ho aba”*) to family members, after they have been sprinkled with a mixture of water with aloe (*“lekhalana la bafu”*). The purpose of the sprinkling is to cleanse those clothes. This sharing of the clothes will be done at the in-laws or the widow’s house.

On this day, representatives will accompany the widow to her parents’ house from her in-laws. These representatives will have a cow, which will be exchanged with the cow that her family would have prepared for this occasion. The cow that will be slaughtered for this event will be the one from her parents’ house. The one brought by the in-laws will then be added to the herd of this family. If the in-laws have no cow, then the widow’s family will continue with the ceremony using their cow. This will mean that the in-laws did not cleanse their daughter in law (*ngoetsi*).

The widow has to be at her parents’ house before sunset of the day before. This means she will sleep over at her parents’ house. In the early hours of the day of the ceremony, the cow is slaughtered and the widow is seated outside the house on the ground. It is here where her hair is shaven off. She will be seated and thereafter she would be shaven with the person who was shaving her. By this time, the gall and some blood from the cow are mixed together. Then the widow will be led to the river that has running water.

On arrival at the river, the person who had shaved the widow’s hair and maybe two other women (who are supposed to be married) will strip off the widow of her mourning clothes. She has to be naked and then these other women will use the mixture to wash her from her head to the sole of her feet. When they are done with this, they will give the widow new clothes and shoes to wear. The old mourning clothes will be carried by one of the women as they go back home. On arrival at home, she will be given a part of the liver of the cow that was slaughtered to eat. She will be the first person to eat out of the cow and then other people can be fed. Her old mourning clothes will be burned.

Part of the meat from the cow that was slaughtered will be cooked and some portion will be put aside to be taken to the in-laws when she returns to her in-laws or to her home. Her

parents or their representatives will say to her: “*Ngoan’a rona, joale ua tsamaea ho ea bohali ba hao, u tsamaee hantle.*” (Our child, now you going to your in-laws, go well.) She has to leave her parents’ house in the afternoon. The in-law representative that came with the cow yesterday will have to be the first to go with the meat and a sign on arrival that all went well.

When the widow arrives at her in-laws or her house, she is welcomed with joy, and the meat from her house will be cooked and enjoyed by those present.

4.9. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION

The Basotho traditionally regard death not as an end of life. They have a firm belief that a deceased person would begin a new life in “*lehodimong*” (heaven) if he has been obedient to God in his earthly life. God moreover has the sole right to judge whether a man has been obedient or disobedient. Unfortunately, the missionaries condemned the Basotho funeral preparation, and it is still so today. They are labelled as heathen practices. The question to ask is, does sin lie in these arrangements or the thoughts behind them? The researcher feels certain that if the missionaries had taken trouble to study the meaning of these arrangements and the thoughts underlying them, they would have discovered a hidden treasure to be used to promote the Christian Faith in life after death and the resurrection. Nevertheless, instead, they echoed Nathaniel who asked, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46). In other words, “Can any good thing come out of the Basotho traditional religion?”

A good illustration of this line of thought comes from the pen of the Rev E Casalis, a French missionary in Lesotho. He wrote: “All the natives believed the world of spirits to be the bowels of the earth. They call this mysterious region “*mosima*” (abyss) – “*Mosima o sa tlaleng*” (the abyss which is never filled.” (The Basotho, 234)

Rev. Casalis came to this false conclusion by not taking time to understand the Basotho ways of thinking and their language. The correct interpretation is as follows: The word “*mosima*” means a hole or the abyss. So then, if the same word is used in connection with the funeral, it means a grave. In this way the literal meaning of the sentence – “*Mosima o sa tlaleng*” is “The grave which is never filled”. What does this mean then? We have here an idiomatic expression, which means that nothing stops death among men – that the grave is never satisfied. It swallows men every day. So, then the “Mysterious region of spirits” as explained

by Rev Casalis exists not among the Basotho but in his own mind. Now what happened at the grave when the deceased was buried? He was usually wrapped with the hide of the slaughtered ox, and placed in the grave in a seated position. Great care was taken to see that he faced east. Some pumpkin seeds, beans, some tobacco, a pipe or snuffbox and some thatching grass were placed in the grave before it was covered up. What lay behind the choice of these items? The answer is simple. The deceased was not regarded as dead, but alive, only in a different place. The following prayers, said over the grave illustrate this point: "*Tsamaya ka kgotso*" (depart in peace). "*O re roballe*" (rest quietly).

The position of the body facing east indicates the direction of the road to heaven. In the Canons of Hypolytus we read that in the early church, the candidates for baptism usually turned west for the renunciations, and then turned east for the profession of faith. The Basotho shared a common symbolism for the new life with the early Christians. In addition, the idea behind the sitting position in the grave was because the deceased would be able to rise immediately when called to heaven. It was as if the Basotho were thinking in terms of St Paul when he said: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

Lastly, Basotho's culture has been a hindrance to pastoral care of widows. The researcher would like to acknowledge firstly that the reasons for some of these cultural activities were positive in the olden days. Yet, when these cultural activities hinder pastoral care for widows, then they become wrong. A pastor or caregiver cannot visit a widow in the evening even if there is a need.

The responses from the widows, pastors and their analysis will be dealt with in the next chapter to be able to suggest a healing method.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. PRESENTATION OF DATA IN CASE STUDIES

5.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher is dealing with stories as told by the widows and pastors respectively. The focal point being on the widows' pain, challenges and struggles on their new reality. For the pastors, the focus will be on their challenges and struggles in journeying with the widows. The shepherding model of Gerkin is applied as a form of healing.

5.2. SAMPLING

In the research proposal, the researcher stated that he aimed to interview ten widows. The researcher took some time and approached ten Basotho women within the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Ekurhuleni District to be interviewed as part of the sample in the research. The widows were first approached to request their permission to be interviewed. They were also informed that the result of the research would be used for research purposes, and that the findings would be used to contribute to Pastoral care intervention in the search to bring healing to those widows who are neglected by their pastors or pastoral care-givers. From the approached sample, only six Basotho widows agreed to be interviewed. Walker suggests that participants are to be selected objectively, and could not be friends or acquaintances of the researcher (1985:30). This was the criteria used to select participants in this research. It was done so to guarantee that the researcher's neutrality was upheld. Afterward, the widows who agreed to be interviewed signed the consent forms to indicate their willingness to participate in the research. In the consent form, the following were highlighted, the purpose of the study, duration of the study, research procedure, expectations of the researcher from the interviewees, the rights of the interviewees, confidentiality of the research. The participants were aged between 25 and 59, and were all members of African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Ekurhuleni District. Twenty pastors were approached to request their permission to be interviewed. They were informed about the results of the research. They willingly agreed to participate in the research and were given a chance to familiarize themselves with the consent form. After reading it, they signed. The participants

were aged between 30 and 60, and were all pastoring in the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Ekurhuleni District.

Below are the details of the interviews.

5.3. INTERVIEWS

The researcher conducted the interviews, which were not easy at some point. Some of the participants broke down in tears and the interview had to be stopped to give them time to compose themselves. At some point, the interview had to be postponed for another day. The two widows who had challenges through the interview were referred for professional counselling. The researcher felt that they would not be able to move from their hurt until they are professionally helped. This intervention was positively received and it brought about positive changes to the widows. With pastors, the researcher did not encounter challenges but at some point had to remind the participants the fact that their contribution will be helpful to the research's recommendations. The researcher used case studies to reflect the impact culture has on widows not receiving pastoral care from their pastors or pastoral care-givers. The case studies also reflected the role of culture that hinders pastors and pastoral care-givers to journey with widows.

5.3.1. Case Studies With Widows

5.3.1.1. (Case Study 1) 'MaLiau

'MaLiau (not her real name) is a young widow of 32 years and a mother of one son. She is a member of the church who is affiliated to the Women Missionary Society. 'MaLiau had found a family in the name of the church. She felt at home in the church before the death of her husband. Through her being active in the women's organisation, her needs were fulfilled. She was regarded as a role model to the other young women who were not members of this organisation. Everybody gave her the respect due to her; both young and old adored her. Her husband passed on in 2005 due to a motor vehicle accident. Her husband was only 36 years old and the breadwinner. The grieving and pressure from her in-laws were difficult to deal with. The church supported her so well until her husband was buried. The cultural practices that were imposed to her created a challenge to her she could not associate to members of the community like before because she had to adhere to these practices.

Her in-laws were adding to her challenges by reminding her that she does not have ownership of anything that her husband owned or has worked for. The church was too far from her at the point she needed it the most. Whenever she took the courage to show herself in the house of the Lord, she would be isolated. All those in church who showed respect and admiration were distant to her. She was even informed that she is no longer allowed or permitted to sit with other members of the organisation. Her new place was at the back seat of the church. This is a place reserved for widows and according to 'MaLiau, "this is a place of shame and neglect. A place of the dirt and ungodly." She was also advised not to attend women's meetings because she is in mourning including prayer sessions. Her mourning was used, as a reason to alienate her but the cultural practice is that she has bad luck because of the black clothes she is wearing. When she related the story to the researcher, tears were forming in her eyes and her voice was cracking and shaky. Her words, "Where should a Christian widow run to when the in-laws and the community are so oppressive? Is the church still a caring family?" The researcher questioned 'MaLiau whether she is angry at the church. Her response was profound in that she said that fellow Christians are not supposed to add to the trauma of the widows but support them during their mourning period. Instead of being angry, she is just shocked by the treatment. She further stated that the pastor as a shepherd and the "father of the house" should not segregate the flock. All including widows are the flock, which need to be taken care of pastorally by the pastor.

In 'MaLiau's case, the researcher found out the following aspects which led to her trauma, isolation from the members of the church. Her pain has helped the researcher to understand the implications of Matthew 11 verse 28, where it is recorded that Jesus extended this invitation; "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest." Gerkin's model of shepherding will then help the researcher to educate members of his congregation to care not only for widows but also for God's creation, despite their challenges. This model will help in bringing healing to both widows and the congregation, whilst on the other hand educate or empower pastors and pastoral care-givers. In pastoring according to Gerkin, the pastor or shepherd will have to have a stick (rod) of protection. This stick (rod) is to be used to protect the injured animal against enemies. This means that every shepherd should have in their hearts the spirit of support and caring for the flock without being

judgemental. During the period of mourning 'MaLiau needed a shepherd and it is the role of the church to provide care and protection. The next story is that of 'Mma Mofokeng.

5.3.1.2. (Case Study 2) 'Mma Mofokeng

'Mma Mofokeng is an elderly woman, whose husband was a lay-preacher at the church. She on the other hand was a member of the Trustee Board of the church. Their daughter Teboho was the choir conductor. The Mofokeng family was very respected and loved family in the church. 'Mma Mofokeng's husband owned a fruit and vegetable shop and his business was very successful. Mr. Mofokeng fell ill and was diagnosed with prostate cancer that was in an advanced stage. He went in and out of the hospital and died after three weeks. The local church was supportive of 'Mma Mofokeng and her family. Even after his death, the church was supportive. Prayer meetings were held during the week. Mr Mofokeng as a lay preacher was buried with dignity. 'Mma Mofokeng shared her pain when she relates to the researcher that after burying her husband no one from her local church visited nor called her and her family. She thought they had given her a little space to or few days to come to terms with her new life. It is when she called her pastor that she was asked how long her mourning period is. In response to her pastor, she informed her that she would be in this period for the next twelve months. The pastor then informed her that a committee of elders would visit her in the next coming week to discuss her role in the local church. She was puzzled and left confused.

'Mma Mofokeng told the researcher how disappointed she was during and after the said meeting. Her disappointment was that she expected these elders to uplift and encourage her but instead she was told to relinquish her position in the Board and not attend any Board meetings. This was done because the "local church wanted to give her ample time to mourn the death of her husband". Her daughter was allowed to come to church without any restrictions. The elders informed her that when she comes to church, she should use the back seats in the church provided for the widows. She further informed the researcher that she felt bitter and questioned the kind of God worshipped in this church. "This God took my husband and punished me with a church that segregates people. This is too much. Something must be done to correct what the church system is doing to the congregants who are in pain."

She feels that she is oppressed by the church that uses the same cultural practices that are used by her in-laws and community. She feels oppressed by her late husband's younger brother who is in control of her husband's assets and has even told her that he is going to move in with her as her new husband. Now, the church is using oppressive tactics on her that she is no longer free to participate in worship services because of being in mourning.

In 'Mma Mofokeng's story, the researcher finds that she experiences trauma on three levels. This is trauma from her in-laws, community that practices these cultural practices, and her own church. Now, the role of the pastor is rendered ineffective because the elders of the church dictate new rules and lifestyle for 'Mma Mofokeng. Reginah is the next widow that will share her story and experiences as a new widow.

5.3.1.3. (Case Study 3) Reginah

Reginah is the spouse of a local pastor in the church. They both are blessed with three girls who are teenagers. Reginah's husband has just received an assignment to the new congregation. The family is happy with the new challenge. Children are enrolled in the new school and they are looking forward to making new friends in the new church, community and school. The church community has welcomed their new shepherd and his family. One fatal Saturday afternoon whilst Reginah and her husband were sitting on the veranda of the parsonage, some young men ran past them being followed on their heels by a few people. Reginah said she heard three-gun shots and whilst shocked and amazed she ducked for cover. She saw her husband fell from the chair and though he is also ducking from the shots only to discover that one stray bullet has hit him on the forehead. She tried helping him whilst shouting for help. When neighbours arrived to help her, her husband was no longer breathing. On arrival at the nearby hospital, he was declared dead.

The local church Board and the Presiding Bishop were on ground after receiving the news of her husband's death. She and her children got support from all angles of the church hierarchy. The Presiding bishop officiated on her husband's funeral. After her husband's funeral, both her in-laws and relatives left her in the parsonage. She was left in the care of the church Board. A week after the burial of her husband she received a call from the Presiding Bishop, who sympathised with her, and asked her to move out of the parsonage as he had assigned a new pastor for the congregation. According to Reginah, the Bishop did not even check whether

she has an alternative accommodation. She told the researcher that she was given two weeks to vacate the parsonage. She consulted the local Board for help in terms of accommodation but was informed that the local Board can only help with organising and paying for a removal truck. They reminded her of the regulations regarding the assignment of a local pastor. To add salt on the wound, the local church Board requested her to organise the cleansing of the parsonage before she vacates it. The cleansing ceremony according to them should be at her expense. On hearing Reginah's story, the researcher began to understand how the church participates in oppressing those who are servants in the vineyard. She informed the researcher that she became vulnerable because the death of her husband had brought shame and isolation. Members of the congregation saw her as the threat to their marriages and relationships. The pastbors who were colleagues of her husband were now far away from her and their spouses who were supposed to be supporting her had also isolated her.

5.3.1.4. (Case Study 4) Josephine

Josephine and her husband Peter were in the usher board. She was the leader of the usher board despite her being a senior citizen. She was elected repeatedly for this position because of her dedication and commitment to her responsibilities but most so, for her love for humanity. She loved everybody, had an eye to spot visitors in the church, and would make them feel at home. Peter, her husband would be part of the committee in support of his wife. He would drive Josephine to church for meetings without a fight. They were inseparable and their love was exemplary to young couples. When they were not busy in church with ushering congregants, you would find them sitting together holding hands. Their presence in church gave hope to the young couples concerning marital matters. They would be invited to share their love life story to the couple's sessions and the manner in which they would look into each other's eyes as they narrate their love and challenges, one would only see love that that is tried and tested. Peter died on his sleep and Josephine only noticed in the morning that her husband was no more. She was very devastated. Upon calling her pastor and close relatives, she was surrounded by people who loved them dearly. The unfortunate part is that both Peter and Joseph had no children. Josephine was now left alone because her friend and lover was no more. The local church and pastor made time for Josephine. The young people would come during the day to help with the cleaning of the yard, making sure there is enough wood in the yard. When Josephine wants to send anyone anywhere, the young people were available.

Others even used their own transport to see to it that Josephine is supported. She did not lift a finger because there were people around. The pastor and the local lay preachers made sure that every evening prayer meetings are held. Josephine would be seen nodding her head in agreement with the hymn that was sung. She would even smile when her husband favourite hymn was sung. She even testified on Thursday before her husband funeral to the women who were with her in the bedroom that her church had given her hope through the hymns, prayers and sermons offered. The funeral service was well attended by both the community and the congregation because not only was her husband a member of the usher's board but he was also a respected community leader for years.

The number of people who came to see her after she had buried her husband dwindled down as the day went by. Both Joseph and her relatives returned to their different abodes. She was now left alone in her house to fend for herself. The church young people who were there in numbers were nowhere to be seen. The congregation that sang hymns and offered prayers were also nowhere to be seen. She never even received a call from either the pastor or members of the usher board to check on her. She then told the researcher with pain in her voice the following; "I, at this moment felt the pain of Mrs Nkambule. Mrs Nkambule came to church, we never looked at her the same, and she never came back to church. She is now an alcoholic because of us." Tears were rolling down Josephine's face as she narrated the treatment that Mrs Nkambule went through.

The researcher asked Josephine to explain why the church is not taking care of the widows. She stated that the church has moved from its purpose of existence. The church has now adopted the world's standards and there is no difference between the church and the world. The church is no longer a caring family, she said. She further explains that pastors also fail in their responsibilities because they have Boards and committees that control them more than God controls them. Josephine informed the researcher that she would not go to church during her mourning period because "I don't want to be treated like we treated Mrs Nkambule." She said she would only go back to church after her cleansing ceremony as an ordinary congregant, who will come in, worship, and then go. The researcher in interacting with Josephine found out that the pattern and treatment of widows remains the same in the church. The story of Victoria will be the next case.

5.3.1.5. (Case Study 5) Victoria

This is one case study that disturbed the researcher in such a way that the researcher had to take some time to seek help from a pastoral care-giver. Victoria is a member in good and regular standing of the church. She is the treasurer of the church, trusted by all, and sundry. Victoria is always in the company of Mr. Moyo. They are always together in church as members. Mr Moyo is just a quiet member of the church who is always helpful when needed to. Mr Moyo was electrocuted and died whilst helping the local kinder garden with their electrical challenges. It was during the preparation of his funeral that the pastor was informed that Victoria and Mr. Moyo were not legally married but were just cohabiting. The church board had a challenge with this status and ordered the pastor not to take part in the burial of Mr Moyo. Other members of the congregation even defied the Board by making sure that they are there for Victoria until she buried her partner.

After the burial, according to Victoria, she called the pastor in order to request a meeting with both the pastor and the board. The pastor agreed to organise the meeting. Due to the cultural practices that she had to observe, the meeting was held at her house during the day. It is in this meeting that Victoria was more traumatised. Her marital status was a cause of disagreement. She told the researcher that her pastor tried to reason with members of the Board in favour of her but they were adamant that she did not deserve the service of the church because she was a bad example to the children in particular the young people. It is in this meeting that she was informed that cohabiting was regarded as sin by the denomination.

Besides the matter of cohabiting, she was told that culture dictates that she be permitted to occupy the back seats of the church and those seats are meant for women whose husbands had died. She felt rejected and used by the church. It is in this interview that Victoria informed the researcher that on the other hand the pastor would regularly call to check on her. She explained that, the pastor said to her that he would like to be there for her but due to the cultural practices and the fear that he might be accused of having a relationship with her, he will continue to call her. The researcher saw abuse at its best in this story. It is the belief of the researcher that Mr. Moyo was supposed to be buried by his pastor in support of Victoria who is also member of the church. Their marital status at this point is not an issue but the death of Mr. Moyo. The last story is that of Sebolelo.

5.3.1.6. (Case Study 6) Sebolelo

Sebolelo is a member of the local church being entrusted with the department of young people. Her responsibilities among others were to mother this young people. Her husband is a member of the men's organisation in the church. Unfortunately, Sebolelo's husband was stabbed to death helping a young woman who was beaten up by a boyfriend. Sebolelo's husband was loving and caring. The church helped Sebolelo throughout the week until the day her husband was buried. In the interview, Sebolelo felt that the pastor failed to journey with her because of inadequate training the pastors are given at the Seminary. She felt that the pastor was not supposed to allow himself to be bullied, to neglect her by the local church board, if he had had proper training. She believes that the cultural practices that the local church board imposes on widows would not be adhered to if the pastor were well trained to pastor widows. Her pain was that the young people she was assigned to lead were the only people who visited her during her mourning period. They encouraged her to be strong and even challenged her to start a support group for widows. This support group will have the support of the young people who told her that they do not want their mothers or relatives to be treated the same way she was treated.

Sebolelo's story opened an avenue that the researcher was not aware of and this avenue needs to be researched in order to check the role of the Seminary to the training of pastors in respect of care of the widows. This will be one of the points that will be raised on the researcher's interaction with the pastors. The researcher will give responses received from the pastors interviewed.

5.3.2. Case Study with Pastors.

Out of the twenty participants that were interviewed, the researcher found out that mostly their responses are the same. A few had different responses and the ones with different responses are going to form part of the data shared on this chapter.

5.3.2.1. (Case Study 1) Pastor Vic

Pastor Vic is a 35-year-old married leader of a charge in the Ekurhuleni District. He has been pastoring since 1997 after his eldership ordination and was assigned to different charges where he led with distinction. He has served one of the charges in the Ekurhuleni district for

the past five years. Pastor Vic was also appointed as the District Dean and one of his responsibilities is to assess people who want to join the ministry as pastors and help them through the process of their training. He was enrolled into the church Seminary and was trained for three years after which he privately enrolled with the University of South Africa for an honours program, which he passed with distinction. In his pastoral duties, Pastor Vic had buried many people and helped many people to come to terms with the death of their loved ones. The interview was conducted at the parsonage where Pastor Vic was the local pastor. During the interview pastor, Vic spoke about his role as a pastor with passion. He felt fulfilled when he sees smiles on members of his congregation after he has served them. "The manner in which I deal with the widow is similar with the way I deal with the widower during their time of mourning. I give them the necessary space to deal with their grief, their own way." The statement of Pastor Vic prompted the researcher to ask probing question in order for him to reveal more information.

He revealed to the researcher that as a male pastor dealing with widows has its own challenges. One of the challenges as he explains to the researcher was that; "we are seen as praying for these young beautiful widows, in order to abuse them sexually and financially." He further told the researcher that these rumours will spread like a wildfire and the administration of the charge will be challenged in one way or the other. The other thing is that his integrity will be under scrutiny by both the members of his charge and the community at large. Therefore, he will only call the widow after they had buried their husbands than to visit them at the homes. He recalls visiting one widow at hospital and that created challenges. When a widow attends the worship services, he as the local pastor is not allowed to shake hands or touch the widow. This he did once and was called to order by the local Board and he had to apologise to the congregation. Pastor Vic told the researcher that he thought that members of the congregation who are widows know of this tradition and should not "complain". The researcher found out that eight participants had responded to the questionnaire in a similar way with Pastor Vic. The eight were six males and two females. Pastor Nombuyiselo responded differently to the questionnaire and her response is the next to be dealt with.

5.3.2.2. (Case Study 2) Pastor Nombuyiselo

Pastor Nombuyiselo is a 58-year-old married female, pastoring one of the charges that are classified as “middle class charge” or a “B” charge. She was born in Cofimvaba where she attended her early schooling until she completed her matric. Upon completing her matric, she was enrolled with the University of KwaZulu-Natal for Bachelor’s Degree in Theology. After which she was enrolled at a Seminary for training as a pastor. She has been a pastoring since 1980 and has been a pastor in the Ekurhuleni District for the past eleven years. She has been a seasoned and a senior pastor who was exemplary to the young pastors and at some point, a visiting lecturer at the Seminary. During the interview, she revealed that she has buried many people and has worked with many widows. She informed the researcher during the interview that the challenge she has been faced with as far as pastoral care of the widows is concerned, was African cultural beliefs that hamper pastoral care. She related to the researcher that she has tried to raise this matter to the leadership of the denomination without success. In one of her encounters with caring for a Mosotho widow, she was called to a family meeting where the elders of that family who were males called her to order. In her narrative, she said that she visited this new Mosotho widow three days after she had buried her husband. The widow called pastor Nombuyiselo and requested her to visit her in the evening. Pastor Nombuyiselo obliged to the request and visited the widow. The widow was in pain not only because of the death of her husband but also because of her new life. She invited her pastor as a spiritual leader and to get advices from her. It is whilst pastor Nombuyiselo was talking to this widow that one old Mosotho lady emerged from one of the rooms to inform the pastor that she is not supposed to be in this house at this time of the evening. The old woman informed both the widow and the pastor that their culture forbids visitors to be in the house after sunset. Pastor Nombuyiselo apologised to the old woman on behalf of herself and the widow, and offered to pray before she leaves but the old woman rejected her offer. Pastor Nombuyiselo resorted to telephone communication with this widow after this encounter. Unfortunately, the family of the widow barred this widow to attend any church services until she has passed through her cleansing ceremony.

Pastor Nombuyiselo as a married female told the researcher that this treatment made her to look at herself and her family differently. She felt that she is going to be treated in the same manner by both the church and the society if her husband can die before her. She then called

several family meetings with different stakeholders in her family circles to address the matter and her concerns. Six participants who are males responded to the questionnaire in a similar manner with Pastor Nombuyiselo. Their responses focussed on how culture has hindered them performing their pastoral responsibilities. The story of Pastor Ditsobotla was different from the two mentioned stories as it focusses on what the researcher missed.

5.3.2.3. (Case Study 3) Pastor Ditsobotla

Pastor Ditsobotla is 45 years old and a single pastor of a congregation classified as an “A” charge in the Ekurhuleni District for the past 10 years. Pastor Ditsobotla was born in Kraaipan in the North West Province and went to the local schools until he matriculated. It is after matriculation that he was enrolled in the Seminary for three years and completed his Diploma in Theology. After his training, he was assigned to a number of charges in Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng.

He was interviewed in his parsonage where he is pastoring. In the interview, Pastor Ditsobotla stated that he had challenges in journeying with Basotho widows after they had buried their husbands. “African culture seems to overpower and dictates how we as pastors perform our duties. These cultural beliefs have proven to be above the Biblical principles and pastoral principles,” he told the researcher. He stated that he was taught to be supportive of everyone under his pastoral care even those who are in the community where he was to serve. African culture dictates that widows are people with “bad luck” and the church treats the widows the same. When the widows who are members of the local church attend the worship services, they are treated just in the same manner in which the community treats them. “We create special space for them in the church, which is the back seat because they have bad luck. I believe that we need to use the word “blessing” than bad luck as Christians,” he said. Pastor Ditsobotla then painfully informed the researcher that the church has not responded to these oppressive African cultural beliefs at all, but has embraced them to the detriment of pastoral care. In the church people are to be treated with love and dignity but when coming to widows the church has allowed itself to be influenced by beliefs that are not in line with what the church is all about.

Pastor Ditsobotla informed the researcher that the training they receive at the Seminary did not focus on pastoral care. The Seminary syllabus focussed on academic matters and it was

the responsibility of the mentors to help the students with pastoral care. His frustration is that even their mentors who are products of the Seminary have no knowledge of pastoral care, except when one had further training with other institutions that offer pastoral care as one of their studies. It is in this interview that Pastor Ditsobotla informed the researcher that every pastor does whatever he or she thinks and perceives as pastoral care, whereas others do not even try because of fear of failure or being caught at the wrong side of the church's laws.

He pointed at the Seminary as having contributed to the challenges they are faced with in terms of journeying with the widows. Yet, he also touched on the fact that, had the Seminary trained them on pastoral care, the pastors were going to be able to stand against African cultural practices that hinder pastoral care to the widows. This question was placed back to Pastor Ditsobotla's lap by the researcher as to find out what his thoughts are. In his response, he said that there are pastors who were going to put their foot down against the African cultural practices that hinder pastoral care to the widows. He further said that there are those pastors who were going to continue with life as if nothing is happening. Two other participants in their responses highlighted the fact that the program offered by the Seminary should include practical theology or pastoral care. This according to them will be beneficial to both the pastors and their congregations. The researcher agrees with the fact that the leadership at the Seminary were supposed to be interviewed in order to get their take on the role of the Seminary in training or equipping pastors.

5.4. DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected during the process of this study through interviews has, in the researcher's view, recognised enough evidence that African cultural practices play a role in hindering pastoral care to the widows and thus this becomes a challenge to the clergy. The research found out that pastors are challenged by this phenomenon caused by African cultural practices. Research also revealed that both the Basotho widows and the pastors or pastoral care-givers are most affected by the African cultural practices that hinder pastoral care. This is why issues of journeying with Basotho widows are a challenge to pastors. The research could have gone into more depth on these African cultural practices and their hindrance; however, the focus was on understanding why pastors are challenged. From the

investigation, the researcher concluded that patriarchy, culture and inadequate training are indeed some of the factors that fuel the neglect of pastoral care to the Basotho widows and the challenge to pastors and pastoral care-givers. The stories shared by these widows, few, as they may seem, serve to conclusively confirm the suggestion that Basotho widows are pastorally neglected and left out of the church circles to fend for themselves with no one helping or journeying with them. These stories also confirm that there are widows in the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Ekurhuleni District that have been neglected. Kowalski believes that, "Church members who have experienced neglect are wary of asking for pastoral counselling" (Kowalski 1988:22). If they have not been openly invited to do so. Thus pastors and pastoral care-givers need to seek ways in which to not only support the victims, but to also train or equip other pastors and congregants on how to journey with the Basotho widows and widows in general after they had buried their husbands. Also, to look into how to be pastoral rather than to be dictated terms by the African cultural practices. The research points out that the challenge faced by pastors when they supposed to care for the Basotho widows is still not receiving sufficient attention within the church; therefore, it is necessary for pastors and pastoral care-givers to take steps to address this issue within their local congregations. This research has helped generate new knowledge, highlighting trauma that is entrenched in real life circumstances with people we meet on a daily basis as shown above.

The aim of this research was to construct or suggest a model for healing; the researcher strongly suggests that the widows who are victims of neglect should be encouraged to turn to Christ and His church, to be embraced, loved, nurtured, welcomed, bandaged and properly mentored in their quest for healing. The church of Christ, which constitutes all Christian believers, should genuinely demonstrate a willingness to take over the elements of the old village life. The church should become the village where people can turn to in times of pain and hurt and not only in need. This research notes that pastors and pastoral caregivers are wounded healers and have experienced pain. They also understand the importance of healing the pain of others and this research has suggested ways to help the pastors to be pastoral.

5.5. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION

Having listened to the six stories, the researcher sees a pattern of lack of pastoral care to them who really need it, in particular the widows. In the last story of Sebolelo, the researcher

was also amazed as to how the training of the pastors in the Seminary plays a role or contributes in their practical pastoral life. The shepherding method of Gerkin teaches that the responsibility of a pastor is to be a leader and a shepherd that spends enough time with the bereaved and show that they cared for their wellbeing. In addition, the pastor has to journey with the widow from the first day of her sorrow until they are healed. The researcher in looking into Gerkin's method of shepherding feels that Gerkin omitted the fact that a shepherd serves as a security for the flock. It is the role of the shepherd to make sure the flock is protected from any kind of harm. In Psalm 23 stanza 2(b) we read that; "He leads me besides the still waters." The researcher feels this is a very important role of a shepherd that Gerkin missed. Therefore, the pastor must be a protector of those marginalised and oppressed. Lead them through the challenging valleys of life to still waters.

The next chapter will deal with the healing method.

CHAPTER SIX

6. HEALING METHOD

6.1. INTRODUCTION

After listening to participants in the interviews, some fascinating facts and information were observed from it, such as deep anger and feeling of being hopelessness. The researcher is convinced that there is an underlying thread of pain, shame, discomfort, and rejection, to mention but a few which could be noticed in the stories of these widows and pastors. Some of them expressed elements of trauma directly, but others by way of implication. The researcher intends to reconstruct some of the case study stories of shame, pain, rejection and discomfort in order to construct or suggest a healing method.

The models of Wimberley and Pollard will be used in order to construct a healing method. The Shepherding method of Gerkin will be applied from which an exegesis of John chapter 21 will be discussed. From this discussion, a healing method will then be developed which pastoral care-givers and the pastors who are caring for Basotho widows who are pastorally neglected after they had buried their husbands can use.

The researcher will explore Wimberley's theories of story-telling which will investigate his theories concerning the retelling of biblical narratives.

6.2. STORY TELLING

Story telling is part of African life. It is used daily in interacting with others. Wimberley emphasises that, "The retelling of the biblical stories in a particular manner has the ability to bring healing to people who are experiencing shame, guilt and unworthiness" (199:15). He uses example of the story of the temptation of Jesus Christ in the desert. Jesus Christ used a particular criterion that will be discussed in this chapter later. This criterion assisted Jesus Christ not to succumb to the temptation brought to Him by the devil. The victories of Jesus Christ in this story become a point of emphasis.

Wimberley believes that, "Our reality is often thought of as being created or constructed primarily by the language, we use and by the stories, we hear" (1999:16). He maintains that each person has an orientation to reality that is extremely entrenched and that the beliefs and convictions that inform people's behaviour, attitudes, feelings and relationships are fairly

well formed. He maintains that these beliefs and convictions of people, which construe their reality, can be changed through storytelling.

Wimberley believes that: "In the re-telling of the stories, help seeker should identify with Jesus Christ's temptations and become encouraged by His victories" (Wimberly 1999:31). By applying this method, the help-seeker will be in a position to emulate Christ's victorious strategy as he unfolds his ministerial life. The researcher believes that this particular strategy will contribute in this research and assist the researcher in creating a model for healing, especially for the Basotho widows who are victims in this research.

It is the researcher's view that, story-telling can be used as an influential means to change negative insights that people might have of themselves. Allowing, a person to re-tell his or her story in order to create an occasion for the person to see alternatives and new opportunities in the same story. It is the researcher's intention to use story-telling method in this research in order to change the negative insight they have about themselves. The researcher is of the opinion that the way we speak about our reality is informed by the use of stories. In this way, one is able to change a person's view of reality which in turn will allow that person to create other stories that are now pleasant. By so doing, that person is happy, confident and hopeful that she or he has dealt with the problem soaked in his or her story. The result being that he or she would be able to come up with positive outcomes.

By using stories, Wimberley constructed a model that can be used to speak to people's emotional, spiritual, interpersonal, marital and family needs. By so doing, he is using bible stories to explore the following;

- a) How Jesus Christ came to grips with the shame and humiliation, He faced in his own life, and, how we can imitate His manner of handling shame.
- b) How Jesus Christ dealt with the shame that others brought to Him and how we can overcome shame by internalising and re-enacting Jesus Christ's stories in our lives, and
- c) How the parables of Jesus Christ can help us to reconstruct our lives to live none-shame based values in our reality.

The researcher's interpretation of the model above is that the Biblical text can be used in healing ministry especially for widows. Wimberly is showing us another way in which one can use the scriptures in order to pursue healing. The following is the first proposed method of Wimberly, which the research will use.

6.2.1. Jesus Facing Shameful Situations

According to Wimberly, shame is an awful condition whereby one experiences a feeling of not being loved or cared for by others. Shame weakens self-confidence and has a way of holding on in our lives. He states that:

“Shame is like a satanic force which tries to prevent us from moving constructively within our lives and seeks to draw us back into the shame-based world” (Wimberly 1999:36). He maintains that the cure for shame is to find noteworthy relationships with others, which might help to cultivate and build self-esteem. Through this, he believes that the spirit of God works on our behalf to help us view ourselves as being worthwhile and valuable by experiencing God’s forgiveness and by expressing forgiveness.

He views forgiveness as a gift from the Holy Spirit, which only the Holy Spirit can bring about since our human nature is weak and fallible. This is a process which needs to be engaged in prayerfully hence his caution to resist premature forgiveness. His advice is to ask God, in prayer, to show us where He is at work in our lives, bringing healing to shame and emotional wounds. It is significant for the researcher to assist some of the Basotho widows who are wounded by being neglected by their pastors and pastoral care-givers as normally as they are expected to first forgive themselves, so that they can work towards forgiving the pastors and pastoral care-givers who neglected them.

Another term Wimberly uses to describe people experiencing shame and emotional wounds is “relational refugee”. Relational refugees are persons not grounded in nurturing and liberating relationships. They are detached and without significant connections with others who promote self-development. They lack a warm relational environment in which to define and nurture their self-identity. Consequently, they withdraw into destructive relationships that exacerbate rather than alleviate their predicament (Wimberly 2000:20).

The researcher’s view is that, the relational refugees are people running away from a past hurt. They try to avoid noteworthy interaction with others for fear of similar damages. Such people become insecure, develop a low self-esteem and become resigned. In most cases, they even blame themselves for their situations because they find themselves “adrift in life without an anchor or a life jacket” (Wimberly 2000:22). The researcher is faced with this challenge, in trying to come up or create a healing model for the Basotho widows in this research, who are neglected by their pastors and pastoral care-givers. Subsequent to the interaction the

researcher had with these Basotho widows, the researcher feels the 'relational refugees' category is where they are and they need to be supported in order to positively deconstruct the negative feelings of themselves, which they have internalized. It is for this reason that the Wimberly's suggestive theory of storytelling will be important in this research.

He maintains that, it is in our search to deconstruct the negative feelings that we have internalized, we need to keep our focus on Jesus Christ. In Him, we concentrate on how He handled shameful environments during His lifetime. This theory will be helpful in working or dealing with these Basotho widows, who have been rejected, neglected and hurt, and now are living in shame. In this, Wimberly recommends that the statement that says; "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus.", be taken up and implemented literally in our lives. (Philippians 2:5) This way a person or a widow in this case, will feel about himself or herself just as Jesus Christ felt about Himself. This will contribute to the research in encouraging the Basotho widows to overcome shame just as Jesus Christ did.

6.2.2. How Jesus Felt About Himself

The author is convinced that Jesus felt positive about Himself because He stayed focused on the task and mission that He believed He had in life. No matter what He faced in life, He kept His mission and purpose in mind (1999:31). The researcher believes that, this is precisely where human beings vary significantly from Jesus Christ. We allow ourselves to become derailed or to be steered off course very quickly and too easily. The derailment might be in the form of painful experiences, sin and wickedness or even temptation, which is what widow's experience. This leaves us to be relational refugees, who are not assured enough to enter into noteworthy relationships but resort to evading people and to wanting to be left alone.

Storytelling, particularly the stories of Jesus Christ's victories and victorious power, is helpful to those who search for ways to overcome their own shame and low self-esteem. In this regard, Wimberley uses the stories of Jesus Christ's temptation to express to us how Jesus Christ remained focused on His task and mission in the face of Satan's onslaught. He did not permit Satan to derail Him. In addition, in the stories of crucifixion, Jesus Christ experienced rejection by the people of Nazareth. His continuous mockery and the fault-finding mission by the Pharisees and other groups or people, can be use and retold in a way of building up faith

and hope of those suffering from shame and guilt. This is similar for the Basotho widows of this research. These widows need to identify their pain and rejection with the one experienced by Jesus Christ and take encouragement from Him on how He dealt with His shame.

Derived from Wimberley's theories of relational refugees, it is the researchers believe that there were many occurrences in which Jesus Christ also felt like a relational refugee. For an example, the story recorded in Mark 6:3, Matthew 13:55 and Luke 4:22, Jesus Christ was practically chased out of the village because in the minds of the Nazarenes, "What good can come out of Nazareth?" Jesus Christ was perceived as useless and being a person with no worth. The rejection of Jesus Christ did not end there. Somehow, Jesus Christ had the ability to bounce back.

It is the researcher's believe that Jesus Christ had this ability to develop a thoughtful resistance and resilience in dealing with this shame by,

- a) Remaining focused to His mission,
- b) Not to allow these things to affect Him personally. He saw it as a means to test His character and
- c) The stories His parents told Him about His birth, and possible embarrassment and how they dealt with it. The Basotho widows in this research can somehow identify their pain with some of the pain and rejection that Jesus Christ had to suffer. This means that the strategies that Jesus Christ used in order to be victorious, can also help them and others who have been neglected to improve after the experience of neglect and rejection.

Wimberly emphasized that the re-telling of stories about the social world from which Jesus Christ came from, which a world was created by shame-based dynamics such as social inequalities, deficiency and social oppression. It was a world with a distinct line of segregation especially to those who were not Jews. On the one side, we would find the upper class, which was made out of those who were considered highly valued such as the Priests, Governors, Rulers, Pharisees, Retainers and Merchants. On the other side, there were the lower class, the degraded and expendable classes made up of beggars, outcasts, hustlers, day-labourers,

outlaws, the sick, the poor and slaves. This group was not valued and they were considered worthless and valueless (Ibid: 46-47).

The temptation story of Jesus Christ is a definitive example that reveals how Satan operates, particularly how he attempted to test Jesus Christ by using riches and status of the world. Had Satan succeeded, Jesus Christ would have failed in His mission. Jesus Christ would have become enslaved to this shame-based world. In the researcher's view, this would have been tragic to Jesus Christ's sovereignty and sabotaged His image that we as Christians would like to emulate. It would have been more tragic to deconstruct the negative feelings of shame and worthless that these pastorally neglected Basotho widows have internalized. They would not have had the capability to put into practice the resilience to overcome their own shame, pain and rejection. Some of the widows in these case studies have been living for years with their pain, unable to come out of it because caregivers have neglected them. Therefore, this research and particularly this chapter will attempt to suggest a solution to this challenge.

Wimberly is encouraging us to create a thoughtful resistance and resilience to intentionally overcome Satan's efforts by concentrating on the stories of Jesus Christ's victories. Hence, the knowledge of scripture and the application of it in the face of challenges will inevitably help us to demonstrate this resistance and resilience. The researcher views this theory of the re-telling of scriptural stories of Wimberley being spiritualizing it.

Therefore, it is the researcher's view that spiritualizing biblical texts can bring either negative or positive results. Yet, in this case, Wimberley's theory gives positive results. By spiritualizing the events in the story, allows the reader to draw parallels to where she is in her life in relation to the challenges faced.

The re-telling of biblical stories, quoting of scriptural verse, the account of how forgiveness works and positively explaining how Jesus Christ dominated His shame and feeling of unworthiness, can be a strategy of untangling the shame, dishonour and feelings of unworthiness experienced by the Basotho widows in the research and would help in starting a process of healing.

The researcher agrees with the statement above and cites the theory of Wimberly concerning Jesus Christ's self-differentiation. Wimberly states that Jesus Christ in His earthly ministry

always was confronted with rejection, ridicule and hostility thrown at Him by His critics but; He had a realistic judgement of Himself. Though He was immersed with expectations from others, He was free from being absorbed by those expectations and was able to distinct His own view from those of others.

It is the researcher's suggestion that Jesus Christ courageously took the blows but never displayed any signs of injuries or hurts. Wimberly states that Jesus Christ never internalized shame, He never ever made excuses for their rejection and their approval was not important (ibid: 41). In other words, there were dynamics in Jesus Christ's life, which supported him to reinterpret acts of shame in positive, development enhancing ways. Wimberley believes that the parental rearing practices surrounding Jesus Christ's background were very effective and that Jesus Christ Himself had some internal spiritual dimension that helped Him as He challenged humiliation. Jesus Christ had the capability to separate His own perception of things, from those influencing others and would not be drawn into the expectations of others. This requires a good amount of self-esteem and awareness of one's own inner aspirations and motivation. Jesus Christ did not explain or make excuses for people's rejection towards Him and He did not even take this rejection personally. The scripture shows that He respected their views and perceptions, which proved that He had matured spiritually. This model of resilience distinctly proves Jesus Christ's Sovereignty, which is a challenge for humans to attain.

This information is fundamental for this research, as the researcher believes that, by deconstructing the negative feelings of the Basotho widows in the research, it will help them to remove the internalized feelings of rejection, pain and shame that they have been experiencing for a long time. These widows need to be reminded of the following scripture and that what they experienced was just one of the devil's tricks to harm and bring discomfort to them; "The devil came to kill, steal and destroy" (John 10:10). This feeling is experienced when others – thus feeling lonely, neglect one.

The stories of Jesus Christ's birth, in particular how His mother handled the shame of being pregnant outside wedlock became the foundation of Jesus Christ's inspiration in handling His own shame and rejection in His own hometown. Wimberly reiterates that; "This became the main source for Jesus Christ's self-understanding" (1999:48). Taking out of what Wimberly is

saying here, the researcher wonders whether the pastors in the research might have had a shameful past during their upbringing that might have activated them to bring feelings of shame, humiliation, rejection, unworthiness and embarrassment to these Basotho widows.

In regards to Wimberly's theory of using biblical stories and scriptural passages, the researcher thinks that the following are suitable in helping to turn around the feelings of shame and rejection of a person, to feelings of worth and value.

The following scripture will help the Basotho widows who have experienced rejection and shame because of being neglected by their pastors after they had buried their husbands:

- a) 1 Corinthians 1:18 For the message about Christ's death on the cross is nonsense to those who are being lost, but for us who are being saved it is God's power", and
- b) 1 Peter 2:7 "The stone which the builders rejected as worthless turned out to be the most important of all". The two passages of scriptures will be explored with widows in therapy.

The researcher here re-affirms Wimberly's beliefs as he says that these stories and extracts from scriptural passages can be used in pastoral counselling by telling from the perspective of the one who carries the shame. He continues to say that the story requires to be told in ways that help the hearer to identify and sympathize with the shame-based person in the story (1999:48). In the case of the Basotho widows in the research, who are overwhelmed by this shame because of being pastorally neglected, there is a need to hear how Jesus Christ was rejected by His own people in Nazareth, and in particular the people of the day. Once the widows can identify their disappointment with the rejection of Jesus Christ, they will gain motivation to work at their shame and rejection.

It is when the shame of the person is exposed, that the pastoral counsellor needs to introduce the transforming parts of the story. Doing this, the hearer can definitely plant in her mind new opportunities for dealing or handling her shame. This is important in the research because it will assist the Basotho widows who have been pastorally neglected to:

- a) Appreciate that God sees them as persons with worth and value, despite their situation because of His love for them. In other words, nothing can take away God's image in a person who is humiliated.
- b) Recognise that life issues also challenged Jesus Christ, who is our role model, but He had the capability to be victorious. The same strategy that Jesus Christ used to be victorious must be taught to the help-seeker and this is where Wimberly's method of storytelling is very helpful, in a way that he is really advising pastors to encourage victims of pastoral neglect to develop the mind of Jesus Christ.
- c) Recognise that God has a plan for all of us in this life. The widow needs to become motivated and eager to fit into God's plan and become co-creators with Him.

These new opportunities can be proposed or presented during counselling sessions. In his final statement, Wimberly is clear that the key to telling the story is to make sure that the alternative to shame is told in a dramatic way so that the hearer can see the point of new self-expectations. The researcher agrees with Wimberley and also stresses the vital role that the pastor or pastoral caregiver plays in restoring, transforming or healing of a troubled person from feelings of guilt to that of worth and value by using bible stories and biblical texts as source of reconstructing people's shameful stories.

Wimberly's method of caring has been influential in this research. However, it falls short of a method that will assist pastors and pastoral caregivers to be good shepherds of the pastorally neglected Basotho widows. The research will now move from the shame of neglected Basotho widows to the role that pastors and pastoral caregivers can play in journeying with these victims. For this reason, the researcher will introduce Gerkin's models of Pastoral Care, which will help pastors to journey with the Basotho widows.

6.3. SHEPHERDING MODEL

Gerkin says that; "The success of human healing is dependent on Divine grace" (1997:86). This proposes that pastors and pastoral caregivers whose aim it is to help heal injured souls needs to depend on God to do the work of healing. The researcher believes that this dependence on God and the work of His Holy Spirit will eliminate the focus from the caregiver (a human being) to God (the Almighty).

Adams reasons that the Holy Spirit is the primary person in the counselling process, but one of the instruments through which He works, is the pastor (1975:180). He further states that, “The resource to the disposal of the pastor is the Holy Spirit. The One who is called the comforter or counsellor at work in your ministry. He is the one who counsels through you, by you and with you. You never need to counsel alone” (Ibid: 180). The researcher believes that Adams like Wimberly, also regards scripture as the main source in the counselling process, as Adams puts it: “The pastor has access to the source of all wisdom which is in the Christ of the scriptures” (Adam 1975: 181).

The researcher submits that the best conceivable starting point to explore Gerkin’s shepherding model is to look at the conversation of Jesus Christ and John in the Gospel of John 21:15-19. The exegesis will aid the researcher to attain the aim of this chapter, which is to explore elements of healing to the troubled souls. What will now follow is an exegesis of John 21:15-19.

6.3.1. John 21:15-19

Marshall describes the term exegesis as “an attempt to interpret a given text by looking at its literary form, background, cultural setting and theological purpose” (1997:220). The researcher will try to follow the above rules as the exegesis unfolds.

The literary form of John 21:15-19 falls under the Gospels; specifically, from the Gospel of John. It is not the aim of the researcher to elaborate lengthily on how John’s gospel differs from the Synoptic (Matthew, Mark and Luke) but just to add that the style of John’s gospel is evidently different from the Synoptic and probably, the main message that the researcher wants to communicate. The research will now explore the background and cultural setting of the text before examining its theological purpose, which has to do with the shepherding model of this chapter.

John 20:31 “But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.” It is the view of some critics that the last verse of chapter 20 as quoted forms the original supposition of John’s gospel and that chapter 21 is to be observed as either a complement added by the apostle himself or an unknown author. The opposition to its legitimacy is based on a few minor differences from John’s usual form of expression. Scholars

agree that the most spiritual and intellectual Fathers of the church attribute to this chapter as a symbolic interpretation.

As for Hendriksen, the following can be seen as motives why chapter 21 was drafted as an addition into John's gospel:

- a) To prove that the risen Christ still takes an interest in His church and that His marvellous power and tender love have not diminished in any way,
- b) To remind the disciples that they must continue to be fishers, not in the usual term, but also of humans and
- c) To emphasize to the church that Peter has been fully re-instated (1954:475).

One of the most current scholars, Matthew Henry, is of the opinion that John's gospel was given to John, the brother of James, one of the twelve disciples who was notable by the honourable measure as "that disciple whom Jesus loved". Scholars agree that John lived the longest of all the twelve disciples and was the only one of them who died naturally. Some held that he wrote this gospel in Ephesus, in opposition to the heresy of the Ebonite's, who held that Jesus Christ was a mere human. It is also believed that he was the last of the gospel writers to have written his text and because of this fact that:

- a) John relates what other writers omitted,
- b) He gives us more of the mystery of what the writers gave us –more detail of what the others have passed by, and
- c) He writes more about the scriptural things while others focused more on the physical.

The researcher believes that this information is significant for pastors and pastoral caregiver who wish to emulate the style of Jesus Christ's ministry. Jesus Christ continuously felt pity or shame and showed compassion to the poor, the needy, and the rejected. These troubled people inclined to withdraw from important relations, and choose to be on their own as they went through a period of loneliness and pain. These are the ones that Jesus Christ felt sorry for, and with whom He chose to associate. These are the ones that Peter is being encouraged to look after, to care for, to journey with as a shepherd of the sheep – a good challenge for pastoral care towards widows.

During His ministry, Jesus Christ deliberately attempted to demonstrate to His critics and attackers that the purpose of His ministry was to restore the hurt and shamed, so that they

could experience worth and importance, as people who have been created in God's image. From these remarks, it should become clear why exegesis of John 21:15-19 is imperative in this research.

John introduces the location in John 21 as the Sea of Tiberius, where Jesus revealed Himself or presented Himself afresh to his disciples after His resurrection. This was after His betrayal by Judas, denial by Peter, and the crucifixion by the Pharisees and Romans. Other commentators estimate that this appearance of Jesus was His third after His resurrection – a strong sign that the Lord had risen. Some of the disciples had gone out fishing with Simon Peter. After a whole night's work, their labour had proved non-productive. The coming of dawn found them tired, perplexed and hungry. A familiar voice off the shore instructed them to cast their nets once again and assured them achievement. The result was a netting of a school of fish without the net being broken. This experience might have reminded them of a similar experience many months before where in that case, the nets even broke. The researcher believes that examples like those that the above stated, prove the power of Jesus Christ in transforming seemingly useless situations should be encouraging to troubled people.

Through the grey morning mist, they recognized Jesus Christ. "It is the Lord" (verse 7). John made recognition while Peter wanted to run away "depart from me Lord, for I am a sinful man" (Verse 7). At this instant, Peter might have felt shame because of his denial of Jesus Christ. He felt embarrassed that he had deserted and disappointed Jesus Christ, despite previous brave utterances on how he would be with Jesus Christ even to the end. Peter is the one that is mostly in need of Jesus Christ's forgiveness. Deprived of that forgiveness, he would not be able to be what Jesus Christ had said that: one day He would make him a "fisher of men".

From one miracle, the account now proceeds to the next. As the men were tired and hungry, Jesus Christ invited them to breakfast. After breakfast (verse 15), Jesus Christ inquired Peter if he loved Him more than the others to which he responded "Yes". He was then instructed to take care of Jesus Christ's sheep. The text further links to the Shepherding model that is needed in this research.

Matthew Henry points out that, this discussion occurs after they had eaten together, and should be seen as a sign of reconciliation. Peter still felt shame and guilt for denying Jesus

Christ. He felt uncomfortable in the presence of the Master. He needed to hear words of encouragement and forgiveness in order to feel comfortable and easy. Remarkably, content that Peter was sincere in his quest to be forgiven; Jesus Christ not only forgave him but also forgot the incident. The challenge he faces was “Feed my sheep”. Therefore, caregivers are also challenged to care for widows.

The researcher proposes that Jesus Christ could have simply reminded Peter about his past promise of loyalty, and then subsequent denial, but He did not. For if Jesus Christ did, Peter would never have overcome his shame and guilt. Jesus Christ deliberately chose to have Peter focused on the future, on God’s plan for him. According to the researcher, this applies into the already mentioned new possibilities of Wimberly’s theories. Not only does it apply into Wimberly’s model, but it is also synchronising with the requirements of the storytelling in the narrative therapy approach; where the counsellor guides the counselee to identify alternate stories (unique outcomes) for herself/ or himself.

Jesus Christ’s way of dealing with Peter, is the right way to deal with a person who is struggling with feelings of failure of some sort, and that is, to create a comfort zone where the person can feel confidently and positively that the negative past has been forgotten. This evidence is not only significant but also vital because the focus of the research is heavily focused on the integrity of the pastor and pastoral caregiver rather than on the point of pastorally neglected Basotho widows.

The researcher had to first point out how Jesus Christ had to restore Peter first, before instructing him to become a shepherd of the sheep. Concerning the poor shepherding that the Basotho widows in the research received, it unearths many questions in the researcher’s mind concerning the pastor’s style, motives and even training in relation to being a proper shepherd.

Peter is now careful not to answer over enthusiastically and boastfully. He has learned an important lesson of modesty, sincerity and humility in leadership. Peter is instructed to feed Jesus Christ’s lambs (verse15), sheep (verse16) and dear sheep (dear little sheep, which has a reference to Jesus Christ’s tender affection for His own).

Scholars agree that Jesus Christ had in mind three different groups within the church that must be taken care of e.g. little children, adults and young people. All three terms refer to the same flock of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ. This flock is perceived from three different

facets. Believers and their children are looked upon as lambs, so do the defenceless and the innocent ones who so easily get oppressed and abused like innocent Basotho widows in our patriarchal society? This group is weak and vulnerable, and at times, defenceless; hence they are constantly in need of strengthening by the food of the Word and continuous protection. Sheep are prone to meander and wildly stray away; hence, they are in need of a loving shepherd, especially when they fall into the category of being relational refugees. The sheep show vulnerability and are in need of the tender, loving nourishment of the Word, and vital protection by the caregiver. According to the researcher, it is as if Jesus Christ is saying to Peter, “Consider the members of my church to be your lambs and feed them, your sheep, and shepherd them, your dear sheep, love and care for them”.

The vital verbs identified here in relation to Gerkin’s model of shepherding are:

- a) Feed them.
- b) Shepherd them
- c) Love and care for them.
- d) Demonstrate forgiveness and help people to forget their ugly past.

Once Simon Peter displayed that he was capable of doing that, he was then instructed to follow Jesus Christ. Thus, Simon is now fully restored publicly to care for the broken people of God. The researcher notes how considerately Jesus Christ dealt with Peter in order to allow him to:

- (a) Deal with his own shame and guilt, which resulted from his denial.
- (b) Vividly deal with the shame Peter brought on Him through his denial, and the choice of Jesus Christ’s words to,
- (c) Charge him to become a true shepherd of His flock, who is the Great Shepherd and God, the Good Shepherd.

The basis has been laid to examine Gerkin’s shepherding model in relation to the requirements found in John 21: 15-17 of feeding, shepherding, loving, caring, forgiving and healing. This research will now move into Gerkin’s views regarding the Shepherding model because out of it, the researcher would like to propose a model that would suit the context of the research.

6.3.2. Healing the neglected Basotho widows

Gerkin states that; “To tour the world of Pastoral Care means to consider the caring task of the pastor in relation to communities and individuals” (1997:11). In the researcher’s perspective, this research has to do with the nature of caring. It is precisely because of the lack of proper caring by pastors and pastoral caregivers that has resulted in an unfortunate traumatic experience by these pastorally neglected Basotho widows. These widows did not have any pillar of support, and certainly, not from their families as they were oppressed through African cultural practices, nor from their pastors, who did not have a method to journey with them through their mourning period. This situation made them feel rejected and unloved.

People, in most communities, walk around wounded. Many people are in need of healing, not only physically but also emotionally and spiritually. People have this great yearning to be cared for, to be listened to and to be loved. Jesus Christ knew this very well; that is why His instruction to Peter was, in John 21:15-19, and to all caregivers today is to take care of His sheep and His lambs.

Gerkin also recognises that Anton Boisen’s work on exploring “The living human documents” when referring to the studying of the real situation and needs of people instead of doctrine and dogma, had a profound influence on him to explore more in the areas of caring for troubled people and how people could be helped (1997:18). Gerkin believes that pastoral care has been part of the Christian story and its tradition over many centuries of Christian history. He believes that before Christianity was discovered, pastoral care was a vital characteristic of the Israelite community’s life and tradition, out of which the Old Testament or Jewish scriptures developed. The researcher thinks that Gerkin is trying to tell us that the practice of pastorally caring for people has been used for many centuries without calling it a particular name, like we are doing so these days (1997:21).

Regarding the development of the models of pastoral care, this research will investigate Gerkin’s statements on how it has developed over the centuries, however, it will only concentrate on the following:

- a) The pastor as Shepherd of the flock.
- b) The pastor as mediator and reconciler
- c) The pastor as the priest and wise guide and

d) Pastoral care and the moral life of the people.

The above will help us to develop a way of caring for the flock.

6.3.2.1. The Pastor As Mediator And Reconciler

Gerkin confirms Paul as a unique example in the practice of this model. If one inspects the Pauline letters, one will find occurrences where Paul had to take on the role of mediator, reconciler and peacekeeper between fighting groups, the church and God (1997:21). It is the role of a pastor to intervene as a mediator when two or more parties are in conflict. The purpose of the mediation by the pastor should be aimed at finding the common ground that leads to healing and reconciliation.

In the researcher's mind, Moses also played the same role in the Old Testament. There is a need for such a function to be facilitated by special people. By "special", the researcher refers to the person's skills, attitude, abilities, etc., in particular when dealing with sensitive matters that have caused conflicts within the church. In most denominations, the bishop takes on such a function on a national or regional scale and the pastor only in his or her local charge. Even with the challenges faced and experienced by the widows, it is the role of the pastor, just like Moses, to facilitate people to sit around the table, in search for solutions to the challenges.

6.3.2.2. Pastoral Care And The Moral Life Of The People

Historically, the pastor has always been seen as the moral voice to the people, challenging wickedness and unacceptable social life of the community. This role is actually to help individuals and the community to consider the morality of their actions. This pastoral care feature is the care that is supposed to be given and results from human actions and relationships i.e. the tendency to misbehave (Gerkin 1997:84-85). This part of pastoral care role is well and alive in our day and age. The Basotho widows featured in the research were disadvantaged of a good, Christian and peaceful lifestyle because of the pastors neglecting them because of African cultural practices that overflowed in the church. The pastors or pastoral caregivers who were interviewed in the research did not have a method to pastorally care for these Basotho widows and thus were unable to shepherd them and restore their dignity. This led to some of them leaving the church broken and in need of Pastoral Care.

6.3.2.3. The Pastor As Shepherd Of The Flock

The researcher has preferred to use this model last because he believes that, when a pastor or pastoral caregiver, appropriately interchange the different models already mentioned, he/she is truly pasturing or tending to the flock, the way that Jesus Christ envisioned. According to Gerkin, the shepherd image is given to pastors to shepherd the flock of Jesus Christ, which has been given directly by Jesus Christ (See John 21:15-19). It was for this reason that the researcher did an exegesis of the mentioned text and from it deduce the following instructions, which are directed to the pastor, and that is to feed, shepherd, love and care for the sheep and lambs of Christ. This is what shepherding is all about.

The New Testament depicts Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd who knows His sheep by name and His sheep in turn knows Him (John 10:14)-thus deeply rooted trust in each other undoubtedly vindicates Christ to be a true shepherd because of His divinity, His life of Truth and Him being the Messiah, The Son of God (Gerkin 1997:80-81). The above will help pastors to emulate their master in caring for the troubled souls.

For the pastor to take on the role of a shepherd, he/she has to become like Jesus Christ to the people in need. This places a heavy accountability on any pastor or pastoral caregiver, since we can never be like Jesus Christ or even try to parallel ourselves with Christ. For the pastor to be an effective shepherd, he/she should function from the pattern that Jesus Christ is inviting us to become co-pastors with Him, in our journey of care and counselling. We can never do things on our own but only in the power of Jesus Christ, assisted by the power of the Holy Spirit. Whatever we do and however, we help people, the glory belongs to Jesus Christ for it is through His grace that we are able to accomplish. When correctly shepherding the flock of Jesus Christ, one cannot but bring healing and restoration to broken souls.

The researcher has observed that whenever one speaks of healing, some elements of forgiveness are a pre-condition and damaged or hurt people should be helped to enter therein (either for themselves or others). For example, in Wimberley's story telling method, the Gospels and other New Testament scriptures have fairly a lot to say about the need for forgiveness including Jesus Christ's own teaching and example. In other words, for people to experience healing, they need to undergo a forgiving experience.

In concluding this part of the research, the researcher would also like to mention how vital and helpful the resurrection narrative in the four Gospels can be utilised in this approach. The Gospel gives us a comprehensive and detailed story of the birth, life and ministry, death, resurrection and second coming of Jesus Christ. In it, we find stories of how Jesus Christ was daily facing trials and challenges from people but also how He dealt with them and always came out victorious. It shows us that pain, humiliation, shame and a feeling of unworthiness, are not something new. The resurrection of Jesus gives hope to the widows that whatever they going through does not mean death or the end.

This displays that on many instances in His lifetime, Jesus Christ also felt like a relational refugee but He had in Him this resilience to overcome. As a healing mechanism, we need to know that, just as Jesus Christ was triumphant, we can also be triumphant over pain, shame and rejection. Jesus Christ has become our role model as Christians. Therefore, we should emulate His thinking and handling of challenges the way He did. In journeying with broken souls, these are the stories they need to hear, that will certainly bring them hope and healing.

6.4. HEALING OF PASTORS WHO NEGLECT THE BASOTHO WIDOWS

Pastors who pastorally neglect the Basotho widows, rehabilitation and spiritual rebuilding. "According to the good news of the gospel, not only does God forgive sinners when they repent, but the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin" (Lahaye:1990:169). The church is called to forgive pastors who have neglected the widows because of the African cultural practices, and not having a model to use in dealing with such widows. The widows who are neglected are members of the congregation, and expect their spiritual leaders being pastors to be there for them when they are in need. The church is also called to follow the footpaths of Jesus Christ. "I am because you are" (Mbiti: 1986:61), the pastor is there in the congregation because of the members of the congregation.

An African life is made out by caring for each other as the community. Pastors should follow the way of caring suggested by Mbiti, "*Umntu ngumntu ngabantu*" (A person is a person because of others) (Ibid: 37) – which is close to overload way of caring. The community sets values, norms and standards to be obeyed, observed and followed by each individual living in that particular place. Thus, the community has a set of norms and moral codes that pastors needs to conform to. Non-conforming may cause confusion and cause damage to the body of Jesus Christ. This is the reason why this research needs to suggest a healing model for pastors

who neglect members and a rehabilitation model to heal them and reinstate them into the community and into the church.

6.4.1. Support Of The Pastors Who Neglect The Basotho Widows

A pastor's aid committee should be elected to help the pastor and pastoral caregivers. The pastor's aid committee members should include qualified professionals such as social workers and therapists to counsel and encourage the pastor. In order for the therapy to be successful, the counselling process should have sessions. During these sessions, it is most significant to listen to the client (in this case, the pastor who pastorally neglected the Basotho widows). This committee should have sessions with the pastor at least twice a month, to give advice, counselling, and work with the pastor about responsibilities of caring for the widows.

The pastor as a healer, is also a person who needs care and to be taken care of. The pastor also goes through challenges such as stress, difficulties, temptation, overwork that all people go through, just like anyone else. If he/she does something wrong or neglect his/her pastoral duties, the pastor's aid committee should be in a position to counsel and encourage the pastor. "Pastoral counselling should always be there to address the needs and feelings of priests, through seminars, workshops and fellowships. Members of the church including the elders should be involved to represent the feeling of the congregation towards the priest's conduct" (Waruta and Kinoti editors: 2005:262). This is our way of empowering pastors to care for the flock.

Ministry is not easy, the support for a pastor should be long term and consistent, and it needs somebody who has a big heart, Waruta and Kinoti have this to say "There should be more workshops and fellowships, bettering the term of service including salaries, monthly seminars, invites guest speakers, providing pastoral materials for reading, encouraging priests to share their intimate problems with others, each diocese should have professional counsellor for pastors, forming of professional associations of pastors, guiding on personal conduct, each diocese should have support group for pastors, develop adequate recreational facilities for pastors, refresher courses after every 5 years, study leave. Pastors go out of control especially when they do not have enough support in their parishes" (2005:262–263). Workshops should have an emphasis on teaching the skills needed in ministry, in particular, for this research, pastoral care of the Basotho widows after they had buried their husbands.

Pastors should be encouraged to fellowship with other pastors and pastoral caregivers, this helps in that when you mingle with people and other Christians, you share stories, and through those stories, you can be helped. During the fellowship, trust can be developed. A seminar reminds pastors who are negligent about their oath of taking care of God's flock, which is the congregation. Books are very much important to read especially ones about pastoral care of widows. In the bible, there are also guidelines on how believers should behave and take care of the marginalised, the needy and the widows. Pastoral counselling by the pastor's aid committee, should attempt to bring healing. Healing must seek to mend the broken pieces, in other words to restore the fallen pastors so that they can be restored and enabled to lead the congregation to the right way.

6.4.2. Healing Process

Herman states that, "All human beings are sick, the first sickness of all being is sin, the state of disobedience and revolt against the creator, and added to this are physical, mental, and other ills (1942:2). We all need treatment, healing from sin lies in return to obedience, to the ever-forgiving God, for other ills, the creator has provided all we need in particular the healing plant." (Ezekiel 4 7:12 and Revelation 22:2) The prayers supplementary the use of traditional medicines makes this an effective instrument of healing, whose value has been proved on many occasions.

Healing from sin starts with confession. We first have to come to God and apologise, where you admit your sin and ask for forgiveness as we all need the grace of God. We sin by words and by deeds, this is why we need to confess and ask for forgiveness in God. God is the giver of good things; He gives the gift of healing. "We began to receive letters from all over the country from women who had never before told their stories, through them, we realised the power of speaking the unspeakable and witnessed first-hand the creative energy that is released when the barriers of denial and repression are lifted" (Herman: 1942:2). The above-mentioned statement assists the research because, first you have to acknowledge your sin to the person you sinned against and ask their forgiveness, and you can ask God for His forgiveness. If you speak out about your situation, it does not matter whether it is abuse, violence and so on; you open up possibilities of it being solved.

Traumatic events call into question basic human relationship, they breach the attachment of family, friendship, love and community; they destroy the contractions of the self that is

formed and sustained in relation to others. They weaken the belief system that gives meaning to human experience. "They violate the victim's faith in a natural or divine order and cast the victim into a state of existential crisis" (Herman: 1942:50). The researcher agrees with Herman, because traumatic events cause separations among the family and church community, they cause bitter hatred from those who encountered the trauma. In relation to this research, the Basotho widows are still hurt and in pain of being neglected at the time when they needed the church the most.

6.4.3. Prayer

Prayer contributes to healing. It is part of therapeutic way of dealing with wrongs done by pastorally negligent pastors. "The Lord is near, have no anxiety, but in everything make your request known to God in prayer and petition with thanks giving. Then the peace of God, which is beyond our utmost human understanding will keep guard over your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:4-7) from the book of (Israel 1984:77) Jesus Christ lives among us, He is not far away. There is no point in being afraid or uneasy. He listens when we request Him in prayers to do something. When somebody parishes in the family, we ask God why it happened, and when we are facing difficulties and challenges, we question God as to why He let the evil trouble us.

In life, there are bad things that are happening and will happen, to us, friends, relatives, and to our own families. To petition God is not disrespectful, it is the way we express ourselves about the current problems and challenges facing us. Though we petition God, we first thank Him for what He has done to us and for us. When our prayers have been answered, we thank God for answering them, we thank God for giving us jobs, and we thank God for elevations at work, excellent results at school, College and University. We thank God for everything in life.

Prayer is at the heart of healing, without direct and direct communion with God, from whom all healing spirals, there can be no return to healthy, no knowledge of wholeness, all healing come to the being by the grace of God working through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's properties are manifold, He is the Lord and giver of life, the spirit of truth, our advocate who will be with us forever (John 14:26). He is sent in the name of Jesus Christ and He is to teach us everything, recalling to our minds all that Jesus Christ had told the disciples :(John 14:26). The Son sends him to us from the Father. He issues from the Father as the spirit of

truth and He bears eternal witness to the nature and the works of the Son (John 15:26). The spirit of truth not only displays the world where right and wrong and judgement lie, but He also guides those who are open to his fellowship into all the truth” (John 16:8).

Prayer is a relationship between people and God. God is the source of healing, the grace and the miracles of God make the impossible to be possible, miracles and the grace work hand in hand with the Holy Spirit, who is our advocate, He shows us the direction, He makes us to speak the truth, and He is our counsellor. We are not alone. The Holy Spirit is the truth that leads us to good life, the Son gives eternal life. The Holy Spirit is the teacher and we are the students, there are times when pastors forget to pray. This is when evil can take the chance, to turn people from good behaviour.

“From very early in recorded biblical history the custom was established of designating three classes of such leaders, the priest, the hereditary class that had particular responsibility for worship and ceremonial life, the prophets who spoke for Yahweh in relation to moral issues, sometimes rebuking the community and its stated political leaders, the wise men and women, who offered counsel of all sorts concerning issues of the good life and personal conduct” (Gerkin: 1997:23). What Gerkin is saying is vital because, members of the congregation cannot hear without the leader in front of them, politicians go astray and the wise men and women too can go astray. They need the prophetic voice of the pastor, to rebuke, correct and encourage them to do better than they are doing. However, there is a problem when a pastor is pastorally neglecting the Basotho widows, the very same women members of the congregation he or she is leading. In that way ministry, become damaged.

Healing is possible when a patient expresses himself or herself truly to the therapist that is why a client, who has been abused by rejection, has to be treated. The information should be kept secret and confidential, because trust is one of the key issues in therapy. Patients can hide vital information in therapy that is why the therapist should ask questions that will explore some hidden information, so that the client should not close up with some information. Active participation in therapy can be very helpful in healing a pastor.

6.4.4. The Importance Of Truth In Healing

In the therapy sessions, it is vital for the counselee to speak the truth, because the truth will help to determine the problem so that therapy can come up with appropriate procedures to

facilitate the healing process. When the negligent pastor does not tell the truth or omits telling vital information, she/he decreases their chances of getting help. Therapy becomes possible when there is a trust relationship between a counsellor and the counselee. Where there is no trust, it is tough for one to open up. A counselee might either hold back essential truth or just shut down because they do not feel safe. It is important to create a trust setting, so that the truth can prevail.

Widows in this research had been violated, rejected and deeply wounded by treatment received from the church community and pastors. Trust was lost and it is going to take a while before they can trust someone, especially a pastor or pastoral caregiver. In the same breath, the pastorally negligent pastor might also have trust issues. Once his negligence has been exposed, he/she will experience rejection, humiliation and insults from everyone around him/her and those affected by his/her negligence. With this in mind, he/she might find it difficult to trust anyone with the truth about his/her pastoral responsibilities. Such a pastor will come into a counselling session thinking that the counselee has already judged him/her because of what he/she has done or not done in pastoring the widows.

The mentioned circumstances of lost trust highlight the need for the pastoral counsellor to be professional, be careful not to be judgemental and be sensitive. A counselee in this case, a pastor, does not want to walk into a counselling session and already feel judged and condemned. This might create an environment of not being safe, which will make it difficult for the counselee to open up and even tell the truth. It is important for a pastorally negligent pastor to be truthful in his confessions so that rehabilitation and therapy can begin.

6.4.5. Setting Boundaries

The life of a pastor is a very busy and demanding one. It does not have office hours and their phones are always on stand-by for emergencies. The fluidity between their roles and personal lives, pastors need to create boundaries. This means that they need to divide their work according to its importance and urgency. The least urgent will only be dealt with during the day and after hours or at night, only urgent issues will be dealt with more timeously.

A pastor should try to avoid night visits, he/she should set times when to do visits and when he/she should not visit, although, there are unplanned visits where a pastor is called at night for somebody who is seriously ill. In that instance, a pastor must not go alone; he/she must

ask one of the elders to accompany him/her. In addition, when administering Holy Communion at home, he/she must be accompanied by an elder, to avoid any temptation and to have a witness should he/she be accused of something he/she did not do.

It is also very vital for a pastor to keep a professional relationship between him/her and the congregants. It is one thing to be friendly but not to be friends with them. A pastor should always remember that they are stewards of God's creation thus, they have to shepherd the flock of Jesus Christ and not to be like them nor conform to their standards. In keeping boundaries, a pastor needs to create and keep personal space.

Creating boundaries will assist to avoid negligence and create environment where there are always witnesses to testify as to a pastor's behaviour in a particular circumstance.

6.5. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION

It is in the beginning of this chapter that the researcher intended to investigate and suggest caring methods for the pastors and pastoral caregivers, who were neglecting the Basotho widows because of African cultural practices. During the research, the researcher saw the need to also inquire of healing methods for the Basotho widows. The reason is that should the research only focus on healing the pastors who are negligent, it would have failed to address the pain, rejection of the widows and suggest a healing method for them. This will create the possibility of widening the chances of reoccurrence of such negligence.

Wimberly's story telling method was suggested and deemed essential in helping people to move from experiences of shame, guilt and unworthiness to feelings of worth and value. Wimberly suggest the re-telling of biblical narratives in such a way that the victims of pastoral negligence identify with the person or people in the biblical narratives. This method is helpful in the research because through the healing or vindication of the people, victims of pastoral negligence can then identify possibilities that will work for them. The story-telling method that is proposed by Wimberly was used in this research to deconstruct the negative feelings that people have of themselves; specifically, by the taking apart of these negative stories. It is important for pastors and pastoral caregivers to know how victims feel and why they feel the way they do. This process can be followed by a one-to-one meeting, either with pastors or in workshop/seminars sessions through group discussions in a counselling session.

Gerkin's models of Pastoral Care was also used in this research to highlight to all pastors and pastoral caregivers, whether experienced or inexperienced, the importance of giving proper pastoral care to God's people in need. In doing that, the researcher embarked on an exegesis of John 21:15-19 in order to hear from Jesus Christ, as to who should be taken care of, how and why. Taking into account Gerkin's views on shepherding, after the exegesis, the researcher noted that shepherding involves showing features of loving, caring, nurturing, guiding, and teaching (feeding) the flock of God in which the pastor or pastoral caregiver requires himself/ herself to be guided by God. Coupled with this, there is a great need for the pastors and pastoral caregivers to teach people about forgiveness and to demonstrate forgiveness himself/ herself in his / her dealings with people.

The aim of this research was to construct or suggest a model for healing. The researcher strongly suggests that the pastorally neglected Basotho widows should be encouraged to turn to Christ and His church, to be embraced, loved, nurtured, welcomed, bandaged and properly mentored in their quest for healing. The church of Christ, which constitutes all Christian believers, should genuinely demonstrate a willingness to take over the elements of the old village life. The church should become the village where people can turn to in times of pain, rejection and hurt and not only in need. This research notes that pastors and pastoral caregivers are wounded healers and have experienced pain. They also understand the importance of healing the pain of others, and this research has suggested ways to rehabilitate the pastors who neglect their pastoral responsibilities to the Basotho widows, due to the African cultural practices that hindered them performing their pastoral duties.

The researcher now has a responsibility to design or suggest a caring method to empower pastors and pastoral caregivers to avoid being pastorally negligent to the widows, and to stop this cycle of abuse, rejection and pain muted to the widows.

Now that a model for healing has been proposed and guidelines suggested, in the next chapter the researcher will give a summary of the study and discuss the findings of the research based on the method used in chapter two of this research.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7. RESEARCH FINDINGS.

7.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will give a brief overview of the research as well as recommendations for further research. The purpose and the aim were to inspect the reasons why pastors and pastoral caregivers are challenged when caring for the Basotho widows. More importantly, the research planned to highlight the negligence of pastors who fail to pastorally care for the Basotho widows, with the aim of finding or suggesting a method, which can be used by pastors and pastoral caregivers to care for the widows. The researcher in the methodology used qualitative research, which also involved in-depth interviews and case studies. The therapeutic method that can be used to pastorally care for the Basotho widows was dealt with in this research. Therefore, in this chapter, there are answers to assumptions, which resulted in this research to take off. The reasons why pastors pastorally neglect the Basotho widows, aspects that propel the reoccurrence of neglect, and the effects of neglecting the Basotho widows.

7.2. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Chapter one, the researcher presented clear information about the study. In this chapter, the problem statement was discussed, which outlined the motive and purpose for this research. Other matters discussed in this chapter included the research questions, which gave a clear picture of the set of questions that the researcher had to ask in order to gather appropriate data. The Significance, Aims and Rationale of the research were also carefully outlined.

Chapter two focused on the methodologies of Gerkin's shepherding, Wimberly's narrative model of mentoring as method to be used in the research. A Qualitative research method was used, in which two approaches were applied, which are the ethnographic and narrative approaches. Gerkin's model of shepherding and journeying with the troubled souls, and Wimberley's narrative model of mentoring the relational refugees to self-actualization, has been used to help people to get their healing and closure through dialogues with the troubled souls were borrowed by the researcher. The instruments of gathering data were semi-structured interviews for individuals. An ethical consideration in data gathering was also

included in this section to guarantee the safety of every participant was well thought of throughout the research process.

Then chapter three covered the literature review in which the researcher referred to various sources to develop an understanding of the state, scope and challenges associated with the pastorally neglected the Basotho widows by their pastors and pastoral caregivers. It painted a variety of ideologies from several authors who did research on the topic. This was done with the aim of exploring and analysing what other scholars had already researched on this topic. Searching this literature was done to assist pastors and pastoral caregivers to develop or suggest a method that could be used to therapeutically care for the pastorally neglected Basotho widows.

The fifth chapter dealt with the presentation of data in this case studies. The researcher, in order to highlight how pastors pastorally neglect the Basotho widows after they had buried their husbands, due to African cultural practices hindering them, and the effects brought by this neglect, and to expose the trauma caused by this neglect, presented the case studies. Interviews were conducted with widows and pastors in the Ekurhuleni District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in order to share their stories of humiliation, pain and rejection. These interviews were conducted with individuals using semi-structured questionnaires in order to understand the problem on the ground for the analysis purposes.

Chapter six explored and developed a therapeutic model of healing and caring for both the pastorally neglected Basotho widows and pastors, with the aim of equipping pastors and pastoral caregivers to be able to journey with widows who have been pastorally neglected. The healing model was strengthened by the information received from the participants during the interviews and the theories borrowed from literature in order to develop or suggest a healing method.

Chapter seven will then give the outcomes from the interviews and findings after investigations had been completed.

7.3. WHAT THE RESEARCH SET OUT TO ACHIEVE

The main aim of the research was to highlight the fact that pastors have a challenge when they are to care for the Basotho widows, within the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Ekurhuleni District. The testimonies and confessions received from the pastors were a proof, and painful stories of neglect and rejection shared by the widows, was a testimony to

the challenge. In order for the church to realize the need to have a proper and effective caring method that can be used to pastorally care for the Basotho widows, this evidence was a prerequisite. Congregants would not talk openly about this matter, as it was evident that it is very sensitive, hence these widows will just be quite or stop from coming to church. Some of these widows will end up seeking spiritual help and guidance from outside sources, whilst they journey towards their healing.

This research evolved around two fundamental questions as a point of entry into investigating the challenges of pastors neglecting the widows. The first question expressed the main aim of the study, which was to create positive space for pastors to voice their challenge of not being able to pastorally care for the Basotho widows. The evidence that was gathered by the researcher from these pastors from the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Ekurhuleni District who have been neglecting the widows and in-depth reviews were used to achieve this. As stated before, that this research would not be complete if the widows were not interviewed, in-depth interviews were also used with them. Participants became part of the study voluntarily and they were allowed to disclose what they were content to share. Even though it was in a small scale, and not intended for therapeutic means, the study managed to bring the widows to a safe space where they could articulate their pain and hope for help. the second and important question hinged around the secondary aim, which was to develop or suggest a method that could be used to pastorally care for the widows who had been neglected by their pastors and pastoral caregivers. In order to realise this, different methods of caring were looked into in order to see if these methods were suitable to be used to journey with these widows.

7.4. REFLECTIONS ON CASE STUDIES (Widows)

The researcher observed the following as he reflected on the case studies after the interviews were finalized:

7.4.1. Reflection On Case Study 1 (Widow)

- **Doubting The Presence Of God**

During the interview, 'MaLiau informed the researcher that the manner in which the pastor and the church had treated her made her doubt the presence of God in this church. Pastors preach and teach about the love of God, which must be seen through believers' deeds, and

utterances to other people yet the same church does the opposite. The manner in which the church treats the widows proves without a shadow of doubt that there is no love for the next person. The treatment she received from the pastor and the church changed her worldview of what the church should be and who God is in this church. What shocked the researcher is that she strongly felt that married women should not invest their time and money in the church, as the church will only use them and not care for them when they in need.

- **Impact Of Spirituality**

The researcher feels that 'MaLiau`s spirituality has been affected by this neglect and treatment. She now views both the pastor and the church as being spiritually lacking and thus other widows together with her cannot rely or run to the pastor for spiritual up-liftment. This eventually affected her spirituality.

7.4.2. Reflection On Case Study 2 (Widow)

- **Self-Blame**

Interviewing 'Mma Mofokeng was one of the toughest interviews the researcher has ever had. The researcher found that 'Mma Mofokeng is imprisoned in anger and frustration and this was a pastoral challenge to the researcher as he did not know how to assist her. To either give her a hug, wipe her tears, tell her it is going to be well or just sit back and allow her to cry. All these emotions came to mind but the researcher could not choose an appropriate response for this particular situation. No number of tears would erase what happened. In the mind of the researcher was the fact that maybe after crying, she would wipe her tears and suggest an alternative response she should have chosen. However, then after some few minutes she would start to cry again. Nothing anyone says or does will remove the pain she is going through. The reason she has not spoken about her pain is that she thought that she might have done something wrong to God hence this punishment.

She felt that God took her husband and punished her with a church that segregates widows. Her self-blame was a daily thing. She decided to take the blame of the treatment she received from her pastor and the congregation, before anyone could blame her and she owned it. It was causing her pain.

- **Impact On Her Spirituality**

It became clear to the researcher that 'Mma Mofokeng lost faith in God hence she used self-blame as a reason to deal with the neglect she received from her pastor and church. This self-

blame changed everything to the extent that she did not see any reason of going to the church anymore. This bothered the researcher even further. The question is, to what degree has this pastoral neglect impacted on her spirituality? This question was not dealt with in the interview because the researcher sensed that she would not be able to respond to it, as she is very fragile. However, this is what 'Mma Mofokeng said in suggesting a way the church can solve this challenge: "Something must be done to correct what the church system is doing to the congregants who are in pain."

7.4.3. Reflection On Case Study 3 (Widow)

- **Loss Of Trust**

Reginah as a pastors' spouse trusted the administrative systems and the leadership of the church. She now had lost trust in the church's systems but more so in the leadership. Her Bishop who was supposed to be fatherly and compassionate hurt her so much during her period of mourning. Her local Board also bullied her and hurt her at the time when she thought they would support her and her children. They pushed her out of the parsonage without checking or organising an alternate accommodation for her. Every door of the leadership of the church she knocked at for help was shut.

This treatment made her to lose trust and try to fend for herself and her children. She did not trust even those few pastors who extended a hand of help as she felt they have concealed motives.

- **Feeling Rejected**

'Mma Mofokeng was surprised and felt rejected by the reaction from both the leadership of the church and the leadership of the local Board. Both leaderships have women in them and she thought that the women would be more understanding and offer support but their reaction baffled her very much. How does a woman encourage the oppression and hurt of another woman who is in pain of losing her husband? 'Mma Mofokeng felt that she could not associate herself with women who claimed to be praying but their actions were opposite to what they were supposed to stand for as praying women. It is not easy for a person to be violated and rejected in the church and still want to be a part of it.

7.4.4. Reflection On Case Study 4 (Widow)

- **Feeling Of Being Used**

During the interview, Victoria pointed out that she felt used by the pastor and the church. Not only her, but her family too. When the local church and the local pastor had visitors, her house was used to host those visitors without the church contributing to the hospitality. Both she and her partner have not complained as they felt they are contributing to the welfare of the local church.

During local fundraising events and efforts, her pastor would be looking at her for more financial contributions and she would do so without complaining as she had the mantra she believed in: "I do not do what I do in the church for the pastor but for the church. This is my contribution towards Kingdom building."

When she needed the pastor and the church during the bereavement of her partner, they were not there for her. She felt hurt and rejected when her marital status was a point of contention instead of the pastor help her to bury her partner. She had to "buy" a pastor to bury her partner. She felt used by both the pastor and the church. "They only wanted our money not us" (This she disclosed outside the interview).

She felt like she was not a worthy keeper, because people just used her and tossed her off. Her self-worth and confidence were negatively impacted. Will she be able to heal and pass this phase? The researcher is troubled by this question.

7.4.5. Reflection On Case Study 5 (Widow)

• Disappointment

Before this occurrence, Sebolelo had great respect and trust for pastors of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. She would always tell her friends and relatives who are not members of this church that the A.M.E produces pastors of high quality. She understood the predicament and plight of pastors because they were mostly paid little. She did not only understand but she encouraged effective caring for pastors and their families.

She felt a deep sense of disappointment when her pastor and the church failed to journey with her during her time of mourning. She thought that her pastor as the leader of the local church failed to give sound leadership to the congregation as to how to deal and support the widows. She questioned the training at the Seminary and whether her pastor put into practice what he was taught at the Seminary. In her disappointment, she continued to go to church and observed the rules given to her by her church.

7.5. COMMON FACTORS IN THE CASE STUDIES (Widows)

The researcher observed that all the Basotho widows that took part in the study were in the right state of mind. They had clear remembrance of the events they were relating and they were mostly emotionally in control, however, their pain was still new and their hurt was more than skin deep. As they correlated their stories, their body language and emotions went back to the events that resulted in their trauma and pain. It looked like they were reliving those incidents of pain, rejection and humiliation again.

The researcher followed up with the participants after the interview, with the aim of verifying the accuracy of the transcription and in a way check the stories for consistency and accuracy. Both the Basotho widows and pastors were consistent regarding their responses to interview questions asked during the interview process.

The following analysis of both the groups of the participants had these factors:

7.5.1. The First Commonality Was Openness To Talk About The Problem

It was noted by the researcher that in the individual interviews, the Basotho widows at first seemed to be ashamed to converse about their experiences of pastoral neglect, humiliation and rejection. Whereas, the pastors were doubtful to open up to the researcher who is their colleague. It is after informing them (pastors) that their contribution towards this study will be able to come up with a method that will be helpful to the widows but in particular to themselves.

Once the researcher assured them of complete confidentiality and requested them to sign the confidentiality clause, they were relaxed and began to converse confidently. The trust between the researcher and the participants grew and as the researcher asked deeper and probing questions, they responded positively without hesitation.

The researcher at the end of the interview would ask the participants why they were reluctant to open up and they would respond by saying they had never discussed the matter formally except when they are complaining or crying out to someone who cared to listen to them. The researcher assured them that breaking the silence helps in gathering data and information that will guide the suggestion of a healing method and a development of a model that will be used uniformly by pastors in order not to repeat the same mistake again.

Wimberly writes, “The cure for shame is finding relationships with significant others in which we experience some resemblance of nurture and care without having to turn ourselves inside out” (1999:11). The intention of the interview was that these pastorally neglected Basotho widows would find a place or someone who cared and the one they could trust. The researcher did not seek to do therapy with both the pastors and the widows at this stage, but to get them to open up and share their experiences and pain. It is in this regard that, their embarrassment was understandable, where the subject of ill-treatment of widows had been not discussed publicly (Baloyi 2020:47); hence it was a great achievement to get them to even agree to be interviewed.

7.5.2. The Second Commonality Was Fear

With some information received in the interviews of the pastors, the researcher noticed that fear of being against African cultural practices was an underlying matter. These pastors could not pastorally journey with the Basotho widows because at some point they will find themselves breaking some of these cultural practices. They will at some point have to lay hands or hug a widow and this will be seen as taboo. Those who are males would be seen as having romantic relationships with the widow if they spent time in their homes during pastoral visits.

On the other hand, the widows feared to be seen to be enticing male pastors if they are to attend pastoral counselling sessions. This fear made the researcher to use his office with people passing up and down the corridors. The researcher’s office was the best neutral place where both the widows and the researcher who is male, would feel safe.

The other reason of fear from the widows’ side was the fear of their pastors and pastoral caregivers knowing that they are “complaining” about them. This fear was laid to rest as the researcher informed the widows that the Office of the bishop granted permission for this study and that they going to remain anonymous.

7.5.3. Third Commonality Pertaining To Regard Of Self

It was noted by the researcher that a sense of failure and guilt was one of the challenges that brought shame to these widows. One of the widows had been blaming herself for the treatment she received from her pastor and members of the congregation. She felt that she

might have done something wrong against God; hence, God took away her husband and then allowed the pastor and the congregation to reject and hurt her.

Ramsay defines shame as “that inner sense of unworthiness or inadequacy as a person, it is the self-judging the self” (1992: 247). For instance, ‘Mma Mofokeng said, “This God took my husband, and punished me with a church that segregates widows. This is too much.”

The researcher realized that some of the widow’s experiences of being pastorally neglected by pastors and pastoral caregivers had left them with a poor self-esteem. It could be a great help for them if their pastoral caregivers would help them to reconstruct new stories of self-worth by first liberating the A.M.E Church theology from African cultural practices overtones (Aldredge-Clanton, 1995: 25). This is emphasised by what Neuger (2001: 66) who says that a sound theology will heal the victims of pastoral neglect.

In the researcher’s opinion, the effects of pastoral neglect of the widows require prolonged treatment if they are to be helped. The recurring nature of the neglect may result in a loss of the sense of personhood where the widows no longer have confidence in their womanhood, and feeling as if they somehow are to be blamed for the death of their husbands. The psychological reactions are intensified by the sense of betrayal by those who were supposed to be helping during this time where widows need their church more.

As seen in the stories of the widows, there is also a sense of betrayal that is real and it causes some widows to wish that they were better off not being members of this local church.

7.5.4. Fourth Commonality Pertaining To The Feeling Of Being Helpless

Most of the pastors interviewed had expressed the feeling of being helpless. They understand that their calling entails being there for those who are in need. Yet, their responsibility of shepherding the flock, in this case the widows is hindered and made useless by cultural practices. Even if a widow in need can call for help at night, a pastor cannot help because culture dictates that no one should visit the widow after sunset.

Pastors, as shepherds feel helpless because even the hierarchy of the church cannot help them to be able to help widows. The church succumbs to cultural practices and thus avoid caring for the widows.

7.5.5. Fifth Commonality Pertaining To The Feeling Of Being Ashamed

A number of pastors highlighted the fact that they felt ashamed to be called “pastors” because of the manner in which the church had allowed itself to be “a guardian of cultural practices that are unbiblical”. These are words uttered by one of the pastors. Pastors in the matter of pastorally caring for the widows find themselves between the hard surface and the hammer. On the other hand, they are expected to be shepherds of these widows and on the other side, they are expected to adhere and observe the cultural practices. Members of the congregation will continue to talk behind the pastor’s back regarding his “failure” to be there for the widows. These gossips will eventually reach the ear of the pastor and the pastor will have to be extra careful of how he/she respond and react to some issues that might aggravate the situation. On the other hand, within the same congregation, there will be those who will congratulate the pastor for observing these cultural practices. Pastors who do what is right will always feel ashamed of the situation and themselves, as they could not be effective in their pastoral responsibilities.

7.6. DIFFERENCE IN THE FINDINGS

7.6.1. Embarrassment

Members of the widow’s family “rudely” reprimanded one pastor who visited a widow after the widow has called her. The pastor responded to the call and unfortunately, she visited the widow after sunset because of her tight schedule. Whilst the pastor was still busy consulting with a widow that was troubled and breaking down, she was told it is late and culture does not allow visitors. The widow tried to engage with the family member who was chasing the pastor away but her pleas were ignored. The pastor felt embarrassed.

This embarrassment was because this pastor was treated as being on the wrong yet the widow had challenges that the family could not help her with. Her only hope was her pastor and her pastor was treated badly. In moving out of this house, the pastor felt embarrassed. What happened in this family became the talk of the town and the local church. This talk divided the local congregation into groups. These groups added on the feeling that the pastor had had. She felt more embarrassed as works and pastor this congregation. She also questioned the fact that as a woman, she felt embarrassed and how would a male pastor feel

like if he were going to be treated in this fashion. Male pastors are in more danger as they would be said to be after these widows for romantic relationships and financial gain.

7.7. NEW IDEA IN THE FINDINGS

7.7.1. Seminary Training

It was during the interviews with one of the widows that the matter of the training of pastors was raised. This widow questioned the manner in which her pastor handled her abuse and rejection as a member of the church, because of her wearing black mourning clothes. She said that she thought that pastors are assigned to local churches, after the leadership has satisfied themselves that this particular pastor meets the requirements to be assigned. One pastor in the interview also raised this issue. The pastor that the training of pastors in the Seminary should not end on academic matters only highlighted it. This pastor suggested that after being academically equipped, pastors must be trained to be pastoral. He also suggests that those who are already in the field must be able to attend a prepared refreshers course on pastoral care. This is a point that the researcher did not think about, and the researcher as a leader at the Seminary believes that this is a point that needs more attention.

7.8. FINDINGS

A single incident of neglect has lasting traumatic effects. The researcher found out that the following were the effects of pastorally neglecting the Basotho widows:

7.8.1. Depression

Most of the women interviewed tried to explain how they felt after being pastorally neglected by their pastors and pastoral caregivers when they needed them the most. Some of the widows used the following words; "I felt worthless", "hopeless" and "helpless".

7.8.2. Feelings Of Hate

The feeling of hate often is given birth by anger. Some of these widows felt that they now hate their pastors, pastoral care givers and the church because of the manner in which they treated them. Hence, a number of them will not even go to church during their period of mourning, whereas, others would even join other denominations after their cleansing ceremonies because of this feeling of hate.

7.8.3. Feelings Of Betrayal

This is what the researcher observed to be the common factor in all the women interviewed. They felt betrayed by the pastors they trusted and respected. Betrayed by the members of the congregations they have thought it is their second family. That betrayal led to feelings of anger, confusion and fear. "What happened was something that I never thought could happen in a million years. I trusted my church to be for the poor, oppressed and marginalised. Now, I know that the church is not what it looks like it is." Josephine exclaimed!

7.8.4. Insomnia, Flashbacks And Nightmares

Josephine still does not believe that the church treated her the way it has. After the incident where her husband was not buried by the church, she tried so much to push that experience far back to the subconscious mind so that she could block it out. In spite of all her attempts, she keeps on having flashbacks and nightmares. She finds it difficult to concentrate at work and has panic attacks whenever she thinks of the meeting where her marital status was discussed and a decision not to bury her husband was finalised. She has suffered a great weight loss and loss of appetite: "Because I could not eat, I lost a lot of weight. Sleeping was so difficult and I was afraid of nightmares. During the day, I would have flashbacks and it was very difficult to concentrate or put my mind on anything, my attention span was very poor. I would cry every time I felt like that, whether it was a happy or said occasion".

7.8.5. Emptiness

After being told to move out of the parsonage, Reginah had never set a foot back at church. She said that this has left her feeling empty because of lack of nourishment of her spirituality: "I believe that, if you do not have anything to believe in, your life just becomes empty. It was just an empty existence for me, and I find no reason to continue living. There was a time when I was unable to pray, my heart was too heavy. I just stopped believing in God. I felt, as though my life was empty, I had nothing to live for."

7.8.6. Anger

Anger seemed to form a prominent part of these widow's lives. They were angered by the manner in which the church has been swallowed by oppressive African cultural practices. These practices have been muted and forced to them in their different households and family

structured. In their neighbourhoods, the same oppressive practices are practices. They are not even consulted to give their views or opinions. They are voiceless. Decisions are taken on their behalf as they are treated like children or disabled people. Referring to her experience, Reginah recalled: "I was just so angry with everybody. I was angry with God, with my late husband and everyone. I just felt as if the whole world was in a mid-stop. One day I was fine and happy then a few days down the line I was down, miserable and angry again. It was as if I was walking around in circles. Even when I was not angry, I would still be angry".

7.9. REFLECTION ON CASE STUDIES (PASTORS)

The researcher observed the following as he reflected on the case studies of pastors who were the main participants after the interviews were finalized:

7.9.1. Reflection On Case Study 1 (Pastor)

• Feeling helpless

It was in the interview with Pastor Victor that the researcher noticed the feeling of being helpless. He kept on emphasising the fact that he did not have a method that he could use in order to journey with the widows, he found himself helpless. In order to respond to his helplessness, he "gave the mourning widows space to deal with their pain." The meaning of "giving them space" according to Pastor Victor is to "step aside from providing pastoral visits to them" and by so doing they (widows) have ample time to observe the cultural practices they were supposed to observe without Christians dictating to them how to mourn or grieve. Pastor Victor, from experience knows that when one is in such a situation, he or she needs spiritual support. This knowledge made him to be helpless because he could not be on the side of the hurting widow to counsel and journey with. He even informed the researcher that this feeling of helplessness is and might be exacerbated by the fact that this widow has children who are also members of the church and might need his service.

7.9.2. Reflection On Case Study 2 (Pastor)

• Feeling Ashamed And Embarrassed

The feeling of being ashamed was what the researcher heard mostly from Pastor Nombuyiselo. She participated fully in the funeral arrangement of the husband of the widow she helped. She even called after the funeral just to check on the widow and her children. When the widow extended an invitation

to her pastor, the pastor felt the need to respond and be there for her widow member. As pastors are busy with different responsibilities during the day, she agreed to see the widow in the afternoon. On the agreed day and time, Pastor Nombuyiselo kept her promise.

It is while the two were busy in their conversation that one old woman interrupted them rudely. *“Moruti, ana o moroa o sa tsabeng leho hlompha litso tsa batho ba bang? E se ele shoalane tsamaea.”* (Pastor, are you not respectful of other peoples’ cultures? It is late in the evening, go!). The manner and the tone of this old woman who reprimanded Pastor Nombuyiselo made her feel embarrassed and ashamed. She even saw pain and embarrassment on the face of the widow she was conversing with. She had to rise from the church she was sitting on immediately and only the widow responded to her good-byes. She felt the pain of being ashamed and embarrassed.

She continued to feel this way even during the presence of other congregants. She knew that the treatment she received from that old woman was in public domain and some members of the congregation are in agreement with what she went through. She pastored and moved around members of her congregation with that shame. “I wonder what this old woman was going to say or treat me if I were a male pastor. This is painful.”

7.9.3. Reflection On Case Study 3 (Pastor)

- **Feeling Angry**

Pastor Ditsobotla informed the researcher that he strived to do his best to pastor the congregation assigned to him, but he feels that he is angry at the church system. He feels that the church has gone worldly but allowing the African cultural practices to hinder pastoral care for the widows. The church is adhering to cultural practices that are even not Biblical to oppress widows. “What is wrong with me administering Holy Communion to a widow, at the same time with other congregants? We receive their offerings but still segregate them?”

The local Church boards who are supposed to act pastorally as stewards oppresses both the pastor and the widow. They will organise meetings to reprimand or suspend a pastor who they think has

Transgressed their rules. These Board members will behave as if they will not experience what widows that are pastorally neglected were going through. Pastor Ditsobotla felt angry that he could not be there for the mourning widows as a pastor.

The researcher feels that the three emotions shared above are common feeling that pastors have. They understand that it is their responsibility to care for those who are downtrodden and outcasts, the poor, the needy and the widows. African cultural practices that overflow into the church hinder pastoral care to be given to these mourning widows. The role of being a shepherd is taken away from

the pastors by these cultural practices. Wimberly's method of shepherding will be able as suggested to positively respond to this challenge and bring about a solution.

7.10. SUMMARY OF FINDING

In conclusion, the researcher acknowledges that pastoral neglect of the widows in the Ekurhuleni District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church is not a fallacy, it exists. Using stories shared by the widows and pastors within this District, the researcher was able to gather evidence that there are widows, who have been pastorally neglected by pastors and pastoral caregivers in the church, and pastors who pastorally neglected widows, due to cultural practices that hindered them to journey with widows during their period of mourning. These pastoral challenges to pastors' incidents may be a single event, which in some cases does not even last more than an hour; however, it has a lasting traumatic effect. These effects make it a challenge to pastoral care.

Finding a resolution to stopping this pastoral neglect will assist in preventing the abuse and rejection of widows, not just in the church but also in society in general. This research started with searching why pastors are challenged by pastoral care of the widows; however, the researcher could not neglect the healing of those widows who are currently hurting. It is further suggested by the researcher that a further research needs to be conducted to investigate the training of pastors and the curriculum offered in the Seminary, with the hope that this investigation will be helpful to the stopping of this abuse to the widows.

It is the hope of the researcher that the findings and recommendations made in this work, will add value to the lives of the Basotho widows, pastors, pastoral caregivers and congregations. Another hope is that, these stories shared here will guide some of the students who will continue with research around the issues of pastoral neglect of other human being. The last chapter will deal with recommendations and conclusions.

CHAPTER EIGHT

8. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1. INTRODUCTION

In this final chapter of this study, the researcher will give an evaluation of the study with regard to whether it was able to achieve what it had envisioned i.e. bring about recommendations and suggest areas of further study.

8.2. EVALUATIONS OF THE STUDY

The most vital objective of this research was to explore relevant models of journeying with widows who are pastorally neglected by their pastors and pastoral caregivers towards healing. The research found out that these widows were still carrying pain and hurt because of being neglected pastorally. The researcher is challenged when pastors and pastoral caregivers pastorally neglect members of the congregation who are to be shepherded. Pastors are supposed to be shepherds who protect and guide the flock, yet in this case, the same shepherds neglect their responsibilities due to the challenge they are faced with. Their challenge emanates from the role played by the African cultural practices that hinder them to be pastoral.

8.3. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Initially the researcher had intended to focus on investigating the reasons why pastors and pastoral caregivers neglect widows with the aim of suggesting a model to be used in future to address this neglect. The researcher found out that this study would not achieve its goals if the widows were not going to participate. Their voice and contribution would reveal part of the reasons why they are neglected. Because of the sensitivity of this topic, the researcher struggled to get pastors to open-up and share their experiences because of being colleagues with the researcher. On the other hand, the widows also could not open-up because the researcher is also a pastor and they do not want to be seen as complaining about their pastors and pastoral caregivers. As a pastor, the researcher also had a fear of being biased in this research.

With these limitations in mind, the researcher had to always remind himself about the pain and rejection that the widows were experiencing, and also the challenge that the pastors were faced with when dealing with widows. This challenge was stressful to pastors, as they do not have a method that is uniform to deal with it.

8.4. CHALLENGES THE STUDY ENCOUNTERED

The challenges that were encountered during the study can be discussed under three categories, which are:

- Gathering data
- Literature review
- Providing care for the Basotho widows

8.4.1. Gathering Data

There were many ways of acquiring the data needed; however, because the study used a qualitative method, information required was attained primarily through in-depth interviews with different people. Because of the sensitivity of this topic, the researcher encountered some challenges.

8.4.2. The Basotho Widows

The greatest challenge was to get them to open up and to trust that what they were sharing would never put their lives and that of their families in danger. They were worried about their reputation and the reputation of their church and its leadership.

Fear was another component that constrained them. Most feared the most that people would not believe them that they are neglected pastorally, and some feared that their pastors or pastoral caregivers would react with hatred and more rejection, that they might be victimised for speaking out. Fear was by far the biggest hindrance to the process. Although the researcher did all he could to make sure of their safety and privacy, some the widows still remained tense during the interviews.

8.4.3. The Pastors In The Ekurhuleni District Of The African Methodist Episcopal Church

The pastors at first were reluctant to participate in the study for some reasons. The challenge was first to get them to acknowledge that the study's problem was of sincere and genuine pastoral concern. When the author first introduced the topic, the general reaction was to dismiss it as a private matter that had no bearing on pastoral care, as cultural matters are private. This denial brought resistance to open up about this topic because according to them, a pastor can never hurt anyone especially the vulnerable, deliberately. It took the researcher some time to convince some of the pastors who had reservation regarding the study.

It is in one of these discussions that Pastor Vic said to the researcher: "*Moruti (Pastor)*, are you your brother's keeper or a sell-out? Is the Bishop behind this research in order to demote or punish us?" The letters of concern were then signed.

The researcher initially wanted to focus on this study on pastors only but discovered that without the participation of the Basotho widows, the study will miss vital information that could be provided by the widows. The pastors who participated contributed a lot to the study and the researcher found out that some used the researcher to vent out their frustration, whilst others found a platform to express their views and perceptions.

8.4.4. Literature Review

Much research has been conducted on the topic of widowhood and the care of widows, but not much on the neglect or challenges faced by the pastors in caring for the widows. Having googled the University of Pretoria website; From Theology, research was done on the traumatic experience that causes women wearing black garments to be excluded from the body of Christ (Matsaneng A.S 2009), Pastoral care of the families of the deceased clergy (Matlou D. 2014), about Women as widows (Lopata H.Z 1979), Widowhood within the Malawian Context: A pastoral care model (Kapuma G.A 2018), Bereavement ritual of widows in Swazi culture: a pastoral concern (Dlamini D. 2016) and Basotho cultural views and practices concerning widows: A pastoral challenge (Bikitsha E. 2019). In Psychology, the following topic was researched, black urban widows: the experiences of coping with bereavement in a transitional society (Masebolao D.P 2011). In Criminology, the needs of widowed person in a system their children in a grieving process (Smith L 2008). In other fields, most focus is on widowhood because of HIV and AIDS and urbanisation. The researcher's

contribution to this field will be researching on pastors who pastorally are not caring for widows after burial, with the aim of helping and equipping them.

The researcher's contribution to the study is to suggest a caring method for the church that will be used by pastors and pastoral caregivers in caring for the Basotho widows after they had buried their husbands.

8.5. PROVIDING CARE FOR THE BASOTHO WIDOWS

Raw emotions surfaced from some Basotho widows at some stage, in the interviews and they were allowed time to catch their breath and compose themselves. Their stories forced these widows to relive the incidents that hurt and made them to feel rejected. The researcher was ill prepared for this and no counsellor or pastoral caregiver was on site to help journey with them out of the pain that had been stirred up. This lack of foresight nearly derailed the research because the researcher was caught in between a male pastor and a researcher, and was not sure which role to play at which time. The researcher was not equipped enough to provide the therapy required and the study did not allow enough time for a full journey to healing with these Basotho widows.

All the challenges met served to make the research more real to the researcher than envisaged. The study stopped being just a theory in my mind, and became a real-life issue with human participants that struggled with life. It challenged the researcher to maintain ethical conduct and to protect the subjects without compromising the study.

8.6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The suggestions that are to be tabled below will try to address the two sides of the challenge so that both the widow and the pastor can be empowered to start the journey towards healing and caring. The research moved towards the direction of suggesting a model for pastors to be able to journey with Basotho widows. However, it would be fruitless to empower pastors while the widows are not receiving assistance that could help them heal from the pastoral neglect they experienced. Thus, the research investigated some methods that could be used by the pastors and pastoral caregivers to journey with widows.

The findings of this study will be used to raise awareness that pastors' neglect of widows is a reality, highlight its effects and suggest ways in which pastors and pastoral caregivers can journey with widows and pastors towards healing. This research does not claim to come up

with a solution that will miraculously solve and stop the neglect of widows by pastors, and pastoral caregivers; however, the researcher has found out some healing methods, that can be used to pastorally care for Basotho widows, who are victims of pastoral neglect. This is why the researcher intends to follow up on this in a future research study to check if the suggested methods are effective or whether they need to be reviewed. The research recommends the following:

1. That the church boosts the ministry of pastoral caregivers, by raising awareness on issues of pastoral neglect against widows as unethical and painful. This can be done by using platforms such as workshops, women's seminars and life skills in order to empower members of the congregation.
2. That the church through the Christian Education Department draws a program for the local churches whereby pastors and pastoral caregivers will be empowered on how to journey with the Basotho widows after they had buried their husbands.
3. That the church adds a course on Pastoral Care in the program provided for the training of pastors in the Seminary.
4. That the church mandates the Board of Christian Education and the Seminary to organise a refreshers course for pastors who are already in the field. Pastors should attend this program after every three years. Pastoral care and counselling training should not be limited to the curriculum of the seminary only. Post Seminary study should be encouraged so that pastors can constantly be reminded of their responsibilities in caring for the flock. There should be ongoing training on counselling techniques so that pastors can be relevant and effective in their counselling sessions.
5. That the church through the local Christian Board of Education establish a committee that aims at supporting and journeying with widows after they had buried their husbands.
6. Lastly, that the church should have more retreat sessions to support burned-out pastors, to retreat and regain strength. There is no one more unsafe, than a tired and burnt-out pastor is. They cause more harm to those they have been entrusted with. Most pastors are wounded healers; they preach while they bleed. These retreats should offer opportunities for pastors to debrief, so that they may go back home revitalised to go help to carry other people's burdens.

The researcher has a responsibility to design a caring method, to empower and pastorally care for the Basotho widows and pastors, in order to avoid neglect of widows, after such recommendations.

8.7. AREAS OF FURTHER STUDY ON THE RESEARCH

The most vital need in the area of further study is research to come up with an effective pastoral care method that would stop the reoccurrence of pastoral caregiver. However, for now, the challenge is to get the church in particular the pastors to get to accept that they have a challenge in how to journey and care for widows after they had buried their husbands due to African culture hindering pastoral care.

Further study is to do research on different African culture and rites of passages, and how they affects a socialization that breeds women oppression. As alluded to in this study, there seems to be a link between the level of women oppression and the culture. This was not convincingly established, therefore further study could help rule it out as an influencing factor, or establish if it is and if it needs being reviewed for social justice to prevail.

8.8. CONCLUSION

In the conclusion of this research project, the researcher has demonstrated that pastors do pastorally neglect widows due to cultural hindrances. This is what makes this topic a pastoral challenge. It is the view of the researcher that by pastorally neglecting the widows, the image of the church and that of God is tarnished. In some instances, the office and the image of the pastor and the pastoral caregivers becomes tarnished. That is why this research was very necessary. It will help to protect the image of the office of a pastor and the dignity of the church by coming up with effective ways of dealing with cases of pastoral negligence of Basotho widows. In addition, to assist find ways in-which pastors and pastoral caregivers can pastorally care for Basotho widows in such cases.

The researcher acknowledges the fact that the process of conducting this study was very challenging and yet personally educative. This process helped the researcher to have a personal journey of overcoming his predispositions and denominational doctrinal preferences, to disconnect oneself from the picture and focus at the bigger picture of pastoral care.

Some of the stories that were shared by these Basotho widows challenged the researcher's integrity as a scholar and his loyalty to the church's doctrines. It became evident during these interviews with both the Basotho widows and pastors to the researcher that his theological training had not prepared him enough for some of the horrific facts he heard, in particular from the widows. The emotional impact of these Basotho widows' stories on the researcher was overwhelming. There were times during the process of this research, where the researcher could not touch the research after some interviews, in particular after Mma Mofokeng's interview. The researcher felt that he, personally as a pastor, who is involved in the training of other pastors in the Seminary, failed these widows and the pain within made him unable to continue. It is during this period, that the researcher consulted with the Supervisor who played a role of a spiritual father for debriefing sessions. The Supervisor was the only person the researcher trusted throughout this process.

The researcher recommends that the church adopt the suggested pastoral methods for pastors to journey with the pastorally neglected Basotho widows and all widows in general. The researcher does not assume that these suggested methods are conclusive; however, they can be tried as a starting point and be revised overtime.

ANNEXTURE A: PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS AFTER BURIAL: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY

1. Could you share your experiences about the response of the church immediately after your husband passed on?

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2. What kind of support did you receive from the church after your husband`s passing?

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3. Did the pastor take you through bereavement counselling? If yes, share your experience!

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4. What were your expectations from the church after your husband passed on? Were these expectations met in your situation?

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5. In your experience, what is the role of the church in caring for widows?

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6. How soon after your husband's burial did you go back to church? Explain how you were welcomed within the church.

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7. How did you feel about how the church responded to you?

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8. In your opinion, do you think pastors are hindered by cultural practices to journey with widows after their husband's burial?

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9. What are the cultural issues that you think are hindrance for pastoral care?

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ANNEXTURE B: PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS AFTER BURIAL: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY (QUESTIONAIRE FOR PASTORS)

1. How do you journey with the bereaved before burial?

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2. What counselling method do you apply when dealing with the bereaved, in particular the widows after burial?

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3. In your opinion, do you think the church has to adhere to African cultural practices even if they are not biblical?

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4. Do you know of African cultural practices that hinder pastors or pastoral care-givers to pastorally care for widows?

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5. What do you think is the solution to this challenge of African culture hindering pastoral care?

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PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY.

1. Could you share your experiences with regards to the response of the church immediately after your husband passed on?

Moruti arrived in my house 2 hours after the death of my husband. She was very supportive during the whole week. As a hands on person, she organised prayers every evening. Young people in the church helped me with house work for the whole week. They were really there for us and I felt their love and care.

2. What kind of support did you receive from the church after your husband's passing?

The only positive help I got from the church was when one of the young people acted on my behalf when I was harassed by someone who owed my husband. This business man did not want to pay the money he owed my husband and this young man as a lawyer intervened.

3. Did the pastor take you through bereavement counselling? If yes, share your experience!

Unfortunately the pastor did not do counselling or referred me to someone who can do counselling.

4. What were your expectations from the church after your husband passed on? Were these expectations met in your situation?

I had expected that the support I got during last week will continue. Moreover when my fellow congregants are aware that I am all by myself.

I expected the pastor or elders of the church would come pray with me. They never visited.

5. In your experience, what is the role of the church in caring for widows?

The role of the church including the pastor is to be close to people who are hurting and vulnerable.

The church should care for the widows and orphans in particular after the pain of burying a loved one.

6. How soon after your husband's burial did you go back to church? Explain how you were welcomed within the church.

I did not go back to church. I saw how Mrs Nkambule was treated when she came to church after the death of her husband. I did not want to experience the same treatment hence I decided not to go back.

7. How did you feel about how the church responded to you?

I felt disappointed and hurt. I thought this kind of treatment will not happen to me and knowing that even Mrs Nkambale was treated badly made matters worse. We as the church need to talk about this problem before the church loses a lot of congregants.

8. In your opinion, do you think pastors are hindered by cultural practices to journey with widows after their husband's burial?

Pastors are trained at the Seminary and therefore I think that they know how to separate matters. Culture is right and wrong, but I don't think it should be brought inside the church to control.

9. What are these cultural issues that you think are hindrance for pastoral care?

Being forced to sit alone at the back of the church as if one has a bad disease. Not being able to greet other bazalware just because I am wearing black clothes.



PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY.

1. Could you share your experiences with regards to the response of the church immediately after your husband passed on?

My church was with me from the first day. My class leader was the first person to be with us after my son called him. Prayers were brought to us everyday in the evening. My pastor helped with the funeral program. Even my other relatives said that my church is very supportive.

2. What kind of support did you receive from the church after your husband's passing?

Spiritually I felt that the pain was healing. This was because of the hymns, sermons and prayers we received from the church.

During the week even the youth helped with their cars when we were busy with the arrangement of the funeral.

3. Did the pastor take you through bereavement counselling? If yes, share your experience!

Unfortunately counselling was not offered by the pastor.

4. What were your expectations from the church after your husband passed on? Were these expectations met in your situation?

I expected that maybe prayers would be done even if it is not every day. No one from the Church visited us

even the Class leader. I felt alone and lost.

5. In your experience, what is the role of the church in caring for widows?

This church does not have a good role at all. The church only wants you when every thing is good. No

care for the widows at all. Yet the church is full of women who are married. Very bad.

6. How soon after your husband's burial did you go back to church? Explain how you were welcomed within the church.

We went to church after a month with my children. I was told to seat right at the back alone. Very far away from other people. I felt very lonely in the church and I couldn't even enjoy the worship. I just wanted to be out of this place.

7. How did you feel about how the church responded to you?

I grew hatred to this church. This is the church that I served nearly my whole life but when I needed their support not money, they pushed me away as if I did something wrong. I did not kill my husband.

8. In your opinion, do you think pastors are hindered by cultural practices to journey with widows after their husband's burial?

I was not aware that my pastor had been subjected to observing cultural practices. These practices are very oppressive to widows even in church.

9. What are these cultural issues that you think are hindrance for pastoral care?

At church we practice hugging and culture does not allow people to hug widows. Therefore pastors can't even console or sympathise or shake hands with widows.



'Ma Mofokeng.

PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY.

1. Could you share your experiences with regards to the response of the church immediately after your husband passed on?

The church and pastor were very supportive. They offered prayers during the week and my pastor was in charge of my husband's funeral.

2. What kind of support did you receive from the church after your husband's passing?

During the week before the funeral, the preachers and my pastor were available for prayers and services. Some of the women even offered to bake cakes.

3. Did the pastor take you through bereavement counselling? If yes, share your experience!

No. No counselling was done by my pastor.

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4. What were your expectations from the church after your husband passed on? Were these expectations met in your situation?

I was expecting that the congregation and the pastor will be available to help me cope with the death of my husband. I thought I have brothers and sisters I can call when I needed help. My expectations were not met at all. Maybe I expected a lot. But I found out that I am pastor-less.

5. In your experience, what is the role of the church in caring for widows?

I think and I might be wrong because I am not a pastor. That the church should be able to take care of widows. The Church should be able to comfort and walk with the widows in this new life. Have widows support groups like they have for HIV and abused people.

6. How soon after your husband's burial did you go back to church? Explain how you were welcomed within the church.

Very painful. I was in church after two weeks of burying my husband. I normally use the front seats because I have a hearing problem. But was told I couldn't seat in front by the usher. This rude usher told me to go seat in the back because of the clothes of mourning I was wearing. Her approach was not friendly at all.

7. How did you feel about how the church responded to you?

I am hurt and have decided not to go back to church soon. I don't know any other church but this one. Yet, the only church I grew up in hurts people instead of being helpful to people who are hurting. I am very hurt.

8. In your opinion, do you think pastors are hindered by cultural practices to journey with widows after their husband's burial?

No, why and how? Culture should be done in our different homes not in church. Church and pastors must look beyond culture. Whose culture are we going to listen to in church as we come from different cultures?

9. What are these cultural issues that you think are hindrance for pastoral care?

As I have said I don't think culture should be brought in church. The bible is our culture in church not the culture of 17th century.

Reginah



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Denkeleers • Leading Minds • Dikgopolo lsa Dintlefi

PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY.

1. Could you share your experiences with regards to the response of the church immediately after your husband passed on?

The Board and my pastor were very supportive from the word go. I counted on them and their response was out of this world.

2. What kind of support did you receive from the church after your husband's passing?

During the week my family and relatives had people to pray with. The funeral program was not a challenge to me because the church helped. I got telephone calls, cards and visitations from the church.

3. Did the pastor take you through bereavement counselling? If yes, share your experience!

No.

4. What were your expectations from the church after your husband passed on? Were these expectations met in your situation?

I expected the church to sympathise and understand my situation as a widow. Instead I was chased out of a parsonage without making sure I have a place to go to. Painful.

5. In your experience, what is the role of the church in caring for widows?

S.1 Love S.2. Care S.3 Sympathy
S.4 Walk with the widow through new challenges.

6. How soon after your husband's burial did you go back to church? Explain how you were welcomed within the church.

After a year but I went to a church in a different location.

7. How did you feel about how the church responded to you?

I was hurt and discouraged.

8. In your opinion, do you think pastors are hindered by cultural practices to journey with widows after their husband's burial?

In my case I think so. They do not recognise these cultural practices and neglect taking care of those in pain.

9. What are these cultural issues that you think are hindrance for pastoral care?

1. No visitation due to these cultures.
2. No hugging or touching.



PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY.

1. Could you share your experiences with regards to the response of the church immediately after your husband passed on?

The church supported me during the week after the death of my husband. Every day they were with me and my children. Until the day we buried my husband.

2. What kind of support did you receive from the church after your husband's passing?

Telephone-calls. Congregants visiting. Pastor and preachers praying with us. Burying my husband with dignity.

3. Did the pastor take you through bereavement counselling? If yes, share your experience!

Not at all.

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4. What were your expectations from the church after your husband passed on? Were these expectations met in your situation?

Counselling and help to try to

cope with a new life.

My expectations were not met at

all.

5. In your experience, what is the role of the church in caring for widows?

The church must care and support

those that are troubled (spiritually and

otherwise). It is the duty of the church

to travel hand in hand with the new widows.

6. How soon after your husband's burial did you go back to church? Explain how you were welcomed within the church.

I went back to church after my
cleaning which happened a year
after my husband was buried.

7. How did you feel about how the church responded to you?

I am not happy at all. I am not blaming my pastor but think something should be done to at the seminary to enhance their studies of caring.

8. In your opinion, do you think pastors are hindered by cultural practices to journey with widows after their husband's burial?

No. Pastors should be adequately trained to deal with such and help the congregation not to practice bad cultures.

9. What are these cultural issues that you think are hindrance for pastoral care?

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PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY.

1. Could you share your experiences with regards to the response of the church immediately after your husband passed on?

AFTER NOTIFYING MY CLAS-LEADER THAT MY HUSBAND IS NO MORE, MEETINGS IN THE CHURCH WERE HELD. THE PURPOSE OF MEETINGS WAS TO DISCUSS WHETHER MY HUSBAND SHOULD BE BURIED BY THE CHURCH OR NOT. IN ONE BOARD MEETING, THE DECISION WAS TAKEN NOT TO ALLOW THE PASTOR TO BURY MY PARTNER. THE CHURCH ADDED PAIN TO WHAT I AM GOING THROUGH.

2. What kind of support did you receive from the church after your husband's passing?

NOTHING AT ALL EXCEPT FEW MEMBERS WHO VISITED DURING THE WEEK.

3. Did the pastor take you through bereavement counselling? If yes, share your experience!

NO

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4. What were your expectations from the church after your husband passed on? Were these expectations met in your situation?

1. PRAYERS. 2. HELP BURY MY PARTNER.
3. COUNSELLING 4. SPIRITUAL SUPPORT.

MY EXPECTATIONS WERE NOT MET FROM
THE WORD & NOT AT ALL

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5. In your experience, what is the role of the church in caring for widows?

1. CARE FOR THE BROKEN-HEARTED
2. PRAY FOR THE CONGREGANTS IN
DISTRESS
3. SUPPORT THOSE IN NEED
4. SHOW LOVE TO EVERYBODY
5. BE THERE FOR THE POOR AND WIDOWS.

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6. How soon after your husband's burial did you go back to church? Explain how you were welcomed within the church.

I WENT BACK TO CHURCH AFTER 2 YEARS.

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7. How did you feel about how the church responded to you?

VERY BAD. I FELT ABUSED BY THE CHURCH.

8. In your opinion, do you think pastors are hindered by cultural practices to journey with widows after their husband's burial?

IN MY CASE THEY SAID I AM NOT MARRIED EVEN THOUGH I WAS TRADITIONALLY MARRIED. I WAS PENALIZED BECAUSE OF THE ACT WHICH WAS CULTURAL.

9. What are these cultural issues that you think are hindrance for pastoral care?

TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE



Pastor
Ditsobotla

PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PASTORS

1. How do you journey with the bereaved before burial?

The known yet not written system that we are familiar with is to be with the bereaved family from the first day to the day they bury their loved ones. Prayer meetings with the family will be arranged and conducted every day in the evening. The class leader will help the family with the funeral program.

2. What counselling method do you apply when dealing with the bereaved, in particular the widows after burial?

I do not have a counselling method unfortunately. My observation is that every pastor in the denomination do what they think is right at the moment.

3. In your opinion, do you think the church has to adhere to African cultural practices even if they are not biblical?

I think the church should not adhere or encourage the usage of cultural practices. The usage of practices of African cultural practices and religious practices will be as easy as serving two masters at the same time.

4. Do you know of African cultural practices that hinders pastors or pastoral care-givers to pastorally care for widows?

Yes, wearing clothes is a hindrance on its own. These black clothes are very oppressive. The one year mourning period hinders pastoral care as this widow is not allowed to practice her spiritual matters to the latter.

5. What do you think is the solution to this challenge of African culture hindering pastoral care?

The church should be and remain the church. It should not practice what is not Biblical or denominational.



Pastor
Nombuyisele

PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY
QUESTIONAIRE FOR PASTORS

1. How do you journey with the bereaved before burial?

The journey differs from person to person. I would make sure as a shepherd that I am available as a spiritual leader and adviser where needed.

2. What counselling method do you apply when dealing with the bereaved, in particular the widows after burial?

Unfortunately there is no method that I use. As I have said I avail myself to help where I am needed. I advice or refer them if I can't help with the solution to a particular challenge.

3. In your opinion, do you think the church has to adhere to African cultural practices even if they are not biblical?

Not at all. I was embarrassed when visiting a widow that called for help but was chased away because of some cultural practices that did not allow me to be with the widow after sunset.

4. Do you know of African cultural practices that hinders pastors or pastoral care-givers to pastorally care for widows?

Widows are not allowed to socialize and thus prevents them to participate freely in the church. Wearing of black clothes is seen as being a carrier of bad luck.

5. What do you think is the solution to this challenge of African culture hindering pastoral care?

The church should have a dialogue regarding these practices that hinders pastoral care.

Pastor Vic.



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PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PASTORS

1. How do you journey with the bereaved before burial?

I always give them my time and try to be available for them before burial.

2. What counselling method do you apply when dealing with the bereaved, in particular the widows after burial?

I do not have a counselling method to refer to. The best thing I do for them is to give them space. It is, I believe that through giving space they find closure and healing without being pushed.

3. In your opinion, do you think the church has to adhere to African cultural practices even if they are not biblical?

Not at all. Yet these cultural practices impacts on us as pastors.

4. Do you know of African cultural practices that hinders pastors or pastoral care-givers to pastorally care for widows?

Male pastors are seen culturally as temptation to the new widows. Pastors can't respond to the call of a distressed widow in the evening because culture dictates that the widow is to be home with no visitors. Widows should be given Holy Communion last because they are no longer regarded as clean.

5. What do you think is the solution to this challenge of African culture hindering pastoral care?

The church should sift through the Basotho culture to check practices that are positive and acceptable to the church for the benefit of harmony. Those practices that hinders pastoral care should not be applied.

APPENDIX A: CONSENT LETTER

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Studente nommer/Student number: **17352305**

Van/Surname: **SEFATSA**

Nooiensvan/Maiden name: **N/A**

Titel / Title: **REV**

Voorname / First names: **NTITI JACOB**

Geboortedatum / Date of birth: **24 JUNE 1966**

ID nommer / ID number: Burgerskap / Citizenship: **6606245665086 RSA**

TOPIC: PASTORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS AFTER BURIAL: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to understand how and why cultural practices hinders pastoral care to Basotho widows. In addition, to understand why widows go through negative experiences with no one to lean on for support. To hear from the widows themselves the pain and challenges they went through as they narrate their stories and if there was any pastoral care offered to them during their time of need. To further, suggest a model of pastoral care that the Church and the pastors can use to help and assist widows in their experience of pain as well as healing.

Procedures to be followed

The researcher is planning to have questionnaires for pastors and to interview widows drawn from the local congregations to source information. A Qualitative method will be used to gather this information. This will be through storytelling to allow participants tell their stories without interference.

Risks and discomforts

The research will not put the widows, pastors and congregants at any risk in any way. The participants will be expected to share their experiences by responding to the questions in order to supply information to the researcher. The information will be treated with utmost confidentiality and therefore there will be no risk involved.

BENEFITS

This is a voluntary exercise; there will be no gain, either in cash or in kind. The only benefit will be that the participants will be able to share experiences and knowledge; this will help the research in suggesting a healing method that is pastoral.

Rights of Participants

The research will make sure that the rights of participants are respected throughout the process. It will be voluntary and participants may withdraw at any time if they feel so without any negative consequences. The researcher will explain the process at the beginning of every meeting so that participants are reminded of their rights.

Confidentiality

The researcher will make sure that the whole exercise and process is done confidentially. The identities of participants will be protected. The researcher and the University of Pretoria will access the information collected during this research.

Declaration

In order to ensure that all participants of the interviews have agreed to participate, the researcher will prepare a form of declaration in this way

Having received detailed explanation by the research on the aims and objectives of this research:

I am willing to participate in this research regarding the Culture that hinders pastoral care being offered to widows.

Signature:

Date:

Researcher: Rev

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX B

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

Dear Sir/ Madam/ Dr/ Prof.....

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT FOR A MTh DEGREE

Greetings

With regard to the above matter, you are earnestly requested to participate in a research project that is undertaken as a requirement for MTh degree with the University of Pretoria.

The Thesis title is: **PATORAL CARE OF BASOTHO WIDOWS AFTER BURIAL: A CHALLENGE FOR CLERGY.**

The research aims at to empower pastors to be able to pastorally care for the Basotho widows during their mourning period. The objective of the research is to suggest a caring method that the church and pastoral caregivers can employ in journeying with the widows after they had buried their husbands.

The study has two phases, which include the following data collection methods:

1. Questionnaire
2. In-depth Interviews.

It is for both part (phase) of the study that your participation is requested. The duration of the interview is estimated to be between 30 to 45 minutes.

- You are assured that all your personal experience or inputs obtained will be treated with utmost care to maintain confidentiality. In the final report, your name will not be disclosed to ensure anonymity.
- You are also assured that efforts will be taken to ensure that all ethical obligations and consideration are adhered to.

Participation in this research is voluntary. Should you at any stage decide to withdraw your participation, you will be at liberty to do so.

Kind regards,

Rev NJ Sefatsa

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