INTERRACIAL COMMUNICATION AND LOCAL CHURCH PARTICIPATION:
A LIBERATIONAL WORLDVIEW

by

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submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of

MASTER OF THEOLOGY

in the subject

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR J A WOLFAARDT

NOVEMBER 1992
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CHAPTER 1

STUDY RATIONALE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Presbyterian denomination consists of mainly racially-distinct local churches with insignificant interracial communication occurring at the local level. Effective interracial communication is understood by the researcher as any verbal or non-verbal communicative action that is perceived as unifying members of different racial groups. The lack of communication between the diverse racial groups is empirically an unexplored area of research in South Africa.

With no formally recorded practical theological theories in praxis on interracial communication and the local church in Southern Africa, an exploratory descriptive study will be applied.

There are several individuals within local church communities who believe in interracial communication as a strategy towards moving away from the socio-political system that enforced separation of races. As yet, in practice and praxis, little communication between race groups is occurring.

In discussion with members of the Presbyterian denomination who believe in the biblical imperative 'to love their
neighbour as themselves' [here interpreted as 'neighbours of other races'] it emerged that the desire to live out the biblical imperative was apparent.

Individuals taking the biblical command seriously were asking questions related to their concern about the gap in knowledge of one another's backgrounds. The main question was: 'What will we talk to them about?' There was clearly an 'us' and 'them' syndrome. 'We' do not see things 'their' way. The 'us' and 'them' or 'we' and 'they' suggested definite racial 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. 'We' and 'us' may be interpreted as 'insiders', and 'they' and 'them' as the 'outsiders' [Rose 1981:116]. 'We' the insiders, refers to exclusive patterns of communication within the 'inner racial circle' and 'they' determining those not within the exclusive circle.

It is understood that members who share a unique social and cultural heritage passed on from one generation to the next have distinct patterns of life which cause them to be differentiated from others. The concern is not in the differentiation, but in the separation and assumed knowledge racial groupings have of each other.

The patterns of perception formed of 'the other' when racial groups are separated, are 'about' rather than 'with' perceptions. 'About' referring to no consultation with racial groups different from self in the formulation of perceptions regarding another race. It is my understanding
that distortion of reality occurs when racial groups organise their perceptions 'of another racial group' into something meaningful to their own group without consultation of the other racial group.

There is evidence that psychologically what does not fit in with a group perception is denied, ignored or distorted. New experiences are interpreted in terms of old, separate worldview conceptualisation which prejudices subsequent perceptions.

What we see, hear or feel is not always a true reflection of reality when worldviews [patterns of perceptions] are formed 'about' another group, rather than in consultation 'with' them, or where contact has been made with a group yet the context has not been processed and understood with the other. Misperceptions are made in terms of 'about worldviews' already held.

As a minister within a predominantly white congregation I am concerned about the gap in knowledge that racial groups have of each other. Although legislated racial separate development has been declared a theological heresy in General Assembly papers and discussion, little practical evidence of interracial communication reveals a problem in initiating praxis.

In order to understand why interracial communication and local
participation is important to me and how it may be implemented, the aforementioned research problem will undergo scrutiny from the researcher's liberational worldview. *Imago dei* and *charismata* are of research interest compared with present church practice.

1.2 EXPLORATORY-DESCRiptIVE GOALS

Taking into consideration the researcher's hunches in order to generate hypotheses, goals of the liberational worldview study will be:

* to identify the researcher's practical theological starting point.

* to gain practical theological liberational insights with regard to interracial communication within the local church context.

* to undertake a preliminary investigation [of the researcher's liberational worldview] to identify the researcher's liberational worldview within an organized interracial local church context.

* to explicate the concepts and constructs related to racial identity in scripture in terms of *imago dei*, *charismata* and present church practice.
* to understand the importance of 'with' rather than 'about' racial perceptions of the other.

* to address subjective racial worldview distortions.

* to determine priorities for future interracial communicational research.

1.3 EXPLORATORY-DESCRIPTIVE STUDY JUSTIFICATION

With many theories on race and communication espoused, why be part of the formulation of another exploratory study?


The purpose of remaining in an exploratory design, lies in the intuition that not all preliminary options have been investigated. A literature search revealed many disciplines tackling the problem of racial communication from their particular disciplinary worldview. A hunch emerged that an multi-disciplinary approach from a specific practical theological framework has a valid operational purpose. From a practical theological perspective the proposed design could use the conceptual material acquired to date in specific
disciplines and formulate it into an integrative operational theory.

The integrative theory would assume trust of foundational research in specific disciplines. The selective combination chosen by the researcher from a practical theological framework has the potential of offering fresh operational insights into the problem of little effective interracial contact at local level.

A descriptive element will help to describe 'what goes on, who or what is involved, when and where things happen, how they occur, and why, at least from the standpoint of participants—things happen as they do in particular situations' [Jorgensen:1989:12].

1.3.1 CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING GROUP

A co-operative learning group will be set up to research the communicative actions that take place between people who wish to communicate with other races.

Individuals within three local Presbyterian churches [Atteridgeville, Soshanguve and Hatfield in the Pretoria area] who have expressed a desire to get together, but are not sure how to begin contact, will be approached verbally and with a written invitation by the researcher to join in a bible study fellowship with the purpose of communicating interracially.
The intention of a bible study fellowship group is to encourage co-operative learning [communicative actions that encourage co-operation with other races] see 5.1.

1.3.2 PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION IN DESCRIPTIVE METHODOLOGY

Within descriptive methodology, participant observation has been chosen as an appropriate subjective tool for analysis. Participant observation according to Jorgensen is used when:

* little is known about the newly formed group;
* there are important differences between the views of ethnic groups [Jorgensen 1989:12]; and when
* it is intended to focus on the meanings of human existence as seen from the standpoint of insiders [Znaniecki, 1935, Spradley, 1980]

The methodology of participant observation provides direct experiential and observational access to the insider's world of meaning, controlling the variable of trying to please the researcher which could occur in overt interviews on specific topics.

The argument for the choice of design construction is stated clearly in Jorgensen's motivation for participant observation when he explains the limitations and potential of the methodology. He says 'questions about fairly large populations, the precise causal relationships among limited sets of variables, and measurable amounts of something are
better addressed by other methods, such as surveys or experiments.'

Participant observation is most appropriate when:

[personal synopsis]

* the research problem is concerned with human meanings and interactions viewed from the insider's perspective;

* the phenomenon of investigation is observable within an everyday setting;

* the phenomenon is sufficiently limited in size to be studied as a case;

* the research problem can be addressed by qualitative data gathered by direct observations and other means pertinent to the field setting; and

* studies are aimed at generating theoretical interpretations [Jorgensen 1989:13].

The participant observation of the researcher will be covert in nature, in that the researcher's ministerial function within the community tends to bring in the need for the individuals 'to please' her in their responses. If the group are not aware of the study intention in the field observation, the variable may be controlled to a certain extent.
1.4 ECOSYSTEMIC VERSUS TRADITIONAL NEWTONIAN EPISTEMOLOGY.

The qualitative exploratory descriptive study will assume an ecosystemic epistemology rather than the traditional Newtonian epistemology of science. In contrast to reductionism, linear causality and neutral objectivity, ecosystemic epistemology considers the world in terms of systems and ecology.

"Systems are wholes and ecosystemic epistemology is holistic, as opposed to reductionistic" [Fourie 1992:3]. Bateson [1972,1979], Maturana [1975,1983], Dell [1985], and Colapinto [1979] concur that Newtonian objective observation is impossible in relating systems.

Proving which approach, the subjective or objective, is more scientific in relational settings, is not the task of this study. It is assumed that both have their place in scientific research.

Newtonian principles have proved their limitations in relational study. Atkinson & Heath [1988], Auerswald [1987], Limacher, Dahler, Bosch & Egli [1991], Melidonis [1989], and Wassenaar [1985] have revealed studies which have shown shortcomings in the singular adherence to the notions of reductionism, linear causality and objectivity.

Ecosystemic epistemology, with the notion of constructivism is to be adopted with an understanding that both subjective and
objective may form part of the picture. Von Glaserfeld [1984] says that constructivism is what is observed and is in actuality constructed, partly by the observer and partly by the observed. This awareness, of what Fourie [1992:4] refers to as 'co-constructed realities', does not negate Newtonian principles, but argues for the place of the ecosystemic.
CHAPTER 2

A PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL APPROACH

2.1 INTRODUCTION/HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Friedrich Schleiermacher [1966] wrote practical theology is only for those in whom an ecclesial interest and a scientific spirit are united [Browning 1983:43].

Schleiermacher viewed theology as a positive science [eine positive Wissenchaft], the diverse parts of which are linked by their constructive relationship with christianity. He made sense of the diverse theological specialities he inherited as Professor Extraordinaire of theology and philosophy at Halle in 1804, by conceiving a new pattern and integration procedure. He succeeded in authenticating scientific research within the discipline of theology.

Ecclesial interest [Kirchliches Interesse] balanced with a scientific spirit [wissenschaftlicher Geist] was his intellectual method of formulating what Christianity is. Schleiermacher named the discipline 'Practical theology', although it had been understood as pastoral theology within the university since 1774. Pastoral theology intended equipping the ministers in pastoral concerns.
Theology which focused on the ministers, at the expense of the community of believers, now became church theology [kirchenregiment] [Pieterse 1981:143].

2.2 THE THEORY-PRAXIS PROBLEM

The theory-praxis problem emerged, which is still the subject of much debate [Wolfaardt 1985:55-62].

Schleiermacher understood theology within a sequential structure; that is, philosophical theology being the root [wurzel]; historical theology, the body [der Körper] and practical theology, the crown [Krone]. Although the natural Order [Natürlichste Ordnung] began with philosophical theology and climaxed with practical, Schleiermacher points out that the three areas are independent and study could begin from any point.

Burkhart [1983:53] critiques the structure succinctly when he refers to there being 'lex credendi, lex orandi but no lex orandi, lex credendi.' that is, thought can influence action, but action does not influence thought.

The practical findings could not challenge the historical or philosophical concepts, which placed praxis in a subordinate position to theory.
Contemporary contextual theologians like Tracy [1975], would be concerned about Schleiermacher's collapsed dialectic. Praxis, Tracy [1975:243] says, 'is the critical relationship between the theory and practice whereby each is dialectically influenced and transformed by the other.'

Schleiermacher's approach perceives only thought as transformative, with action being an empty vessel through which thoughtful processes flow, allowing no influence of praxis on theory. This mono-influential relationship is rejected by contemporary practical theologians and by students of the theory of science.

In order to examine the relationship between theory and praxis, what Firet [1980:9] calls the primordial question: What is theology? [Wat is teologie?] needs clarification.

Firet [1980:81] defines theology 'as reflection on faith' [geloofsreflectie]. The process of systematising this reflection defines the place of the various theological disciplines.

The combination of confessional with the contextual approach is to maintain the Bible as the source of knowledge within the interracial context.

Practical theology has metamorphosed from Rautenstrauch's
reflections on the actions of the pastor through to Schleiermacher's examination of the actions of the church in its widest sense. The much debated sequential structure of practical theology evolves from philosophical and historical theology through to the contemporary approaches that have held onto the broad concept of reflecting on the actions of the community of all believers.

The definition of practical theology, accepted within this study, is concisely stated by Pieterse [1987:2] 'as the aspect of theology which studies human actions that serve to communicate faith' [fides qua].

Added to his functional definition are the faith structures that encourage action.

In order to clarify the difference between the two present faculties concerned with faith in action, Hanekom [1983:67] describes theological ethics 'as the faculty concerned with normative values and practical theology as that concerned with the communication of actions.'

How the human actions which serve to communicate faith are explored and evaluated, is still open to debate.

The study approach chosen for empirical research here emerges from the works of the practical theologians who reacted to Schleiermacher's approach. He insisted on the implementation
of radical, empirical analysis on all actions within the church.

The understanding of Otto, with his inclusive social relevance of theology, [Symington & Wolfaardt:1983], and the views of Baumler, Stollberg and Zerfass [who are between the neo-marxist multi-faceted, critical rationalism of Popper and Albert and the critical theory of Horkheimer and Habermas] are foundational starting points for this research. Within this group of theorists, who have reached consensus on seeing empirical research as that which best determines a practical theory, there are differences.

The study emphasis is on Baumler's social role of church praxis. Baumler [1976] explains that he has absorbed elements of critical rationalism, a middle range theory for a finer grasp of the processes in praxis.

Since social processes are the object of practical theology, it made sense to accept a structural-functional theory: 'as functions always depend on structural suppositions, criticism of structures will always arise from a critical analysis of functions' [Mckinney 1966:6]. However, Firet [1987] had problems with the structural/functional dichotomy and has directed practical theology towards 'acting communicatively in the service of the gospel', by naming the growing consensus in the operational 'acting' base [Firet 1987:260]. As Firet's
work is important to the researcher, I have accepted his retraction from a structural-functional position.

The criteria for criticism is a contextual hermeneutical 'ideal' interpretation of the scriptures.

In tension with the empirical researchers are the theologians who do not want the practical approach to become an empirical interpretation and formulation of data [Symington & Wolfaardt 1983:89].

Josuttis, Schroer and Bohren [1975] espoused the hermeneutic approach, which functions from an historical-critical perspective only, giving no validity to empirical science.

It is my intention to use the insights of both the hermeneutic and empirical approaches as both have valid contributions to make towards a practical theory. This empirical-hermeneutic-contextual method known as the correlative approach involves Schleiermacher's areas of philosophical and historical hermeneutic disciplines, integrated with the social sciences in praxis and the scriptures in a racial liberation context. The method of correlation explains the content of the Christian faith through existential questions and theological answers in mutual independence [Tillich 1968:68].

The hermeneutic strategy records the origin and goal, including the historical and critical reflections of christian
communicative actions. The practical strategy involves simultaneous information from theory and praxis, guided and informed by the tradition of Christian faith in action.

Although not in agreement with the argument of Josuttis, Bohren and Schroer for the preponderant use of the historical-critical method in theory-praxis reflection, it is my intention to reveal how this approach may co-operate dialectically with that of operational science.

Human actions are studied according to empirical-analytical methods. In applying 'operational science' Firet [1980:13] states that at least the following four elements should be included in the reflection. [personal summary]

* a focus on concrete fields of action;
* analysis should take into account actuality and potential;
* analysis should take into account motives, goals and means, and
* action models should be derived from an empirical-critical theory.

Action is the key word; 'the subject is basically about acting communicatively in the service of the gospel' [Firet 1987:260].
The theology science dialectic examines the insights of multiple disciplines within a practical theological framework. The strategy assumes a multi-disciplinary approach with regard to theology and the social sciences [Mette 1976:309].

The dialectic refers to the bi-polar continuum that exposes the limitations of both poles, and the compliment of the two poles offer another interpretation of truth.

Problems arose when whatever is termed 'practical' in practical theology is contrasted with the theoretical nature of the other theological disciplines [Jonker 1981:6].

Using 'practical' in the title helped to distinguish from speculative theology. The new terminology intended 'bringing in the practical as a vital balancing factor in what it was feared would become a mystical discipline without practical use' [Jonker 1981:11].

Using 'practical' in the title helped to validate the importance of theory formulation and praxis in theory development. It enabled the combinations of theory and praxis to be debated, with the acceptance of both being of equal importance in the development of a model of faith in action.
The title has been a source of confusion since its inception. The suggestion of a name-change to encompass more than the 'practical' in the study of one's faith, through communicative actions, has been suggested.

If scientific methods of inquiry are used in the examination of faith in action, it may be postulated that the title of the discipline should reflect the two major contributors, operational science and theology.

Further research into the motivation for the name-change from 'practical theology' to an emphasis on the scientific contribution of the discipline, for example, theological science, needs consideration. van der Ven [1991] mentioned in a practical theology colloquium discussion at the University of South Africa, that the discipline is referred to as the department of empirical theology at Nijmegen in The Netherlands. This would help to clarify the complimentary role of the sciences in the study of faith expressed through communicative action. Yet, still further discussion is needed as empirical defines a method, but does not clarify the content debate. For the purposes of theory formation, the tension between the theological and scientific fields needs elaboration.

In the ancient world, as well as in the Old Testament, the reflection on the creation of the earth presented no
scientific problems. To them, it was a foregone conclusion that God [or the Gods] had created everything. People of our modern age, however, are no longer convinced that the origin of everything can be attributed to some Higher Power/Person.

Today there is the tendency to see the events of every day either as contingent or as a result of certain natural laws. People are wondering whether the earth could be the result of chance, or certain natural laws [Van Dyk 1987:2]. This age of 'secularisation', Van Dyk [1987] attributes to the thinking of Copernicus, Darwin, Freud and archaeology. There is also the period of enlightenment which influenced the scientific-theological schism.

The Copernican revolution changed the thinking from the earth being the centre of the universe to that of being an insignificant speck of dust in the greater cosmos. Darwin, in zoology, with his theory of evolution, postulated humans as being merely the highest level of evolutionary development [Van Dyk 1987:3].

Freud’s theory of the unconscious and the pervasive influence that it has on the activities and decisions of people stripped humanity of its divine dignity [Lorentz 1968:12-13].

Finally, archaeological findings in the nineteenth century discovered cuneiform manuscripts which have revealed a number
of extra-biblical creation narratives. The accounts revealed that the Biblical account of creation was not unique as they had previously thought.

The increasing schism and emerging secularisation led to the questioning of Christian theology. Science became a means of disproving faith. The opposite continuums of faith and reason, theology and science were set up, with the compliments to each other left unexplored, until the emergence of Schleiermacher.

Schleiermacher's pragmatic approach to practical theology was based on the premise that all theology is a positive science, directed at the actions of the church in its widest sense [Firet 1974:5].

2.3.1 A PLACE FOR SCRIPTURE AND SCIENCES IN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

Appealing to the scriptures in practical theology brings its own problematic. Villa-Vicencio [1981:3-22] analysed three models for using the scriptures in theological reflection:

the revelational model;
the hermeneutic model; and
the liberation model.

The revelational model examines the words of the scripture in a fundamental way, without appealing to a specific context;
the hermeneutic model defines the word within the specific contemporary societal context, and the liberation model defines the context in terms of the poor and oppressed. [Villa-Vicencio 1981:10]

The scriptures, which are the foundation for the study of the christian communicative actions of the faith, act as the stimulus from which the theories in praxis flow.

The problem of using a worldview to determine the use of the scriptures, rather than the scriptures to determine a worldview, needs to be noted.

My approach to the scriptures and the context makes use of Weber’s method [1949:90-93] of ideal types. It generates hypotheses about scriptural and anthropological ideals giving direction to empirical research by ‘providing an abstract concept against which reality may be viewed’ [Goodman 1978:558].

Weber [1949:90] defines the formation of ideal types by ‘the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present, and occasionally absent, concrete individual phenomena. These are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct’ [Gedankenbild].
A conception of something in its absolute perfection offers an ultimate goal, and allows empirical research to discover how close, or far, the object of study is from the ideal.

Firet [1980:10] refers to the danger of pluralism by examining the opposite poles of the continuum. On the one side, there is the concern of degenerating into syncretistic trite, and on the other, of perceiving theology to be the superior discipline through which God is revealed, with the sciences forming an inferior role.

If science is also conceptualised as systematised truth, the dialogue between the two disciplines can be viewed through the interpretation of the word of God.

The difficulty here is when God is not recognised or acknowledged in scientific achievements. Can one use the results of an atheist’s or agnostic’s study in a work that claims to be systematised truth, where truth refers to a concept/constuct/process that reveals more about God? For the purposes of this study, where the researcher can see a link between operational sciences and biblical truths [as correspondence], the research will be used despite the atheist’s or agnostic’s personal belief.

In Van der Ven’s findings [1983:996-114], he named the interdisciplinary approach as one of the methods of handling the relationship between theology and the sciences. A multi-
disciplinary approach is preferred by the researcher, as 'inter' implies a merging of disciplines with the expectation of equal weight given to 'theology' and 'science'. 'Multidisciplinary suggests the incorporation of numerous disciplines within an operational science methodology.

With sciences being responsible for the rise in theological sceptism, it was feared that the eclectic use of the sciences within the practical theological discipline would infiltrate the discipline with scientific definitions and a loss of theological content.

In order for the compliments in the two disciplines to be incorporated into a whole, or complement, a process of ensuring the theological nature of the discipline, has been discussed by Kuyper, Trimp, Dijk, Jonker and Smuts [Trimp 1976:55].

The thought emanating from the Netherlands, under the initiative of Kuyper, was to refer to practical theology as 'diaconology.' This approach intended not only preserving its theological character, but also defines its praxis—the actions of the institutionalised church [Wolfaardt 1985:56].

The object of theological study is, for Jonker [1981:29], the revelation of God in his word. He stressed the need for the theological findings to be uncompromisingly founded on the word of God [Jonker 1981:37].
The sciences are considered in a supplementary relationship to the word of God, used to highlight the scriptures. The process of using the word of God as a means of integrating the sciences, within the study of theology, needs further elaboration.

From the social sciences, Popper [1959] believes that observation is always selective. It needs a chosen object, a definite task, an interest, a point of view, and a problem.

In order to process what aspects of the various disciplines compliment and work towards the complement of the study, it is recognised that the inductive process uses the Bible as source, together with the theory gathered in praxis, as a means of determining genuine supporting evidence for highly probable conclusions. This process assumes that if all the premises are true, then the conclusion is more than likely, but not necessarily, true. The conclusion may contain information that is not even implicitly contained in the premises [Mouton & Marais 1988:113].

The practical theologians proceed, after gaining information from various scientific and theological sources, to the formulation of their own distinctive premise - one that is not derived from dogmatics, sociology of religion, communication science or psychology [Pieterse 1987:40].
The information collected is systematised into premises which form the hypothesis. The hypothesis defines the context of postulated relationships between empirical phenomena for interpretation and evaluation within a practical theological framework [Mouton & Marais 1988:40,134].

The empirical results determine whether a new practical theological theory is validated or rejected. Campbell [1990:18] argues that practical theology can neither be inductive [cf. Hiltner], nor deductive [cf. Thurneysen]. He argues for the use of a lateral rather than a linear measure. The discipline is perceived here 'as an exercise in creative imagination, the interplay of idea and action, with all the ambiguity and inconclusiveness which this implies.'

The fragmentary and poorly systematised material that a predominantly lateral thinking measurement approach would develop, leads me to remain with a linear inductive method of measurement. Campbell's argument though has made me aware of the possibilities of lateral thinking in design creation.

The goal of this project revolves around Fowler's [1983:148-149] concepts of formation and transformation through identification. Fowler perceives the formation and transformation of persons through christian nurture. The christian nurture aims at identifying with Christ and following his example.
This Christocentric point of departure aims at the liberation and restoration of humankind for full humanity.

Practical theology is investigating here a means of liberating truth through an ideal paradigm in relation to separated worldviews in practice. On superficial examination, this approach looks like a return to Schleirnacher’s sequential relationship from theory to praxis.

The hermeneutic reflection initially defines an ideal, and hermeneutics and operational science define an evaluation of the praxis.

The difference between Schleirnacher’s model and my choice is that truth of the ideal through praxis may be challenged and lead to other interpretations of an ideal.

It is hoped that, in this circular relationship between theory and praxis, a new practical theological theory will emerge, offering liberation and restoration of humankind to their intended full humanity.

The key concept for liberating the praxis will be by identification with liberation through the correlative approach. ‘Charismata’ will be interpreted in relation to interracial experience of full humanity in praxis.
A RACIALLY LIBERATING WORLDVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION
The term 'liberation theology' refers to several approaches that see the call in the gospel to free people from oppression. Although there is debate as to whether there are different liberation theologies, or whether there are only varying perspectives and approaches to liberation theology, the important fact to note, Motlhabi [1987:1] says, is that all liberation theologians 'place a key emphasis on the relationship between the message of the Gospel as reflected in the Bible on the one hand, and the situation of the people to whom this message is addressed, on the other.' The message is concerned about the oppressed crying out for relief.

Although identification of the study is with the black theologians' insights within the United States and South Africa, and although my work focuses on the racial concerns in the Presbyterian church of Southern Africa [within the boundaries of the North Commission], I am hesitant to be labelled under 'black theology'. The very name implies black partiality rather than the concern to identify with any racially oppressed group. Black liberation theology also concentrates on the need to liberate 'themselves' rather than a co-operative racial development.
Liberation is understood in the sense of being freed from imperialist or colonial exploitation and 'taking back our destiny and our history' [Cabral 1979:83]. I dissociate myself from the strategy which assumes all whites are colonial or imperial and affirm:

... liberation of the productive forces of our country, the liquidation of all kinds of imperialist or colonial domination of our country, and the taking of every measure to avoid any new exploitation of people. 

[Cabral 1979:83]

With the dramatic changes in the country, since 2 February, 1990, [the State President's declaration of the dismantling of apartheid through reform promises], and the third referendum in March 1992 [in favour of negotiation], 'grassroot local church people' believe, naively, that people are free to live where they like and the oppression is ending. There is no clarity on grassroot participation in freeing oppressed races.

Many white people are speculating as to whether the white race will become the oppressed. There are discrepancies in thinking. Amongst some 'white' groups, there is thought that they will soon be in the political minority and they fear oppression. There is the need to hold onto what they have and fight for survival, acknowledging themselves as the potentially oppressed racial minority.
There is also the view that the black groups have the freedom to improve themselves now and therefore no racial contact needs to be initiated or intensified, nor is it justified.

There are the black groups who continue to see the inequalities in political and material power and fight for equality.

Interracial communication refers to communicative acts between racial groups which bring shared understandings of biblical imperatives and re-creation of racial justice. This includes equality and integrity for all participating people of God.

It seems that destructive or constructive assumptions are made in South African society still on the basis of skin colour. 'Colour' is connected to specific racial, ethnic and cultural stereotypic worldview assumptions. The visual variable has a significant influence. It is important to existentially bring people together for the exploration of their worldviews 'about' other races beyond present visual interpretations.

Interracial communication refers to communicative acts between people of different races. The dependent variable consists of the non-negotiable physical features. The multiple independent variables are ethnicity, class, gender, culture, personality, age, and education [formal, non-formal and informal]. The extent to which each of these factors will affect the study
will depend on the degree of influence within the intercommunication.

A developing hypothesis here is the importance of communicative acts that encourage interconnectedness between races. Racial interconnectedness considers differences in ethnicity, class, gender, culture, personality, age and education as influences on interracial communication, but need not be non-negotiable factors that result in no effective communicative action between races.

The incorporation of independent variables with the experiencing and analysing of liberating christological communicative acts, may initiate new perceptual understandings of independent variables related to racial interconnectedness.

Interracial communication is set within a particular biblical, psychological, anthropological, christological and ecclesiological worldview.

3.2 INTERRACIAL WORLDVIEW CONSTRUCTS

3.2.1 PSYCHOLOGICAL PERCEPTION AND WORLDVIEW

Worldviews are more total views of reality than paradigms, that is of standard models, and more encompassing than models themselves, yet incorporate paradigms and models within their parameters.
The psychological framework of how people 'see' reality provides a valuable link between biblical imperatives and anthropological experience. A genetic racial factor, for example, colour, may be perceived variously. Some see the visual stimulus of a black/white skin either as a threat or an opportunity. Although the pigment colour of the skin remains the same, the subject may be perceived differently.

Racial perception needs further clarification. Perception 'understood as an awareness of the world through sensations and the interpretation of these' [Universal Dictionary:1148] expresses the subjective nature of understanding an object [the process of evaluating from one’s personal frame of reference]. Racial perception refers specifically to the way individuals interpret the communicative actions of races.

Worldview can be understood as patterns of perception. A set of perceptions by which people live that distinguish the self from the other. Research done to universalize the sets of perceptions is intended to objectify the subjective for empirical integrity. Here, objectifying refers to the degree of commonality in perceiving a set of data. The concepts, image and assumption are the frameworks for patterning or ordering the perceptions.

The selective way in which people interpret themselves and their environment through the cognitive and emotive process to develop a pattern of perceptions, that is, a set of images and
assumptions separating the self from other is referred to here as worldview.

3.2.1.1 WORLDVIEW AND STEREOTYPE.

Whereas worldview consists of patterns of perceptions evolved from a particular life setting, a stereotype is an oversimplified, generalized belief about groups in which all individuals within the group are labelled according to the generalized belief.

Campbell [1967:812] says that stereotypes of other groups are simplistic and homogeneous. The stereotypes of one's own group are usually complex and highly differentiated. Stereotypes may lead to overgeneralization, negative memory bias and polarized judgements, as well as to an overestimation of differences between groups.

It is hoped that a worldview pattern of seeing is a process of understanding perception patterns within a particular group, rather than an oversimplified belief process of labelling.

The interracial worldview multi-disciplinary framework will address images and assumptions within the disciplines and make propositions related to interracial communicative acts.

Images, assumptions and propositions offer a qualitative objectifying or constructive procedure, through which
multidisciplines may be perceived to examine the way in which different people think about themselves and others. [Kearney 1984:48]

An image is defined by the anthropologist in literal and structural terms. The literal sense means 'a visual representation in the mind.' He acknowledges that there are other sensory modalities, such as the auditory and tactile, but the underlying premise is that visual imagery is the major influence.

'Assumptions' are the images of reality that are hypothesized as existing in the worldview of a particular individual or group [Kearney 1984:48].

There is a causal relationship postulated between image and assumption. Different worldview assumptions will lead to different conclusions of reality. Kraft [1988] cites a helpful example of divergent assumptions of women and the conclusion thereof.

The society that assumes that the most valuable thing society can give to women is equality, [defined in terms of the right of a person to move freely, speak out freely and compete freely for employment] seeks to equalize the position of the sexes.
The society which assumes that the most valuable thing that can be given to women is security, seeks to provide women with secure marriages and a domestic life which may, in turn provide security for the vulnerable children.

The image of a homemaker would bring joy to the individuals whose contribution was to put their security assumption into practice. It would be in conflict with the one who assumed security was part of equality, and that equality assumed a more valuable role than that of security.

The hypothetical statements made about the images and assumptions are referred to as 'propositions'.

The location of an image or assumption is in the mind of the people whose worldview is being analysed, while the proposition is in the model that is constructed to replicate the worldview [Kearney 1984:48].

Images, assumptions and propositions will contribute to theory formation based on knowledge formed from the subjectivist conviction that trustworthy knowledge comes from personal understanding rather than pronouncing that which is true for the authorities, as did Mead [1984] and Kearney [1984] themselves believe.

Since knowledge comes from internalising, I have adopted 'the connected knowing procedure [Belenky et al 1986:113]. This is
the subjective process of approximating Kearney and other worldview authorities' experiences, connecting with their material, seeing their perspective acknowledging their contribution, followed by a distancing from the experience and a connection with my own thought and emotion process.

A dialogue between authorities' experiences and my understanding will reveal what is true to myself. Where the process is true for many, a universal may be formed and knowledge may be gained for the individual and the society.

There has been considerable evidence to suggest that human reasoning processes are essentially the same irrespective of culture' [C Kraft 1988:57].

People differ ...'not so much in their reasoning powers as in their starting points' [Nida 1960:90-91].

The psychological and anthropological starting points are channelled through a contextual biblical lens to gain ecclesiological insights.

3.2.2 A CONTEXTUAL INTERRACIAL BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

Liberation, as mentioned before is concerned with the oppressed which Motlhabi [1987:6] says 'calls attention to the state of oppression which cries out for relief.'
Theology refers to the reflection on God's word, and the Bible is God's word. There is a connected relationship between all three: liberation, theology and the Bible. There can be no theology without the Bible and there can be no understanding of the Bible without theology.

It is important to state that liberation theologians acknowledge the Bible as their supreme source. Many christians within the local church perceive the threatening interpretations as Marxist-inspired, which is associated with anti-christian ideologies and therefore evil.

What is behind the contextual approach?

3.2.2.1 TRADITIONAL THEORETICAL VERSUS MARXIST SPECULATIVE

The cultural idealist perceives truth as absolutely and eternally true. They are not rooted in the changing realities of the material world, as opposed to the materialist contextual views that focus on the material world in constant flux. Both extreme positions are simplistic, but which is predominant and how the positions interrelate is critical.

Kearney [1984:23], an idealist, says 'ethnicity by its very nature is ideal. It consists of the images, rules, plans and preferences that people have in their heads.' Marx and Engels would refute the universal stable concept in favour of the fluctuating material conditions to which ethnicity is subject.
The dynamic relationship between the physical, social and ideational aspects of culture [more specifically named as technology, social organization and ideology] as well as the economic factors, play a significant role [Honigmann 1959:294-295]. People are viewed as making their own history, improving themselves through study and action.

The debate as to what remains constant and what fluctuates is handled variously. The materialists show the faciliation of concepts due to varying material conditions. The idealists focus on universals, the materialists on the particular.

Contextual racial communicative theory considers both universal and material conditions to be important. Physical features remain constant, but material conditions can make the difference between racial oppression and equality.

The material Marxist approach has come up against criticism from local people within mainline christian denominations because of the association of Marx, 'communism and anti-christ.'

Although some liberation theologians have accepted a particular aspect of Marxism, there is no rejection of Christ. Deist [1987:17-18] explains the controversial use of the Marxist analysis of the scriptures as follows: 'The traditional western values are where ideas or theories become the principle by which the world is explained. The western
thinker would conceptualise the ideal from which relationships between the phenomena in the world can be deduced.’

The Marxist would oppose the static ideal traditional western starting point, which is perceived to be status quo entrenching. This is where ideologies are idealised and theoretical constructs are perceived to be sanctioning oppositions and therefore keeping the world from changing, in favour of a dynamic worldview.

Within the physical, social and ideational relationship Karl Marx and Engels focused on ‘the importance of the economic variables as the prime responsibility for the state of a culture’ [Honigmann 1959:294-295].

The dialectic materialism approach involves the creative tension between opposites in order to achieve economic expectations. The approach revolves around people themselves transforming human life through study and action.

Deist [1987:21-22] refers to the Marxist’s starting point as that of matter, not ideas, or theories, and the Marxist ‘would talk about a God who has for the greater part been created in humankind’s image.’

People may speculate about God and have conceptions about God, acknowledging that the speculations are constructs of what the
human mind can conceive. Divine sanctioning is unacceptable in explaining material oppositions.

The circular idea status quo entrenching western theories have maintained the status quo for centuries. The Marxist suggests that the oppositions react in order to create a new society and this reaction of energy is referred to as revolution. Deist [1987] sees that the Marxist exegesis of a text consists of unmasking ideologies and supplying paradigms of action towards liberation.

The status quo ideological criticism that refers to ideological bondage calls for a western christian examination of christian theory formation. However, the absolute Marxist philosophy, which is presented as the truth about reality, is practising the very enslaving ideology which it is criticising.

The single perspective that is presented as the ultimate truth is as distorting as the ideological bondage of its counterpart.

A method must be developed to examine the extent of the ideological bondage within western christian theory formation, recognising a valid western interpretation that does not necessarily require Marxist exegesis. The study is identifying with a materialist, but not a purely Marxist position.
3.2.2.2 BIBLICAL SELECTION

The second major criticism of liberation theology is the selective use of scripture. The defence against selectivity may be understood within the context of Eyber's [1980] statement that every theological discipline seeks to approach the word of God from varying angles with varying emphases.

The positive aspect of selectivity is that it:

... asks what its message was for the black struggle for freedom today ... if God sided with the poor and weak in Biblical times, then why not today? If salvation is a historical event of rescue, a deliverance of slaves from Egypt, why not a black power event today and a deliverance of blacks from white American racial oppression.

[Cone 1985:65]

Adapted from Cone's thinking [1985:65], my main concern of racial liberation is to locate a dominant theme in scripture which has a message for the present racial struggle in South Africa

'...If salvation is a historical event of rescue, a deliverance of slaves from Egypt, why not a racial event today and a deliverance from racial oppression?'

Where black experience has been irreconcilable with traditional biblical exegesis, the authority of scripture has either been rejected or a new critical hermeneutic is sought, taking into account the racial disharmony.
From writings on the history of South African Black theology, a racial model of critical interpretation is emerging committed to the black struggle for liberation.

The following three elements are part of this emerging black model of critical interpretation, which I wish to incorporate in the initiation of a racial model for any group which is oppressed and seeking relief:

* a hermeneutic of condemnation or suspicion, where, using Motlhabi's words, 'traditional and current western interpretations are seen to be abstract', evasive and irrelevant in speaking about the word of God in concrete human conditions.

* a constructive social relevancy hermeneutic; that recalls social conditions and God and people's response [through an historical-critical reconstruction of biblical history,] from the perspective of the racially oppressed.

* a hermeneutic of proclamation, where God brings hope to the suffering, racially oppressed.

A racial model for any group which is oppressed and seeking relief needs to adapt the hermeneutic of condemnation or suspicion, to include the specific oppressive condemnation to which it is subject.
Adding to the above three elements, the researcher wishes to take note of De Villiers [1987:73] observation that there are large discrepancies between what is perceived by liberation theologians and what is said about them and, therefore, include the hermeneutic of inclusivity; that is, the hermeneutic which includes dialogue with other theologies in order to gain new insight and interpretations of the truth for the relief of the oppressed.

Wilson [1984:10] has warned that 'the use of social scientific approaches in biblical studies is still in its infancy. It is, therefore, too soon to predict the influence that these methods will have' but one can be part of the multi-disciplinary exploratory process in objection to 'the bourgeois status quo' biblical interpretations which entrench racial oppression.

There can be no doubt that introducing 'a systematic application of sociological insights has brought about a new atmosphere in biblical criticism [Mosala 1989:45].

There is movement away from a perspective 'reinforced and complicated by the attachment of biblical scholars first to monarchic and aristocratic class interests and then to bourgeois class interests' [Gottwald 1983:11].
3.2.3 AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ECCLESIOLOGICAL 'INSIDER' AND 'OUTSIDER' WORLDVIEW.

Barbour [1974:34] says that, with few exceptions, most scientists until the present century assumed that scientific theories were accurate descriptions of 'the world as it is in itself.'

Theoretical terms were said to denote real things of the same kind as physical objects in the perceived world. The emergence of subjectivity opened up new avenues for research, one of them being the study of worldview. Worldview study assumes a subjective knowledge or what Perry [1970,1981] calls 'multiplicity', as worldview has moved from the understanding of knowledge only acquired through the external oriented perspective [objectivity] to where truth may also emerge as personal, private and subjectively known.

It is important to note that subjectivism is dualistic in the sense that there is still a conviction that there are universal 'rights'. The importance of subjective knowing is that 'truth now resides within the person who can negate answers that the outside world supplies' [Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule 1986:54].

Cultural anthropologists are conscious that, although every culture has its own worldview, people are not always aware of
it, even if it underlies their actions, and gives them meaning.

There is a sense of an in-group and an out-group, ['we' referring to the 'insiders' and 'they' to the 'outsiders' without a clear understanding of why this is so.

With the inability of the other to see the underlying presuppositions, the study of worldview offers the opportunity to understand the starting points with the hope of bridging 'the gap between the reality around and the culturally agreed upon perception of that reality within' [Kraft 1978:4-5].

Throughout history people have been of concern to churches. Churches that are culturally diversified have described the relationship between diverse groups in terms of christian anthropological concepts. These descriptions have influenced the pattern of relationships between people.

A racial perspective needs to take cognisance of the models and clarify its stance.
3.2.3.1 AN ACCOMMODATION OR ENCULTURAL ECLESIOLOGY

Two model foundations:

Luzbetak [1988:67] finds two main orientations in church theology, that is of accommodation and contextualisation.

Accommodation believes that 'other' cultures contain elements that are consistent with the scriptures. According to the accommodational model, the task is:

* to seek out the naturally good in order to make it supernaturally perfect.

Pope Pius XII said of the church: [no. 89]

... when the scriptures are accepted by diverse races, it does not crush or repress anything good and honorable and beautiful which they have achieved by their native genius and natural endowments... the church acts like an orchardist who engrafts a cultivated shoot on a wild tree so that later on fruits of a more tasty and richer quality may issue forth and mature.

Pope John XXIII also stated specifically that the church:

...does not identify herself with any particular culture not even with the occidental culture to which her history is so closely bound. Her mission belongs to the salvation of man. Rich in her youthfulness which is constantly renewed by the breath of the Holy Spirit, the Church is ever ready to recognize, to welcome and indeed to encourage all things that honor the human mind and heart.
Luzbetak [1988:68] states strongly that although accommodation has consistently been preached as the official policy of the Catholic church, in practice it has only too often been token in nature, looked upon as optional, or ignored rather than taken as a serious policy and obligation. A harsh judgement that needs evaluation within christian churches.

Churches are faced with two processes, that of enculturation and ethnocentrism. Enculturation refers to the process of learning a culture from one’s society, and ethnocentrism refers to a danger within the enculturation process, where one’s own cultural values, norms and standards are perceived to be superior to the other.

Ethnocentrism occurs in a variety of forms and intensities. The most common forms are paternalism, triumphalism and racism.

It is known now that paternalism, the misguided compassion that tends to humiliate the receiver, results in more dependency, rather than interdependency. A specific example of paternalism is the church that makes great socio-economic sacrifices for ‘third world groups’, but does little to change the institutionalised abuses or provide opportunities for self-help.

Triumphalism is the conviction that the giving church has a
destiny to share with the receiving church, not only in its faith, but more importantly in the cultural qualities of its faith.

Racism is any communicative or non-communicative action that legitimates inequality between races. Beliefs and actions, individual and institutional, that sustain or increase the subordination of a racial group are considered racist.

Kraft [1979:49] points out that a rejection of ethnocentrism implies the acceptance of cultural relativity or validity:

... cultures are to be regarded not as assignable to some level of overall superiority or inferiority with respect to other cultures but, rather, as more or less equal to each other in their overall ability to meet the needs felt by their members. [Kraft 1979:49]

Cultural validity or relativity must not be confused with cultural relativism, that is 'Live and let live without ever attempting to influence anyone else in the direction of one's own values since there are no absolute standards and, therefore, his system is as good as ours.' [Kraft 1979:125]

The two espoused models of interracially communicating need further elaboration if the church is not to be accused of cultural relativism.

In practice, the accommodation model 'tended to be shallow, affecting only the surface of culture...accommodation also
tended to be overcautious, paternalistic, distrustful of the local community, with the sending church determining the accommodation’ [Luzbetak 1988:68].

The contextual orientation encompasses an incarnational and inculturational process. Contextualisation refers to the various processes by which a local church integrates the gospel message [the text] with its local culture.

The intention is that ‘the text and context must be blended into that one, God, intended reality called Christian living’ [Luzbetak 1981:39].

Contextualisation is also known as inculturation, developed by Jesuits in the mid-seventies, and incarnation used muchearlier. Incarnation in the church can be understood specifically by examining the words of Pope Pius XII, who in December 1945 said:

... the Church ... is placed in the center of history of the whole human race ... As Christ was in the midst of men, so too His church, in which he continues to live, is placed in the midst of peoples. As Christ assumed a real human nature so too the Church takes to herself the fullness of all that is genuinely human wherever and however she finds it and transforms it into a source of supernatural energy.

Pope Pius did not elaborate on how this incarnation was to take place.

The accommodational process revolved around the insiders accommodating to the outsiders in order to make known their
own values, which were seen to be superior. Whereas in inculturation, the task of the church universal is to enhance or remove obstacles in the way of the Holy Spirit.

In achieving inculturation, the church makes use of the incarnational approach, that is, the church is perceived as a catalyst, a guide for the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who brought God to the earth in physical form. Inculturation implies a transforming together to make 'other Christs'.

I am opting for the contextual enculturation anthropological model, as its aims and intent are laudable and in keeping with the racial liberators' doctrine of full humanity for all races.

3.2.4 A CHRISTOLOGICAL WORLDVIEW

In order to transform society from racial discrimination to race as a complimentary variable of humankind, requires a Christological worldview of the redeemer of all races, a liberating Christ, who showed evidence of reversing social status in his words 'the last shall be first and the first last'.

The liberation here is in the Christ who has radically opposed any social structure which has perpetuated oppressive conditions. The Christ who in the incarnation reveals
liberated humanity. The one who was incarnated to reveal God’s universal salvific will, offering grace to all humankind.

Without that incarnational event, death and Resurrection of the Christ, the entire grace-filled process would not be a reality. God desires the salvation of everyone, won by Christ. Jesus Christ, Lord of Salvation tells humanity what it is, where it is going, and what it can hope to achieve [Knitter 1985:128].

The emphasis here is on the Christ as Liberator of the oppressed, with his message of love and servanthood going beyond racial prejudice.

Linked to the anthropological contextualisation worldview, a racial Christology highlights the inclusive status of all races within the incarnation.

The church is not Christ, but can imitate the great one, the one who directs all to the attainment of wisdom, moral perfection and peace.

Using H R Niebuhr’s [1975:92] terms, the Christ works ‘in and above’ culture, transforming culture into Christlike values within a specific cultural context.

Christ is ‘above’ culture in the sense of watching over and guiding culture to greater awareness. ‘His life and teachings
are regarded as the greatest human achievement; in him, it is believed, the aspirations of people toward their values are brought to a point of culmination; he confirms what is best in the past, and guides the process of civilization.’

[H R Niebuhr 1975:42]

Although not all grace is channelled through the church, it is intended to be the continuation of Christ’s example. Christ is unique and universal, and the church is called to continue this salvific image by following his example.

[Knitter 1985:129]

3.3 A RACIALLY LIBERATING WORLDVIEW

Racial liberation theologians would reject the accommodation anthropological model because of the superiority of the ‘insiders’ who make decisions for the ‘outsiders’, which in the present South African church context refers to white slight accommodation to other groups, with white male dominance in decision making.

There is more ambivalence with the inculturation model, as it is accepted in theory, but the church finds difficulty in putting theory into practice. The individual members of the church, the *imago dei*, the image bearers of universal salvation need to work out specific inculturation communicative actions.
A transforming goal within the inculturation model has its theological foundation firstly, in the concept of imago dei found in Genesis 1:28. Here humankind reflects God’s image for all people; all races are therefore considered to be image bearers. Secondly, the transforming model is the rejection of racially oppressive acts, be they non-communicative or ethnocentric in nature. ‘There is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and freeman, male and female, for you all are one in Christ Jesus’ [Galatians 3:27-28].

Racial liberators insist on the doctrine of full humanity for all persons, rather than having humanity determined by genetic features.

The anthropological term, triumphalism, related to ethnocentrism, identifies the dilemma to which the racial liberation theologian is subject. Within the present white dominated separate/accommodation cultural model, there is white superiority.

Those who argue against inculturation, pleading for accommodation or separation of the races are using the patriarchal covenant as their guiding star. They perceive themselves as the elect, negating Christ’s sacrifice on the cross to redeem all humanity, which includes the ethnic curse on a disobedient clan and their descendants. All who now believe would be saved.
The fear of contamination in cultural pluralism, and loss of identity, is not legitimate where the ultimate sacrifice was performed for all people to be set free. The Old Testament 'bahar', whereby God chose a group for a purpose and a destiny, was radically replaced by Jesus' offer of redemption for all.

The argument of purity, which goes with the theology of Israelite election, is one of ritual purity. The transposition from the ritual purity to the level of interior salvation has not been taken into account.

The group has not taken into account Paul's invitation to the christians to expel from their lives the 'old leaven' and replace it with the unleavened bread of purity and of truth' [1 Cor. 5, 8. Jm. 4:8], that is interior purity [Mark 7:14-23], the belief that nothing which enters from outside into humankind may render her/him to implore symbolic ritual purity. There is no condemnation for those who are in union with Christ.

Separating people and/or not doing anything about a separated people, I believe is morally wrong and a theological heresy. It carries a false doctrine of humanity when people are classified according to their race rather than having their worth determined by God.
The separate model focuses on the Tertullian model, which replaces the positive and warm ethics of love with, to a large extent, a negative morality, stressing the fearsome preparation for the coming day of judgement. The Tertullian thought that original sin is transmitted through society, that is 'that if it were not for the vicious customs that surround the child from birth its soul would remain good', is evident in this external purity theology.

The fear of being contaminated by a pluralistic society is causing a barrier to unity by its structures and policies. Justice exists when human institutions and relationships mirror God's righteousness, where each person and the whole community are helped to flourish and realise their God-given potential.

Racial liberation theologians, at this time in South Africa's history, are calling for an integration of races, that may overcome the present separate/accommodational model which leaves the black race presently in an inferior position. The call for full humanity, through the acknowledgement of Christ's incarnation and practise of Christ's salvific message, is intended to return all to their imago dei status.

This racial liberation approach requires an examination of church functions and structures for racial biases and prejudice. The approach intends a new society in which Paul's vision in Galatians 3:27-28 will become a reality.
The worldview anthropological insights and church models are to be considered liberating if they lead to a clearer understanding of a racially liberating conceptual starting point.

It is hoped with the clarification of the starting point, the information could transform the present static racial separation model into a christological model not based on the genetics of race as the determining factor for communication or non-communication, but race as a complimentary variable within the doctrine of full humanity.

The racial liberation perspective sets free the racially oppressed through imitating Christ’s calls for liberation and liberates the church from white dominance and paternalistic models of interracial communication.

The church needs to identify its mission within a transformative model that promotes the full humanity of all races, that is, liberation from the Semetic white elect to living in the reality of the incarnation of Christ for the redemption of all humanity.

In order to move from white racial superiority, the church must acknowledge Christ as liberator and own Paul’s vision in Galatians 3:27-28, by developing a model which may be practically implemented in the church.
Worldview shifts need to take place, recognising that the struggle for liberation no longer needs to take place only by the racially oppressed. With the struggle being named and accepted by those other than the oppressed, a strategy involving their gifts may be incorporated in the liberating process.

The vital role of practical theology from a racial liberation worldview is to liberate the church from white race superiority towards a complimentary function in which all races may contribute towards full humanity in Christ.

3.4 A PLACE FOR A RACIALLY LIBERATING WORLDVIEW THEOLOGY WITHIN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY.

Practical theology is interpreted as the theology of christian communicative actions: liberation identified here as one of the processes through which communicative actions may be interpreted and evaluated.

Interracial communication concerns itself with the quality of interaction between races and is therefore primarily qualitatively defined within a specific context.

Interracial communication is defined as any personal verbal or non-verbal behaviour that is perceived between members of different racial groups.
The hermeneutical liberation key has symbols of communicative action through which practical theology goals may be expressed.

How can liberation theology, the school of theology where the Gospel call is to liberate people from political and material possession, and specifically the liberation key be interpreted with the practical theological framework?

The task open to the practical theologian here, is to examine the liberation from oppression through christian communicative action eyes.

A helpful caution arising in the integrating of the two theologies, is that of Wolfaardt’s [1983:141] admonition against the use of terms such as ‘liberation’ without due attention being given to their original theological context.

It would be generally accepted that the gospel offers, as a central truth, liberation from sin. The task facing the practical theologian is to define the christian communicative actions which liberate people from a state of sin.

Racial liberation theologians would agree to one of the central truths being liberation from sin. The symbols of sin, may be interpreted within the communicative actions presently presented to the practical theologian within the context studied.
The scriptures, the major source of reference from which the development of this practical theory emerges, have a dominant theme of human sin and God's gracious salvation.

As a standard from which to work, although aware of the multifaceted dimensions of sin, it is interpreted here as disobedience, in contrast to Christ's life of obedience and offering of humankind's redemption. His ultimate obedience to die for all people enables humankind to express themselves as imago dei people; people who extend God's holy and glorious image into this world.

The signs of disobedience are:

* an economics of privilege;
* a politics of oppression.

The white ethnic groups have had privileged education and job opportunities. Particularly within the Presbyterian denomination, the privileges dwell amongst the minority white Presbyterian group, who then decide how to share these privileges, using the accommodational model.

The ideology, that is the liberational and restoration of humankind, is common to both liberation and practical theology. Both theologies make use of the inductive process as part of their methodology.

Whereas liberation theology is a reflectional process,
practical theology is a process that combines action and reflection to clarify actions and conceptualisations for the liberation of the people towards full humanity.

Liberation, in practical theology, refers to the majority of people, the black races being liberated [empowered] to full humanity through the removing of racially, black, prejudiced, oppressive structures and actions.

Liberation refers to the minority white groups being liberated to full humanity by diminishing the structures and actions that make themselves and others less human.

Whereas liberation theology is explored by those who belong to the exploited group, practical theology is encouraging not only the oppressed, but those who are in privileged positions to be part of the struggle towards liberating the oppressed.

With liberation theology's strategy being debated as an acceptable hermeneutical exercise and liberation being central to the gospel, it is my hope to bring liberation ideology under the scrutiny of christian communicative action hermeneutics to offer another way of processing liberation theological ideology.

Practical theology needs to label the christian communicative actions which may liberate the people from the present who hold on to oppressive structures and actions.
From this multi-disciplinary context, within a liberating christological framework, communicative sciences as input towards the understanding of communicating liberation actions will be discussed.

It is the task of this study to examine communicative christian actions which could liberate the people from the present racially oppressive actions which are in contrast with the christological liberational model espoused.
CHAPTER 4

COMMUNICATING RACIAL LIBERATION

4.1 COMMUNICATING ENCULTURATION WITHIN INCULTURATION

Historically, the Greek philosophers initiated models of communication. Aspects from these early models are evident within the emerging interracial model. Socrates [469-399 BC] used dialogue. He conversed with the people in the market place through questions and responses to his questions. Plato [427-347 B.C.], Socrates’ student, also made use of the process by which two people may have equal opportunity to speak and express their ideas in order to refine conceptualisation and arrive at truth.

Aristotle [384-322 B.C.] espoused an historical model, known as the Aristotelian triad of communication, which examines the speaker, the speech and the audience.[Abbey 1976:27]

Communication was understood here as the refinement of speech between speaker and audience. The Romans including Cicero and Quintillian adapted Aristotle’s triad communication model. A rich tradition of oratory emerged.

It was only in the last century that the oratory tradition fell under critical eyes, and allowed for an emergence of modern models of communication. Although there is evidence of
the use of this model in churches today, Kierkegaard [1813-1855], the Danish Philosopher and theologian, highlighted the recipient in the communication process. The receiver or recipient was an active not a passive role. [Van Schoor 1977:43] The process involves receiving and interpreting before a message may be sent. A dynamic rather than static receiver function materialised.

Jaspers [1883-1969], the German Philosopher who was Professor at Heidelberg [1921] and Basle [1949], understood communication to be vital. Truth is understood as a state of 'becoming' which may be revealed through dialogue. The communication triad consists of a sender, a message and a receiver.

The sender is the one intent on getting a message across. The message is the content to be relayed and coded. The coding refers to the meaning intended by the sender and decoding refers to the meaning formed by the receiver. The coding process is important in interracial communication as each racial group has signs which have specific meanings for the group.

This modern approach examines relationships between the people taking part in the dialogue and the circumstances in which they are involved. Van Schoor [1977:13] understands the modern view of communication to be 'the process of expression and interpretation of messages.'
In the Aristotlean model, although there was dialogue, the control lay in the hands of the one speaking. In Jasper’s model, the active role of the recipient was stressed. Numerous contemporary models of communication have absorbed the active role of listeners in the communication process.

From an interracial, liberational perspective the specific need within contextualisation is to heed the trap of communicating ethnocentrism [in Jasper’s model, this would imply relinquishing the predominant speaker’s role and taking an active listening role], and according to the racial liberational perspective, this approach assumes active listening from the worldview of another race.

The goal is to work towards inculturation where there is no ‘insider’ or ‘outsider’, ‘we’ or ‘they’, but a mutual respect of cultures within a liberating christological frame of reference.

Williams [1972], Barnouw [1973], Bourguignon [1973], Le Vine [1973] and Devos [1980] have accounted for the process of learning within culture. Although there are arguments for racial culture being determined, discounting the above theories of socialisation through learning, Luzbetak [1990] and personal growth experience in interracial encounters, has led me to opt for ‘enculturation as a lifelong process of mastering an adaptive system’.
The inculturation process, as an adaptive system within enculturation, has the integration of the gospel message within the community culture as the channel through which communication in racial diversity may take place.

Concern for racially liberating 'the other' requires the 'insiders' to relinquish their white dominant 'insider status' in multi-racial gatherings as a strategy towards interpersonal racial relationships. The present 'insider' needs to communicate devolvement of power and the outsiders evolvement towards a mutually accepted goal and group norm. This would involve the present white 'insiders' assuming an active listening role and the 'outsiders' an active speaking function.

The strategy is in contradiction to the orthodox liberational perspective, which assumes power by ousting the 'insiders' into an 'outside' position through force; a reaction which has been interpreted as a response to the accomodation model with its ethnocentric racial superiority, where the 'outsider' is made to conform to insider standardisation, often to the detriment of the 'outsiders' humanity.

The interracial communication process involves a Kierkegaard/Jasperian model of dialogue, consisting of the active personal involvement of both 'insiders' and 'outsiders', receivers and senders as criteria for liberation. In each interaction there is a sender, an initiator of a message, and a receiver, a
receptor and interpreter of a message, with dialogue revealing reciprocity between sender and receiver. [see 4.1.2] The process between sender and receiver is dynamic. The sender can simultaneously be a receiver as both verbal and non-verbal elements are part of the process.

Dialogue is essential if the Greek philosophy that truth may not emerge without personal interaction is to be practically explored. It is not sufficient to believe that the aims of the 'outsiders' are laudable in principle without active relational participation between sender and receiver.

The main argument against interracial communication is the concern about syncretism. 'Synkretismos', originally used by the Greek author Plutarch meant 'achieving a common purpose. Only in seventeenth century European theology did the concept become affiliated with the negative 'melting and mixing' pot associated with the move from purity to an amalgamation with a lower conceptual status. Syncretism may only be considered a problem where one-way communication takes place without active participation of another race.

With the coding process involving both receiving and interpreting, races may decide what to include and what not to include within their racial worldview.
Semiotic studies, that is studies of forms of human communicative behaviour, bring clarity to the problem of syncretistic negativism.

Schreiter's semiotic model examines four communicative syncretistic models.

* new information incorporated into existing racial codes;
* new information incorporated to fill certain gaps;
* indiscriminate mixing, where a receiving culture is under duress and domination; and
* an existing code replaced with a new one.

[Schreiter 1985:151-157]

From the discussion above, it is clear that the interpersonal process assumes Schreiter's [1985] first two examples where a common purpose rather than a melting pot is espoused.

For specifics on the kind of communication inferred in liberating the 'outsiders' reference is made to an interpersonal approach.

4.1.1 INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

With the explosion of modern communication theory, Dance [1970] did a content analysis of ninety-five definitions. He concluded that the concept is overworked and that a family of concepts needs to be developed.
Despite the difficulties in definition, there are three ways in which to view the process of transmitting interpersonal information.

The three approaches are:

* informational
* interactional
* relational

The informational approach started in the 1940's, where the transmission of mainly factual messages between interacting people who were capable of sending and receiving messages through a common system, took place.

Shannon and Weaver [1949] and Cherry [1957] examined the theory and practice of message conversions and meanings into icons, signs, signals and symbols. Goffman [1959] researched the circulation between members of a community and gatherings.

The Interactional approach emerged in the 1960's, defining communication in terms of 'behavioural management in co-presence', whereby individuals co-operatively established and maintained contact through the use of behaviour. Proponents of this process were Argyle [1975], Kendon [1977], Dean and Scheflen. [1974]
The Relational communicational science approach began in the late sixties, perceiving communication in terms of the overall system of relationships people develop between each other and their habitat.

In this approach communication itself constitutes the circumstance under which the transfer of information can occur more so than the influence of environmental and social contexts.

The significance here is the combination of the situational context in relation to communicational science. Whereas Kierkegaardian/Jasperian theology took into account the situational context, relational communicational science places more weight on the interpersonal engagement. In the Presbyterian church of Southern Africa, this refers to focus on how interpersonal engagement will take place, with the situational problem of geographic distance between racial groups and differing interests influencing the interpersonal, but not forming the predominant argument.

This process is not minimising the importance of situational context, but espousing that the context does not have to define whether a relationship can emerge. It is the 'interpersonal' engagement that allows the context to play a relevant part in the dialogue.
The three pioneers of modern communication studies, Bateson [1973] Scheflen [1974] and Birdwhistell [1968], have marked a growing influence in 'the systems approach.' This framework has replaced Aristotelian epistemology, mainly suitable for analysing simple systems with systems designed to examine complex dynamics.

Johnson and Johnson [1987:173] applied the systems approach developing interpersonal communication, which was defined broadly in interactional terms as 'any verbal or non-verbal behaviour that is perceived by another person.'

Specifically that which can be empirically evaluated is 'the message sent by a person to a receiver/s with the conscious intent of affecting the receiver’s behaviour.'

Stewart and D'angelo [1986:14] clarify the interpersonal by making a comparison to the impersonal. The impersonal 'objectifies others' and the interpersonal personifies.

D'Angelo understands impersonal relationships to be where people treat the other as a thing. Within interpersonal communication people are treated as significant others.

The impersonal in this study is understood as people who perceive 'the other' as insignificant, and interracial as integrated races who treat each other as significant others.
Martin Buber [1970] identified significant conditions for a dialogue between 'the self' and 'other': openness, love, a reciprocal willingness to be influenced, respect for the convictions of the other, understanding, objectivity and fairness.

4.1.2 INTERRACIAL COMMUNICATION WITHIN INCULTURATION

Interracial communication concerns itself with the quality of interaction between races and is therefore primarily qualitatively defined.

Interracial communication is identified by any interpersonal verbal or non-verbal communicative action that is perceived between members of different racial groups. Perceptions and patterns of perceptions lead to different coding and encoding procedures.

Specifically that which can be evaluated is:

* the personal message sent by a person of one racial group with the conscious intent of affecting the receiver's behaviour from another racial group; and
* the interpretation of the message by the receiver.

The interracial study has two processes;

* the intra, and
* interpersonal.
The study of the interracial intrapersonal process refers to the examination of patterns of racial perception [worldview] within oneself.

The interracial personal process refers to the examination of the patterns of racial perception [worldview] communicated interpersonally both verbally or non-verbally.

In evaluating the qualitative interracial definitions of effective communication and the elements of a communicator the following aspects are taken into consideration:

Ideally, effective communication will be understood as 'the communication between two persons when the receiver interprets the sender's message in the same way the sender intended it' [Johnson and Johnson 1987:174].

The assumption being the closer the interaction is to the ideal, the more interpersonal and the more liberation racial groups will experience from their present separated, unnegotiated racial worldviews.

Implicit in this definition of communication is the importance of relationship, which is not merely the sending and receiving of a literal message, but the interpretation of the sending and receiving.
The communicator refers to the 'sender' and the person to whom the message is aimed, is the 'receiver'. The message is known by any verbal or non-verbal symbol that is transmitted between communicator and receiver.

A channel has been defined as the means of sending a message to another person [Johnson and Johnson 1987:174]. The channel in this study is the dialogue consisting of interpretations on selected biblical themes by both insiders and outsiders. [See Appendix A for the interpersonal communication model].

Communicating liberation through communicative sciences, refers to the personification of the other, through the use of effective communication actions, which make both the self and other feel significant.

Both the sender and receiver are offering maximum messages in the striving towards full humanity in Christ; a process that conveys liberation through communicative action.

A development in modern communication group theory is dialogue without individual dominance, which moves communication further away from the Aristotelian speaker dominance, towards modern theory, which values the active participation of both the sender and the receiver, the speaker and the recipient. Habermas [1982] presents this 'ideal' where 'true' communication occurs without domination.
Amidst racial separation and the pain of exclusion is the power of revelation through dialogue, where both the insider and the outsider, the sender and recipient have an equal opportunity to actively communicate their faith.

And with regards to the content of the message, Ferm [1986], Boff and Boff [1987], Gibellini [1979] Kloppenburg [1974a] and Ratzinger [1984, 1986], though not specifically related to interracial theology would support the liberation theological approach which links the message with the specific liberational needs of the society. The gospel dialogue is a sine qua non in communicating faith.

Johnson and Johnson [1987:68] presents a task/maintenance model [1987] which incorporates a researched group process of dialoguing effectively without dominating within groups.[The process includes active listening and speaking skills.]

[See fig.1]
### Observation Sheet for Task Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Members</th>
<th>actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information and Opinion Giver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information and Opinion Seeker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direction and Role Definer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summarizer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Energizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comprehension Checker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Observation Sheet for Maintenance Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Members</th>
<th>actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourager of Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication Facilitator</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tension Releaser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process Observer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interpersonal Problem-Solver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporter and Praiser</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The task and maintenance model has been chosen as interracial communication is concerned with the task of relating interracially and simultaneously building relationships without domination.

'Maintenance' refers to the maintaining of personal bonds between races and 'task' examines the way in which the individuals within the group handle the problem given to them. Interpersonal communication refers to the way in which individuals within the group handle personal communication within the group, whilst attending a set task.

The model will be presented as a guide towards effective group participation within the research design procedure.

Co-operative communication involving the sharing of task and relational functions] and mutual influencing of faith is the ideal, involving communicating with oneself [intra] and another. Interracial communication in the local church intends initiating loving communicative initiatives and responses that develop relationship with God and people of different races within local church groups in the Presbyterian church.
CHAPTER 5

A CO-OPERATIVE MODEL

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The racial inculturation liberating approach, chosen to transform society from racial discrimination to race as a complimentary variable within the church community, offers a co-operative model where people of God may seek a reconstruction of relationships; a reconstruction which may give each person the fullness of being that is taken away by false polarisations.

Rosemary Radford Ruether [Smith 1985:44] says that a co-operative model for relationships ‘must cease to be hierarchical and become mutually supportive.’ Ruether’s exhortation can be interpreted within the church context as a call to a new distribution of power within the church relationships, which assumes more participation and avoids centralisation and domination.

The exhortation to move from hierarchy to mutual support makes possible the rise of an ecclesiogenesis that encompasses the creativity of all available resources.

The basis of a co-operative model requires a Christology that clarifies how the liberational Christ is to be used by the people in order to define an ecclesiological stance.
5.2 CHRISTOLOGY

Continuing the christological discussion from 3.2.4, the Christ of liberation, who transformed society through minimising traditional oppressive positions of power and maximising [that is empowering] the de-humanised, is emphasised in the racial liberation struggle.

The liberational Christ who challenged social orders and structures, the Christ who proclaimed authority through servanthood rather than his royal heritage, the Christ who believed in the _imago dei_ [that all people and not only the Jews were children of God] is the foundation of the co-operative model.

Schleiermacher [1778-1834] refers to the church as 'the community of those for whom the feeling of absolute dependence on God is the centre of their understanding of reality, and for whom Jesus Christ is the lens or focus of that understanding of God and redemption. Christianity was a commitment not to a romantic symbol or idea, but to a community of Christians working in the wider community of modern society' [Newlands 1984:30].

The liberational commitment is to the areas where de-humanising hurt has been caused through the separation of races.
Up until now, literature within the liberational model in South Africa, and globally, refers to the oppressed only identifying with oppressed against the oppressor. The cooperative model is not only requiring the 'insiders' to change places with the 'outsiders'. Both 'insiders' and 'outsiders' are asked to identify with the Christ who sets free all who believe. Both groups are challenged to examine the Christ of liberation and are called to examine the gifts bestowed upon them within the interaction. It is hoped that what Gandhi refers to as 'Satyagraha' dialogue will take place, where the truths of the different racial groups are shared in order to find commonalities. Within conflicts, it is hoped that a dialogic theory will lead to new patterns of perception [worldviews] which neither group would have claimed in their separated state.

The authority placed upon Christ's followers to imitate his works and carry out his commands has many empowering implications.

For the purposes of this study, the scope is limited to an examination of people and their identification with the liberational Christ expressed through their communicative interracial actions in a bible study/fellowship group.

Within this liberational christological approach, there is the debate as to how the present ecclesiological, hierarchical,
mainly patriarchal model, relates to the liberation of all God’s people?

The conceptual biblical framework, from which liberational communicative acts emerge, are founded in Augustine’s [AD 354-430] concept of Amor Dei, the love of God, in addition to the Amor congregatio, the love of the assembly gathered to build up the body of Christ. What then are the most loving racially affirmative communicative actions one can offer to reveal one’s love for God and one’s love for all God’s children?

It is a hunch that the more gifts offered to the needy racial communicative gaps that can liberate people, the more the individual will be seen as a loving one, leading the people out of bondage. It is a hunch that the more gifts people offer, the less chasm there will be between the leaders and the led [the insiders and the outsiders]. The process will be one of leading together, using gifts in harmony with the body, acknowledging Christ at the head of this body [Eph.4:15].

Dulles [1983:20] confirms the correlation of charismata and Christ. One of the powerful images of Christ is his Lordship, where people exercise the gifts of the Holy Spirit.[1Cor 12:4] Christ is built up, where the gifts are being used.

If Christ has promised that all people have gifts, one can deduce that all people can use their gifts in establishing communication between racial groups. [see 5.4 charism
defined. A causal relationship between gifts and interracial communication may be postulated. The verification of this hypothesis is outside the scope of the study, but may be empirically researched at a later date.

Within interracial communication, all people are committed to uplifting the separated 'other'. It is the determining and recognizing of the gifts which will empower.

Both the ecclesiological model and the empowering gifts within a specific context, within the community need elaboration.

5.3. PEOPLE OF GOD

What Boff [1985] refers to as a better distribution of potestas sacra [sacred power] is an important reason for the people of God. This makes possible the rise of a rich ecclesial sacramentality where the entire church is seen as sacrament.

The ecclesiology of the 'People of God' is grounded in koinonia [communion] and diakonia [service][Kung:1976:502]. Moltmann defines the people of God, as those who will give account of themselves at all times to the God who has called them into being, liberated them and gathered them [Newlands 1984:34].
The 'people of God' take the Resurrection into account where all are one in Christ [Gal 3:28].

There should be no superiority between peoples if: the risen Christ is identified within the community, with the Spirit and God the creator; where there is an ecclesiological dependence on the understanding of the pneumatological function of the risen Christ with the anthropological vested in the imago dei image.

The 'people of God' recognises the imago dei of all; the ascended liberational Christ who promised a guide, the Spirit to descend upon the people empowering people with the gifts expressed by Christ, the liberator.

It must be stated that no model can totally depict a church, but can form an image from which data may be gleaned. The important data Minear [1960] gained in his study of nearly one hundred images of the church, is that the pattern within all the New Testament church images is to be 'concerned with the love of God in Christ.'

Mohler cited in Congar [1960:19] points out that the Spirit was given to the disciples when they were all together and of one mind in prayer and love. The Spirit is given to each, but in company with the rest. The 'body' therefore has both Christological and pneumatological roots.
The pneumatological can be connected to interracial contact. Where there is no gathering together of the different groups which have been hurt in forced separation from one another, there can be no place for the Holy Spirit to bring different race groups to 'one mind in prayer and love.' Togetherness invites the Holy Spirit to work through people.

In uplifting the Resurrected, liberational Christ there is too, an ecclesiological preference for the poor. The privileged status of the poor, I believe, engages the psychological dimensions of physical, cognitive, emotive and soul deficiencies.

The Resurrected, liberational one offers upliftment out of oppression, where all are called to unity and oneness in Christ. Where there is no unity and great disparities, there is no Christ.

Boff [1985] does not refer to a church for, but rather a church of and with the poor. In this way the church may begin to define its relationship with all other social classes ... its catholicity becomes real and not merely a matter of rhetoric [Boff 1985:10].

This approach intends a partner with those who struggle for a more participatory gifted society; supporting liberation without the instinct of revenge or self-righteousness.
The goal is **comunidades eclesiales de base**, where the people express and achieve their desire for participation and where the hierarchy is rediscovering the paths of the people, and so divests itself of its titles and ecclesiastical baggage [Boff 1985:156].

Specifically, in interracial communication, we are dealing with the racial hierarchy, based on the colour of skin, rather than the communicative action of sharing **charismata**.

5.4 CHARISM

Paul details a model which has many members all springing from the same spirit each with its own function. This assumes that there is no non-charismatic member, no-one is useless, everyone has a decisive place as each member serves the other. Paul introduced the word charism in the context of the organisation of the community.

The term **charis** or **charein** being God’s gift to the individual. For Paul ‘charism’ simply means the concrete action that each person exercises within the community for the good of all. Any interference in the charism of another is an interference in the unity of the Church.

The principle of the structure is not the institutional
hierarchy, but rather the charism which is at the root of all institutions and hierarchy. Boff [1985] sees that there is not one group of rulers and another group who rule; there is the community of faith.

Two problem areas are identified:

* the individual may attribute the charism entirely to God and yet be under false impressions; and
* there may be self-interest and power deep within the subconscious that leads the person to be tricked into consciously attributing the gift to God. When charism is not preserved as charism, there is concupiscence, or the will for power and possession. [Boff 1985:161-63]


Pauline ecclesiology is affirmed by Kung [1976:247], who defines charismata broadly in terms of the call of God, addressed to an individual for particular community enrichment.

The call of God is challenged by Weber [1958], who claims that gifts may also emanate from the evil one. Without going into this debate, I accept charismata that uplift the oppressed, to come from God.

Bittlinger would argue with Kung’s use of ‘exceptional’. Charismata, whether ordinary or extraordinary, serve to build up the body of Christ [1974:16].

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The problem is in the structuring of the gifts within the community.

'charisma without any institutionalization threatens to be volatized into fanaticism and pure subjectivity, quickly becoming the plaything of opposing forces, to the detriment of the apostolic communities.'

[Bittlinger 1974:16]

The opposite is also true; institutionalisation without charisma... is where 'charisma becomes starved and threatens to turn into a power institution.' The criterion for God-emanating gifts is where there is identification with 'internal cohesion and unity' [Schillebeeckx 1981:24].

Challenge is vital within unity to continue to strengthen the body as opposed to the maintenance of pre-conceived self-justification.

Taking the charism discussion into account, an interracial perspective would approve a Pauline ecclesiology that structures the community around the following inclusive premises; all receive gifts [1 Cor 12:4-11], and all are members of one body.

The gifts under the authority of the Jesus Christ the liberational one who did not come 'to divide and destroy, but to reconcile and unite' [M Barth 1983:71] are given expression for the good of the community.[1 Cor 12:7, Rom 12:4, Eph 4:7.]
Pneumatological studies are not easily confined to empirical research. Charismata, with their foundational root in pneumatology, can be defined in terms of the communicative actions of races who are identifying with the liberational Christ and experiencing and living out the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

This dissertation acknowledges:

* Bittlinger’s [1974] perspective that charismata, whether ordinary or extraordinary serve to build up the body of Christ;

* the interracial perspective; and

* that the Holy Spirit sometimes offers gifts to an individual/group for specific group enrichment. This means that individual’s gifts may be peculiar to the interracial group or may be generalized and work within other settings.

An attempt will be made to set up an exploratory, descriptive design where emerging charismata may be processed in terms of interracial communicative action value for possible use as empirical data in further research.

Communication science from a practical theological perspective will appeal to the ‘insiders’ for initial active listening and
the 'outsiders' for verbalising, combined with skills for both 'insiders' and 'outsiders' to dialogue effectively within an interracial group.

It is hoped that the study will lead to the addressing of the chasm, particularly between white superiority/domination [the insiders] to the detriment of the gifts of other races [the outsiders] and the separation of racial groupings.

Patriarchal, white male dominated theology has not successfully included other races and gender in the functioning of effective communicative actions within the body of the Presbyterian church.

Interracial theology is not espousing the accommodation into existing oppressive structures. It is the creation together of a new inclusive structure, with a framework to detect old exclusive structures emerging within the new development. It requires a process of co-operative communication to move members from a predominantly, racially ill-informed body of Christ, to an informed, racial inclusion within the body based on complementing each other through the charismata bestowed upon them by the Holy Spirit, promised by Christ after his resurrection.
6.1. INTRODUCTION

The study so far has included my understanding of practical theology from a racially liberating worldview. The departure from liberation theology, is in the use of all races in the liberating process. The key is liberation. Biblical hermeneutics, anthropology, communication science, christology, pneumatology and ecclesiology informing racial interaction have formed the practical theoretical foundation.

Liberational communicating includes expressing hermeneutical interpretations of the scriptures in a safe setting where a common communication system is established by the group to interpret actions.

A 'safe setting' may be interpreted as a place of sanctuary; a place of refuge where the years of stereotyped perceptions of 'the other' may be freely expressed.

The liberation to an inculturation process, it is hoped, will communicate 'a new christian worldview' that rids itself of paternalism, triumphalism and racism, transforming people to make 'other Christs' who are inclusive of all races.
Christology affords the oppressed the opportunity to be subjects of their own destiny, refusing to be condemned to the fate of being objects of manipulation and suppression [Kim Yong Bock 1981:188].

The book of Psalms affirms the place of safety concept. It is especially rich in references to God as refuge. Psalm 57:1 is an example of the cry of the people to be taken into refuge; a place of safety where one can be rebuilt.

Presently, the racial grouping in South Africa not considered 'white' have been societally oppressed/suppressed. Affirmative action would be to offer these groupings hospitality, a place where subjectivity/human dignity may be rebuilt, in place of hostility or indifference previously experienced.

It is in this safe place communicative actions may reach out to one's own and other's innermost being. 'Our reaching out to our innermost being can lead to a reaching out to the many strangers whom we meet.' [Nouwen 1976:63-101] The racial liberator would interpret Henri Nouwen's [1976] strangers as 'racial strangers.' This study refers to the racial strangers amongst the grassroots people in the Presbyterian church although unity in Christ is espoused.

The assumption behind the liberational Christ motivation is that churches which neglect the racial liberational Christ image, with it's liberating communicative actions, are like
monochrome TV's trying to present an image of multi-coloured unity.

6.2. PROBLEM FORMATION

Theory which Kerlinger [1973:9] states is a 'set of interrelated constructs [concepts, definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations between variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena' has been presented, gleaned from the researcher's distinctive racially liberating worldview premise.]

In terms of empirical research methodology, the accepted methods for the social sciences are used. It is agreed that 'no social science has a monopoly of the research methods it applies: they belong to all the disciplines [Pieterse 1987:40].

The practical theological research design is methodologically distinct, because of the distinctive nature of the theological operational science approach.

The approach is directed by a problem, [McKinney 1966] in this case of a lack in effective communication between races at grassroots level and lack of empowerment of races who are not white, dominant, male, patriarchal figures has been identified.
The necessity to communicate seems clear when one is daily confronted with racially dehumanised predominantly black people, who have been undermined by white superiority, as well as different races whose worldview is not understood by the other, although expressing an identical denominational identity.

Presently, the racially de-humanised seek to be recognised and move from their 'outsider' position in society, and those who have not been racially oppressed claim a willingness for the outsiders to accommodate to their ways.

Accommodation is an ideal which is neither appealing nor practical to the oppressed, as the racially distinctive communicative contribution of the 'outsider' is negated. Inculturation as a process of mutual racial learning is espoused where all races are valued and considered a complimentary variable in communication.

6.2.1 FIELD ENQUIRY

I held informal discussion with both grassroot and people in various leadership levels in Natal, the Cape Province and Transvaal. These informal discussions took place with individuals during tea or meal times at formal gatherings of the church, initiated by Presbytery or General Assembly committees, over the past five years.
The informal discussion [self-initiated] had a specific goal:

to examine why there is so little evidence of effective communication between local Presbyterian churches?

The people were randomly chosen; whoever was sitting next to me at church gatherings or whoever I sat next to, determined by available seating, formed the randomisation process.

Within these informal discussions there are several responses evidencing consistent patterns of perceptions that are racially distinct.

The results of the questions 'Don't we need each other?' and 'Who is my racial neighbour?' highlighted the 'us' and 'them' syndrome. The majority black worldview expressed the need for contact and the white majority interpreted 'neighbour' in terms of people in their physical vicinity. Interracial communication images were limited to the paternalistic domestic worker-employer stereotype.

The question of racial preference was implied in many conversations. Honeyford [1986:52] claims that a preference for 'one's own kind' is a universal tendency. O'Keeffe claims also that 'preference is not prejudice' and states that there is nothing wrong with preferring to 'marry people of the same race'[1986:190]. Miles [1989:8] takes O'Keeffe to task: 'This sounds innocuous, although one is alerted to it's problematic
character by the absence of any evidence to support the claim of universalism.

By itself, the claim that it is 'natural' to prefer 'one's own kind' is not a racist claim, although there are reasons to doubt it's veracity, but... 'it is an explicit justification of a process of inclusion and therefore of exclusion: to prefer to rank and to choose to value something or person or group, and therefore to preclude some other person or group', and I would add, particularly if the group or individual has been racially oppressed.

There are many self-justifications for not getting together with other races, but the dominant exclusion of other groups is contrary to the liberational Christ's inclusive strategy.

6.2.2 SYSTEMISATION OF QUALITATIVE DATA

Scientific enquiry requires a systematic examination. Qualitative data is attractive in a 'study which attempts to understand people in terms of their own definition of the world' [Mouton 1988:71].

Although the procedural approaches are less strictly formalised, the level of critique must be of the same quality as that of the standardisation criteria set for orthodox Newtonian procedures.
Qualitative research 'is a source of rich descriptions and explanations of processes occurring in local contexts' [Miles and Huberman 1984:15].

Smith [1978] highlights the qualitative procedure by accenting words. 'Words, especially when they are organized into incidents or stories, have a concrete, vivid, meaningful flavor that often proves far more convincing to a reader - another researcher, a policy-maker, a practitioner - than pages of numbers' [Miles and Huberman 1984:15].

Continuing the argument of subjective convincing meaning, Thomas and Thomas [1928] perceive that if people define a situation as real, it is real in its consequences...

Untested perceptions and patterns of perceptions have disastrous consequences if not justified by all. Schutz [1967] Blumer [1969] and Denzin [1978] have done several studies to show that people make sense of the world around them by giving it subjective meaning and then they interact on the basis of these meanings [Jorgensen 1989:14].

In a separated racial society, the race in power [the insiders] consider their subjective meaning as the whole of reality.

the 'insiders'. The oppressed group, ['outsiders' in society] need clear evidence of being 'insiders' within local church structures. Little or no evidence of 'black "insider" status' is evident in local church relations. In addition to the domination of the 'insider's' subjective reality, Schutz [1967] & Simmel [1950] have evidenced the 'insider's' conception being not directly accessible to outsiders [Jorgensen 1989:14]. With no clear difference between the separation of races in church and society, it must be assumed that the white male-dominant insider worldview inaccessibility holds true within the local church. From the field verbatims described there is clear evidence of 'insiders' and 'outsiders', 'they' and 'we's.

6.2.3 THE PROBLEM OF 'THEY' AND 'WE'

The problem of 'they' and 'we' is that with the continued separation of races, there continues to be 'about' patterns of perceptions [worldview] of one another. The crude notion criticism of Hall [1959,1966] of the 'insider's' world is clearly evident; yet unity is espoused.

These 'about' stereotyped perceptions limit the other. The traditional religious image, claiming all races to be part of one body, severely lacks integrity within a liberational Christ image that does not accept 'insider about' perceptions because of the exclusivistic nature of perceptions that do not include all races.
With the researcher's evidence that the 'insider's' conception is not directly accessible to 'outsiders', this study wishes to set up a communicative structure which links 'outsiders' with 'insiders' to form an inclusive rather than exclusive structure. The 'insiders' are defined as those who make the decisions; the 'outsiders' as those who need to conform to decisions made.

6.2.4 SAMPLE, VENUE AND CONTENT SELECTION

6.2.4.1 SAMPLE SELECTION

The researcher initially hoped to have two groups for study: a control and an experiment group. The researcher made contact with three people known personally to herself in three local churches, Soshanguve in the North, Atteridgeville in the West and Hatfield Presbyterian church in the east.

The contacts were put into the picture regarding the nature of the bible study fellowship and asked whether they would be willing to participate. Cost was involved in presenting attractive, colour-filled, Presbyterian blue pamphlets [Appendix B], bible study books as well as transport to the respective 'contact' people. The pamphlets, together with the biblical material 'The Future Starts here', a biblical study on the Lord's prayer was handed out for perusal after the Sunday service [see Appendix C]. The course was made known through three appeals from the pulpit.
Individuals were asked to commit themselves to a weekly meeting for two months.

It was hoped to structure the experiment group with six whites and six black members. The control group would cater for the remaining members who responded to the pamphlet.

Purposive sampling, [where subjects were chosen based on the researcher's knowledge of the 'contacts' and the 'contacts' knowledge of their respective populations and the nature of the empirical study] was employed. The race variable could be controlled with the inclusion of six white and six black in the experimental group. Random sampling would form the control group.

The different choice of strategy for experimental and control group is to accommodate the researcher's need to obtain equal race representation and enthusiastic leadership potential for the former group.

The control group could accommodate any extra people who believed in the interracial vision, thus not turning anyone away who wished to participate in interracial communication. The selective bias is noted.

What is the tolerable error within the selectivity process? The researcher was concerned that not only the in-group to
the three contact people be invited, but that the selection be inclusive of the local church community population racial perceptions and patterns of perceptions.

The bias may be significant people who might not relate to the 'contacts' and therefore would not participate, although they could make an important contribution to the study. The 'contacts' might not select persons because of their personal selective biases. The degree of selectivity error is difficult to quantify.

The general assumption in purposive sampling is that errors in judgement are random and neutralise one another.

The problem with this non-probability sampling approach is that the researcher is not able to claim a representative sample and will find difficulty in generalising results. The benefit is that it takes advantage of available resources.

The three 'contacts' went through selecting a number of people without receiving agreement from those selected. Twelve candidates agreed to take the course, although fifty were approached.
6.2.4.2 VENUE SELECTION

Selecting an appropriate setting is often based on opportunity and convenience:

* whether or not you can obtain access to the setting;
and
* what range of possibilities the physical setting offers.

[Jorgensen 1988:40-41]

6.2.4.3 CONTENT SELECTION

The Lord’s prayer was chosen by the researcher as the content material for discussion for the following reasons:

* Christ initiated 'the Lord’s prayer' as a universal prayer for his people. The prayer is said amongst all racial groups in the Presbyterian church. The study intends beginning from the known.

* The researcher’s experience in a ‘black church’ of the Lord’s prayer as an economically and racially liberating christological event was another important deciding factor. The predominantly black congregation took comfort in a prayer of solidarity that not only had a vision for the eschatological future of their people, but saw that mystical experiences include
earthly actions. Achieving 'kingdom values on earth' provides a natural transition into God's kingdom. The concern of the researcher was to meet with different races to understand together what 'kingdom' values God is calling us to discover on earth together.

* The different perspectives in black and white race groups on the meaning of the Lord's prayer that lead to varying consequences in church and society seemed a liberating christological point of departure that would address the 'about' perceptions races have of each other in a biblical context.

* The Serendipity bible study was chosen because of the programme design that encourages participation of all members at various relational levels, emphasising contextual application of the scriptures in a way that produces action. 'Serendipity' addresses the need for applied biblical knowledge, the need to belong, the need to share burdens and the need to be truly a united body in Christ. The intention was to communicate a body which has taken seriously the problem of little interracial interaction.

The communicative action of interracial communication involves the use of the bible as the basis of discussion, and a common communicative structure.
Johnson and Johnson's [1987] communication typology [fig.1] may offer a key to genuine inclusion within the body of Christ. Empirical testing hopes to prove whether this hypothesis is valid.

The typology was chosen because of the understanding that:

Group effectiveness is determined in large part by the quality of the reasoning strategies that members use, by their ability to take a variety of perspectives on the issue under consideration, and by the constructiveness of the conflict-resolution strategies members use, their success in influencing each other's attitudes and conclusions, and their general level of collaborative skills [Johnson and Johnson, 1987a].

The Johnson and Johnson [1987a] typology is employed to encourage effective communicative actions with 'the other'. 'Effectivity' referring to any communicative role that produces understanding of other racial worldviews and a stronger connectedness between Christ, themselves and their racial neighbours. Johnson and Johnson's [1987a] model names twelve specific verbal and non-verbal sending and receiving skills that encourage participation of all.

The participants will start off with a one-day retreat workshop that will examine intra- and interpersonal
communication skills, introductory personal experiences and share a vision of the course with an appeal to course commitment [see Appendix E].

Interpersonal racial commitment entails the participants agreement to relational accountability that implies;

- a commitment to the vision of the group;
- priority given to agreed upon group meeting times;
- a striving towards translating biblical learnings into action;
- allowing the rest of the group to hold each other accountable for the goals that the group set for themselves;
- give each other the right to call upon one another;
- use communication skills as a guide line to presenting material; and
- acknowledgement of the breaking down of racial barriers through communicative actions.

Whether to select a focus or not is a decision each researcher must make. A surface or in-depth investigation are the choices. A surface investigation identifies and partially studies as many domains as possible. An in-depth investigation selects a particular focus [Spradley 1980:101].
Spradley [1980:101] gives five criteria for selecting a focus:

* Personal interest.
* Suggestions by informants. [Sometimes the people you are observing will make suggestions about things they feel are important.]
* Theoretical interest.
* Strategic ethnography [Spradley 1970] began studying a city jail because of reports that the jail was degrading.
* Organising domains. [A large domain that seems to organise the cultural meaning of a particular scene.]

The strategy in this study has been to accept Jorgensen’s [1988:84] approach of beginning by broadly examining the topic [in this case phenomena related to interracial communication] and then limiting one’s attention that is, focusing on specific phenomena which may shed light on the espoused practical theological theory [fulfilling the first, third and fifth criteria.]

The focused topics are:

* self and other
* charismata
* ecclesiological structural images
* biblical interpretation

Selective observations represent the focus through which observations are made. Spradley [1980:129] says that
'selective observations require careful planning... It becomes increasingly necessary to make notes in the situation that answer each of your questions.'

6.2.5 DESIGN EVALUATION

6.2.5.1 THE RESEARCHER'S ROLE OF PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

'The methodology of participant observation focuses on the meanings of human existence as seen from the standpoint of "insiders" '[Znaniecki 1934; Spradley 1980].

My privileged position of being an 'insider' in multiple racial groups over the years determined the effectiveness of participant observation as a means of examining insider stories.

Jorgensen [1989:15] states aptly my intention when he describes the methodology of participant observation as 'that which seeks to uncover, make accessible, and reveal the meanings [realities] people use to make sense of their daily lives.'

In placing the meaning of everyday life first, the methodology of participant observation differs from the approaches that begin with concepts defined by way of existing theories and hypotheses.
Some of the later researchers who attest to the richness of understanding, from the point of view of the 'insider' are Ellis [1986], Mitchell [1983] Lynch [1985], Swanson [1986] and Gallimeier [1987].

Participant observation methodology provides direct experiential and observational access to the 'insider's' world of meaning.

An inductive procedure of delving into subjective components of this sample would be limited if dealt with purely in terms of objective statistical true or false conceptualizations.

A qualitative study does not work within the framework of narrow 'right and wrong' measurements, but trends which may strengthen or weaken the integrity of the hypothesis generating process.

An important point accepted from orthodox scientific theory, here however, is that 'a critical and inquisitive attitude' is essential, whether the quantitative or qualitative strategy is chosen [Mouton:1988]. Concept validity is emphasised by Becker, [1969], Glazer and Strauss [1967, Wiseman [1970], Douglas [1976], Kirk and Miller [1986].

The terms 'participant' and 'observer' on first examination seem a contradiction in terms. 'Participant' determines a verbally active role, and 'observer' a verbally passive one.
Junker [1960] and Gold [1958,1969] give four images of participation which help to clarify the role:

i] a complete observer;

ii] a participant as observer [more observer than participant];

iii] an observer-as-participant [more participant than observer]; or

iv] a complete participant.

It is my intention to provide a fifth option which allows for situational participation and observation, that is participation and observation expressed by the researcher according to the group need.

'The methodology of participant observation requires that the researcher become directly involved as a participant in peoples daily lives' [Jorgensen 1989:20].

Whereas Cooley [1930,1969] would describe the approach as sympathetic introspection, Weber [1949] as 'verstehen', and MacIver [1942] as 'sympathetic reconstruction', I consider both to be important elements of the process.

The vital role of the participant observer assumes that the researcher must sustain access once it has been granted, and maintain relationships with the people [Johnson 1975].
Many others have owned the assumption of credibility through access and maintenance of relationships including Hayano [1982], Sudnow [1978], Forrest [1986] and Peshkin [1986].

The idea is to gain access and build a participative-observational relationship in order to observe qualitative relational actions towards interracial growth. Verbal intervention may guide the people towards their set goals of communicative actions that will facilitate the building up of the broken body of Christ evidencing little interpersonal racial communication.

In the setting up of the study, verbal facilitator participation will be at its maximum in the sense of setting up Christologically liberating norms together with the group. When the process is on its way, the researcher's participation will only be to highlight digression or fulfillment of goals set up by the group. With the growing maturity of the group, the participant-observer's role would move towards model i.

The participating role allows for accurate checking of perceptions and guidance. The observer offers the opportunity of being an 'outsider', present on 'insider' detail. The energy of the observer is not involved in participating, but analysing for group gain.
There are problems in holding these two in tension. Participation and observation can and may be seen as two conflicting and competing objectives. The intention is to use them co-operatively rather than competitively to lead to the complement of each other.

In not being a full participant, Peshkin [1986] found that when the observer participated in discussion, 'obtrusiveness' became a factor combined with displays of suspicion, contempt, hostility, indifference, curiosity, friendliness, or even deference, depending on the setting and how the participant observer’s presence is or is not legitimated [Jorgensen 1989:59].

Taking the vulnerability of the participant observer’s position into account, Blau [1964] and Whyte [1984] emphasise the importance of negotiation and exchange between the observer and the participants. The position is not to be taken for granted.

Jorgensen [1989:71] has an insightful question which helps to keep the participant observer’s role constructive.

‘What do you have to offer people in exchange for trust, co-operation, information and friendship?’

Gaining acceptance and developing rapport are vital criteria for the participant observer. Jorgensen [1989:73] says that 'you do not need to be liked or loved', but it is necessary
that the group do not perceive you as objectionable or intolerable'.

Mere toleration in Hall's [1984] understanding is not sufficient for the development of the group. Genuine rapport requires that people's feelings towards one another are quite positive.

Developing rapport also needs to be understood within a cooperative rather than competitive framework.

Hostility or mistrust towards the participant observer can be handled to the advantage of the group. The observer does not need to assume superiority of conflict resolution, but gains co-operation of the group through consensus resolution.

The participant observer has the advantage of reading all the material and confirming perceptions from participants' reports. Material will be handed back with comments of encouragement and challenge weekly.

As a measure against course and researcher bias, the course was sent to twelve leaders chosen for their specific views on interracial issues. Six leaders were chosen who are known to be in favour, and six who were not in favour of interracial contact. Feedback was requested on the content and process.

One significant, detailed response was received from a black
leader who identifies himself with the oppressed. Other cursory, positive responses were received from the black members. One superficial verbal response was received from a white leader, merely stating his business as the reason for not offering a response to my request. No other responses were received.

The lack of response, assumes a denial of the racial problem by the white, male patriarchy; or perhaps reveals the insignificance of a project initiated by a woman not in a 'power' position or that the project was not sufficiently motivated within the structures of the Presbyterian church or perceived as irrelevant in the life and work of Presbyterian leadership.

The 100% black response to the request perhaps revealed the awareness of a racial problem from the oppressed group. Although the responses were positive from the black community, only one proved significant because of the critical nature of his detailed response.

Criteria for response to the course was not considered, as I assumed that the leaders who had voiced their opinions on the problem of interracial communication would respond according to their convictions.
6.2.5.2 QUALITATIVE DATA RECORDING

A tape recorder would also be an ideal recording technique. The sessions could be transcribed verbatim. However, owing to the sensitivity of the group, another method needs to be sought. Within the group, there is both a policeman and an ex-detainee who are sensitive to 'bugging devices' and the use of their statements.

The design has incorporated two forms of recording. Each member is given a handout containing a guide to group process observation [see fig.1]. The participants are asked to write a weekly intra- and interpersonal journal. The 'intra' describes their perceptions of their own functioning in the group session. The 'inter' describing their perceptions of the interpersonal communication process.
CHAPTER 7

DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO THEORY FORMATION

7.1 BACKGROUND

The preliminary investigation is to discover patterns of perceptions [worldviews] races have of one another tested within a liberating christological communicative action process.

The descriptive aspect of the study will absorb the deductive material from the literature study and focus on describing four theological areas related to interracial communication.

A Saturday morning was mooted [9-12] by the contacts as an acceptable time. The premises of accountability and guidelines of operating were opted for here by the researcher, not to be presented as a fait accompli, but as a means by which the group could begin to develop their own particular norms depending on the communication exercised within the group.

7.2 THE CONTACT GROUP

The purposive sampling group was named 'Contact'.
All three contact people agreed to the venue of St Andrew's in church in town. All concerned had access to the building. The venue was equidistant for the participating churches. The
centrality relieved transport problems as taxis were freely available to all groups. The 'cottage' provided a personal intimate setting and the neutrality of the venue seemed a good starting point.

The twelve chosen people arrived to take part in the interracial learning event: Seven from the black grouping and five from the white, with one white participant observer. The educational level was set at anyone who was able to read the advertizing pamphlet and was stimulated by the content. [The educational level was therefore approximately Std. eight and above]. The age level varied from twenty to sixty five. The target group were middle class people who believed in christological, educational liberation from racial separation and oppression.

Too few people arrived to set up a control. The four who came, of their own volition, took part in the retreat day and were asked to recruit more members for their group. The 'control' would not be able to run simultaneously.

The experiment group is biased towards the gender and racially oppressed. Only one white, young male, who is not in an influential decision-making position, agreed to participate. No 'dominant, white, patriarchal males' agreed to participate. The researcher is a white middle-class female. In essence, all group members formed part of an oppressed group, either of
race, youth or gender. Why do only the oppressed see that there is a problem?

Fig. 2 gives an indication of the participants race, age, ethnicity and gender. The diversity of the group was intended to see the influence of certain independent variables on interracial communication. The group may all be considered middle class. One member is in the process of getting matric and the others have all completed matric. Four have degrees and two are pursuing higher and two have professional qualifications. Three are working in clerical positions.

The reason the researcher agreed to study interracial communication with this diverse group, is the fact that the white racial groups predominant belief is that there will be nothing in common with people who have a different coloured skin than themselves. Rather than manipulating the independent variables, an initial study would examine a group of initiators who are willing to explore interracial communication from local churches to discover whether there are commonalities beyond the skin barrier. Further study, could hone in on specific variables which could enhance interracial contact, for example, interest groups, project groups, gender groups etc.
The study intends analysing the experimental group with exploratory and descriptive intentions.

Cicourel [1964:67] has referred to 'descriptive observations of dubious validity and value' to scientific knowledge. It is my privilege to test whether the descriptive procedure has any contribution to make to interracial worldview.
The researcher will proceed with an overt relationship with the participants, taking into consideration the importance of establishing rapport. The specific criteria being studied will remain covert, to counteract any member trying to please the researcher and confounding the results.

The use of covert strategies does have ethical implications. Whereas covert research is commonly understood as a deception of the subject, in this case the researcher asked permission to use all data within the meeting times for research purposes. Bulmer’s [1981] Social ethics clarifies the ethical implications of covert participant observer research.

The group members have been told that they are here to strive towards bridging the gap in communication between the races. They were urged to be honest and share their understanding of themselves and other groupings within their church and society.

There would be no specific leader of the bible/study fellowship group. During the general session, the date, time and leadership of the next meeting was discussed. Any person who felt called to lead the following session was asked to offer at this stage.

The venue was fixed at ‘The Cottage’ by the group.

[See Appendix E for planned and actual retreat day.]
A weekly discipline of writing a journal was stressed, because there is a temptation to postpone and neglect note-making. Adler [1987], Rambo [1987] and others have emphasized the importance of writing down the events. Jorgensen [1988:99] cautions the observer not to wait too long before writing down events, as the longer the process is left, the more likely it is that details will be forgotten.

Personal experience has revealed that written observations help to determine the amount of personal and group progress that has taken place. One tends to accumulate knowledge without realising the personal growth taking place.

The process may be considered arduous and costly in terms of time. The confirmation of group progress by all participants helps the participant observer and the group together to mature.

7.3 CONTACT PERCEPTIONS EVALUATED - FOCUSED ANALYSIS

7.3.1 'SELF AND OTHER IN THE GROUP'

[in relation to the imago dei]

All twelve participants perceived themselves created in God’s image and therefore bearers of God’s image. How they were racially perceived in society limited their expression of the imago dei. Distinction needs to be made between the
anthropological models experienced in society, and within this
group, to reveal the predominantly, transformative
enculturational model present in the group. Elements of the
accommodational model were evident during the group sessions.

The comments will be indicated as follows:

B=Black, W=white, F=female, M=male, X=Xhosa, P=Pedi,
E=English, A=Afrikaans, D=Dutch, NS=North Sotho, N=Ndebele and
SS=South Sotho, YA=young Adult under 21.

B/X/F : 'Since the 9th June, 1990, [start of the course]
there are changes in my life. I realised that God is Great. At
first when I had a problem nobody listened. I thought God does
not love me. I cried at times. Now I know that there is
someone who listens and does not treat me like dirt.'

B/SS/M/YA : 'This time together is changing my attitude
towards white personalities. I don't only have to do things
their way.'

B/N/M : 'When I started in the bank, I had to walk up the
stairs while the whites got into the lift. I had to walk up
and down many floors often. Once I got in the lift and I was
told 'Kaffir...uit.' Thank God for my church which taught me
about my true self. It is nice to realise that what I am
trying to achieve as far as God is concerned other race groups
are also now trying to achieve. I feel now, that I am not
trying hard enough, but now being one of the group members, I am really determined to work even harder. To see other people sacrificing their time to be in the discussion made me more determined to be here to find out more about what I am missing or don’t see. All of a sudden my eyes are open.’

B/P/N: 'This togetherness is changing my attitude towards the white personalities. It is shifting me from the old world. I am used to the cold war, where we do not say what we want to say, because we alone will suffer.’

B/SS/M: 'God and Jesus Christ, my family and church have always made me know that I am important and that praying together changes things. I feel good with my Lord. Sharing whatever God reveals to us helps us to know more. We know less when we don’t come together.’

B/NS/M: 'My previous stand about the whites: We used to think oppositly.[sic] Our innerself was not good to Jehovah, Our Creator. We thought they never cared about us. They have the big cars, we have no food.

After sharing ideas and views with our colligues [sic], I then realized that we are taught to fight the darkness together.

Those who live in it will be deceiving [sic] themselves. I never respected the whiteman. I was swayed to hatred by their wrongdoing and wrong saying.’
B/P/F: 'Forgive them they do not know what they are doing.' I felt sorry for the whites because they thought that they knew best. I became a Matron through hard work. Education and talking to other groups helped me to understand them and us. There is not enough meeting. I go to all the meetings where other groups can meet. It is only when we come together will we understand the pain of my people and how to move forward.'

W/E/F: 'I have mixed with a number of cultures. Getting to know one another helps me to know more about God.'

W/E/D/F: 'I have had different experiences with Dutch, Greek, Belgian and British people. I learnt about loyalty, trust, understanding, patience and love. In this group, when someone is missing the group has a different atmosphere. It leaves gaps. I like talking and listening to them.'

W/E/F: 'I grew up in a christian English home in an English/Afrikaans suburb. Are there major differences between black christians and white christians? Up until this point in my life, as long as they kept their distance, and did not interfere with my life, I was pretty OK. Then after session 1, and a bit of thought, I had a feeling of expectation and excitement, of a new challenge, an opportunity to learn and grow.'
M/W/A: 'Being in the police force, you get to know many cultures, but you only meet them in not so good circumstances. I knew because I am a policeman that I was going to be a big discussion point during the sessions. But I am willing to help them understand certain things that they judged without knowing the other side of the story.' In the second session, he wrote: 'I have learned a great deal about black cultures that I didn't even know existed before. Well this is a great and eventful day. We are all God's flock of sheep. All sheep are in the same situation at a sheep farm. Everyone gets to be killed for their meat and wool.'

W/E/F: 'I have met with many different groups. I continue to seek contact with others as good communication leaves people mutually encouraged in serving God.'

7.3.2 CHARISMATA

The people of God espouse that all people have gifts to enhance God’s work. Paul’s charismata or gifts of the Holy Spirit [1 Cor.12:4] which operate within the one body have diverse functions [1 Cor 12:22-31].

These gifts are related to communication function in that the gifts of the Spirit may enrich, by bringing together the separate body of believers. Gifts are interrelated with communicative actions.
Bittlinger [1974:16] states that whether 'ordinary or extraordinary' the gifts 'serve to build up the body of Christ.'

There are several debates regarding the nature of charismata, that is whether gifts are ordinary or extraordinary and what may be considered a gift. Kung [1976:239] and Bittlinger [1974:18] opt for the ordinary, although Bittlinger warns that not all ordinary actions may be considered gifts. The upliftment of the body is the criterion for the naming of gifts.

The importance in this study is not to expound on the variety of gifts given by Paul, [1 Cor 12:8-11, 1 Cor 12:28-31, Eph 4:11,12, Rom 12:6-8] and other interpretations on what may be attributed to Paul's understanding of gifts, but to discover what gifts the people believe they are offering to build communication in the group.

Domination/accommodation in the past has not uplifted the whole body. Denise Ackermann [1986:97] addresses the problem of domination by stating that 'a community of believers which wants to preserve it's integrity and avoid patterns of domination, must above all, recognize that the charism above all charisms is love' [1 Cor 13:13].

Each person identified gifts within themselves and others in group sessions. The main gifts which uplifted the body were
the gifts of: teaching, preaching, pastoring, encouraging, praying, prophecy, wisely listening and interpreting. These communicative actions assisted the people to know God and each other better.

The interesting dynamic here was that the older, black woman, who was used to dominating in her own community, was extremely quiet. She said that she needed to be nursed like a baby in spiritual matters. Although she had been detained for her beliefs, she said that she felt biblically illiterate and was not used to this 'democratic approach' in groups.

In her culture, one way [sender-receiver] communication was acceptable. The older one spoke, the younger listened. She was used to giving information. She was used to the authorities giving information and she had to comply. In detail she shared about her work during the 1976 riots; comforting the parents and family of dead and missing children.

Her gifts were temporarily withdrawn as she tried to make sense of this inclusive pattern, which did not take specific recognition of her cultural norm that respected elders [to the detriment of the verbal contribution of the young member].

Only two of the black members saw that their gifts were enriching relations between black and white races. The others all questioned what they had to offer 'whites members'. They knew their gifts in their own community. Four of the white
members were confident about what they could offer. One had not examined her gifts. She was the youngest member of the group.

Although the sessions could be run as the 'leader' decided, within the guidelines agreed and set by the group, it was interesting that the white group offered their services immediately.

Only after the participant observer's intervention and encouragement of all gifts that had been evidenced in the group so far, did black members offer to lead a group.

The non-verbal delight after leading a session, and later expression of accomplishment from one of the black leaders was sufficient upliftment for the group for an entire year.

Affirmation by the group brought tears of joy as he stated: 'I never thought I could do or would ever do this.' Yet in his own church, he was highly regarded as a leader and teacher.

Was he living up until now within the bondage of the white, superior image which he despised and rejected? Why, if he rejects the theory, does he live within it in practice and believe that his gifts are inferior?

This 'gift inferiority' was expressed by the majority of black members. The inferiority is related to the anthropological,
inferior position society has imposed and lack of sufficient affirmation from the body of white believers over the years.

The two young members, one black and one white, were grateful for the affirmation which helped them to begin exploring their gifts. Their confidence was clearly evidenced in the leading both took in the 'agape' feast held at the end of the course.

Their singing, enthusiasm, insightful comments and sense of humour were clear communicative actions that brought about personal bonding in the group, assisting the members to laugh and enjoy themselves in God's company.

7.3.3 ECCLESIOLOGICAL IMAGE

This dissertation has opted for the 'people of God' image. The study will be determining what conceptual models the participants espouse with regard to inter-church participation and what is presently in practice.

On arrival, the participants were asked to draw a picture of how they think a visitor might see their church leadership and grassroot people functioning with other local churches. They were then asked to draw a picture of how they would like a visitor to see their church operating with other local churches.
The participant-observer asked the participants to describe their church in terms of structures and functions. They were asked to compare their church to the structures and functions set up by the interracial communication group. After discussion of the church images, [1 Peter 2:9-17] the participants engaged in 1 and 5 of the relational bible study [p.14-15].

All twelve of the group drew the shepherd-flock model. Only one white member was completely unhappy with the way the model was interpreted in practice and advocated a people of God option. The rest of the group shared frustration with the shepherd-flock practice and called for a change in the understanding of 'shepherd and flock.'

In the exercise of guidance, the 'shepherd' is often experienced as the authoritarian in which one-way communication is expressed from the shepherd to the flock.

At present the predominantly 'shepherd-flock' model, with authoritarian shepherds, is seen to be stifling the spiritual gifts of the people.

Within the interracial group it was interesting to note that, although I, as participant observer, set myself up as one of the group, the group stated that they needed a shepherd. They were not willing to allow a leader/s to emerge from the group.
I was the ordained member of the group, and was perceived as the 'shepherd' although the role was not assumed by myself.

The liberating exercise came in the understanding of their own contribution in the group. The excitement of sharing their gifts and discovering new ones led to the awareness of the little use of the people of God in practice.

The problem in interracial services and gatherings previously set up, the shepherd authoritarianly decided when and to which people the flock were to relate, without consulting grassroots people about the process.

Before interracial gatherings are to be initiated, the group requested that the grassroots people be contacted for initial discussions and prayer together with the shepherd, so that the shepherd can make wise, rather than personal, decisions about race and contact at local level.

The hierarchical structure of the ordained and laity needs attention in the decision making of interracial events.

This study is perceived to be the genesis of helping to establish common symbols with which different racial groups could generate commonality and discussion.
7.3.4 BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

All participants regard the scriptures as the highest written authority communicating God's word to people. Eleven of the twelve participants regard the scriptures as the most important written guide for their lives.

All twelve participants perceive that they operate primarily from a contextual model. All seven of the 'black' participants operate predominantly from a hermeneutic of condemnation or suspicion, where traditional and current western interpretations are seen to be abstract, evasive and irrelevant in speaking about the word of God in concrete human conditions. I know whites who sing and proclaim God's love in the church daily at home and weekly in the church and don't even know the surname of their servant or what family they have [Motlabi 1987:2].

Two of the black participants combined the above with a hermeneutic of proclamation, where God brings hope to the suffering racially oppressed. 'God has always been on the side of the oppressed, the unjust will fall, we must continue to pray for peace and justice.'

One white woman could be categorised within a constructive, social relevancy hermeneutic. Two of her questions addressed to the black participants were: 'How do you feel about the interview between Nicodemus, the Pharisee and Jesus?' and If
Nicodemus had asked you what it meant to be 'born again, what would you say?' [John 3:1-21].

Her approach in the relational bible studies was to recall social conditions through a historical-critical reconstruction of biblical history from a racially oppressed perspective. Two white members espoused a hermeneutic of proclamation and two although believing that they operated from a contextual model, practiced a revelational model, where scripture was approached fundamentally, without appealing to the context.

Eleven members tended to be fundamental and selective in their approach to scriptures. Only one member reflected critically on her chosen historical-critical hermeneutic. The rest were satisfied that their selected passages were given by the Holy spirit to be acted upon. The distinctive pattern of perception here is the hermeneutic of suspicion/condemnation on the part of the racially oppressed and contextual naivety on the part of those who have not been racially oppressed.

7.4 CONTRIBUTION TO THEORY FORMATION

How can this qualitative exploratory descriptive study contribute to theory formation regarding the liberation of interpersonal communication between the race groups?
Firstly, the researcher has come to understand and name her liberational worldview and interracial communication in local Presbyterian churches in praxis.

An enculturational model in praxis proved to be a liberating experience. Interracial communication from an accommodation perspective seems to hinder rather than build relationships with the oppressed ‘outsiders’, as the ‘outsider’ accommodates to ‘insider’ worldviews to the detriment of their own learning.

Models of racial enculturation need to be initiated and present theory typologies for enhancing the enculturation model, for example R. Niebuhr’s ‘Christ within culture, Christ above and Christ transforming culture’ need exploration.

A biblical model containing an ‘interpersonal communication typology’ for groups has been espoused. The model demands critical reflection in order to facilitate interracial communicative action that consists of a two way rather than a mono-communicative structure from the ‘insiders’ imposed upon ‘outsiders.’

The black participants still view themselves within an accommodational model, where the black culture has to accommodate to the white western dominant patriarchy within society and some structures within the church.
Evidence of enculturation in praxis has set a precedent for the establishment of racially transformative anthropological models in local churches.

The examination of gifts allowed an 'inferiority' regarding the black participants perception of the use of their gifts amongst whites to emerge. Liberating black charismata amongst these whites required affirmation. May this finding be generalized?

The white race needs to investigate whether confidence in their gifts in interracial settings may be substantiated by their black sisters/brothers. The image presented of self sufficient white or black worldviews was challenged by the growth that took place in interpersonal contact with God and each other.

The transformation in both white and black participants, from one sided racial perspectives of 'the other' to incorporation of 'the other's' perception into their previously separated white/black worldview reveals that God may not fully be known by one racial group.

Evidenced growth within the previously entrenched racial worldviews needs to be taken seriously in local church praxis, where the majority practice the separation of racial worldviews and simultaneously espouse racial unity in Christ's name.
People belonging to God in an interracial communication setting, propose a re-examination of the role of the shepherd and an encouragement of people participation that assumes each member has gifts to develop interpersonal relationships amongst different race groups.

The present dominant hierachical clergy structure limits the expression of the gifts of the spirit amongst the laity. Interracial gatherings require the grassroots people to be approached in terms of gathering procedures.

It is not to be assumed that leaders know what kind of events the grassroots people would relate to when planning an interracial event.

The scriptures form a vital part of the participants lives. Interracial communication invites the confrontation of varying hermeneutical approaches to the scriptures. The participant can no longer accept her/his position uncritically. Differing procedures requires reflection on why a particular approach and stance has been chosen.

The interracial engagement requires each member to reflect critically on their patterns of perception influencing their biblical position and communicative actions and how their biblical hermeneutic influences their patterns of perception. The confrontation of diverse racial groupings cause hermeneutics and actions to be modified or maintained.
Integrity is gained by developing 'with' perceptions rather than about perceptions of the 'other'. Espousing racial unity requires communicative actions that deepen racial relationships and liberate racial groupings from oppressive conditions.

Previous racial stereotypes limited all participants understanding of God, themselves and others.

In order to transform the local church from entrenched separate biblical and anthropological worldviews about one another, interpersonal communication is proposed as a means to achieving a unity in praxis that has integrity amongst all the races.

It is hoped that clarifying a racial liberational Christ worldview, races could be transformed from the present static racial separation model into a christological model not based on race as the determining factor for communication or non-communication.

Worldviews regarding race are challenged to communicate race as a complimentary variable within the doctrine of humanity. The co-operative model of twelve has presented practical evidence of a transforming process amongst the people of God.
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APPENDIX A
INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION MODEL

APPENDIX C

THE FUTURE STARTS HERE—SERENDIPITY BIBLE COURSE

DISCOVERING TOGETHER
THE MEANING OF
GOD'S KINGDOM

by 'Tricia Williams
Introduction to Serendipity

SERENDIPITY GROUP BIBLE STUDY  
BOOKS

Serendipity Bible study is essentially a course for small groups, and centres around the growth of relationships in such Bible study groups. It’s an approach that helps groups to discover the true meaning of *Koinonia* - a fellowship where people really care and support one another. In each study emphasis is placed on encouraging people to apply God’s word in a way that produces action and change and in an atmosphere where there is trust, encouragement and support. In such groups pastoral care develops as a natural consequence of learning together.

The original Serendipity study series was developed in the United States under the authorship of Lyman Coleman. Scripture Union agreed to edit and publish a British edition which is still available from Scripture Union Mail Order: S11 Clothier Road, Brislington, Bristol, BS4 5RL.

This current series is brand new - originated in this country and designed specifically for British churches but retaining the essence of Serendipity. If the Serendipity approach is new to you read the section below, What's behind Serendipity?

This new material has been devised by Serendipity (UK) a recognised offshoot of American Serendipity whose aim is to continue to produce in this country material for study groups wishing to grow not only in their knowledge of God but also in their caring and support for one another.

WHAT'S BEHIND SERENDIPITY?  
An understanding of groups

Central to the Serendipity approach is an understanding of how relationships can be nurtured in small groups so that people can learn to take risks in opening themselves to God and to each other. This understanding is best represented by the diamond below, each point of the diamond representing a stage in the life of the group.

![Diamond diagram with points labeled: Affirmation, Storytelling, Koinonia, Goal Setting]

People need the opportunity to share something of themselves and need to hear others sharing elements of their own lives, before relationships can begin to open up - this has been called *Storytelling*. Everyone needs to know that they are being listened to, and need encouragement in their learning and in their relationships. When we respond to someone with a ‘thank you’, for example, or ‘I found your contribution helpful’, we are helping them to realise that they are valuable in themselves, and they have a vital contribution to make to the growth of others. This is called *Affirmation*. In experiencing these things in a group that meets together on a regular basis (even over a limited number of weeks) people begin to share their deeper longings or hurts or discover that they can trust others to support them in their struggles. Individuals begin to share what God is saying to them and the changes they need to make in the way they live. This is called *Goal-setting*. Serendipity Bible study material encourages these stages to be reached through Bible study.

Needs in our churches

The needs addressed by this material are reflected in our churches and in society:

1. The need for applied biblical knowledge: Christians are crying out for help in applying their Christian Faith in an increasingly complex world. Knowing what the Bible says isn’t enough - people want to know how to translate this knowledge into action.

2. The need to belong: The increased pressures, pace of living, and the constant moving of home, all work against the development of deep relationships. Many feel a need for relationships that are more satisfying, long lasting, and with greater commitment, depth and caring. Some long to belong to a group where there is some stability. Some feel that deeper relationships should be a distinctive feature of the local church as it witnesses to a lonely generation.

3. The need to share the burden: Pressures on Christians as they try to survive in the world are often intolerable - witnessed by emotional/psychological disorders, increased divorce rates and the problems of parenting. Many feel that one answer to this is for Christians to share each others' burdens more seriously - not only prayerfully but in practical ways as well.

4. The need to build the church as a community: a growing conviction that the church is meant to be a community of Christians of all ages and backgrounds who demonstrate in the way they live the true nature of God's Kingdom and who experience what the New Testament means by *Koinonia* or fellowship.

A GUIDE TO THIS SERIES

There are nine books in this series, covering three broad areas of study: 1. A Bible book (the whole book or a selection); 2. Study of doctrine; 3. Issues in Christian living. Turn to the back cover for a chart which sets out their titles and subject matter. Each book is self-contained with six or seven weeks' study in each.
HOW TO RUN A SERENDIPITY GROUP

Using Serendipity to form new groups

Serendipity is essentially group study material and, to be used effectively, requires the establishment of small groups of people committed to meeting regularly.

Groups of between five and twelve people are ideal for these studies – meeting in someone’s home or in a church building. Where groups are larger we recommend that they are sub-divided, each sub-group having its own trained leader. But leave the dividing up until the end of a series of studies, otherwise continuity will be broken. Two or more groups could work independently in the same building in this way.

New people can join groups after a series has been started, but care must be taken in incorporating them. If possible, the leader should meet the newcomer beforehand, to explain what has happened so far. Time can be given at the beginning of group time for the newcomer to introduce themselves to the other members, and vice versa.

Group commitment

Relationships within groups need to be built up and this will only happen if members are prepared to commit themselves to meetings. We recommend that people are asked to make that commitment to the series (six or seven weeks) and then to renew it, if they wish, for further limited periods. In order to emphasise this commitment there is a covenant form in the beginning of each book for members to sign.

Leading a group

Leadership of a small group should not be taken on lightly. Each small group needs a leader who understands Serendipity material, and who has time to prepare and to take responsibility for the practical running of the group. If possible, leaders should attend a Serendipity training course or use the training course provided in Serendipity Bible studies for small groups: Leader’s Guide. Details of training events, and of this published training course, are available from Serendipity (UK), 48 Peterborough Road, London SW6 3EB.

The leader should feel free to use each session’s outline as appropriate to the group – perhaps reducing the time taken over sections or, on occasions, even missing out whole sections. The leader is responsible for seeing that all extra materials are supplied, including extra Bibles.

Worship

Groups may wish to spend much of their time in prayer and worship. Consequently, time-allocation is left to the discretion of the leader who will need to take the group’s wishes into account as the session is planned.

Keeping the group open

There is a danger that a small group of people, developing a close relationship between its members, will become inward-looking and isolated from those outside. So it is hoped that groups will make a special effort to ‘open their doors’ to those around them – friends, neighbours, children of group members, relations etc. Special evenings can be arranged regularly – perhaps every month or every two months – when the programme focuses on a meal, coffee and chat, or on some of the intergenerational ‘fun’ activities published in the ‘families’ section of the Leader’s Guide. You never know – others may want to join your study group as a result of these events!

Using Serendipity in established groups

The Serendipity material can, of course, be used for existing groups. The method is different to many other types of group Bible study, though, and leaders should prepare group members for something different – a different emphasis (application rather than just understanding). Anyone used to one particular form of study is liable to resist a new one, but encourage everyone to participate. Our experience shows that established groups gain far more than they expect to when they use the programme in full. Among the gains for existing groups are: even deeper relationships, the chance for everyone to speak, and the assistance given to leaders especially in terms of helping individuals contribute fully.

Using this series

Each book in this series consists of six or seven studies for groups. Each book is a self-contained course, with leader’s notes included. Sessions are designed to be tackled in one evening but they may be spread over two evenings if so desired. Each session is structured in the same way:

Icebreaker (15 mins) … a warm-up exercise at the start of the session to help the group unwind. Usually based around an activity connected with the theme of the session. This section often requires some preparation before the session.

Relational Bible Study (15 mins) … an initial, and fairly light, excursion into the Bible passage, relating it to the lives of those in the group through multiple choice questions.

In-Depth Bible Study (20 mins) … moving deeper into the passage and discovering more about its relationship to life, but sticking to the passage under consideration.

Going Further (15 mins) … an optional section for those who want more depth to their study, often referring the group to other parts of the Bible containing similar teaching. This section may be incorporated into the group time, or offered to group members as homework, or left to those who wish to use it for personal study.

My Story (10 mins) … an encouragement to the group to relate the session teaching to their lives.

Notes … provide background study material – primarily for those who lead the group – though group members are encouraged to read them, too. Notes on difficult verses, or explanations of the context of the passage, are also given.

Leader’s Notes … are given at the back of the book. General points which apply to all sessions are listed. Specific information for each session is also given.
Group Covenant

fore you start on this course, it is important to agree as a group on your goals and common disciplines. Like Weight Watchers, the strength of the group is in these common disciplines.

The Covenant

or the duration of this series we agree to the following disciplines as a group:

attendance: To give priority to the group meetings. Except for emergencies we will be present and on time.

participation: To give ourselves to the purpose of the group — to get to know each other and become a spiritual community — by sharing our ‘stories’ with one another.

confidentiality: To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential.

accountability: To allow the rest of the group to hold each of us accountable to the goals we set for ourselves.

support: To give each other the right to call upon one another for help and support in times of temptation and need — even in the middle of the night. We realise that we need the help of each other to overcome temptation, spiritual depression, and weakness.

Evangelism: To be willing and ready at any time to welcome newcomers into the group who need its support and help, and who will agree to these minimum disciplines.

SPECIFICS

We will meet on (day) _____________ Babysitting _____________

at (place) ________________

from (time) ________ to ________

Newcomers _____________

WHAT WE WANT TO DO ABOUT . . .

Refreshments _____________ Absence _____________

I will try, with God’s help, to be a regular, faithful, caring member of this group.

Signed _____________

NAME PHONE NO. NAME PHONE NO.

_________________________ ______________________

_________________________ ______________________

_________________________ ______________________

_________________________ ______________________

_________________________ ______________________

Remember: new people can join the group at any time during the course.
God is sovereign. Throughout history, throughout time and eternity; throughout our world, our universe and beyond it; whether men recognize his rule or not – our God reigns.

Sometimes when we look at the suffering and injustice of our world, we may think ‘It doesn’t seem to be that way!’ Ever since the fall, man has been excluded from the kingdom of God and has instead been born into ‘the kingdom of darkness’. Like his father, Adam, he has chosen to reject God’s rule. And the whole of creation has suffered as a result. But even as God announced the consequences of the fall, he had a plan ready which would enable men and women to be brought back into loving relationship with himself. A way would be provided for man once more to come into the kingdom of God; and this world, spoilt by sin, would eventually be replaced by a new creation.

The theme of God’s kingdom runs throughout the Scriptures. In the Old Testament, God’s dealings with the Israelites and the laws he gave them demonstrate the values of the kingdom. The prophets speak of the king – the Messiah – who would come to inaugurate God’s kingdom on earth. In the gospels, Jesus, the Messiah fulfils those prophecies as he announces the arrival of God’s kingdom on earth. It is through his death on the cross that the way is opened to Jew and Gentile alike to come in and enjoy the benefits of living under the rule of God. Our response to him is the decisive factor in entering the kingdom. In the epistles, the writers teach God’s people how to live as members of the kingdom whilst still surrounded by the results of the fall. And in Revelation we are shown the end of time when death and evil will be totally vanquished, when there will be a new heaven and a new earth, when the kingdom will be seen in all its glory and everyone will recognize the king.

As Christians, we are members of that kingdom; the church is its visible ‘exhibit’. As such, our lives should demonstrate our King’s values and concerns. To acknowledge God as sovereign is to know that we have no rights on our own life or possessions. The teaching of the kingdom challenges our values, our attitudes towards money and possessions, our treatment of other people – especially those we consider less important, our view of ourselves and our relationship with God. It challenges us to see that we are in a battle situation and need to take up the offensive, proclaiming the good news not just in words but in deeds which our local community or nation can’t fail to notice.

Yes, we long for the time when the kingdom is fully revealed, when we will serve the King in perfect peace with no hindrances; but whilst we are on this earth we have a responsibility as God’s people to be part of the answer to our prayer ‘Your will be done on earth as in heaven’, as we stand up for justice and righteousness. Living in such a way will bring us into sharp confrontation with some people as God’s light shows up their darkness; but others, like Nicodemus, will be attracted to God’s kingdom through what they see and will want to become members of the kingdom themselves.

Exploring the meaning of the kingdom together is a risky and exciting business. It could turn our lives completely upside down . . .
Now try the same for similarities between our world and the new heaven and earth:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our world now</th>
<th>The new heaven and earth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is God like? Fill in the verses from the passage you have just read which illustrate the following qualities. Then add some more of God’s qualities that you can find here:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>God is . . .</th>
<th>Verse: God is . . .</th>
<th>Verse:</th>
<th>God is . . .</th>
<th>Verse:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holy</td>
<td>Just</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loving</td>
<td>Light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerful</td>
<td>Welcoming</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creator</td>
<td>Hates evil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What things do you think this picture of the new heaven and earth should encourage you to do? (For example: ‘Tell my friend who attends seances what God thinks of such things’ – see 21:8.)

Going Further

In these verses John is describing the climax of his vision. Unknown to him, it is also the fitting climax to all of the Scriptures. Look back to Genesis chapters 1–3. Compare this with the passage from Revelation. Now consider why these last words of John are so appropriate and such an encouragement to God’s people.

2. The benefits of God’s kingdom are not just for our enjoyment in a future life. The marks of God’s kingdom can be seen throughout Israel’s history and find their perfect fulfilment in Jesus Christ who came to inaugurate God’s kingdom on earth.

Study Isaiah 61, where the prophet speaks of the Messiah who would bring the new order; and Luke 4:16–21, where Jesus announces its arrival. What picture of the kingdom do these verses give?

3. The New Testament teaches that the church, as the body of Christ, is a living demonstration of the kingdom. In what specific ways could your group be part of the answer to the prayer: ‘Your kingdom come’ in the next few weeks? (For example, by helping one another, meeting a need in your church, doing something for the local community.)
These pictures in Revelation of the kingdom make me feel... threatened | really excited

If I am part of the 'bride' (21:2) I feel:
I haven't even had a bath! Just my bouquet left to pick up!

How sure are you that you'll be in the new heaven and earth?
I don't think I'll get in Absolutely certain

One thing I could do this week to bring the benefits of God's kingdom to one other person is...

One thing I could do this week to make myself better prepared for the new heaven and earth is...

If possible, close by praying for one another remembering some of the things you talk about during the 'Icebreaker' and 'My Story'.


In the two final chapters of Revelation, the apostle John gives us this sparkling picture of the new heaven and new earth. So amazingly beautiful is John's tantalizing vision of God's kingdom, he can hardly find the words to communicate what he is seeing and understanding. Human words and images are stretched to the limit and we can only begin to guess at the reality.

Jesus inaugurated the kingdom when he came to earth and, consequently, as Christians we have a foretaste of all the good things that are still to come, even though at present we are surrounded by the results of the fall. The future kingdom has invaded our present age. John's vision of God's kingdom, where evil has no place, provides us with the ideal whose fulfilment we long for and towards which we strive.

21:1
No longer any sea: The sea is a picture of constant change and, for the people of John's time, a frightening place, fraught with dangers. (See Tyn dall New Testament Commentary on Revelation, (Morris.)

21:6
The Alpha and the Omega: These are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. There is nothing which is outside the compass of God.

22:1
The river of the water of life: Some other references to a river flowing out from Jerusalem are: Ezek. 47:1-12; Zechariah 14:8; Psalm 46:4.

22:2
The tree of life: See also Genesis 3:22-24. Remember that John is using picture language. The month referred to cannot be literal months as there is moon or sun in the new heaven and earth. The picture of the tree of life yielding one crop after another suggests a constant, never-ending supply.
SESSION 1

Your kingdom come

(Lleader's notes: page 31)

Aim

to get a glimpse of God's kingdom, to give us encouragement for the present and hope for the future.

Icebreaker

Ask in pairs. Think about your own answers to the following then tell your partner.

What's the best thing that has ever happened in:
- a. my family?
- b. my church?
- c. the world during my lifetime?

One thing I would really like to happen at the moment in...
- a. my family, is...
- b. my church, is...
- c. the world, is...

Ask about some of these with the whole group.


The New Jerusalem

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.'4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'5 He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new!' Then he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.'6 He said to me: 'It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.7 He who overcomes will inherit all things, and I will be his God and he will be my son.'8 But he cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practise magic arts, the idolaters and all liars -- their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulphur. This is the second death.'9

I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendour into it.10 On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.11 The glory and honour of the nations will be brought into it.12 Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

The River of Life

1Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

6The angel said to me, 'These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place.'

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Relational Bible Study

Imagine that the new heaven and earth (21:1) will be:
- like a super de-luxe hotel room.
- a non-physical world.
- like this world without the bad bits.
- all beautiful buildings and trees.
- I can’t imagine it!
- Other _______________________

What I am especially looking forward in the new heaven and earth is:
1. my bad back not hurting any more.
2. no more dark.
3. knowing God is close.
4. the end of materialism.
5. no unemployment.
6. fellowship with the rest of God’s family.
7. no more death.
8. being and feeling free.
9. Other ______________________

3. How do you feel about those who will be excluded from the new heaven and earth? (See verses 21:8 and 27.)
   a. Sad.
   b. Glad they have gone.
   c. Justice must be done.
   d. Guilty.
   e. It’s their own fault anyway!
   f. Other ______________________

4. How do you imagine you will ‘serve’ the King? (See 22:3.)
   a. Sit and meditate.
   b. Play a harp.
   c. Do ‘good’ things.
   d. Praise him.
   e. Other ______________________

5. Why do you think God has given us this picture of the new heaven and earth?
   a. So that we know what to expect in the next life.
   b. To warn us.
   c. To cheer us up.
   d. So that we have an ideal to work towards in the ‘here-and-now’.
   e. Other ______________________

In-Depth Bible Study

List as many differences as you can find in these verses between our world now and the new heaven and earth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our world now</th>
<th>The new heaven and earth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eg. has night and day</td>
<td>has constant light</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which of these do you feel is most important? Mark it with an ‘X’. Talk about your choice with the group.
Aim
To learn more about the servant-King – Jesus.

Icebreaker
Choose one of these characters or someone else who you really admire: the Queen Mother, Wesley, a pop star, Mother Teresa, a sportsman, Sir Robin Day, a famous scientist, Dr. Billy Graham.

Imagine you are that character. Now in pairs, A and B, take turns to interview one another, with the rest of the group as audience, without mentioning the name of your ‘hero’. A is in character, B is the interviewer. If you don’t know the precise answer to the question, give a vague, general answer or guess. (B could ask questions like: ‘Where did you grow up?’ ‘What subjects were you good at in school?’ A may reply, as the Queen Mother: ‘I lived in a number of very large houses, one of which was a castle. I didn’t go to school, I was taught at home by a governess.’)

Then swap round. The other members of the group have to try to guess who the interviewee is (no more than 2 or 3 minutes). When the group has guessed (tell them, if they can’t!) the person being interviewed tells the rest of the group why they admire that person.

Read: Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12

The Suffering and Glory of the Servant

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

By oppression and judgment, he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants?

For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken.

He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.
it was the LORD’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer,
I though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering,
ill see his offspring and prolong his days,
3 the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.
4 at the suffering of his soul,
will see the light of life and be satisfied;
is knowledge my righteous servant will justify many.
d he will bear their iniquities.

12Therefore I will give him a portion among the great,
and he will divide the spoils with the strong,
because he poured out his life unto death,
and was numbered with the transgressors.
For he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.

Relational Bible Study
By the following list mark with a tick three qualities you would expect (not necessarily all) to find in a ruler of this world; and then mark with an ‘X’ three qualities that you see in Isaiah’s prophetic description of Jesus, the King, in the passage you have just read:

- Expects others to serve him
- Despised and misunderstood
- A Peacemaker
- Ill-treated
- Idolized
- Totally dependable
- Impressive appearance
- Would have a rich funeral

- Serves others
- Very rich
- Public acclaim
- Owns nothing
- Lots of privileges
- Willing to die for others
- Self-effacing

If you were a member of the royal family and someone told you that you were going to be treated as the person described in this passage from Isaiah, how would you feel? Choose one or more answers from the following:

a. I can’t believe this is happening!
b. I won’t stand for it!
c. This must be God’s will for me.
d. Don’t you know who I am?
e. It’s not fair!
f. Other ________________________________

4. If this is a description of our King, what sort of subjects do you think he wants? Write a short advertisement for someone aspiring to be a member of his kingdom:

WANTED: ________________________________

_______________________________________

Share your ideas with the rest of the group.
In-Depth Bible Study

Take a list of all the 'unfair' things that happened to Jesus, the King, as described in this sage:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'It's not fair!'</th>
<th>Verse:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eg. He was despised</td>
<td>53:3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'What a waste!' you might say. Isaiah tells us that Jesus would feel quite the opposite about his time on earth. Why? What do the following verses suggest?

- 53:10 __________ |
- 53:11 __________ |
- 53:12 __________ |
- 52:13 __________ |

Going Further

1. The idea of a king who is also our servant takes us by surprise. Read John 13:1–17 and Philippians 2:1–11.
   ○ What can we learn about the kind of leader Jesus is from these passages?
   ○ What sort of followers does he want?

2. The word 'obedient' is significant in the Philippians passage (v. 8).
   ○ Look through the Gospels and note all those times when Jesus consciously submitted to the will of God, his Father.
   ○ What does this have to teach us as members of his kingdom?

3. Although Jesus took 'the very nature of a servant' (Philippians 2:7), he is, nevertheless, God. What sort of picture do you gain of Jesus, the King, from Revelation 1:12–18 and Daniel 7:13,14?
My Story

Think of a person who has shown you by his or her life something of what Jesus is. Tell the group about that person:

_________________________ (fill in person’s name), because _____________________________

Can you remember a time when you felt Jesus was especially close to you, helping you with a particular need? (For example, when you were facing a difficult decision or a friend was seriously ill.) Write about it in this space below:

The time I remember when I was especially aware of Jesus helping me was when...

Circle any of the words below that describe either how you are feeling or what, in your heart, you most want Jesus to bring to you now:

ANXIETY FORGIVENESS GUILT SORROW HEALING
REJECTED PEACE PAIN COMFORT
ACCEPTANCE LOVE HOPE

On a separate piece of paper write down one or two of the words you have just circled. Fold the papers and place them in the centre of the group. Mix them up well! Now take back one of the pieces of paper (not your own). Find a phrase or verse from the passage which might encourage the person whose paper you have. Read out the verse(s) you thought of:

• ‘The words on my piece of paper were...

• ‘I thought these words from Isaiah might encourage you...

NOTES: Isaiah 52:13–53:12

The Jews of Jesus’ time had a clear idea of the sort of Messiah they were expecting. He would be like other great kings and leaders of this world: an impressive, powerful, military leader who would overthrow the Roman invaders who ruled their nation; he would make Israel once again a leading and prosperous nation, feared by those around.

God’s blueprint for the Messiah given particularly in Isaiah 52:13–53:12 and in three other passages (Isaiah 42:1–9; Isaiah 49:1–13; Isaiah 50:4–11) is very different. Here we are shown the servant-King whose desire and commission is to bring justice and peace to all nations, not just to Israel. From the beginning of his earthly ministry, Jesus identifies himself with the servant model, for example, when he rejects the devil’s temptation to conform to a more conventional, earthly kingship (Matthew 4:1–11). Throughout the epistles there are many references to the servanthood of Jesus. Paul and the other writers of the New Testament clearly identify Jesus as the suffering servant Messiah depicted in the Isaiah passages. This is seen particularly in Acts 8:26–40 when Philip uses a passage from Isaiah 53 to point the Ethiopian eunuch to Jesus.

Jesus, our servant-King, gives us the example we are to follow (see Mark 10:41–45).

The following verses from the New Testament quote, echo and apply verses from the passage in Isaiah:

• John 12:37–41, Romans 10:16:
• Matthew 8:16–17:
• 1 Peter 2:20–25:
• Romans 5:19:
• Isaiah 53:4
• Isaiah 53:5–6, 9
• Isaiah 53:11
• Isaiah 53:12
On earth as in heaven

Aim

xplore the implications of the church being the demonstration model of God's kingdom on earth.

Icebreaker

w a picture to show how you think a visitor might see your church (the people, not the ding!). (For example, you might draw a hospital, an army, a hedgehog, a sun or an tract shape.)

ow show your drawing to the rest of the group and explain why you've drawn it like that.

Read: I Peter 2:9-17

1 you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a y nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of kness into his wonderful light. Once you were t people, but now you are the people of God; once u had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

11 Dear friends, I urge you as aliens and strangers in world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among theigans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, ey may see your good deeds and glorify God on the y he visits us.

Submission to Rulers and Masters

13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers; fear God, honour the king.

Relational Bible Study

Recall a time when you were 'chosen' (v. 9). (For example: to be a school prefect, getting job, being proposed to.)

ow did you feel? Choose one or more answers from the following:

a. Over-the-moon.
b. Of course they'd choose me!
c. A sense of responsibility.
d. Not bothered.
e. Will I be good enough?
f. Oh no! This is going to take a lot of time and effort.
g. Determined to do your job well.
h. What a privilege!
i. Other ______________________________

2. Knowing that God has chosen me to be a member of his kingdom makes me feel (put 'X' somewhere along the line to indicate your answer):

So what? ___________________________________________________________ That's fantastic!

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3. How do you feel about your fellow members (v. 10) of the kingdom? Choose one or more answers from the following:
   a. Why can't I be a Christian by myself?
   b. That means just the Baptists (or Anglicans, etc.) doesn't it?
   c. I feel a sense of oneness with all Christians.
   d. God doesn't expect me to be friends with people from a different background does he?
   e. It's great that being in God's family crosses all racial and class barriers.
   f. What would the neighbours think if they thought that those people were my friends?
   g. What Christ has done for us makes our differences seem unimportant.
   h. I'm delighted when I unexpectedly meet other Christians on holiday or at the bus stop.

4. Peter describes God's people as 'aliens' (v. 11). Circle any of the following areas which you think mark out the members of your church as being 'aliens' or different from the world around.

   CULTURE    CONCERN FOR SOCIETY    MORALS    DOING GOOD
   LANGUAGE    DRESS    VALUES
   PRIORITIES    STANDING UP FOR JUSTICE    CUSTOMS

Are the differences good or bad? _____________________________

5. Peter highlights three areas of our lives in this passage where we are to demonstrate God's rule (v. 17).
   Give yourself a score on the scale 1–10 (1 being the lowest) on how well you think you are doing in each. Then do the same for your church.

   | My score | My church's score |
   |----------------------------------|
   | My (my church's) relationship with God |
   | My (my church's) relationship with fellow Christians |
   | My (my church's) life in society |

6. Is there enough evidence to convict your church of being 'a people belonging to God' (v. 9; see also v. 12)? Put an 'X' somewhere along the line to indicate your answer:

   Definitely not _____________________________ Yes!
In-Depth Bible Study

The calling of a priest was, in the Old Testament, a very special calling. The priest ‘stood in the gap’ between God and man: on the one hand he represented the people when he offered sacrifices to God on their behalf. On the other hand, he represented God to the people when he announced God’s forgiveness to them. Peter calls God’s people ‘a royal priesthood’ (v. 9), after Jesus, who is both our king and priest. The idea of royalty speaks both of immense privilege and immense responsibility. How should we reflect the two aspects of this title in our society? List as many ways as you can think of below:

Our royalty (for example: protecting the weaker members of our society):

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Our priesthood (for example: praying about important issues on behalf of our society):

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Even though we are under a higher priority, we are also under the authority of our earthly rulers (see verses 13–17). How are we to live under this régime?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

What actions of ours does this passage suggest as being the sort of actions that point people outside the kingdom to King? Choose one or more answers in the following:
- Bringing people to church services.
- Turning a blind eye to evils in society.
- Respecting others.
- Bible bashing.
- Doing good.
- Not doing wrong things.
- Telling people what God has said and done.
- Other __________________________

4. Peter tells us to ‘live as servants of God’ (v. 16). Write down one need or issue in your local community or nation where your group or church could ‘serve’.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Talk and pray about this with the group.
Going Further

How far can or should we follow the example of the believers in Acts 2:42–47 and Acts 4:32–37?

1. Why is unity amongst God’s people so important? See John 17:20–23 and John 13:34,35.

My Story

In pairs, tell your partner one thing which you see in him or her that reflects God’s rule in their life.

1. ‘In order for the church in this country to demonstrate God’s kingdom more clearly, we need to:

2. ‘I feel that the church in this country is already clearly demonstrating God’s kingdom in these ways:

3. How can I be involved in what I have written for numbers 2 and 3?

Close by praying for one another and your church.

NOTES: 1 Peter 2:9–17

‘The church is meant to be the Kingdom community, a model of what human community looks like when it comes under the rule of God, and a challenging alternative to secular society.’ (Issues Facing Christians Today, John Stott, Marshalls.)

Verse 9
A royal priesthood: In the original this phrase conveys the sense of God’s people being a kingdom as well as a priesthood.

Verse 10
Compare this verse with Romans 9:23–25. God’s people will be made up of Gentiles as well as Jews.

Verse 11
This verse emphasises that Christians are citizens of God’s kingdom, not this world. Aliens and strangers: This conveys the sense of people who are both foreigners, having no legal rights or status, and temporary residents. This does not mean, however, that we are to remain aloof from the world (see v. 12).

Verses 13–17
Here Peter lays down some guidelines as to how God’s people are to live in society in such a way as will point others to God (see v. 12).
Aim
I think about the way into the kingdom.

Icebreaker
Groups of three or four, one person sits on a chair, the others sit on the floor or stand round him/her. The two or three people not sitting on the chair must try to persuade the one who is, to get off the chair! (Eg. ‘If you do, I’ll give you a Mars Bar!’ or ‘A spider just ran across the back of your chair’, etc.)

When you have succeeded, and if there is time, swop roles.

Read: John 3:1-21

Jesus Teaches Nicodemus

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, ‘Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.’

In reply Jesus declared, ‘I tell you the truth, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’

‘How can a man be born when he is old?’ Nicodemus asked. ‘Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb to be born!’

Jesus answered, ‘I tell you the truth, unless a man born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.’

Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, “You must be born again,” he wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the spirit.’

‘How can this be?’ Nicodemus asked.

‘You are Israel’s teacher,’ said Jesus, ‘and do you not understand these things? I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. 12 Have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? 13 No-one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. 14 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, 15 that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. 16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. 19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. 20 Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. 21 But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.’

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Relational Bible Study

Put yourself in Nicodemus' shoes. How would you have felt about this interview with Jesus? Choose one or more of the following:

a. I hope none of my colleagues sees me.
b. Is he the Messiah?
c. It's a pity it's dark, but I couldn't make it earlier.
d. I desperately want to be part of God's kingdom.
e. This is dangerous, but I've got to know the truth.
f. It's amazing, but I believe he is the Messiah!
g. There's something special here I can't quite grasp.
h. Surely a person of my position will get into the kingdom?
i. Other ____________________________

If you had the chance to meet Jesus face-to-face, which of the above reactions would you identify with?

In-Depth Bible Study

1. Nicodemus, the Pharisee, would have understood well the implications of Jesus' Old Testament reference to Moses and the snake in verses 14 and 15. (See Numbers 21:4-9 for the background to this.) What lessons would Nicodemus have learnt from Jesus' comparison between himself and the snake in the desert? List them below:

   The snake
   (Eg: the snake was lifted up.)

   Jesus
   (Jesus was lifted up on the cross.)

2. If Nicodemus had asked you what it meant to be 'born again' (v. 4), what answer would you have given? Choose one or more from the following:

   a. Turn over a new leaf
   b. Have your sins forgiven
   c. It's a cosmic experience
   d. Start all over again with God in charge
   e. It's impossible
   f. Believe in Jesus as the Messiah
   g. Jesus meant a spiritual event
   h. Other ____________________________

3. Think back to your own experience of entering the kingdom. Which of the following seemed most important to you at the time as the key to your entry into the kingdom?

   a. New birth
   b. A gift from God
   c. The Holy Spirit
   d. The cross
   e. Jesus
What does it mean to 'enter the kingdom of God' (v. 5)? Choose one or more answers from the following:

a. I'll follow God's way for me from now on.
b. I'm saved, now I can live my own life.
c. I don't have to worry about this world any more.
d. My sins are forgiven.
e. My body will never die.
f. I have a free and open relationship with God.
g. The essential 'me' is going to last for ever.
h. I place my life under the rule of God.
i. I have life with a capital 'L'.

Which verses from the passage would you use to back up the answers you have chosen for number 3?

a. ____________  
b. ____________  
c. ____________  
da. ____________  
e. ____________  
f. ____________  
g. ____________  
h. ____________  
i. ____________

Going Further

1. Read the account of the crucifixion in Luke 23:26-49. Meditate on this for a few minutes. You could do this in silence or against the background of some music on the theme of the cross.

2. Why is the cross so important to our understanding of the kingdom? In groups of three or four look at all or some of the following passages and then share your findings:
   - Galatians 6:14-16
   - Hebrews 10:1-23
   - Ephesians 2:11-22
   - Revelation 5

My Story

1. Nicodemus was first drawn to belief in Jesus by what he did (John 3:2). What first drew you to Jesus?

 Tell the group the story of how you 'entered the kingdom'.

2. What has entry into the kingdom meant for you in reality? Mark on the line below with an 'X' where you think you are now. Be honest! (You don't have to share this with the rest of the group.)

 Phew! I'm OK for the next life anyway __________________________________________________________________________

 Every bit of my life is under God's rule
3. Underline any of the following aspects of entering the kingdom, referred to in the passage, which you feel you haven’t yet fully experienced or understood:

- Being born again
- The importance of the cross
- Coming into God’s light
- Being forgiven
- The work of the Holy Spirit
- Believing in Jesus
- Receiving eternal life

If possible, talk with the group about any you have underlined and also be prepared to share your own understanding with other members of the group who are having problems with any of the above.

NOTES: John 3:1–21

Verse 3
Jesus comes straight to the point. Nicodemus hasn’t even asked a question, but Jesus knows the question on his heart. (See New Testament Commentary on John, William Hendriksen, Banner of Truth.)

The word again in the phrase born again has the sense of ‘anew’ or ‘from above’.

Verses 5, 16 and 17
Entering the kingdom of God (v. 5), receiving eternal life (v. 16) and being saved (v. 17) are equivalents of one another. The way to any of these is to be born again (v. 3). Compare verse 3 with John 1:12,13.

Verse 5
Water and the Spirit: Water baptism is the outward sign of an inner transformation. By itself it won’t save a person. It must be accompanied by the inner washing of the Holy Spirit. It is this which is most important. (See also John 1:32,33 where baptism with water and baptism with the Holy Spirit are placed side by side.) It may be that, being in the context of birth, water here refers to a person’s natural birth.

Verse 6
Sinful human beings can only give birth to other sinful human beings. It is God’s Spirit alone who can produce human lives that are pleasing and acceptable to God.

Verse 8–10
Nicodemus, the Pharisee, was a ruler and a teacher. He would have expected to be a part of the coming kingdom. He is amazed that Jesus says new birth is the only way into the kingdom. The Pharisees believed that their obedience to the law would earn them salvation. Jesus explains to Nicodemus that man cannot save himself; his salvation is dependent on the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit who can no more be controlled by man than the wind can be. Nicodemus, as a teacher of Israel, shouldn’t have been quite so astonished by what Jesus said. He should have been familiar with God’s promises in Ezekiel 36:25–27. (See Tyndale New Testament Commentary, John, R. V. G. Tasker.)

Verses 14–17
The cross is the key to the kingdom. Without it there is no way in for men, no possibility of being put right with God, no possibility of new birth, no possibility of Spirit-filled lives which demonstrate truly and powerfully God’s kingdom on earth. Its importance cannot be over-emphasised.

The story of Moses and the bronze serpent can be found in Numbers 21:4–9.
As we forgive others

(Leader's notes: pages 31 and 32)

Aim
To explore the upside-down values of the Kingdom

Icebreaker
Tear out pictures or words from magazines/papers which suggest five qualities the world looks for in people. Then tear out pictures or words which suggest five qualities God looks for in people.

In groups of four talk about them and explain the reasons for your choice.

Read: Leviticus 25:1–43

The Sabbatical Year
1 The LORD said to Moses on Mount Sinai, 2 "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: "When you enter the land I am going to give you, the land itself must observe a Sabbath to the LORD. 3 For six years sow your fields, and for six years prune your vineyards and gather their crops. 4 But in the seventh year the land is to have a Sabbath of rest, a Sabbath to the LORD. Do not sow your fields or prune your vineyards. 5 Do not reap what grows of itself or harvest the grapes of your untended vines. The land is to have a year of rest. 6 Whatever the land yields during the sabbath year will be food for you - for yourself, your manservant and maidservant, and the hired worker and temporary resident who live among you, 7 as well as for your livestock and the wild animals in your land. Whatever the land produces may be eaten.

The Year of Jubilee
8 Count off seven Sabbaths of years - seven times seven years - so that the seven Sabbaths of years amount to a period of forty-nine years. 9 Then have the trumpet sounded everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land. 10 Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each one of you is to return to his family property and each to his own clan. 11 The fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you; do not sow and do not reap what grows of itself or harvest the untended vines. 12 For it is a jubilee and is to be holy for you; eat only what is taken directly from the fields.

13 In this Year of Jubilee everyone is to return to his own property. 14 If you sell land to one of your countrymen or buy any from him, do not take advantage of each other. 15 You are to buy from your countryman on the basis of the number of years since the Jubilee. And he is to sell to you on the basis of the number of years left for harvesting crops. 16 When the years are many, you are to increase the price, and when the years are few, you are to decrease the price, because what he is really selling you is the number of crops. 17 Do not take advantage of each other, but fear your God. I am the LORD your God.

18 Follow my decrees and be careful to obey my laws, and you will live safely in the land. 19 Then the land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill and live there in safety. 20 You may ask, 'What will we eat in the seventh year if we do not plant or harvest our crops?' 21 I will send you such a blessing in the sixth year that the land will yield enough for three years. 22 While you plant during the eighth year, you will eat from the old crop and will continue to eat from it until the harvest of the ninth year comes in.

23 The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants. 24 Throughout the country that you hold as a possession, you must provide for the redemption of the land.

25 If one of your countrymen becomes poor and sells some of his property, his nearest relative is to come and redeem what his countryman has sold. 26 If, however, a man has no-one to redeem it for him but he himself prospers and acquires sufficient means to redeem it, 27 he is to determine the value for the years since he sold it and refund the balance to the man to whom he sold it; he can then go back to his own property. 28 But if he does not acquire the means to
5. What sort of picture do you get of the God who gives laws like those in the passage? Write below any words or phrases which come to mind:

He is: (eg. generous)

Does the way in which you relate to other people reflect these characteristics? 

☐ YES / ☐ NO

In-Depth Bible Study

1. What does this passage teach us about stewardship and its extent? (Look at verses 1–7, 23, 35–43.)

How do these values differ from those of the world?

2. Where should we find our security? (Look at verses 8–12, 17, 18–22.)

How does this differ from the world’s view?

3. What does this passage teach about the way we should treat our fellow men? (Look at verses 6–7, 14–17, 25–43.)

How does this differ from the world’s attitudes?

4. When faced with ideals like these, how do you react? Choose one or more from the following:
   a. I agree, but do nothing.
   b. Yes, but you can’t live like that today.
   c. Let’s think about it.
   d. I don’t see that I can change much.
   e. Let’s act now!
   f. Other ____________________

Going Further

1. How is the teaching of Leviticus 25 reinforced in the sermon on the mount? (see Matthew 5 and 6 and Luke 6:17–38.)

2. Compare kingdom and world values in one or more of these areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Money and possessions</th>
<th>Human worth</th>
<th>My rights</th>
<th>Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matthew 20:25–28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The upside-down values of the kingdom aren’t totally absent from the world. Why is it that we see kingdom values being put into practice where the rule of God isn’t acknowledged?

**My Story**

1. Which of these people, if any, do you ever treat as unimportant? Choose one or more from the following:
   a. The girl at the supermarket check-out
   b. Rough-looking teenagers
   c. Elderly people
   d. The children of adult friends
   e. The wife of a famous visiting speaker
   f. The ‘odd’ people in my church
   g. Other

2. Have you ever felt like the least important person present, a reject or unwanted? Tell the group about it. Did anyone at the time try to make you feel accepted? How did you feel about that?

3. Share ways in which this group have made you feel accepted. Think about it for a few moments first.

4. How upside-down are your values? Be honest! Are they most like kingdom values or the world’s values? Mark along the line with an ‘X’ where you think you’ve got to.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Kingdom</th>
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<td>Money and possessions</td>
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**NOTES: Leviticus 25:1-43**

The Sabbatical Year and Year of Jubilee
As well as one day in seven being set aside for a day of rest, the Israelites also set aside one year in seven as a sabbatical year. Then after forty-nine years, they had the fiftieth as the year of jubilee.

In the sabbatical year, land was left fallow, slaves were released and debts were cancelled (see also Deuteronomy 15:1-18). In addition to this, in the jubilee year land was also returned to those who had occupied it at the beginning of the jubilee period (v. 10).

The Year of Jubilee was a great leveller. It prevented the poor being endlessly exploited. It prevented an ever-widening gulf being established between the rich and the poor, but without crushing individual enterprise. Above all, it underlined the fact that it is God who owns both land and people. The Israelites were simply stewards of what God had given. The generosity embodied in the jubilee year was to be a reminder of and response to God’s generosity in liberating his people from slavery in Egypt.

In the jubilee year we see a pattern of values (generosity, forgiveness, respect for others, etc.) that should be reflected in God’s people today. Jesus made this clear when he announced the kingdom in Luke 4:16-21. ‘The year of the Lord’s favour’ (Luke 4:19) is the same as ‘The Year of Jubilee’.

For further helpful comments on the Year of Jubilee and its significance for God’s people today, see The Upside-Down Kingdom, Chapter 5, Donald Kraybill, Herald Press.

Verse 9
The day of atonement was a special day set aside once a year when atonement was made for the people’s sin. (See Leviticus 23:26-32.)

Verses 14–17
When an Israelite sold land to a fellow Israelite he was in reality selling the number of crops to be harvested before the next jubilee, because the land itself belonged to God. The selling price was therefore to be lower or higher depending on the number of harvests left until the next jubilee.

Verses 32–34
The Levites were to be treated as a special case because they were set aside to serve God and their fellow Israelites as priests.
For yours is the kingdom

Aim

To grasp more fully that the kingdom is real, present and powerful. Its success is assured, in spite of its low profile in the world.

Icebreaker: What's my secret?

Form groups of three or four. Each member of the group thinks of something they've done, secret ambition or something about themselves that they think the rest of the group wouldn't suspect or know about. The group has to try to guess each member's secret in less than twenty questions. The person with the secret can only answer 'yes' or 'no'.

Read: Matthew 13:10-17, 24-35, 44-52

The disciples came to him and asked, 'Why do you speak to the people in parables?'

He replied, 'The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. This is why I speak to them in parables.

Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.

In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

'You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.'

But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.'

The Parable of the Weeds

Jesus told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. The owner's servants came to him and said, "Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?"

"An enemy did this," he replied.

The servants asked him, "Do you want us to go and pull them up?"

"No," he answered, "because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: 'First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned, then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.'"

The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast

He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches.'

He told them still another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough.'

Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet:

'I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world.'
Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

The kingdom of heaven is like a man who found treasure hidden in a field; he hid it again, and then in his joy he sold all he had and bought that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold all he had and bought it.

Parable of the Net

Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

'Have you understood all these things?' Jesus asked.

'Yes,' they replied.

He said to them, 'Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.'

Relational Bible Study

The disciples wanted to know why Jesus was speaking about the kingdom in parables (v. 10). What do you think?

3. What would you say to encourage anyone (including yourself) who has circled 2b, c, d or e?

4. Imagine that you are one of the disciples listening to Jesus. How would you feel about the kingdom? Write below:

One thing that worries you:

One thing that surprises you:

One thing that pleases you:

One thing that inspires you:

3. As a member of the kingdom, what's our response to these verses? Choose one or more from the following:

a. Because the kingdom is an undercover organisation.
b. Because the kingdom is only for clever people.
c. He wanted to make sure people listened well.
d. He wanted to entertain people with good stories.
e. Only those really serious about finding the kingdom would bother to look for the meaning of the parables.
f. Other

4. Imagine that you are one of the disciples listening to Jesus. How would you feel about the kingdom? Write below:

One thing that worries you:

One thing that surprises you:

One thing that pleases you:

One thing that inspires you:
In-Depth Bible Study

What do these parables teach you about the kingdom? Draw a line between the two items below from ‘From this parable’ to ‘I learn...’

From this parable: I learn...

Weeds
- Its success is certain.
- Members of God’s kingdom and members of the kingdom of the world can look alike.

Net
- Only those definitely in the kingdom will be saved.
- It crosses all national and racial barriers.

Mustard seed
- God’s kingdom is in a battle situation with the kingdom of the world.

Pearl
- The day of judgement will come.

Yeast
- It may look small, but it’s greater than anything.

Treasure
- It’s worth giving up everything to gain.
- There’s a profound difference between those in the kingdom and those who are not.
- It’s worth looking for.
- Other ________________________________

Share what you’ve discovered.

Form groups of three or four. Choose one parable per group. Look at it in detail. Think about your own situation at the present time. How does its teaching challenge...

- my own life?
- my church’s life?
- the church worldwide?

Are your answers with your small group and then briefly as a whole group.

Going Further

Jesus inaugurated the kingdom: ‘The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!’ (Mark 1:15). But there is also a sense in which it is yet to come: at the last supper Jesus told his disciples, ‘For I tell you, I will eat it again until it finds fulfilment in the kingdom of God’ (Luke 22:16). Then the kingdom will be fully revealed and all will recognize it and, above all, will recognize the King.

From your reading of the Gospels, how would you say these two aspects of ‘it’s here now’ and ‘it’s yet to come’ fit together?
us said, 'My kingdom is not of this world' (John 18:36). It is not that there is a vague ethos of either 'worldliness' or 'spirituality'. There are two different, dis-opposed regimes. Explore this idea in some of these passages:

- Matthew 13:24–42
- Ephesians 6:10–18
- Philippians 3:17–21
- John 14:30, 31
- John 17:13–23
- Colossians 2:15

My Story

Throughout today's session one thing which has challenged me is:

As a result of what I've learnt about the kingdom in the last few weeks, one thing I know I still get sorted out in my Christian life is:

One thing I have received from this group over the last few weeks is:

One thing I'd like to thank God for about these studies in the kingdom is:

- Share your answers together.

What action should you take as a result of your studies – either as a group or that you would suggest as an area of action for your church?

Pray for each other.

NOTES: Matthew 13:10–17, 24–35, 44–52

Parables of the kingdom

It is important to remember that these parables are not meant to be literal comparisons in every respect with the kingdom. There will be something in each which points us to a clearer understanding of one main aspect of the kingdom.

The veiled nature of the kingdom parables underlines the fact that whilst the kingdom has arrived – the seed has been sown – it has yet to be fully revealed.

Other parables of the kingdom are found in:
- Matthew 13:1–9
- Matthew 22:1–14
- Matthew 25:1–30
- Mark 4:26–29

Verses 14,15: See Isaiah 6:9,10.
Verse 35: See Psalm 78:2.
SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR LEADERS

Special instructions for leaders

GENERAL POINTS TO NOTE

1. Introducing a new course to a group
   When starting a new course, spend a few minutes giving the group an overview of the subjects to be covered. Take
   time to decide how, as a group, you want to organise your meetings (see page 4), and to think about and sign the
   group covenant. Make sure everyone knows when and where you meet, and how long you meet for.

2. Timing sessions
   As a general guide, sections may be timed as follows: ICEBREAKER: 15 mins; RELATIONAL BIBLE STUDY:
   15 mins; IN-DEPTH STUDY: 20 mins; GOING FURTHER: 15 mins; MY STORY: 10 mins. For each session, work
   through the material yourself before the group meeting, checking the timing of each part with the time available
   to your group.

3. Time for prayer and worship
   Your group may wish to spend as much as half the meeting time in prayer and worship. Allow for this in your
   timing of the session. Always make sure there is time to pray for each other at the end of the session, especially
   at matters which have been raised during the session. As leader, pray for individuals in the group during the
   and as you prepare, and encourage group members to do the same for each other.

4. Giving a lead in sharing
   With many of the questions in the sessions it is best to allow time for individuals to fill in their answers for the
   whole section (eg. Relational Bible Study) and then to go around the group sharing the answers. If time is short, or
   the group is large, pick out only one or two questions in a section for sharing. If people find it difficult to share their
   thoughts, or are a bit baffled by the exercises which call on their imagination, the leader should go first in sharing.

5. Optional 'Going Further'
   'Going Further' is optional. If you do not have enough time for it in the meeting, people may like to work on it at
   home.

6. Making sure you have enough books
   It is wise to have a few spare books for others who might join the group later. It is best if each person has their own
   book.

7. Leaving an 'empty chair'
   Be prepared to integrate newcomers. Introduce them to the group, and the group to them, and make them feel at
   home.

8. Background notes
   The background notes are there for anyone who wishes to know more about the passage being studied. The leader
   should always read them, and it may be helpful to ask group members to read them through too, either on their
   before coming to the session, or together at its start.

NOTES FOR THIS SERIES

Session 1: Your kingdom come

Introduce: The idea of the kingdom, as it may be unfamiliar to some people in your group. Use the introductory
notes at the beginning of this workbook to help you.

Relational Bible Study: Introduce the passage using the notes for Session 1 on page 9.

In-Depth Bible Study: Give people time to answer all the questions in their workbooks before asking them to share
answers with the group as a whole.

Going Further: Work individually or in small groups. Then report back. Is there a specific task the group could be
involved in over the next few weeks in response to 3?

My Story: If your group is not familiar with this style of question, illustrate by giving your own answers to
questions 1 and 2. Encourage people to act on what they have written for both parts of number 4 in the coming
week.

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Session 2: Your will be done
Before the session: Allow time at the beginning of the session for people to share how well they got on in putting into practice what they had thought about in last week's study. Make sure this isn't threatening to anyone.
Icebreaker: Don't worry if this is not taken too seriously; encourage people to guess at likely answers to questions that they don't know!
Going Further: Work in pairs or in small groups. Then report back.
My Story: Make sure you have enough paper and pens for everyone (question 4).

Session 3: On earth as in heaven
Before the session: Make sure you have plenty of plain paper and felt-tips or crayons ready for the Icebreaker.
Icebreaker: People may feel shy about drawing, especially if they know other people are going to see it. Reassure them that the artistic quality of their drawing is unimportant! It may help if you do your own drawing in advance, ready to show the group before they start.
Relational Bible Study: Don't let people be merely critical of their church. If they are feeling negative, help them to see that their church is as much their responsibility as any other member's. Encourage the group to think of ways in which they can see God at work in and through their church and remind them that he is able to change people and situations. As a group, make specific, positive suggestions for how to improve your church's relationship with God, fellow Christians and the society around. As leader, pass on these suggestions to your church leaders!
Going Further: Work in pairs or small groups. Then report back.

Session 4: Forgive us our sins
Before the session: Prepare pieces of paper for the Icebreaker as described below.
Icebreaker: Give each person who is sitting on a chair a piece of paper on which is written a key word or phrase. Don't let the rest of the group see it. If the key word or phrase is used by the group, the person on the chair will automatically get off. Prepare pieces of paper as follows:

"If your group uses this word (or phrase) get off the chair immediately: [Write the word/phrase]"

Examples of words/phrases: 'I'll faint if I don't sit down'; 'Ice-cream'; 'The back leg of your chair is broken'; 'I'll tip this water over you if you don't . . . '

Each time the group swaps roles, give a new key word or phrase to the person on the chair.

Before going on to the reading, point out that there was just one key word or phrase which had to be found to ensure that the person would move from the chair.

In-Depth Bible Study: The incident of Moses and the serpent is recorded in Numbers 21:4-9. Be prepared to tell the group about it if they are unfamiliar with the story.

My Story: People in the group will be at different stages in their Christian life. Be sensitive to how people are feeling and make sure they don't feel obliged to share their answers if they don't really want to.

After the session: This session may have raised thorny questions for some people; for example: 'Am I really a Christian?' 'Am I completely forgiven?' Is there anyone in the group who you sensed might find it helpful to talk further about some aspect of the study? Follow them up, perhaps with an invitation to come and talk over a cup of coffee during the week or by encouraging them to talk with another leader in your church.

Prepare: for the Icebreaker of session 5. Collect magazines and papers during the week.

Session 5: As we forgive others
Before the session: Have magazines and papers ready for the Icebreaker.

Before the reading: Introduce the passage, explaining briefly about the sabbatical and jubilee years (see leader's notes).

Relational Bible Study: Don't let people get too involved in the technical side of this passage. Explain that the laws God gave to Israel reflect the values of his kingdom and these should also be reflected in God's people today.

My Story: Question 2 could be very threatening for some people, while providing a glorious opportunity for self-pitying complaints for others. You will need to handle this question carefully if both extremes are to be avoided.

Session 6: For yours is the Kingdom
Going Further: Work in small groups. Then report back.
My Story: Encourage people to think back over all the studies, not just today's. Help the group to see what they have learnt together and to be definite about any action they decide needs to be taken.
Finally: Have the group or individuals in the group undertaken any task or actions as a result of issues or needs raised in these studies? Are these 'complete' or is there still more to do? Report on progress.

Talk about what's happening next. Is the group continuing to meet? If there are no formal plans for the group continuing, how about organising an occasional meal together or keeping in touch with one another's practical needs or even doing some more Bible study together?
APPENDIX E

RETREAT: PLANNED AND ACTUAL PROGRAMME

GROUP COMMITMENTS

The group agreed to:

- discover the meaning of God's world together.
- give priority to the group meetings.
- keep confidential information to the group.
- strive to translate the biblical learnings into action.
- allow the rest of the group to hold each other accountable to the goals that the group set for themselves.
- give each other the right to call upon one another.
- use communication skills, participants experiences and the scriptures as a means to building fellowship.

The sessions are structured to address the need for applied biblical knowledge, the need to belong, the need to share and the need to build the church as a heterogenous community.

TWO MONTH STUDY/FELLOWSHIP ENCOUNTER

The participants will start off with a half day retreat/workshop, that will examine the intra and interpersonal communication skills, introductory personal experiences and an exegesis of the course's understanding of God's domain, which may be elaborated upon by the group. This will be followed by a one and a half hour weekly study/fellowship meeting for six weeks, including input on inward, outward and corporate spiritual disciplines from the book, CELEBRATION OF DISCIPLINE by Richard Foster.

An agape meal will be prepared by the group in the last week.

THE FUTURE STARTS HERE

[a Serendipity study from Scripture Union.]

consists of icebreakers, relational and in depth bible studies and time for people to share their own stories. If the group works and wishes to continue their shared pilgrimage, there are eight other studies, plus the American series available on every book in the Bible.
GROUP CONSTANTS

1) A participative white facilitator.
2) The Serendipity Bible Study; The future Starts Here by 'Tricia Williams.
3) Open with prayer and sharing, followed by Bible study.
4) Changing weekly meeting time to accommodate all twelve people and their varied commitments.

ATTENDANCE : 12 PLUS FACILITATOR.

RETREAT

Date : 9th June, 1990.
Time : 1 - 5 pm

PLANNED PROGRAMME

1pm. WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER.
    Introduction. Getting Acquainted exercise.
1.15 Lunch
1.45 Why are we here? What are our expectations?
    What are our fears and hopes?
    What does fellowship mean to each one of us?
2.15 Experiential exercise. Going to Mars.
    Interpersonal Roles in a group.
2.45 Evaluation of exercise
3.15 Tea
3.30 Self adventure [Journalling]
4.00 Contact Biographical details.
4.15 The Future Starts Here.
    Leadership Expectations.
    Choosing leader and time for following session.
4.30 Prayer Concerns, prayer.
5.00 Close.

ACTUAL PROGRAMME

1.00 5 white participants from Hatfield arrived.
    Informal chatter.
1.40 4 participants from Atteridgeville arrive.
1.45 Welcome and opening prayer.
    Getting acquainted exercise.
1.55 Lunch
2.15 Why are we here? What are our expectations?
    What are our fears and hopes?
    Listened to group.
    Discipleship group goals and commitments worksheet.
    Asked group to change goals as they want to. The group then shared their 'hopes'
On the flipchart, was the question:
What is the most loving way to approach yourself and one another, so that;
we may learn together.
we may learn from one another.
we may understand one another, God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit better?
The facilitator mentioned that she had chosen studying the scriptures and sharing personal experiences of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and people as a way of making contact with one another, and asked the group to offer any ideas they thought would build the fellowship in the group.

2 members from Soshanguve arrived. Briefly explained programme to them. Promised to give them full details at tea time.
Gave two people in the group, the process observation sheets for the experiential exercise.
Explained each term briefly giving a chance to internalise and put the names of the people in the appropriate blocks. Each time they observed a particular interpersonal role by an individual they were asked to make a tick in the appropriate block.

The following task was given to the rest of the group.

GOING TO MARS?

You are on a committee to decide which 7 people will be chosen to go to Mars. The world is going to blow up in six days time. The spaceship can only take 7 people plus 20kg of luggage each. Choose 7 people from the following list [and if you have time, decide on appropriate luggage to be taken.]

1] a soccer player [man]
2] F.W.de Klerk [present State President]
3] an entertainer [woman]
4] a farmer [man]
5] a pregnant woman
6] a doctor [woman]
7] an elderly minister [man]
8] Nelson Mandela
9] a teacher [woman]
10] a policeman
11] an elderly scientist [man]
12] a health instructor
13] a business woman
14] a dentist, who is also a community worker.[man]
The group were not given a time limit. They finished the entire task in half an hour. The final member from Atteridgeville arrived. The facilitator explained the task that was in the process of being completed. The group was given the opportunity to analyse their interaction, followed by the process observers and finally the facilitator. Each member was then given a process observation sheet.

The facilitator and process observers were not allowed to participate in the decision making or offer any added information. Using the process, the group were initially happy with their roles. After the process observers and facilitator had shared their observations and received feedback from the group, new awareness took place. The group agreed that they were a task group [see process observation sheet] focusing mainly on information and opinion giving, with very little consideration to maintenance roles. Creative thinking was not affirmed.

By this statement, I refer to when one of the group began to think of swapping people for luggage, he was immediately stopped because the group said that the statement given to them does not allow for this. No other creative options were considered. The group affirmed the need for all the communication roles, had none to add and committed themselves to trying out these skills during the coming weeks together.

3.30 TEA
3.45 Self-Adventure [Journalling]
   Flip-chart brainstorm of creative ways of sharing self.
4.15 Contact biographical details.
4.30 The Future Starts Here Outline, plus leadership expectations.
   There was a debate about the timing of the following week's session. It is to be held on the 16th June, Soweto day. A day, that is highly emotionally charged, remembering the Soweto riots of 1976, and the many killings that took place, in the name of freedom. It was decided that the group would meet from 11.00-1230 on Saturday, the 16th June, 1990.

4.50 Prayer concerns were shared. The group then prayed as they felt led. The prayer time was closed off by the facilitator. The group were asked to write a journal consisting of the intra/interpersonal dynamics of the session, to be handed in at the next session.
5.00 Close.