TITLE:

LISTENING TO GOD’S PEOPLE:
A RESPONSE TO PERCEIVED DISCONNECT IN PASTORAL CARE

AUTHOR:

KEITH WILLIAM MARSHALL
Declaration

I certify that this dissertation, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of M.Th., has not been submitted for a degree at any other University, and that it is entirely my own work. I agree that the Library may lend or copy the dissertation upon request.

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Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my supervisor Dr. Katie Heffelfinger for her encouragement and advice throughout the period this dissertation was written.
Abstract

This dissertation is written in response to a perceived breakdown in pastoral care.

Chapter one allows us to see something of the hurt and disappointment which many are currently experiencing. Some of the letters quoted are by experienced clerics with decades of experience.

In Chapter 2 we consider pastoral contexts. We look at the Pastoral Great Commission of John 21:15-17. We consider the appropriateness of the primary metaphor which the dissertation uses. We finish by looking at the Trinity as a model of community.

In Chapter 3 we look at pastoral commonalities in the models and writings of four figures from the sixth to the twenty-first century. We find agreement that pastoral care must be individualised but that the context for care can vary considerably. All agree it critical that the “under-shepherd” is an example.

In Chapter 4 we consider Jesus as kenotic archetype. We look at the nature of divine love. We suggest that Jesus is to be understood in the Gospels as being genuinely dependent on God in his humanity and that he taught and modelled kenotic service.

In Chapter 5 we use criteria derived from our study which relate to the three dimensions of the Christian life. We test these criteria by examining three different contexts of pastoral care.

Our conclusion is that excellence in pastoral care will promote love for God reflected in a prayerful dependent spirituality, love for one another reflecting Trinitarian communality, and love for others in kenotic service which will include enabling sheep to also become “under-shepherds.”

In “under-shepherds” promoting and valuing these three things as essential, they will, however tentatively, be responding to Jesus’ commands: to “Feed my sheep” (John 21:15-17) and to “Follow me” (John 21:19, 22).¹

¹ Unless otherwise stated all quotations will be from the New International Version.
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Chapter 1: Listening to God’s People: Someone to Watch Over Me

Recently in Ireland there has been a particular change, (amidst the many reflecting our post modern culture), in one of the most basic dynamics of church life. That change is the decreasing frequency of pastoral visits.²

This trend of decreasing visits has been noted by leaders in the Church. The former Archbishop of Dublin, the Rt Revd John Neill, spoke of this trend in 2009 as part of his synod address. Commenting on the findings of an audit of parishes in Dublin and Glendalough he said that for clergy

There were three areas of frustration that seemed to surface quite a lot ... [First] the amount of administration ... [Second] clergy were finding it hard to get time for any routine visiting beyond the administrative and the visitation of the sick and ... pastoral emergency situations ... [Third] the difficulty of encouraging lay leadership with the demands on the time of most lay people, [as] regular participation in the life and worship of the church was less regular and frequent than used to be the case.³

The decrease in “participation in the life and worship of the church” on the part of the laity combined with clergy frustration with “the amount of administration” and their finding it “hard to get time for any routine visiting” present challenges to the integrity and life of the church as a community where relationships are considered a key.

An additional audit performed in the neighbouring Diocese of Meath and Kildare around 2004 also returned information relating not only to frequency of attendance but to the willingness of lay people to engage in pastoral care.

²It is not just Ireland that is affected, See Mervyn Wilson, *The Disappearing Parson*, [Parson & Parish, Issue Number 171 Summer 2011] downloaded from [http://www.clergyassoc.co.uk/content/parsonandparish.htm](http://www.clergyassoc.co.uk/content/parsonandparish.htm) [Accessed March 2011]; Mr Wilson notes that “some dioceses, Salisbury, Lichfield, Hereford, Oxford, Lincoln in particular, have set up schemes for locally ordained and non stipendiary priests to fill the gap and maintain the valuable elements of the traditional ministry. Many have not. Lichfield has done something to build up local lay responsibility, establishing small groups of laity in each parish to work closely with the ordained minister.”

From the questionnaire to the diocese we found 66% felt that lay people could give pastoral care within a parish. ... In looking at how often people attended worship, we see that 43% say they attend weekly, 24% every couple of weeks and 18% occasionally. However, in looking at this further, some people feel that occasionally and every couple of weeks is ‘regular’ worship for them.\(^4\)

What is noteworthy is the similar percentage of those who didn’t attend worship every week (24% + 18% = 42%) compared to those who did (43%). There is also, according to this study, a widespread view amongst large numbers of lay members in the church that they “could give pastoral care within a parish.” Of those who attend Church, roughly 50% do not do so every Sunday.

This trend in attendance has also been noted at Synod level in the Church of Ireland. The 2006 *Commission On Ministry Report* presented to the Synod contains the following comments with regard to specific areas of lay ministry development:

> The Church should equip lay people with a greater confidence so that they can effectively share the faith with others and so that they can walk beside others in supporting them on the journey of faith. ... One area where lay people could use their gifts is in the area of the pastoral ministry.\(^5\)

So not only lay people recognise this but the wider Church of Ireland also recognises this possibility.

Archbishop Neill’s concerns regarding “clergy finding it hard to get time for routine visiting” were also highlighted in recent times by letters in the church of Ireland Gazette. In December 2010, the Venerable R. Clayton Stevenson wrote a revealing and vulnerable

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letter in which he referred to the aims of the Connor Diocese Age-Ability committee initiative\(^6\)

there are many members of the church of Ireland, over 50 years of age, who do not suffer from this serious illness [dementia], yet feel in need of pastoral care. I applaud the efforts being made by the whole of our church to bring its youth into the worship and witness of the church of Ireland, but I cannot close my ears to the regret and disappointment of many of 50 years of age and over who feel neglected because they rarely, if ever, see their rector or curate assistant in their homes.\(^7\)

There is almost something of a sense of betrayal at this perceived lack of care suggested by the Archdeacon’s choice of words: “regret and disappointment,” and “feel neglected.” Missing is the sense of being valued, loved and appreciated which belonging to a church community should affirm. One can see how feeling this and reading of an initiative to “identify ... problems and opportunities ... and bring them to the attention of leadership in each parish” in relation to dementia, that the proactive nature of this initiative would stand out in painful contrast to a seeming indifference in relation to himself and others in a similar age bracket who feel ignored or “neglected.” Writing on December 10th Canon James R Hall endorsed his sentiments by reaffirming the importance of pastoral contact and being able to offer better pastoral support through visiting saying:

[... ] there is no substitute for pastoral contact established through house to-house visiting. Where this contact is lost through the neglect of visiting, the price can, indeed, be high. ... For the rector/curate to know each family and each individual by name in the home setting helps to forge relationships and is doubly rewarding for the clergy concerned, especially when sickness or bereavement invades the home. ... On the eve of his enthronement as Archbishop of Canterbury on 25th March 1980, Dr Robert Runcie was asked what he regarded as his own particular contribution to the life of the Church. “I am a pastor,” he replied, continuing: “I have an immense love and care for people. I hope I am not burdened by memos and papers.”\(^8\)

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\(^6\) Karen Bushby, “Connor seminar focuses on pastoral care of dementia sufferers”, Church of Ireland Gazette, November 12\(^{th}\) 2010.

\(^7\) R. Clayton Stevenson, Letters To The Editor, Church of Ireland Gazette, December 3\(^{rd}\) 2010.

\(^8\) James R Hall, Letters To The Editor, Church of Ireland Gazette, December 10\(^{th}\) 2010.
Canon Hall’s remarks about knowing “each family and each individual by name in the home setting,” seems to be a basic knowledge. It could be viewed as sad that it needs to be made. His closing comment that “these words are still relevant today” quoting Dr Robert Runcie carry the implication that “memos and papers,” administrative work, have a negative influence on ministry. Like the Archdeacon, his words regarding visiting helping “to forge relationships” offer a challenge and strike at the heart of what the Christian community is supposed to be, one where we love one another as Jesus loved us (John 13:34).

The following month the Rev Ron Elsdon took up this theme of decreasing visitation in his “Life Lines” column in the Church of Ireland Gazette with the heading: “Rectors Endangered Species?” In defence of clerics who found it so hard to get to see parishioners the Rev Elsdon wrote of the increase in office work which was of greater magnitude than when the various clerics ministered. He finishes his article mentioning a possible solution to remedy the problem; “if your rector doesn’t visit, ask him/her how much time is being taken up with these tiresome forms of ‘busywork.’ Better still, you could ask if there is anything you can do to help.”

In the correspondence of the Gazette in February, the month after the Rev Elson wrote his article there were suggestions as to solutions to this problem. Harry Allen wrote “No one, to my knowledge, has asked the question: ‘What would Jesus do?’ [...] it does not matter what time a rector has to visit his flock. The question is whether he should visit or wade

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9 Ron Elsdon, Life Lines, Church of Ireland Gazette, January 21st 2011.
10 Ibid.
through the ‘mountain of paper work.’ [...] if the rector places visiting high on the agenda, then surely the paper work has to be undertaken by someone else, paid or unpaid.”

So here proactive action motivated by theological reflection (What would Jesus do?) is suggested to resolve the problem. Another letter writer, Derek Sweetnam, gives an example of a rector who managed to solve the issue of visiting verses administration. Mr Sweetnam writes that: “ [...] For clergy swamped by ‘busy-work,’ I suggest with humility that they say: ‘There is someone in the parish who can do this as well as I can, and I will find them during my home visits.’ [...] “Informed laity recognise the difficulties faced by clergy and we pledge our support. Good luck and we ask you to keep visiting.”

Mr Sweetnam suggests another proactive response. He believes the rector doesn’t need to be involved with issues which “could be dealt with by the laity” and brings to mind the response of the apostles to a time consuming administrative issue in Acts 6vs1-4 which might have become a distraction from the apostles “prayer and the ministry of the word.” His suggestion consists of doing visiting intentionally, with a clear vision of the non-ordained as both capable and willing to take up the burden of various tasks while the rector is doing “extensive visiting.” Doing so may result in being like a successful rector referred to so that one may be seen to have successfully “identified and enlisted the various talents of the laity.”

Letters on the subject of perceived lack of pastoral visiting, and therefore of pastoral care continue in the Gazette. The same themes above continue to be repeated. Typical of one

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11 Harry Allen, Letters to the Editor, Church of Ireland Gazette, February 18th 2011.
12 Derek Sweetnam, Letters to the Editor, Church of Ireland Gazette, February 18th 2011.
13 One issue which doesn’t appear, however, is that of the vulnerability of clergy to accusation: While bishop of Connor the Rt Rev Alan Harper spoke openly regarding awkward and uncomfortable issues facing the Church in Connor in his presidential address in June, 2004. Referring to the vastly changed social context and expectations on ministers and of their families he said that there are ‘risks inherent in parochial visitation should clergy find themselves alone with a parishioner and in particular the dangers of offering pastoral
of the most recent is that by Canon Jack Mercer. His thoughtful letter comes out of some “forty years of experience.” He sees the historic “close and valued relationship between” the church’s “clergy and people”, as being “built up to no small degree by the practice on the part of the clergy of [...] routine pastoral visiting.” He continues that “observation and anecdotal evidence leads me to fear that this custom is in some respects no longer valued and implemented in some places, which I believe is a mistake and very sad.” His closing comment is to advocate “systematic visitation of [Jesus’] people in their homes by the clergy [to provide] opportunity to carry on Jesus’ ministry of loving care.”  

14 In another recent letter the Rev Sid Mourant focuses on the role of the clergy. Of particular note however is his focusing on the rector as an example of pastoral care for others who may also be engaged in it. He asks if “the rector is the pastoral manager, is he/she expected to take on the role of directing operations in the parish, including training visiting teams? Should the rector also be a leader by example as well as by training? What of the expectation that the pastoral manager leads by example?”  

15 In conclusion: Although these letters relate to one feature of traditional pastoral care, that of home visitation; the issue of pastoral care is wider. The two audits we quoted from, that of Dublin and Glendalough and that of Meath and Kildare, acknowledge the negative factor of decreased regular attendance at Sunday worship. There are stresses on the relationship between clergy and laity from two directions: from the clergy not being seen to respond to a desire to be visited but also, perhaps less focused on, a lessening of a sense of being part of a community due to a decrease in frequency of regular contact. Yet we also

support on a one to one basis to persons in distress or to a child. In today’s climate, the entire basis of the inherited but unexamined, expectation of the ministry of parish clergy is seriously challenged.” Alan Harper, Connor Diocesan Synod presidential address, http://ireland.anglican.org/news/178 [Accessed April 2012].  

14 Jack Mercer, Letters to the Editor, Church of Ireland Gazette, Friday 13th April, 2012.  
15 Sid Mourant, Letters to the Editor, Church of Ireland Gazette, Friday 23rd March 2012.
quoted from the Synod report of 2006 which in the context of lay training suggested a willingness on the part of the church to facilitate non-clerics engaging in pastoral care.16

When the human body registers pain it is in order that the body can respond and alleviate it or address the cause. Listening to the voices of God’s people in the body of Christ suggests there is a level of pastoral pain being experienced by many in the one body of Christ. This pain seems to be in the form of perceived neglect, disappointment and sadness relating to pastoral care. This dissertation is in response.

16 Church of Ireland Synod 2006, Commission On Ministry Report, Appendix B, Lay Training, http://synod.ireland.anglican.org/2006/docs/pdf/reports/40COMrpt.pdf; [Accessed March 2012]; This willingness is evident in some parishes undertaking their own proactive response to ensure people are visited (though not necessarily by ordained clerics): See the article “Parish visitors commissioned in Diocese of Armagh church”, which relates that twelve parishioners of St Columba’s parish, Portadown, Diocese of Armagh, were commissioned as parish visitors having completed a certificate lay visitor training course run by Revd Elizabeth Cairns, vicar of St Columba’s, “Church of Ireland Gazette, 20th April 2012, p.4.
Chapter 2  Feed My Sheep: Contexts for Pastoral Care

In this chapter we shall consider some contexts within which the pastoral needs which were mentioned in Chapter 1 may be best addressed. They are that of God’s Missio Dei; of the Pastoral Great Commission of John 21:15-17; of the “Under-shepherd” and sheep metaphor; and of the Trinity as a community whose life the Church is called to emulate in unselfish mutual love and care.

God’s Missio Dei

The Trinitarian needs of the Christian life are in relation to unselfish love for God (the first great commandment), unselfish love for one another (Jesus’ new commandment) and unselfish love for others (the second great commandment). They are set within the broader context of God’s mission for humanity or Missio Dei. This is what the church is called to participate in, a mission concerned with bringing all into the fullness of eternal life and of sharing in the life and unselfish mutual love of the Trinity. This Missio Dei is God’s mission to restore and reconcile humanity and the world to God. It is soteriological, redemptive and includes a social dimension. It involves the whole world and the whole of humanity.¹

Pastoral care is a reflection, within the body of Christ, of the broader love of God for humanity. It is God who initiates, who gives, who loves first, who has always done so:

“God so loved the world” (John 3:16). The response to God, to accept his gift of grace, to believe, to trust, is only a beginning of participation in the life of the Trinity, of eternal life.

The start and end of all pastoral care is being transformed into the image and likeness of Christ. The disappointment, sadness, regret and feelings of neglect which we heard in chapter 1 stand in stark contrast to that healthiness and fullness of life which Jesus speaks of in John 10:10.

God’s *Missio Dei* which the Church is invited to participate in, (Matthew 28:19ff, Mark 16:15ff, Luke 24:47-49/Acts 1:4-7 and John 17:18, 20:21, 21:15-17, 19, 22), is a call to participate in the new phase of God’s mission for humanity. It is to go, make new disciples, teach, instruct, guide and shepherd them. Doing so involves the raising up of those who are new in Christ to the fullness of conformation to his image (Romans 8:29: “conformed to his image”, Colossians 1:28: “fully mature”, Philippians 3:13: “pressing on”, Ephesians 5:15: “grow to become”). It is communal as well as individual (John 13:34-35, Matthew 28:19: “baptism”, John 15:1-15, particularly vs1-8). All believers are to be one in Christ, members of one body (1 Corinthians 12) with the same love and care for each other (John 13:34-35).

**The Pastoral Great Commission: John 21vs 15-17**

In the final form which we possess, John’s gospel begins with high Christology but ends by focusing on the pastoral emphasis of God’s mission, in a very earthy and grounded way – a night of fishing followed by breakfast with a significant discussion and a call to follow Jesus (John 21:1-23).²

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² See Gary M Bruge, John, [*The NIV Application Commentary*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2000], p.32 “John asserts the divinity for Christ. If anyone were inclined toward adoptionism (i.e., that Jesus was a divinely inspired man), this Gospel gives an unrelenting argument to the contrary.”
In Jesus’ third appearance, the focus is on Peter in the discussion after breakfast. Jesus’ opening question makes clear reference to his previous betrayal and boasting, “do you love me more than these?” (v15) which echoes Peter’s boasting in Matthew and Mark.3

Peter had denied he knew Jesus three times (John 18: 17, 25, 27) despite claiming he would not do so and being forewarned (John 13:38). The three questions query Peter’s love for Christ.4 Each time Peter responds with an affirmation of his love for Jesus he is told to care for God’s people, God’s flock.

In response to Peter’s first reply, Jesus commands Peter to care for the youngest and most vulnerable: “He said to him, “Feed my lambs” (v15).5 Jesus’ second command is to “Tend my sheep” (v16).6 Jesus’ third command, made after Peter’s protestations that he does love Jesus is to “Feed my sheep” (v17). These three imperatives are a comprehensive mandate to Peter to care for God’s flock, both lambs and sheep.7 What we wish to focus on here is not the undoubted restoration of Peter and his opportunity to three times affirm his love for Jesus, but rather that on each occasion of professed love there is a charge to care for God’s flock, God’s people. That these three commands are given in the context of Peter’s three affirmations of love links in a clear and emphatic way the love which the church professes for Jesus with the care the church provides to those who are his lambs and sheep. One need

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4 John 13:37 I will lay down my life for you.” Matt 26:33 and Mark 14:29: “Even if they all fall away, I will not,” where Peter boasts of his greater commitment and therefore love, of Jesus. Haenchen writes that “The author of chapter 21 knows Mark as well as Matthew.”

5 One is also reminded of the charge to Peter by Jesus in Luke that 22:32 that “[...] when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”

6 It can also be translated as “Shepherd My sheep”.

7 Rodney A Whitacre writes that “While attempts have been made to find significant differences in these words, none are convincing (Brown 1970:1104-6; McKay 1985:332). Rather, this pattern suggests we have a comprehensive image of shepherding, a very familiar figure of speech for leadership over God's people.” See Rodney A Whitacre, John, [IVP Commentary Series, 1999 publisher information not available]; http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/IVP-NT/John/Jesus-Appears-Again-Disciples [Accessed April 2012].
not see the line between apostolic mission and “special authoritative commission” (with particular reference to Peter) as exclusive. As noted by Brown, in the preceding context of the passage there is a strong emphasis on apostolic mission (symbolised by the catch of fish) and in the following context a strong emphasis on discipleship with the words “Follow me” repeated in vs19 and 22.⁸

Failure to care for the lambs and sheep of Christ will put one in the uncomfortable position of not loving Christ.⁹ The church has an emphatic and comprehensive threefold mandate which encompasses: feeding those who are viewed as lambs, caring or tending for the sheep and feeding the sheep. Whether this was intended to say the same thing three ways or to imply comprehensiveness, the threefold repetition could not be more emphatic. This is equivalent to the great commission of Matthew 28v19ff or Luke 24v44ff but put into John’s language. It is a pastoral care great commission which is in complete harmony with

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⁹Whether with *agapao* or *phileo* the much discussed words used by Jesus and Peter. While Jesus asks twice do you *agapao* me and Peter responds twice that he has *phileo* love for Jesus, it is when Jesus asks Peter does he *phileo* him that Peter protests that he does. Most scholars seem to take the view of W. Hall Harris III who says that “The suggestion that we should see a distinction in meaning comes primarily from a number of British scholars of the nineteenth century, especially Trench, Westcott, and Plummer. It has been picked up by others such as Spicq, Lenski, and Hendriksen.” But who advocates “seeing no real difference in the meaning” of the respective words. W. Hall Harris III, *Exegetical Commentary on John*, publisher and publication date unknown, [http://bible.org/seriespage/exegetical-commentary-john-21](http://bible.org/seriespage/exegetical-commentary-john-21) [Accessed April 2012]; For a contrasting view see Rodney A Whitacre who writes that “a simple distinction between the verbs is not justified, but this does not mean there is no distinction at all. For in this passage there is a pattern, with Jesus asking Peter twice whether he loves him (*agapao*) and each time Peter responding that, yes, he does love him (*phileo*). Then the third time Jesus switches to using Peter's word. Such a pattern suggests there is a distinction here (McKay 1985; H. C. G. Moule 1898:176), and since *agapao* is used more often in John for God’s love than is *phileo*, it was likely that *agapao* would be chosen for the higher meaning” (McKay 1985:322).” [http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/IVP-NT/John/Jesus-Appears-Again-Disciples](http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/IVP-NT/John/Jesus-Appears-Again-Disciples) [Accessed April 2012]; See also Frank E. Gaebelein, *Volume 9 (John – Acts)*, [The Expositor’s Bible Commentary] who agrees with Whitacre and writes “it explains better Peter’s distress when questioned a third time, since Jesus would not only be challenging his love but would be implying that it was superficial.” P.202.
that of Matthew or Luke. Burge writes of the apostolic mission of the church being symbolized not only by the catch of fish but Peter’s conversation with Jesus.

This is a theme echoed in the Synoptics wherein no Gospel could be complete without some signal that the work of Jesus’ followers must now follow his resurrection and departure. The chief images of John 21 (fish and sheep) both speak to us about the work of the church. We must gather up those to whom Christ directs us and nurture those who live in his flock. This is labor, divinely directed labor that must be inspired by our devotion to Christ.

The further context of that labor is indicated in Jesus’ involvement in the catch of fish which preceded his discussion with Peter, that of vs 21:1-14. Bruce Milne suggests the disciples catching of nothing at their own initiative illustrates, and is suggestive of, the words of Jesus in John 15:5 that “Apart from me you can do nothing.” He also believes that calling the disciples to throw the net over the side echoes both the place of their original call (Luke 5:1-11), the metaphor of catching men as fish, a command in a similar situation (having caught nothing Luke 5:5) and the previous miraculous catch (Mark 1:16-17, Luke 5:1-11). Unlike in Luke’s account, the net does not break despite a vast catch which Milne sees as an assurance that the “mission will result in a great harvest among the nations, though one that it will never be too great to accommodate.” In Jesus’ call for Peter to cast the net on the other side, to do what may have seemed pointless or foolish,

10 For a contrasting view see Arthur John Gossip Luke John, [The Interpreters bible VIII], 1952, Abington Press, New York, who sees the purpose in Peter’s restoration though he does however refer to the “triple trust” as being that of “a true pastor” – and so points to the wider symbolic mission of the Church. See p.806. Alternatively Haenchen, John 2 writes that “it is entirely comparable with Matt 16:17f.: it is a commission and authorization in which Peter is entrusted with the highest task in Christendom.” p. 232. Another view is held by Brodie who sees John 21 as being all about God’s provision for the church. Thomas L. Brodie, The Gospel According To John, Oxford University Press, New York, 1993. See pages 579-582.

11 Gary M Bruge, John, [The NIV Application Commentary], P.581. According to Raymond E Brown, E. C. Hoskyns also held the view that “a Gospel’s closing should include not only an appearance of the risen Lord but also a mission of the disciples to the world for its salvation.”

12 Bruge, Ibid p. 599.


14 The opening question of Jesus to Peter (“do you love me more than these?”) certainly supports John’s knowledge of other Gospel accounts and therefore of Luke also. Elsewhere in John the implicit reference to the place of Jesus’ birth in the query left unanswered (John 7:27) also suggests a wider known framework of reference beyond the Gospel.

there can be therefore be seen an analogy to the church to also be faithful to its mission to fish for disciples as directed by her Lord. This will require divine empowerment. Brown similarly writes of the symbolism that it “is not too great an exaggeration to say that the catch of fish is the dramatic equivalent of the command given in the Matthean account of the Galilean appearance: ‘Go therefore and make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:19).’”

In John 10, Jesus draws an analogy between himself and others (who have come before him claiming to offer care and protection for Israel) as between the good Shepherd and thieves and bandits. Jesus unlike them, is the good Shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep (John 10v11, 15, 17, 18). In John 13:1-17 Jesus, taking the role of the slave, washes feet and explicitly calls his disciples to follow his example. There is general agreement regarding Jesus’ foot washing of the disciples in John as prefiguring the cross. Both of these thoughts, that of the Shepherd and that of the servant are present in John 21:19 where Jesus’ second command to Peter to “Follow me” is the revelation of his death.

Jesus’ call to his disciples to follow his example of service in 13:14-15, is added to with his call to love and to obey the “new command” he gives in v34-35 “to love one another as I

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16 Burge writes “No energy or expertise can make a catch like this. Thus Jesus desires to participate in our labours, and at his direction the burden of our work will be lifted. ... But how does Jesus continue to participate in the labor of the church? How does he assist his shepherds in their work? The answer is found in the sustained emphasis on the Holy Spirit not only in the pages of John’s Gospel, but also in the five short letters penned by Peter and John. ... The work of the church, therefore, is not religious energy fuelled by our sense of commission: it is a call to work, wed to a divine empowering; it is ministering knowing that Christ himself (through the Spirit) is ministering in and through our efforts.” Gary M. Burge, John. [The NIV Application Commentary] P.599; See also Raymond E Brown, p.1097, who agrees on the symbolism of the great haul of fish and the net not breaking, as being representative of the mission of the Church. According to Brown “The basic symbolism of the catch of fish [...] is widely accepted by scholars”. P.1097. Brown also suggests with reference to the “haul” of fish in vs 6 and 11 that one may see an echo of John 12:32: “When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men to myself.”, Brown, The Gospel According to John, p.1098.


18 John 13:14-15 “Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”

have loved you.” It is an existing commandment (Leviticus 19:18) made new in the sense of the model to be followed: “as I have loved you.” Jesus calls his followers to sacrificial love of others in the form of humble servanthood. While it may literally entail loss of life, at the very least it is a call, especially to those in leadership, to put the needs of others (the flock) ahead of their own. It is a call to love as he loved us, to shepherd God’s flock as servant “under-shepherds.”

In conclusion there is the strongest of mandates to the church in Jesus’ threefold command to Peter in John 21:15-17, to ensure that all of its members are cared for whether young or old and that they are fed. This mandate is a part of the apostolic commission to “go into all the world” (Matthew 28:19ff), a part of God’s Missio Dei. In the broader context of Jesus’ final discourses in John, this mandate recognises our need for divine empowerment and dependency on the Holy Spirit and on Jesus “apart from whom we can do nothing” (John 15:5). It is directly linked to the love for Christ which all, but especially leaders as “under-shepherds,” should possess.

Jesus is the good shepherd whose love all Christians, but particularly leaders, are called to imitate in the service of one another. They are to serve Christ’s lambs and sheep, (and others, John 10:16 “other sheep”, 17:20 “all who will believe”) as part of God’s mission. The mandate to care for God’s flock is also implied and included in Jesus being the good shepherd, whose example we are to follow. This mandate is both explicit and implicit in the foot washing of Jesus in John 13. If a pastoral breakdown is perceived as having

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20 Keener, *The Spirit in the Gospels and Acts*, p.161-162. This is in strong contrast to Brown, *The Gospel According To John*, who writes of this suggestion as “dubious”. For Brown it is new in terms of the “covenant at the Last Supper”. The love of 13:34 “is the basic stipulation of Luke xxi 20.” He sees this linking to Jeremiah 31:31-34 and to the brotherly love of the Qumran community. p. 613-614; Hall Harris III, who sees both covenant and Jesus’ example present writes that “In speaking of love as the new commandment for those whom Jesus had chosen as his own (13:1, 15:16) and as a mark by which they could be distinguished from others (13:35), John shows that he is thinking of this scene in covenant terminology. But note that the disciples are to love “just as I have loved you” (13:34).” [Accessed April 2012].
occurred with parishioners feeling neglected and uncared for, a response is required out of love for Jesus (John 21:15-17), and in order to follow him (John 21:17,19).

“Under-Shepherd” and Sheep as The Dissertation’s Primary Metaphor

An established biblical metaphor which encapsulates many of the dynamics of need and responsibility in the care of God’s people is that of shepherd and sheep. The use of shepherding language and the metaphor of leaders as shepherds and those led as sheep is an established one throughout the Bible, frequently referenced.

The relationship of others charged with caring for Israel is frequently portrayed using the image of Shepherd. In Psalm 23:1, Psalm 80:1, (and in Psalm 95 and 100 insofar as being “sheep of His pasture” implies God as our Shepherd) and Isaiah 40 it is Yahweh who is the Shepherd. King David is said to have been called by God from having shepherded sheep to shepherd Israel. In Ezekiel 34 the prophet rebukes false shepherds who didn’t care for God’s flock. They are also condemned in Isaiah 56: 9-12, Jeremiah 23:1-4; 25:32-38 and Zechariah 11. In the New Testament, Mark (6:34) and Matthew (9:36) say that Jesus had compassion for the people who had travelled seeking him because he saw them as sheep without a shepherd.

Milne writes that “shepherding is a hard, demanding and costly life, in contrast to the perception of most western Christians ... David experienced this cost when defending his flock from the attacks of wild animals (1 Samuel 17:34-35).”21 The true shepherd is the good one who endangers himself if called upon (John 10:11, 14). The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery notes that the conditions “of shepherding in ancient Palestine provide the

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21 Bruce Milne, The Message Of John, [The Bible Speaks Today, IVP, Nottingham, 1993], p.148; We can add too the references by Jacob in Gen. 31:40 to the trials of outdoor living “In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from my eyes.”
foundation for figurative references. [...] Sheep [...] were totally dependent on shepherds for protection, grazing, watering, shelter and tending to injuries. In fact, sheep would not survive long without a shepherd.” It sums up the role of shepherds as “providers, guides, protectors and constant companions of sheep.” Even today, “shepherds can divide flocks [when mixed together] by simply calling their sheep, who follow their shepherd’s voice.”

The strength of the shepherding metaphor is particularly illustrated in the parable of the lost sheep in Luke 15 (see also Matthew 18:12-14). In this parable the love of the Shepherd results in actions which defy rational explanation except in the context of God’s superabundant and overflowing love. The shepherd atypically abandons all other sheep to search for the one lost (Luke 15:4). The shepherd places the heavy, smelly sheep on his shoulders and does so with rejoicing (Luke 15:5). The shepherd calls together friends and neighbours to celebrate the return of that which was lost (Luke 15: 6). This parable, like that of the prodigal Son which follows it, illustrates the superabundant and overflowing love of God for his lost sheep (or wandering children). In every sense the love and joy of the Shepherd which mirrors that of God (as Shepherd) are in magnitude beyond all contemporary expectation and is even shared by the angels in heaven (Luke 15:7, 10). Everyone is important!

In John, Jesus refers to “other sheep that are not of this sheep pen [...] there shall be one flock and one shepherd.” (John 10:16) This reference, which can “only be a reference to the Gentile church” as biblically Israel is God’s flock, puts a more missional slant on the passage. The mandate of John 21:15-17 is from Jesus who is logically the chief shepherd. Those to whom it is given operate as “under-shepherds.” 1 Peter 5:1-4 uses the imagery of

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23Bruce Milne, The Message Of John, p.149.
Jesus as “Chief Shepherd” (1 Peter 5:4). Hebrews 13:20 and 1 Peter 2:25 make similar reference to Christ as “that great Shepherd of the sheep” and as the “Shepherd and overseer of your souls.” Christian leaders therefore operate as “under-shepherds” (whether “elders” see Acts 20:28, or otherwise). They serve out of love. They do not act as “rulers” or “lords”, which is prohibited by Jesus (Matthew 20:24-26, Mark 10:41-43, Luke 22:26-28, John 13:13-17). There is only one “ruler” and “lord” in the Church, Christ.  

According to Campbell, Shepherd “leadership has a very special quality. Concern is entirely focused on those entrusted for care, even to the point of life's surrender. Thus leadership is expressed in great compassion, sensitivity to need, and knowledge of what is life-sustaining and wholesome.”

It is stating the obvious to say that a good shepherd knows his or her sheep and is known by them (John 10:3-4, 14). The converse possibility suggests some uncomfortable thoughts. The suggestion would seem credible that if we do not know our sheep and are not known by them we are falling short of what is required. The church has been given the strongest of mandates to ensure the spiritual health of those whom they have charge over. In the opening correspondence there appears to be evidence of a breakdown in the pastoral relationships and care.

In conclusion, the “under-shepherd” and sheep metaphor is the appropriate one for us to consider in looking at the pastoral needs of the church. Because of Jesus’ description of himself as the good shepherd and his charge to Peter to care for his lambs and sheep (in

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24 John Finney writes that there is one title in the New Testament to describe leadership “never used of the Christian minister”. There are “109 occurrences of the words which stem from archon, ’a ruler.’ They are used frequently of secular authorities; they are used of the ’principalities and powers’ (archais kai exousiais); one of them (archegos) is even used several times as of Christ himself, but never are they used to describe a Christian Leaders.” P.58-59; John Finney, Understanding Leadership, Daybreak, London, 1989.

addition to the broader New Testament reference to leaders as shepherds who must give account to the Chief Shepherd), it is also appropriate for us to adopt the usage of “under-shepherds” for all of those in Christian leadership. Jesus’ example of a willingness to serve the disciples taking the lowest place of service, is one that they and we, are called to imitate to one another (John 13:14-16). Jesus our shepherd knows his sheep and their needs. As “under-shepherds” Christian leaders are given the same responsibility.

**The Trinity as a Model of Community**

The call to share in the mutuality of God’s love and the relationality of that love is explicit in John’s gospel. Here Jesus’ new commandment is given (13:34-35, 15:12, 17), there is extended discourse with his disciples, and then prayer with the Father, before proceeding to Gethsemane (13:31-17:26). In John 13:34-35 it is by their love that all “will know that you are my disciples.” The call “to love” is also call to reflect Jesus’ love and therefore to reflect Him, which is in itself a witness to Christ and to his reality. If the body is becoming fragmented and dislocated it is surely more difficult for Christ be encountered in the church community.

Intrinsic to Classical Trinitarian Christianity is a belief in the relationality of God. All Christians affirm that the relationship is one of mutual love, unity and directed towards the inclusion of others. Jurgen Moltmann explored the dynamics of the Trinitarian...

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26 Hall Harris III writes that: “The love of Christians for one another should be the distinguishing mark by which the world recognizes them as followers of Jesus. This kind of sacrificial love is what F. A. Schaeffer has referred to as “the final apologetic.” [http://bible.org/seriespage/exegetical-commentary-john-13][Accessed April 2012].

27 God the Father loves the world and gives the Son (John 3:16). The Son loves the Father and lays down his life in obedience to him. The Son and the Father send the Holy Spirit. The Father wishes to honour and glorify the Son and reveals and speaks of, the Son, to the Church and to the world. The Son seeks to reveal the Father to the Church and to the world and give glory to Him. He gives Himself freely for the Church and the world. The Spirit loves the Father and the Son and seeks to reveal both and disclose their will to the Church and reaches out to all in the world. The Holy Spirit gives understanding and teaching concerning the Father and the Son to the Church and empowers the Church to witness about the Son. 

relationship in his book *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, and how it can be understood as undergirding a social theology. The “understanding of God as a mutually loving, interacting, and sustaining society allows Christian theology to develop a theory of society.”

Moltmann sees in the doctrine of the Trinity a way of uniting the opposites of the individual (or personal) and the social. His writing is poetic in the beauty and simplicity of the concepts he articulates. In the inner life of the Trinity, “the three Persons themselves form their unity, by virtue of their relation to one another and in the eternal perichoresis of their love.”

The three persons of the Trinity have all in common, except for their personal characteristics and correspond to a community “in which people are defined through their relations with one another and in their significance for one another, not in opposition to one another, in terms of power and possession.”

The doctrine provides the means to “harmonize personality and sociality in the community of men and women, without sacrificing the one to the other.” The theory acts as critique of selfish individualism and of the desire for, or use of, power for the promotion of self, of materialism, and the control of others.

There are two critical things to grasp from what Moltmann articulates. The first is that “God as love” is “represented in the community of believers” (John 13:34-35) and “is experienced in the acceptance of one person by another, as they have both been accepted

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31 Ibid P. 198.
32 Ibid P. 199.
33 Ibid Moltmann lists four ways this occurs. First, in the unity of Father, Son and Spirit is an undermining of a monarchical view of God. “It is impossible to form the figure of the omnipotent, universal monarch, who is reflected in earthly rulers,” out of this unity. Second, far from being the “archetype of the mighty ones of this world”, God is Father to Jesus who was crucified and raised for us. “He is almighty because he exposes himself to [...] suffering, pain, helplessness and death. What God “is is not almighty power; what he is is love.” Third, “the glory of the triune God is reflected, not in the crowns of kings and the triumphs of victors,” but in “Jesus crucified, in the faces of the oppressed whose brother he became, in the community of Christ: “in the fellowship of believers and of the poor”. Lastly the life-giving Spirit, “who confers on us the future and hope” proceeds “not at the spearheads of progress, but in the shadow of death”, “from the Father and from the resurrection of the Son.” *The Trinity and The Kingdom of God*, P.197-198.
by Christ.” All are coequal in the community of Christ, (including both “under-shepherds” and sheep). Christ should be encountered, and is encountered, in community. Second is that “the truth of freedom is love” and only through love can “human freedom arrive at its truth. [...] I become truly free when I open my life for other people and share them with me.” As such the other person is not a “limitation of my freedom” but rather “an expansion of it.” By expansion in “mutual participation in life, individual people become free beyond the limits of their individuality and discover the common room for living which their freedom offers. That is the social side of freedom.” Both love and freedom are interlinked with sharing and being in community. Christian leadership cannot be considered Trinitarian in character if done in a hierarchical non-mutual, non-communal way.

The call to Christians in the prayer of Jesus in John 17 is a call to share in the relational sharing and unity of love of the Trinity. This call to share in the relationality of the Trinity is not however unique to John but apparent in the Sermon on the Mount in the call for Christians to imitate their heavenly Father and “be perfect” (Matthew 5:48) as their Father is perfect (and indeed as implied by the seventeen references to God as Father in Matthew 5-7). It is also apparent in the unique relationship of Father and Son: “no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him” (Luke 10:22, also Matthew 11:27). It is however in John’s gospel where the most strikingly inclusive words appear after the resurrection “Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God’” (John 20:17).

34 Ibid 201.  
Divine relationality is one of sacrificial love, a relationship freely entered into. Every act of disclosure of the inner self to another is an act of sacrifice. The invitation is repeatedly extended to the church to participate in divine relationality and in its unity. We are loved by Jesus just as he is loved by the Father: “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love” (John 15:9). We are loved by the Father just as the Father loved Jesus (John 17:23). We are also invited to share in the oneness of that loving unity, to be one with the Father and the Son and the Spirit. Jesus prays “that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that they may be made perfect in one,” (John 17: 20-23).

Commenting on John 17, Gary Burge sees it as a reflection of “a conversation that has been going on for some time. ... Jesus lives in conversation with the Father. ...., spirituality is [...] a dynamic relationship in which ... our talking develops an intimacy with profound social dimensions” Plantinga writes that “in the divine life there is no isolation, no insulation, no secretiveness, no fear of being transparent to another. Hence there may be penetrating, inside knowledge of the other as other, but as co-other, loved other, fellow. Father, Son, and Spirit are ‘members one of another’ to a superlative degree.” This should mitigate against any situation arising where people feel disconnected and uncared for. Communal interconnectedness emphasises the context within which pastoral care needs discovery occurs and can be met. It also emphasises the context of those who seek to meet those pastoral needs. “Under-shepherds” in community need to be equally members of one another.

36 Healy writes that “every ‘dis-closure’ of the self is an act of self-surrender involving vulnerability and the risk of being misunderstood.” Also that “human experience suggests that a relation between persons can be perfected only if there is a possibility for ongoing communication.” Nicholas J. Healy, The Eschatology of Hans Urs von Balthasar, Being As Communion, Oxford, 2005. P.182.
37 Burge, John [The NIV Application Commentary], p.474.
Disciples are to be baptised into the [one] name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). Jesus prays for his followers to be one with Him and the Father, to enjoy the same unity. This unity and relationality is further emphasised by the church being variously described as a temple or as a body in 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 2:18-22 and 4v3-17. The church’s interdependent unity is expanded on with profound implications such that no Christian can be seen to stand in isolation from others but rather to be in some sense dependent on the rest of the body (1 Corinthians 12:12-26) for healthy growth into the image of Christ – Ephesians 4:16 (“by every supporting ligament” is literally “by every contact”). Mutual love and care for one another is therefore understood to be intrinsic to what being a Christian involves. Paul writes of the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12:25-26 “that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it.” His words presuppose knowledge of both difficulty and blessing. Commenting on this Craig Bloomberg writes that “What modern medicine has recently come to understand even better than did the ancients – that the body is a psychosomatic whole – should apply that much more to the fellowship of believers.”

One might suggest a breakdown in community is evidenced by the sample correspondence from the Gazette discussed in Chapter 1. How can friendship and community be present when people do not know one another? In his book Living Cells James O’Halloran writes that in order for genuine Trinitarian communal life to be present there must be a degree of intimacy present which is impossible in a large gathering on a Sunday morning. He comments that “If to be a Christian is to experience – and reflect – the intimate life of loving and sharing that characterises the Trinity, then this is best achieved in small groups.

It is hard in a parish of thousands or that matter even in a gathering of a hundred. [This shows] the importance of small Christian community.

A key task of the Church and all “under-shepherds” must be the facilitating of the creation of intimacy with the possibility for growth in social relationship and freedom, in mutual love and friendship. John V. Taylor in his book *The Go Between God*, writes that “the ideal shape of the church [...] will provide this ‘one-another-ness.’ [Therefore] the essential unit in which the church exists must be small enough to enable all its members to find one another in mutual awareness,” while large enough to embody the life of the Kingdom. Intimacy and real Trinitarian community cannot be just between rector and parishioner. If we are truly a community of co-equals then all will not rest on the poor, heavy laden, shoulders of one or two exhausted people. “Under-shepherds” will serve in mutual vulnerability with others, and with the same interdependent need for others as those being served.

In conclusion, without knowing each other and sharing in one another’s lives, Christian community, the context for Pastoral care and for growth into the image and likeness of Christ, is impossible. Classical Trinitarian Christianity presupposes a community which reflects the life of the Trinity and where unselfish love will be manifest to one another. The Trinitarian relationality of such a community is evidenced when the needs of members of a church are known and there is an unselfish mutual desire to love, or seek to help, or assist one another, as much as possible. Relationality between “under-shepherds” and parishioners is critical but so is that between parishioners in general as a reflection of the life of the Trinity. Yet care is needed here. There are not two “castes” those who lead and

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those who are led. There is only one body. Every “under-shepherd” is also a sheep. Every sheep is called to become in whatever varying way an “under-shepherd.” Evidence of a breakdown in those relationships or in the sense of people feeling cared for and loved should be viewed with alarm. Small gatherings of Christians are essential in order to allow genuine intimacy, vulnerability and growth in relatedness.

**Conclusion**

Trinitarian pastoral needs in relation to God, one another and others, are met as part of God’s mission and with particular reference to the mandate of Christ in the Pastoral Great Commission of John 21:15-17. Using the metaphor of “under-shepherd” and Sheep is appropriate and helpful to keep in mind both the responsibilities of the “under-shepherds” and the needs of the sheep, God’s flock. Our one caution is not to see these two terms as static or rigid. They are not. Trinitarian Church life is only present when there is some level of intimacy and vulnerability which allows relatedness in love and friendship to grow. Consequently there is a considerable onus upon “under-shepherds to promote” such contexts so that there is Trinitarian community within which the three dimensions of pastoral need can be discovered or ministered to. There is also an onus on them to recognise that all are called to be “under-shepherds” and that they have the same needs as every other sheep.
Chapter 3  Commonalities in Pastoral Models, Past and Present

The Trinitarian needs of the Christian life (love of God, love of one another and love of others) require pastoral care. God’s love, divine love, Christian love, always has an “other.” Miroslav Volf, writing on “God is love” (1 John 4:7), says that “it is thoroughly a Christian view of love that there is a connection between the idea that God is love and the Holy Trinity. […] if there is no differentiation within the Trinity, then it is no longer love, but self-love. Love is always expressed toward another.”¹ The expression of God’s love will be seen in the care of the flock and the example of the “under-shepherd.”

The Rationale for Selecting These Four Figures

The desire for “under-shepherds” to seek excellence in pastoral care for God’s people is not new. In this chapter, we shall seek to extrapolate from commonalities in the pastoral thoughts of four significant pastoral writers from the 5th to the 21st centuries.

Gregory the Great was born into a wealthy patrician family in 540 CE. By the age of 33 he had attained the highest civil political position as prefect of Rome. Within a year following the death of his father he renounced his wealth and power to pursue a monastic life after the pattern of St. Benedict.² He published his Book of Pastoral Guidance or Liber Regulae in 590 CE shortly after he became Pope.³ It provided the template for pastoral care in the West from the late sixth century to the time of the reformation. His godly life and

¹ Miroslav Volf, “The Doctrine Of The Trinity Is Our Social Program”: The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Shape of Social Engagement, [Modern Theology 14, no. 3 (July 1998): 403-423].
³ Andrew Purves, Pastoral Theology In The Classical Tradition, Westminster John Knox Press, London, 2001. His writing drew on the work of Gregory of Nazianzus, a fifth century Eastern Church predecessor, and Gregory the Great is seen completing a process already begun by his Antioch colleague who provided the basis for its pastoral theology.
spirituality were so evident that John Calvin referred to him a thousand years later as “whom you may with justice call the last bishop of Rome.”

Richard Baxter (1615-91) was an Anglican minister during one of the most turbulent times in English history in the 17th century. According to Packer he was “the most voluminous English theologian of all time” with the total number of words running to about ten million.

Baxter suffered an array of serious illnesses and virtually all his life believed he was not far from death. His seventeenth century book *The Reformed Pastor* was a best seller and continues to be reprinted even today. Andrew Purves writes that “the book bears witness to the nature and power of pastoral ministry perhaps more convincingly [than] any other book in the history of pastoral literature.” He is the originator of the phrase “Mere Christianity.”

John Wesley’s legacy and influence is enormous. The Methodist church which he started as an Anglican renewal movement continues to affect the English speaking and English influenced world today. In the eighteenth century, the era of John and his brother Charles, the Methodist movement had an enormous influence. Wesley’s preaching, together with that of his fellow cleric George Whitfield is viewed by some as having prevented a revolution in England, such as occurred in France. In America the Methodist preachers

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4 A saying which appears to be misquoted universally as “the last good pope” though that is the meaning. [http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes.pdf](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes.pdf) [Accessed April 2012], chapter 17.49, p.1124; Gregory is also referred to along with Bernard as “holy men” chapter 7.22, p.909.
6 Purves, *Pastoral Theology In The Classical Tradition*, p.95.
also had enormous effect. Much of the social legislation introduced in Britain in the late 18th and early 19th century originates amongst Methodists. At eighty years of age, Wesley wrote that among the reasons for his good health were “[…] travelling four or five thousand miles a year; […] my rising at a set hour; and […] my constant preaching, particularly in the morning.”

His commitment to social justice is illustrated in his last letter which was written to William Wilberforce a week before his death aged 88. In it Wesley passionately exhorted and encouraged the young Wilberforce in the fight against slavery: “Go on, in the name of God and in the power of His might, till even American slavery, the vilest that ever saw the sun, shall vanish away before it.”

Rick Warren is the author of *The Purpose Driven Life*, the bestselling nonfiction hardback book in history, with over 30 million copies sold since 2002. In 1979 he founded Saddleback Church with his wife, Kay, and oversaw its growth to over 23 thousand attending weekly. He is said to have given “purpose driven” training to some half a million pastors. His peace initiative aims to enable social transformation in countries across the world by utilizing the willingness of Christians to help others.

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9 See Steve Addison “How the west was won. Methodists and Baptists on the American Frontier”. [http://www.movements.net/wp-content/02-How-the-West-was-Won.pdf](http://www.movements.net/wp-content/02-How-the-West-was-Won.pdf) [Accessed March 2011]; “By 1830 membership stood at nearly half a million. If you add regular attenders who were not members and children of members, the actual number who attended may have been ten to twelve times greater.”


13 Amazon. *The Purpose Driven Life*, Book Description: [http://www.amazon.com/Purpose-Driven-Life-Rick-Warren/dp/0310205719](http://www.amazon.com/Purpose-Driven-Life-Rick-Warren/dp/0310205719) [Accessed April 2012]; The book is designed to be read a chapter a day for forty days as a progressive spiritual journey.


15 *Ibid*, Peace stands for: Promote reconciliation; Equip leaders; Assist the poor; Care for the sick; Educate the next generation [Accessed February 2012].
It will be shown that, despite widely differing contexts, all of our figures are in broad agreement in relation to care of God’s flock and the character of the “under-shepherd.” While conversion and conforming to Christ is the principal aim of the care of God’s flock, this care must be tailored to individual needs. With regard to the character of the “under-shepherd”, it is critical that the “under-shepherd” be seen to be an example to others. This is reflected in three ways: God dependency (being humble in loving relationship to God); Trinitarian communality or collaborative ministerial interdependence (being humble in loving relationship to others in ministry in the model of the Trinity) and incarnational loving outflow (being humble in offering loving service to others).

The life of the Trinity is a life shared in each of the persons by the other persons. In that mutual sharing is the perichoretic interchange or dance to which all are called to participate. The promotion of an individual’s relationship with God may well be improved by one to one care, but it is equally, if not far more critical, to have fellowship with others to allow for openness, sharing and growth in intimacy. Just as love for God and for others cannot be separated out from following Jesus, neither can love be separated out from expression in deeds of kindness and service to others.

Care Of The Flock

Conversion and conformation to Christ

Gregory’s commitment to Benedictine monastic life, along with his writings affirm living out of conversion. Gregory’s monastic community in Rome was a source of mission and Gregory himself was intent on being a missionary before becoming pope. Subsequent to
this, he offered and instigated papal support for worldwide mission.\textsuperscript{16} Drawing on Jesus’ words to the Church at Sardis Gregory wrote figuratively that, being “cold” (unconverted) was preferable to being “lukewarm” to Christ as “being not yet converted, [there is] hope of his conversion, or, being already converted, he be fervent [hot] in virtues.”\textsuperscript{17}

Like Gregory, Baxter saw conversion as a priority. All else was secondary to this. On the manner of shepherding God’s flock it was clear that “the work of conversion, and repentance from dead works, and faith in Christ, must be first and frequently and thoroughly taught.”\textsuperscript{18} Baxter sought the growth in grace of the convert so that they were “inflamed with the love of God” and lived out their faith in the entirety of their being and life.\textsuperscript{19}

John Wesley was clear that it was not information but transformation which was required of people. Conversion was a beginning of a process which needed to continue and grow such that an individual attained Christ-likeness. He wrote “[...] orthodoxy, or right opinions, is, at best, but a very slender part of religion, if it can be allowed to be any part of it at all. [Rather what is to be sought] is nothing short of, or different from, ‘the mind that was in Christ;’ the image of God stamped upon the heart.”\textsuperscript{20} According to Marquardt, the aim of Wesley’s preaching was to “lead individuals to renewal through God’s grace in


\textsuperscript{19} The expanded quote is “inflamed with the love of God, and live by a lively working faith, and set light by the profits and honors of the world, and love one another with a pure heart fervently, and can bear and heartily forgive a wrong, and suffer joyfully for the cause of Christ, and study to do good, and walk inoffensively and harmlessly in the world, are ready to be servants to all men for their good, becoming all things to all men in order to win them to Christ, and yet abstaining from the appearance of evil, and seasoning all their actions with a sweet mixture of prudence, humility, zeal, and heavenly mindedness.” Baxter, \textit{The Reformed pastor}, Section 1. The nature of this oversight, 3(1), \url{http://www.ccel.org/ccel/baxter/pastor.iii.i.html} [Accessed January 2011].

\textsuperscript{20} Wesley Centre Online, \textit{The Letters Of John Wesley}, \url{http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-letters-of-john-wesley/wesleys-letters-1748/} December, 1748 [Accessed April 2012].
justification and sanctification and thus to a meaningful life, and to guide them into activity suited to transform the whole of society from within."

Like Wesley, Rick Warren lays a great stress on character rather than profession of belief. He writes that “christlike character is the ultimate goal of all Christian education. To settle for anything less is to miss the point of spiritual growth.” Spiritual maturity is “demonstrated more by behavior than by beliefs.” “It is fruit, not knowledge, that demonstrates a person’s maturity.” At Warren’s church there is a very clear intention to facilitate a journey of progression and movement from attenders (those who attend the church), to members (who have made a commitment), to mature members, to ministers.

The Trinitarian needs which begin in relationship with God through Christ need to be nurtured pastorally in order to develop. The context of that pastoral nurturing is focused on in our next section.

*Care is tailored to the individual and allows other pastoral contexts*

Each of our figures, while emphasizing the need for individual care, also allows for broader pastoral contexts of meeting those needs. For Gregory it was his Benedictine monastic tradition. Richard Baxter used family house group meetings and a variety of others which he promoted and encouraged. John Wesley viewed the Methodist class

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23 Ibid p.336.
24 Ibid p.337.
25 Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, P.309-393. Diagrammatically this is viewed as a series of circles. Beginning with the outermost circle of Unchurched, then regular attenders and then members, followed by mature members until getting to the innermost circle of ministers, p.307. Day 7 of Warren’s 40 day program in the Purpose Driven Life is about conversion which precedes the five purpose sections thereafter. See Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, Zondervan, 2002.
Rick Warren uses a highly structured but varied home group system with lay pastoral teams.

The third section of Gregory’s book details some thirty-six cases of pastoral care using opposites. These demonstrate in great detail the specific and highly individualized care required. He writes in the prologue of the third section that “the things that profit some often hurt others; seeing that also for the most part herbs which nourish some animals are fatal to others.” In a pastoral context “hearers” needed the “discourse of teachers to be fashioned, so as to suit all and each for their several needs, and yet never deviate from the art of common edification.” Communal life and mutuality in sharing and supporting one another was intrinsic to the Benedictine Rule which Gregory followed. When in 578 Gregory was appointed as the papal representative at the court of Byzantium, he took with him several monks who enabled him to maintain his monastic life.

Baxter wrote “Doth not a careful shepherd look after every individual sheep? […] Christ himself, the great and good Shepherd, that hath the whole to look after doth yet take care of every individual;” To those claiming there are too many parishioners for the cleric to get to know each, he suggests hiring more help and if necessary sacrificing a substantial part of their salary to pay for it. For Baxter, conversion though a priority, was merely a starting point and he utilized every means to cause faith to grow. His main method as

30 Ibid “I would ask you, might you not have procured assistance for so great a charge? […] if you have but a hundred pounds a year, it is your duty to live upon part of it, and allow the rest to a competent assistant, rather than that the flock which you are over should be neglected.” [Accessed March 2011].
described and advocated in *The Reformed Pastor*, was a proactive model of individualized pastoral visitation and oversight. This particular methodology of pastoral care was one which he believed to have achieved more success than all his sermons.\(^{31}\) Through this proactive method of systematically visiting and counseling each of the 800 families in his parish that Baxter saw the most success.\(^{32}\) It was this that made the greatest difference in his parish ministry. Baxter wrote *The Reformed Pastor* with the stated aim of encouraging other ministers to take up this method so that they and their parishes would also reap the same benefits.

For Baxter, the promotion of what might in modern terms be called “self-feeding,” plus a mixture of what can best be termed family home groups and lay religious assemblies provided other contexts of pastoral support, care and encouragement. He received every fiftieth copy of his books sold in lieu of royalties and would often lend them to his parishioners. He wrote “See that in every family there are some useful moving books, beside the Bible.”\(^{33}\) He encouraged each family to pray together, read scripture and to receive spiritual edification by means of the “rulers” or “master of the family” exercising their responsibilities to ensure that children understood the faith.\(^{34}\) As well as these family house group meetings, Baxter also encouraged meetings on other occasions outside of

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\(^{31}\) Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, Dedication p.43 I find that we never took the best course for demolishing the kingdom of darkness, till now. [...] And I find more outward signs of success with most that do come, than from all my public preaching to them.”

\(^{32}\) *Ibid*, Looking back he wrote “when I came there was about one family in a street that worshipped God and called on his name and when I came away there were some street where there was not part one family in the side of a Street that did not so.” p.84-85: The long lasting effect of the social transformation which occurred was witnessed to some 80 years after Baxter. When visiting Baxter’s town of Kidderminster in 1743 George Whitefield wrote to a friend: “I was greatly refreshed to find what a sweet savour of good Mr Baxter's doctrine, works and discipline remained to this day.” *Works*, London, 1771, II.47, quoted in *The Reformed Pastor*, The Banner of Truth Trust, 1974 ed.  P.12  by J.I. Packer in the introduction.


\(^{34}\) *Ibid* P.100.
Sunday service.\textsuperscript{35} These included a sermon discussion meeting, youth prayer meetings and meetings for sermon analysis, and a variety of others such as days of thanksgiving for giving birth.\textsuperscript{36}

Baxter is a prime example of a proactive minister whose intentional vision of care was applied in a systematic manner and so ensured that every parishioner was visited, counseled, supported and encouraged in order to discharge the biblical mandate to provide pastoral care. Yet while doing all he could personally to get to know and minister to his parishioners, he also facilitated and encouraged a wide variety of other assemblies. Baxter promoted personal spirituality or Christian self-feeding, in every way he could in order to promote growth in Christian life.\textsuperscript{37}

John Wesley knew of, approved and commended Baxter’s book and his method. He wrote “Every travelling preacher must instruct them from house to house … Can we find a better

\textsuperscript{35} The blog on Baxter at the site: A wandering pilgrim: \url{http://a-wandering-pilgrim.blogspot.com/2011/06/baxters-families.html} [Accessed November 2011] helped me to realise the connection between home groups and what Baxter was encouraging. Also a talk by Bishop Wallace Benn on Baxter which also refers to Baxter and home groups: The talk may be downloaded from the site of Sussex Evangelical Christian Seminars \url{http://www.sussex-ems.org.uk/resources/} [Accessed November 2010]; and—“Learning from Richard Baxter: Wallace Benn, Bishop of Lewes since 1997, speak on Baxter the preacher, and explores ways in which his method could be applied in the 21st century. (25 January 2010)” \url{http://www.hhefc.org.uk/SEMS/Wallace_Benn_Baxter.mp3} [Accessed November 2010].

\textsuperscript{36} Matthew Sylvester, \textit{Reliquiæ Baxterianæ: or, Mr. Richard Baxter's Narrative of the Most Memorable Passages of His Life and Times}, 1696, accessed at \url{http://www.archive.org/details/reliquiaeabaxteri00baxt} [March 2011]; Part one p.83 [The house meetings facilitated] “younger folk who were not fit to pray in so great an assembly, [to meet] among a few more privately, where they spent three hours in prayer together, every Saturday night they met at some of their houses to repeat the sermon of the last Lord’s Day, and to pray and prepare themselves for the following Day.” It should be noted that a sermon for Baxter was one hour in length. There would have been plenty to discuss.

\textsuperscript{37} Baxter lists a full range of non sacramental practices which are considered commendable in group meetings when no minister is present in his \textit{Practical Works}, \textit{Volume 1: A Sum of Practical Theology, and Cases} p.717 Google books: \url{http://books.google.ie/books?id=cyQFBOUhkaoC&pg=PA717&dq=Richard+Baxter+and+the+need+to+for+christians+to+meet+together&hl=en&sa=X&ei=qQ8-T7LPLcaJhQFYyAIw&ved=0CCgQ6AEwCQ#v=onepage&q=Richard%20Baxter%20and%20the%20need%20to%20for%20christians%20to%20meet%20together&f=false} [Accessed April 2012].
method of doing this than Mr. Baxter’s? If not let us adopt it without delay.”

Wesley commented concerning the necessity of engaging pastorally with individuals that “as great as this labor of private instruction is, it is absolutely necessary.”

While Wesley understood the aim of Christian living to be gaining the mind of Christ, (generally discussed in terms of perfect love for God and neighbor), he saw it being best facilitated in Christian small groups or classes and bands. This was the place of pastoral formation where needs could best be met. In his rules for Band-Societies drawn up in December 1738 he wrote “The design of our meeting is, to obey that command of God, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.” This was taken literally: “To this end, we intend,” [A list of 6 rules followed of which no.6 is]: “To desire some person among us; to speak his own state first, and then to ask the rest, in order, as many and as searching questions as may be, concerning their state, sins, and temptations.”

In the Methodist class meeting there was a healthy mutual submission which led to stronger and more authentic community.

Wesley supremely demonstrated the need for Christian fellowship and the pastoral benefits which can flow from it in the course of his decades of ministry. In 1748, some six years after the class meeting achieved its form, he observed a dramatic linkage between whether or not Christians grew in maturity and their membership of a class. While “those […] who had begun but were not united together, grew faint in their minds, and fell back [whereas the] far greater part of those who were thus united together continued ‘striving to enter in


at the strait gate,”\textsuperscript{41} He saw the class as pivotal with numerous benefits: “what advantages have been reaped […]. Many now happily experienced that Christian fellowship of which they had not so much as an idea before.” They began to "bear one another's burden," and naturally to "care for each other."\textsuperscript{42} In 1763, writing with the hindsight of twenty years experience of classes being used for pastoral care, he wrote of the futility of making converts with no support system for nurture:

I was more convinced than ever that preaching like an Apostle, without joining together those that are awakened […] is only begetting children for the murderer. [Despite] preaching [for] twenty years all over Pembrokeshire! But no regular societies […] nine in ten of the once-awakened are now faster asleep than ever.\textsuperscript{43}

Such an analysis is devastating in showing how critical group support is and shows the strength of his conviction for the need of support structures. Without it the ability of Christians to grow in Christ, let alone cope with challenges to maintain their faith, would be nearly impossible. While Baxter is one of our strongest figures from history on what a difference pastoral visitation can make, Wesley shows by empirical observation and decades of experience that intimate group support may be similarly critical by its presence or by its absence.

Wesley saw the Methodist classes as imitating the structure of the early church described in Acts 2:42-47 and Acts 4:32-37. In his \textit{A Plain Account Of the People Called Methodists} written in 1748 he writes of the initial practice of forming bands that: “Upon reflection, I


\textsuperscript{42}Ibid II.7.

\textsuperscript{43}Wesley’s Journal: Thursday August 25, 1763 \url{http://www.godrules.net/library/wesley/274wesley_c3.htm} [Accessed March 2011].
could not but observe [that] this is the very thing which was from the beginning of Christianity.”

In Chapter 7 of his *Purpose Driven Church* Warren, sounding very like Wesley writes of spiritual maturity that it “is not a solitary, individual pursuit! You cannot grow to Christlikeness in isolation. You must be around other people and interact with them.”

Warren sees small groups as the place where pastoral needs are met. In this setting “real fellowship” occurs where people “experience authenticity”, “mutuality” and “mercy,” as well as a commitment to community reflected in “honesty”, “humility”, “confidentiality” and “frequency” of attendance.

While large group gathering celebrations “give people the feeling that they are a part of something significant,” this isn’t where pastoral needs are met. It is in people’s homes that one finds “a sense of intimacy and close fellowship. It’s there that everybody knows your name. When you are absent, people notice.” Warren sees a direct correlation with size and the importance of the small group: “The larger your church grows the more important small groups become for handling the pastoral care functions. They provide the personal touch that everyone needs especially in a crisis.”

Like Wesley, Rick Warren draws an analogy between the life and practice of the early church and that of the practices of their respective churches. Warren understands Acts 2 is

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46 Ibid, chapter 18 P.158-165.
as being “the clearest example” of a healthy church and authentic community.\textsuperscript{50} Acts 2 is seen to embody all of the five purposes outlined in his \textit{The Purpose Driven Church}. He views the new Christians “meeting from house to house” after Pentecost as doing the equivalent to “small groups.”\textsuperscript{51}

While Wesley saw in retrospect the similarity between the fellowship and practices of the classes similarity with Acts 2, for Warren Acts 2 represented at the outset what his church sought to achieve. Both of them look to the dynamic early Christian community as a vision of what can be and what more importantly what should be sought today. Jurgen Moltmann also points to the early days of the church and specifically that of in Acts 4:3ff as reflecting the life of the Trinity.

\begin{quote}
Father, Son and Spirit have everything in common except for their personal characteristics. They [...] empty themselves on to each other and live in each other by virtue of love. This kinetic and perichoretic fellowship [...] is also the experience of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit in Christ’s community, as Acts 4:3ff reports.\textsuperscript{52}
\end{quote}

In conclusion, proactive pastoral care is evidenced as occurring both on a one to one level and also through an intimate gathering of the body of Christ for that purpose. Trinitarian community requires the opportunity for intimacy and sharing with others regardless of how effective a cleric’s pastoral visitation may or may not, be. Both historic and contemporary models of pastoral care demonstrate Christ-centered small gatherings with openness and accountability are a valid means to this end. Whether in a monastic setting, a home or by pastoral visitation, effective pastoral care and support can occur when there is relational

\textsuperscript{50}Warren, \textit{Purpose Driven Church}, P.106.
sharing. This relational sharing evidences Trinitarian Christian life not unlike that of the early Church in Acts 2:42-47 and Acts 4:32ff.

**Character Of The “Under-shepherd”**

*Under-shepherds need to be examples*

Three of the four sections of Gregory the Great’s book deal with the character of those seeking to shepherd God’s flock. In the first section Gregory warns against “[those who] penetrate with their understanding [what] they trample on in their lives.” The “under-shepherd” must be a model so that his life example may “point out the way of life to those that are put under him.” Gregory points to Jesus’ example of ministry and withdrawal to pray as an example to follow for healthy spirituality. He recognizes the need for the “under-shepherds” to be self-conscious watchers of their own motivations. Using vivid imagery from Ezekiel and Revelation he writes of having “eyes within and round about” they would please God who sees the heart and by their example demonstrate what they correct in others.

In his book *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, Baxter writes that “All churches either rise or fall as the ministry doeth rise or fall (not in riches or worldly grandeur) but in knowledge, zeal and

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54 Ibid.
55 Ibid. [Accessed January 2011].
56 In the second part of Gregory’s book is an extensive description, of what sort of life the pastoral guide should live. The Benedictine idea of consideratio is woven unstated throughout this section. It refers to the requirement for a meditative balance. It means, according to Purves “The exercise of introspection that examines both inner motives and experiences and outer actions in such a way that a balance is established between them.” Andrew Purves, *Pastoral Theology In The Classical Tradition*, Westminster John Knox Press 2001 p.61; This is repeated elsewhere in reference to focus on Christ and focus on his members on earth. [http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/36012.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/36012.htm) [Accessed January 2011]; This is effectively the same twin emphasis as Baxter. Baxter’s The Reformed Pastor is divided theoretically by its intent to draw out the fullest of meaning of application from Acts 20:28: “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, […] to shepherd the church of God […]”. The entire first half of is concerned with oversight of self, the shepherd, and the second with oversight of the church, God’s flock.
ability for their work.” For Baxter the “under-shepherd’s” role is critical and like Gregory he warns against any gap between words and life example.

I can oft observe [...] that when I have grown cold in preaching, they have grown cold too; [...] Take heed to yourselves, lest your example contradict your doctrine, and lest you lay such stumbling-blocks before the blind, as may be occasion for their ruin; lest you unsay with your lives, what you say with your tongues.

Wesley similarly saw the damage of a life inconsistent with words. He wrote in relation to the words "And shall teach men so" from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:19) that “In some sense [...] whosoever openly breaks any commandment [...] generally teaches other men to do so too, by word as well as example.” In an address to clergy, Wesley, having outlined an intimidating list of practical qualifications for ministry, wrote of three key qualities more important. First was intentionally glorifying God, second loving God and brethren “beyond [...] ordinary.” Third was a complete devotion to God so that in everything the minister was “an example to the flock, in his private as well as public character [...]”. He describes such a life with the beautiful phrase, “one incessant labour of love.”

Warren wrote in 2011 that “leadership is about being a model for others. Why? You can only take a person as far as you have gone yourself. [...] You can’t preach what hasn’t changed your life already.” He points to John 13 and Jesus’ example of service he writes

61 John Wesley, An address to the clergy, Wesley Centre Online: [http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/an-address-to-the-clergy/] [Accessed April 2012].
62 Ibid [Accessed April 2012].
63 Ibid [Accessed April 2012].
that in the foot washing Jesus “modeled servanthood.” Jesus “expected his followers to do it. But he modeled it first.”

All of our figures show being an example is critical for the “under-shepherd” and for the care of the flock. Being in right relationship with God is inseparable from being in right relationship with those whom s/he wishes to shepherd and guide. Without being in loving relationship to God it will not be possible to be in loving relationship with others which facilitates their care and growth into Christ. The “under-shepherd” is called to be an example in each of the three dimensions of Christian life.

God dependency: Being humble in relation to God

Gregory finishes his first section by the underscoring of the critical need for the pastor to maintain a vital spiritual life, to read scripture and to:

meditate daily on the precepts of Sacred Writ, that the words of Divine admonition may restore in him the power of solicitude and of provident circumspection with regard to the celestial life, [...] and that one [...] be ever renewed to love of the spiritual country.

His words have a strong sense of being written from experience and hindsight. Baxter similarly advocated a diligent spirituality. “Study, and pray, and confer, and practice; for in these four ways your abilities must be increased.” Wesley wrote that the Christian “should be more zealous for the ordinances of Christ than for the church itself; for prayer in public and private; for the Lord's supper, for reading, hearing, and meditating on his word; and for the much-neglected duty of fasting” before seeking to speak or commend

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them to others. Rick Warren stresses that humility and integrity rather than ego, are key to getting God’s vision. “I'll take a person who's humble and has integrity over a person who has vision any day.” It is “in dependence upon God that we get His vision and develop more trust in Him.”

Collaborative interdependency: Humility in relation to others

Gregory strongly warns against pride and the need to be open to receive instruction from others. While left unexplored by Gregory in his Pastoral Guide, his monastic background and taking monks with him to Byzantium, emphasizes interdependent accountability amongst peers. In his book humility is advocated, and Gregory sees self exaltation as the sin of Satan when he refers to Isaiah 14. The fourth section of his book warns that having accomplished all, the preacher must take care to return to a humble state and consciously strive to ensure his soul “return to its own weaknesses.” Baxter’s book was written for a clerical fraternity which he had hoped to attend. His book itself is testimony to the need for leaders to learn from, and be mutually accountable to, one another. Such interdependence can also be seen in the life of Wesley and his encounters with others such as the Moravians or delving into the writings of the Fathers for wisdom and inspiration. Rick Warren begins his book The Purpose Driven Church by recounting his “twenty years of observing” and reading “nearly every book in print on Church growth” demonstrating a clear desire to learn from others. He has also spoken about mentors and of that of Peter Drucker, (who

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72 Purpose Driven Church p.15.
has written extensively on leadership) who he says mentored him over twenty years. It is never about you but Jesus according to Warren, who has himself confessed to struggling with pride and having to often remind himself of this due to celebrity status.

**Incarnational loving outflow: Offering humble service to others**

In Jesus’ life he modeled loving your neighbour by reaching out to those who were despised and estranged from others described as tax collectors and sinners in the New Testament (Luke 15:1-2). In the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) Jesus defines our neighbour as everyone to whom we can show kindness (“Go and do likewise”). In the biography and writing of all of our figures one sees this incarnational loving outflow.

Gregory ensured that the revenue of Papal estates was redirected to the poor. Baxter at one stage acted as town physician for a period of some five years, treating patients free of charge and when it took away from his work ensured a trained physician came to the town. He did not hesitate to attack social evils including slavery calling slave traders “common enemies of mankind” and those who bought them “fitter to be called incarnate devils than Christians.” Baxter was vociferous in opposing all oppression of those who

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75 Purves, *Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition*, p.58.
76 See Leonard Bacon: *Select practical writings of Richard Baxter Volume 1; Life of Richard Baxter*, p.90 [http://books.google.ie/books?id=DKI9AAAYAAJ&q=town+physician#v=snippet&q=town%20physician&f=false](http://books.google.ie/books?id=DKI9AAAYAAJ&q=town+physician#v=snippet&q=town%20physician&f=false) [Accessed March 2011]; See also p.99 “Sometimes I could see before me in the church a very considerable part of the congregation, whose lives God had made me a means to save, or to recover their health; and doing it for nothing so obliged them, that they would readily hear me.”
77 William Orme, *The Practical Works of Richard Baxter: with a Life of the Author and a Critical Examination of his Writings, Volume 4*, See: Christian Economics, Chapter 14, P.217, Just part of what he wrote is “to go as pirates and catch up poor negroes or people of another land, that never forfeited life or liberty, and to make them slaves, and sell them, is one of the worst kinds of thievery in the world; and such persons are to be taken for the common enemies of mankind; and they that buy them and use them as beasts,
did not have power by those who did. He called for just and merciful treatment of tenants by landlords in relation to rent: “unmerciful landlords are the common and sore oppressors of the countrymen.”

Wesley grasped clearly that “Christianity is essentially a social religion; and that to turn it into a solitary religion, is indeed to destroy it. [...] it cannot subsist at all, without society, - without living and conversing with other men.” He continues that “it is the design of God that every Christian should be in an open point of view; that he may give light to all around, that he may visibly express the religion of Jesus Christ.” Wesley sought practically, like Baxter, to offer practical help in the form of medical treatment when he was able to do so during his life. He was also concerned for the education of the young.

He was horrified by slavery and preached against it longing for those so bound to be free.

Rick Warren combines together the great commandment of Matthew 22:37-40 with the great commission of Matthew 28:19ff as a good foundation for a healthy church. Sacrificial service out of love for God and others is seen to be at the heart of the call to ministry, to mission and to maturity. His *Purpose Driven Church* and *Purpose Driven Life* for their mere commodity, and betray, or destroy, or neglect their souls, are fitter to be called incarnate devils than Christians, though they be no Christians whom they so abuse.”


80 Ibid.

81 See the article by Randy Maddox which sets this in the wider context of the tradition for clerics to offer help including medical help as part of their vocation: http://www.faithandhealthconnection.org/new/wp-content/uploads/John-Wesley-on-Holistic-Health-and-Healing-Randy-Maddox.pdf [Accessed April 2012].

82 See the numerous references and thoughts of this by Wesley at the Wesley Centre Online, *The Letters of John Wesley*: http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-letters-of-john-wesley/wesleys-letters-1748/ [Accessed April 2012] and in particular the letter to Vincent Perronet December 1748.


books emphatically show all as intended to progress to maturity including ministry and mutual service. The last two purposes outlined in *The Purpose Driven Life* clearly state: “You were shaped for serving God,” and “You were made for a mission.” Warren refers to Christians needing to apply both 1 John 3:16b (“And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren”) as well as the famous John 3:16 (“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son […]”) in their lives. In doing so he pointedly illustrates the inescapably mutual service all are called to because “you can’t practice being like Jesus without being in relationship with other people.” In words drawn from the Great Commission he writes: “Remember, it’s all about love – loving God and loving others.” Warren listed the qualities of character, humility and an unselfish loving generosity as the top qualities of a leader in a 2008 sermon. “The hallmark of whether a person is genuinely a loving person, genuinely a compassionate person is their generosity.”

**Conclusion**

There is a need for pastoral care to facilitate growth in relationship to God, one another and service of others. While proactive pastoral care of God’s flock requires dealing with individuals needs (Gregory’s detailed list in Section 4) it may be equally facilitated either one to one (Baxter) or in the context of Trinitarian community where there is intimacy and support (Wesley’s class meetings). Without intimacy with others Trinitarian communality will be absent (Warren and the need for small groups).

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86 Ibid, p.325.
87 Ibid, p.152.
88 Ibid, Chapter 22, p.203.
89 Ibid.
We have shown that all our figures from history and the present agree it is critical for an “under-shepherd” of God’s flock, whether lay or ordained, to be an example to others. This may be seen in three ways. First, it is critical for “under-shepherds” to be dependent on God with a healthy and humble spirituality. Second, it is also critical for “under-shepherds” to be ministering in collaborative interdependence with others (following the model of the Trinity), and to be able to receive support, help, correction form others in community. The Trinity, as model for community, exemplifies voluntary egalitarian mutual service out of unselfish love.91 Third, an incarnational outflow in wanting to seek to meet the needs of others must be present. Warren writes that “you can give without loving but you cannot love without giving.”92 Divine love is outpoured in service to others and a sign of spiritual maturity.

As the “under-shepherd” is related in love: to God, to one another and to others, pastoral care will flourish and be facilitated.

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91 We looked at this in our section on the Trinity as a model of Community for the Church in Chapter 2.
Chapter 4  “Follow Me”: Jesus as Kenotic Archetype

In our last chapter we saw that all of our figures agreed on the importance of the “under-shepherd” being an example to God’s flock. The one whom all “under-shepherds” must seek to imitate, in order to correctly lead or minister to God’s flock, is Jesus. Our five figures agree that only if “under-shepherds” are following Jesus can they be effective models for others whom they seek to shepherd and guide.

The words “follow me” occur twenty times in the Gospels on the lips of Jesus starting with the calling of the disciples.¹ All but one of these are in the form of an imperative. These occurrences are: Matthew 4:19, 8:22, 9:9, 10:38, 16:24, 19:21; Mark 1:17, 2:14, 8:34, 10:21; Luke 9:59, 5:27, 9:23, 14:27, 18:22; John 1:43, 10:27, 12:26, 21:19, 21:22.

In this chapter we will show that Jesus’ leadership model, which we are called to follow, is a dependent one in relation to God, and a kenotic, self emptying one in relation to humble service of others. He serves out of love for the Father and for others. The validity of Jesus as our archetype requires an awareness of his true dependency on the Father and the Spirit in his humanity. Jesus’ dependence is then to be seen as a parallel to ours in our humanity and our dependency on God. Luke-Acts and John show this dependency most clearly. Jesus is then to be seen as the pioneer of faith whose example we are called to follow (Hebrews 12:2).

¹ James Lawrence notes that Jesus not only shares his call but commits to sharing his entire life, not just his public ministry. In calling he “was committed to investing in others and sharing his Father’s vision for his life, even though they struggled to accept it (Mark 8:31-33).” James Lawrence., Growing Leaders – Reflections On Leadership, Life and Jesus, [The Bible Reading Fellowship, 15 The Chambers, Vineyard, Abingdon, OX14 3FE, United Kingdom, 2004], P.98.
Trinitarian Relationality and Love

A call to relationality is apparent in Jesus’ teaching on the greatest commandments. McIlroy writes that:

Jesus’ identification of the two Great Commandments as being to 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind' and to 'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Mt. 22:37-40, quoting Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18) as the hermeneutic keys to the Old Testament law places the whole of the Torah in a relational context.\(^2\)

The doctrine of the Trinity, “of God as primordially a being of Persons in communion, implies or presupposes that the fundamental category of reality is that of relation.”\(^3\)

In the ministry of Christ the love of God for the world (John 3:16) is demonstrated by each member of the Trinity in the three years of Jesus’ ministry, culminating in the cross, but also in the resurrection and Pentecost. In the cross, we see the “love of God the Father which led him to give his Son; the love of God the Son which led him to sacrifice himself; and the love of God the Holy Spirit which binds them together in their unity of loving purpose.”\(^4\)

This love manifest in the giving of the Trinity is with reference to humanity as the focus of God’s love, whose reconciliation into the life of the Trinity is desired.\(^5\) The desire of the Trinity for the reconciling of humanity to God’s self is the message of the Gospels, Acts

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\(^3\) Declan Marmion, Theological Trends – Trinity and Relationships, [The Way - A review of Christian spirituality published by the British Jesuits, Vol. 43, No. 2, April 2004], p.112. He writes this referring to Walter Kasper, Catherine LaCugna, John Zizioulas and Colin Gunton as some of the many now advocating this view.

\(^4\) McIlroy, Towards A Relational And Trinitarian Theology Of Atonement, p.28.

and the whole New Testament and Bible.\(^6\) God did not require creation in order to be God. Creation itself is an unselfish act of love.\(^7\) The redemption of creation and of humanity is a freely entered into act of love in consistency with God’s character.

Divine love, like God, “is all-embracing and self-emptying and so is the grace of the Kingdom.”\(^8\) The love of the Trinity is an outpoured other centred love. It seeks to include, to identify with and to embrace others. It is perichoretic: the persons of the Trinity uniquely share mutual interpenetrative and empathic love in their relations.\(^9\) It is entirely unselfish and it is entirely exemplified in the mutuality of love within the perichoresis of the Trinity and the desire of the Trinity to include both the church and the whole world within that love. Divine love is kenotic and humble. It is the love that all Christians and “under-shepherds” in particular (John 13:34, 21:15-17) are called to manifest.

**Following Jesus In His True humanity: Dependency On The Father And The Spirit**

It is “precisely in the Kenosis of Christ [...] the inner majesty of God's love appears, of God who 'is love' (1 John 4:8) and therefore Trinity.”\(^10\)

Kenosis (from the Greek word meaning “to empty”) is the belief that in the incarnation “in order to live a truly human life,” God the Son “laid aside his attributes of glory and went through a normal human development of growth, temptation, limitation and then suffering

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\(^7\) *Ibid* p.26-27.

\(^8\) Geevarghese Mar Osthathios, *The Holy Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, p.2.


\(^10\) Geevarghese Mar Osthathios, *The Holy Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, p.3.
and death.” This belief draws from Philippians 2:6-8 where Paul urges Christians to share (v5) the same “mind” (or attitude) as did Christ, who (v6) “though he was in the form of God, (v7) “emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant”.

Roger Helland writes that

A common position is to view Jesus as one who shifts back and forth between his humanity and his deity. This view attributes his supernatural miracles, knowledge and power to his deity, while attributing his tiredness, temptations, trials, thirst, and emotions to his humanity. Yet, this view makes him into some sort of schizophrenic divine-man who functions back and forth between his two natures.

Only by recognising Jesus in his complete humanity, by understanding him as primarily, (if not exclusively) dependent on God, on a prayerful spirituality and on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit can “under-shepherds” truly follow Him. In the gospels Jesus miracles are perceived as those of a prophet, though the Gospels make clear he is not just a prophet.

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14 Jesus refers to himself as “a prophet” in: Matthew 13:57, Mark 6:4, Luke 4:24 and Luke 13:33; Jesus is thought to be “one of the prophets” by the people according to Matthew 16:13-14, Mark 8:28, Luke 9:19, Luke 21:11, Luke 21:46, (Luke 9:7-9 by Herod); Jesus is described as “a great prophet” in Luke 7:16. Note Luke 7:39 “if this man were a prophet he would know”; Two of his disciples call him “a prophet” in Luke 24:19, as does the women at the well in John 4:19, and the man born blind in 9:17; Jesus is thought to be the prophet in John 6:14 and 7:14; While John the Baptist is not “the prophet” that Moses spoke of (Mark 6:15, 8:28, Deuteronomy 18:15, John 1:21,25, 6:14, 7:40) Jesus is, although not explicitly stated to be. It is not just the words of Jesus but the actions that are pointed to: Matthew 11:4-3 Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Go and tell John the things which you hear and see.’ ” All the Gospels show Jesus to be greater than any prophet i.e. Matthew 23:34, 27 and Luke 13:34 which speak of Jesus sending prophets and acting in divine (and pre-existent) relationship to Jerusalem. In addition see Matthew 22:45, Mark 12:37, Luke 20:44 and the implication of the Messiah being David’s lord as well as David’s son in Psalm 110, which suggests both Lordship and Messiahship, (see Bruce F.F. Bruce & W.J. Martin, The Deity of Christ, Manchester: North of England Evangelical Trust, 1964, p 2-3 of the pdf, accessed at http://theologicalstudiesorg.uk.blogspot.com/2008/04/ff-bruce-wj-martin-on-deity-of-christ.html] [April 2011]; Also see Matthew 11:27 and Luke 10:22 with regard to only the Father knowing the Son and only the Son knowing the Father; For explicit reference see John 1:1, 14; 8:58; Finally, baptism and transfiguration accounts and the beloved Son: Matthew 17:1-13; Mark. 9:.13; Luke. 9:28-36. For a comprehensive overview of the appropriation of divine imagery from the Old Testament in the ministry of Jesus see pages 2 to 6 of the article by Bruce and Martin.
While the desire of the church historically to safeguard Christ’s deity is to be seen in the great debates which produced the various creeds, the challenge to Christians is to also recognise his humanity. In doing so Jesus’ example of ministry in the Gospels then becomes a real and actual example which we can follow.

According to Klaus Issler “contemporary Christians tend to give greater attention to Jesus’ deity than his full humanity, thus tending toward a functionally docetic Christology. Without an appreciation of the predominant role of the Father and the Holy Spirit in Jesus’ life, it is impossible to make sense of how Jesus can be our genuine example.”

In Acts 10:38 Peter summarises Jesus’ ministry in the words: “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.” The overall view of Jesus’ ministry in the Gospels is that Jesus is anointed with, dependent on, and empowered by, the Holy Spirit. This does not take away from his deity but affirms the reality of his incarnation. As John 1:14 asserts, and Luke 1:34-35, 3:23 (“so it was thought”) and Matthew 1:18 and 23 (“God with us”) may be taken as inferring, the eternal word “became flesh.” In the Gospels it is because God is with Jesus, because he is anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power, that he does miracles. In Acts 2:22 Jesus is described as “a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you

through him, as you yourselves know.” It is God who did the miracles through Jesus, the perfect servant and perfect example of faith.\textsuperscript{16}

Jesus’ miracles of healing are the result of the Spirit’s anointing and Jesus’ faith and prayer which the disciples are instructed can be theirs also (Mark 11:22-24, Matthew 17:20 “if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain...”).\textsuperscript{17} The occasional lack of success of the apostles (such as their failure to cast out a demon when at the base of the Mount of Transfiguration), is attributed to their lack of faith and prayer.\textsuperscript{18}

When the twelve are sent out (Matthew 10:7-8, Mark 6:7,13,30, Luke 9:1-2, 6) and later the seventy (Luke 10:9, 17-20) they also minister, heal and cast out demons, not from their own resources but in dependence on God’s power.\textsuperscript{19} Peter walks on the water by faith in God and then sinks through lack of faith when he doubts (Matthew 14:28-31).\textsuperscript{20}

Jesus in his humanity is intentionally shown to be a parallel for our prayerful dependency on the Father and the Spirit.

\textsuperscript{16} See Helland, The Hypostatic Union: How Did Jesus Function?, “Here we are told that Jesus did not perform miracles, wonders, and signs by himself. They were done by God through him as God accredited Jesus. They were not done by him but through him. The ministry of signs and wonders were also accomplished by God through the apostles and others (see Acts 2:43; 3:12; 4:29; 5:1-16; 6:8; 8:5--7; 14:3 etc.)”. p.323.


\textsuperscript{18} Matthew 17:19-20 ““Why couldn’t we drive it out?” He replied, “Because you have so little faith” / Mark 9:29 “‘He replied, ‘This kind can come out only by prayer.’”

\textsuperscript{19} See Boring, The Gospel Of Matthew, The New Interpreter’s Bible, Vol. 8, p. 256; “the discourse [of Matthew 10: 1ff] begins by charging them to [...] perform the same healings, exorcisms, and even raisings of the dead (8:1-9:35; 10:8); [...] The list reflects the works of Christ in chapters 8-9.” See also Pheme Perkins, The Gospel of Mark, ,The New Interpreter’s Bible ... Vol. 8, “The Twelve share in Jesus’ authority and mission. They do not become independent of Jesus. Both the teaching and healing they perform are extensions of Jesus’ own ministry.” p.596.

\textsuperscript{20} See Donald A. Hagner, Matthew 14-28, [Word Biblical Commentary, Dallas, Texas, 1995] “Peter is here paradoxically a model both of faith and of lack of faith. The story is also a demonstration of the saving power of the Lord.” P.423; For a very different interpretation which views Peter as almost succumbing to a demonic temptation to test God see: Boring, The Gospel of Matthew, The New Interpreter’s Bible, Vol. 8, p.329.
Jesus’ dependency on the Father and Spirit in John parallels that of the future Church

Though generally accepted as having the highest Christology of any Gospel John contains many statements by Jesus indicating an exclusive dependency on both the Spirit and the Father for all he does, says and teaches.

In John the emphasis on the unique anointing of the Holy Spirit under which Jesus ministers is stated in John 1:33 “The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.” This speaks not only to Jesus’ present ministry (come down and remain) but also to the future ministry of the disciples who must be baptized with the Holy Spirit. The dependence on the Spirit by Jesus in the present and that of the Church in the future are also emphasised elsewhere. In John 3:34 Jesus’ teaching and authority (“speaks the words of God”) is indicated as being by the Holy Spirit on whom he is dependent “the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.”

In John 7:38-39 reference is made to the future reception of the Spirit by disciples (v39a: “rivers of living water will flow from

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21 Bruce Milne, *The Message Of John*, [The Bible Speaks Today, Nottingham, IVP, 1993], P.55 “That Jesus is ‘the baptizer with the Spirit’ implies possibilities in terms of our experience of God through him, which may [like baptism by immersion in water], as God chooses, be similarly ‘overwhelming’”. P.55; Raymond E Brown writes that “John clearly understands the impact of the Spirit’s descent on Jesus much in the same manner as the other Gospels, namely, that it marks him out as God’s unique instrument, and in particular as the Messiah and the Servant of the Lord.” *The Gospel According To John I-XII, [The Anchor Bible, Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1991]*, p.66.

22 Gary M Burge, John, *[The NIV Application Commentary; Zondervan, 2000]* P.123 “Even though the subject of the final clause in 3:34 is ambiguous (lit., “for he gives the Spirit without limit”) and some have speculated that the verse describes how the Son gives the Spirit to believers, it seems clear that these verses are about what God has given to Jesus, equipping him for his mission in the world.”
within them”, “were later to receive”) which must await Jesus’ death and resurrection (v:39b: “Jesus had not yet been glorified”).

Jesus comes not to do his will but that of “the one who sent me and to finish his work” (John 4:34). There are in fact some forty references to Jesus being ‘sent’ in John. This is a staggering number given the paucity of references in the Synoptics, a mere thirteen in total.23 By contrast some 60 or so occurrences of “apostellein and pempein” are present in John.24 In the prayer of Jesus, in John 17 alone, there are 6 references (17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23, 25) to being sent. Being ‘sent’ stresses that all Jesus does and says is under the authority of the one who sent him.25 All his teaching comes from God: “My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me” (John 7:16). He has been taught by God: “as My Father taught Me, I speak these things” (8:26). In the totality of Jesus’ ministry all he does and teaches is “just what the Father has told me to say” (John 12:50).26 In John, then, the entirety of Jesus’


25 Ibid. Mercer concludes his article writing that ‘sending” “can be integrated into the total message of John by relating it to the fourth gospel's vertically oriented dualism. In this context "sending" serves to correlate the Father above to the world below. The revelation of the things above occurs in the Son whose authority is in "the one who sent” him. As "the” apostle, Jesus reveals the truth, confronts the world, and leads to salvation those who respond. His mission is continued through the Paraclete and the disciples, both of whom are sent as Jesus was. The motif in John, through which Jesus is God's apostle (though never called by this term), not only argues against a docetic interpretation but also supports a reading of the fourth gospel's Christology that affirms the traditional Christian teaching about Jesus: that he was, paradoxically, both divine and human.” P.462.

26 See George R. Beasley-Murray, John, [Word Biblical Commentary, Word Publishing, Dallas, 1991] , p.218. He writes of 12:49-50 that “The final affirmation of the summary of Jesus’ proclamation reiterates his sending by the Father and the origin of his message in God. This has been a constant theme of the Gospel from the prologue on (cf. 1:14-18; 3:31-36; 7:14-17; 8:26-29; and for v50a see also 3:16: 5:19-29, 39-40; 6:38-40, 68).”
teaching and his ministry pattern is being set not by his own initiative but is in response to the leading and teaching of the Father. Jesus has passed on “everything that I learned from my Father” (John 15:15).

Most radical to modern ears are his statements that he “can do nothing of himself, but only what he sees the Father doing” (John 5:19-20) which are repeated a few moments later as he declares publically that “I can of Myself do nothing [...] I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father...” (John 5:30). The Greek in verse 19 is *ou dunatai ho huios poiein ap' heatou ouden.* Literally: ‘the son is not able to do anything from himself.’ Verse 30 is *Du dunamai ego poiein ap' emautou ouden,* literally: ‘I am not able to do anything from myself.’ Helland writes that “In both verses the order of the words lays great stress on *ouden.* John also reveals that what Jesus says is not from himself either (see John 3:34; 8:26; 12:49-50). This passage affirms that the Son, as a man, derived his ability not from himself as God but out of a dependent derived ability from God the Father.”27 This theme of radical dependency is repeated yet again when Jesus later declares “I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things” (John 8:26).28

John’s Gospel also shows the future dependence on the Spirit, on the Son and on the Father by the Church. We note in particular 14:26 “But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.” Jesus tells his disciples that “apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). A clear link may be seen in this John 15:5 reference to the work of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, who is to come. 15:26-27 “When the Advocate comes [...] he will testify

28 Don Carson writes that “all that Jesus tells to the world he has heard from the one who sent him (cf. 3:34; 5:19-30; 8:15-16), and that one is true”. D. A. Carson, The Gospel According To John, [The Pillar New Testament Commentary], Eerdmans, Apollos, Leicester, England, 1991]p. 344; In the account of the healing of the blind man the theme of *nothing* is echoed once more though this time by the man formerly blind: “If this man were not from God, he could do nothing” (John 9:33).
about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.” Just as Jesus was and is empowered so too will they be. John’s gospel makes clear that through the Holy Spirit, the disciples would also have access to the same guidance and teaching as Jesus had. Issler also sees a parallel dependency between the Church and Jesus in 15:5, with that of Jesus on the Father in 5:19 and 30 suggesting “his dependency on the Father as the analogy for how his disciples will depend on him.”

Through prayer and God’s provision they could expect to see and to do “even greater works than these” (John 14:12). The stunning statement is made by Jesus that it is better for the disciples that he go so that the Holy Spirit will come: 16:7 “But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you” (see also 16:8-15).

John’s gospel is clear on the dependence of Jesus on the Father and the Spirit - who remains on him, who the Father gives to him “without measure” (1:33, 3:34). It is also clear that the disciples will be able to “do nothing” (John 15:5) just as Jesus could “do nothing” (5:19-20, 30; 8:26) apart from the Father unless they abide in him. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus’ ministry can continue through them and to them. Furthermore this Trinitarian dependency would also emulate the social communality of the Trinity. Moule writes that in John 14-16: “The ‘Paraclete’, the Spirit of truth, represents a continuation of Jesus’ own teaching after Jesus’ earthly ministry is over.” The “work of the Spirit [in teaching] is essentially through persons and in the context of the Christian community,

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30Carson, The Gospel According To John, writes that “Jesus’ valuation of what is for his disciples’ ‘good’, indeed, for our good, ought to temper longings of the [Oh if only I could have been in Galilee when Jesus was there!] sort. That same Jesus insists it is better to be alive now, after the coming of the Spirit.”
31Bruge, p. 418, writes regarding the “remaining” or “abiding” in 15:4, 5, 6, 7,9, 10, that the “disciple in whom the Father and Son live (14:20, 23) through the Spirit (14:16, 25, 15:26) is one whose life is utterly dependent on Christ.”
even when the result (John 16:8-11) is that the world at large is convicted.”

It was in community by their love for one another that their association with Jesus would be witnessed most effectively (John 13:34, 35, 15:12, 17).

In being sent as Jesus is sent (John 17:18 and 20:21), the Church will be empowered and strengthened by the Paraclete whom it is to receive and on whom it will be dependent: “another advocate” (14:16).

The presence of the Spirit, and asking and bearing fruit, go together. Disciples will ask the Father in Jesus’ name (John 14:13; 15:7,16; 16:23,24,26), or ask Jesus in his name (John 14:14). This asking will result in God responding so that disciples bear “much fruit” (John 15:8). The disciples are chosen “and appointed […] so that whatever [they ask in Jesus’ name] the Father will give” (15:16).

The Church is to be dependent on the Spirit and on prayer.

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33 Craig S. Keener, Sent Like Jesus: Johannine Missiology (JOHN 20:21-22), [Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies 12:1 (2009), pp. 21-45] [Accessed April 2012], p. 2;3 “Believers will do the kinds of works Jesus did (14:10-12). Many of Jesus' works in this Gospel are his miraculous signs (5:20; 7:3, 21; 9:3-4; 10:25, 32, 37-38; 15:24), but his work also summarizes his entire mission (4:34; 17:4). Presumably, John, like Luke and other New Testament writers, does expect continuing miracles among Jesus' followers. But there is a kind of sign that John specifies, one that reveals God's character and light in a dark world. In 15:11, Jesus says that disciples, as branches bearing the fruit natural to the vine, should love one another. By loving one another, we show the world more of God's heart.”
34 Beasley-Murray, John, writes that “The implication of v16 is that Jesus has performed the role of a Paraclete during his earthly ministry, and after his departure he will ask the Father to send another Paraclete to perform a like ministry for his disciples.” p.256.
35 Carson, The Gospel According To John, writes on p.524 regarding 15:16 that “these closing words again remind the reader that the means of the fruitfulness for which they have been chosen is prayer in Jesus’ name (cf. Notes on 14:12-14; 15:7-8).”
36 Keener, Sent Like Jesus, concludes that “Jesus is the model for what it means to be sent in this Gospel: “As the Father sent me, even so I send you.” The object of this mission, as in the case of Jesus, must be the world: “For God in this way loved the world.” The Spirit who comes to testify about Jesus enables this mission by continuing to make Jesus the Word present in his followers' word: “Receive the Holy Spirit.”, p.45; Keener also discusses the various ways that disciples are not sent and cannot be sent as Jesus was: See: page 26: “Jesus is the monogenes (1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 Jn 4:9), the specially beloved and unique Son (the traditional English translation, 'only-begotten,' reads too much etymology into the term). We are not divine, so while the world should see God among us (13:34-35; 17:21, 23), we are not his revealer in the unique way that Jesus was. While we may lay down our lives for one another (1 Jn 3:16), we do not carry away the sin of the world (Jn 1:29).”
John’s Gospel supports the dependence of Jesus on God the Father and the Spirit as an intentional parallel to our dependence on Jesus, the Father and the Spirit who was to be given. We too are sent (John 4:38, 13:20, 17:18, 20:21).

**Jesus’ dependence on God in prayer is shown particularly in Luke**

If Jesus in the Gospels was truly dependent (at least predominantly if not exclusively) on God then one would expect to see him do what humans in both the Old and New Testaments do in relation to great needs – and that is to pray. In the Gospels that is what we find, and in Luke this is especially the case (though not uniquely as all show Jesus praying before his crucifixion, and at other times). Virtually every significant event in Jesus’ ministry is connected with prayer. Acts shows a similar pattern of dependency in the brief references to key events and figures in the early church.

Jesus is praying: when baptised (Luke 3:21); when he is in the wilderness (Luke 4:1 “fasted”); frequently withdrawing to pray during times of great busyness ministering to multitudes (Luke 5:15-16); before choosing the twelve apostles (Luke 6:12); when Jesus asks the disciples “who do people say that I am?” and Peter makes his pivotal confession (Luke 9:18); Jesus goes the Mount of Transfiguration “to pray” (Luke 9:28); when he is transfigured he is praying (Luke 9:29); when he is asked to instruct on prayer (Luke 11:1);

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38 Navone: writes of the major events as being answers to Jesus prayer: “that: (Lk.13; Acts 1.8). The Lucan Gospel teaches that Jesus’ prayers are always answered: he receives the Holy Spirit at his baptism (3.22); he receives the Twelve after his night of prayer (6.12); he receives Peter's confession of faith after his prayer (9.20); his glorification at the Transfiguration follows upon his prayer (9.29); the disciples learn to pray the Lord’s Prayer after his prayer (Lk.11:1); Peter repents (22.62) because Jesus has prayed that his faith would not fail (22.32); the apostles preach the forgiveness of sins to the people of Jerusalem (Acts 2.38, etc.) which Jesus had requested of his Father at the Crucifixion (23.46). p.120.
both before the last supper when he is with the disciples (John 12:27-28); after the last Supper (Luke 22:31, John 17); in Gethsemane before his arrest; and on the cross which included using words from Psalm 22 and Psalm 31.

In addition to showing Jesus in prayer on several occasions when Matthew and Mark do not, Luke also has more teaching on prayer. There are three parables which instruct on prayer only found in Luke: Luke 11:5-8; 18:1-8, 18:9-14; The dependence of Jesus in prayer parallels that of the disciples who are taught, and urged, to pray by Jesus (Luke 11:8, 18:1, 22:40, 46).\(^{39}\)

Additionally there are times of prayer at decision crossroads. An example of this is after the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law when we are told that Jesus “having risen a long while before daylight, went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed” (Mark 1:35). The result of this prayer was the decision to leave Capernaum where “everyone is looking for you” (Mark 1:37) to go elsewhere because for “this purpose I have been sent” (Luke 4:43).

There is also the entire night of prayer spent on a mountainside before the twelve are chosen (Luke 6:12) where the linking between the choosing and Jesus persistent prayer


which precedes it is clear.\(^{40}\) There is clearly dependency on the Father as the one revealing and instructing Jesus in what needs to be done by the Spirit. Noting that “decisive events often occur in the context of Jesus praying,” Nolland writes of this night of prayer that “Nowhere else is such a sustained period of prayer attributed to Jesus.”\(^{41}\) He comments that Acts 1:2 which speaks of Jesus ascending (“... after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.”) “establishes an equivalence between prayer [...] and the guidance of the Spirit.” In other words Jesus was reliant on the Holy Spirit for the instructions he gave to the apostles during his ministry and the critical choices he made were under the guidance of the Spirit. Nolland also refers to Schürmann who notes that Jesus’ behaviour here “becomes normative for later Christian appointments to office (Acts 1:24; 6:6; 13:2-3; 14:23).”\(^{42}\)

The sense of withdrawal to pray or to rest or both is also referenced in Jesus seeking to be alone after hearing the news of John the Baptist having been killed: “When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself (Matthew 14:13).” It seems reasonable to infer that the news of John’s death provided an additional impetus for Jesus to desire focused time with the Father free of distraction. After the feeding of the five thousand Jesus seeks solitude when “leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray.” (Mark 6:46).\(^{43}\) Luke makes a general observation about Jesus’ pattern of prayer withdrawal in the context of crowds following him to hear him and to be healed: “crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed [...] but] Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed” (Luke 5:15-16). There is an implicit pattern of work to be followed by Jesus

\(^{40}\) O’Brien, Prayer in the Gospel of Luke “By this the Third Evangelist emphasizes the momentous issues of the choice which was to be made.” p.115.


\(^{42}\) Ibid.

\(^{43}\) Perkins, Mark, [The New Interpreters Bible Vol 8] notes that this instance as with the previous occasion of Mark 1:35, “mark significant developments in Jesus’ ministry.” p.603. While the first is mission to go through all the town of Galilee, the second is seen as an eschatological foretaste of the Messianic banquet.
needing to withdraw for renewal or refocus or rest.\textsuperscript{44} It is likely this duality underlies the words of the Apostles in Acts 6:4, “give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.” It reveals their key priorities. Their emphasis on prayer reflects their self awareness of being dependent on God.\textsuperscript{45}

Jesus’ wilderness experience reflects not only a spiritual and physical dependency on God there (in fasting and therefore prayer: Luke 4:1, Matthew 4:2) but also link to his utter dependency on God in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:38 = Mark 14:34 “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death”). While there he abandons himself to God in prayer dramatically: Matthew 26:29 “fell with his face to the ground and prayed” (Mark 14:35 has “he fell to the ground and prayed”). By contrast Luke 22:41 “knelt down and prayed,” seems weaker. Luke 22:43-44, not present in earliest mss suggest this as the prelude to more intense prayer when “being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.”\textsuperscript{46} In the first of the wilderness temptations the devil suggests that Jesus attempt to exercise power to turn stone into bread at his own initiative, to act independently of the leading of the Father and the Spirit.\textsuperscript{47} Matthew and Mark both record that help for Jesus after this time of trial in the wilderness was provided by angels (Matthew 4:11, Mark 1:13 noting John 1:50 and Jesus’ words to Nathanael). In Luke by contrast, it is in Gethsemane (22:43) that an angel is said to appear to strengthen Jesus. It is noteworthy that the possibility of deliverance for Jesus from arrest and trial in Matthew is linked not to Jesus exercising divine authority but the intervention

\textsuperscript{44}Thompson comments on 5v15-16 “went abroad ... gathered ... withdrew ... prayed: the tenses are imperfect and describe what kept happening.” G. H. P. Thompson., \textit{The Gospel According To Luke In The Revised Standard Version}, Oxford University Press, 1972, P.99.

\textsuperscript{45} Stott writes that “It is noteworthy that now the Twelve have added prayer to preaching (probably meaning public as well as private intercession) in specifying the essence of the apostles’ ministry.” See p.121 John Stott, \textit{The Message of Acts [The Bible Speaks Today]}, IVP, Nottingham, 1991.

\textsuperscript{46} See Darrell L. Bock, Luke, \textit{[The NIV Application Commentary, Zondervan, Michigan, 1996]} p.567 who suggests “the text may have been removed because it argues for angelic strengthening, which makes Jesus look too human.”

\textsuperscript{47} See Michael J. Wilkins, \textit{Matthew}, \textit{[The NIV Application Commentary, Zondervan, Michigan, 2004]}; p.158.
of his Father in the form of legions of angels (Matthew 26:53). Divine assistance will come
to Jesus through prayer (asking the Father) not through Jesus’ exercise of his own divinity.

Had Satan suggested to Jesus in the wilderness that he pray to the Father so that stones
would be turned into bread, there would have been no temptation because there would be
to attempt to act independent of the Spirit and the Father. These pericopes of Wilderness
and Gethsemane have been linked together with the intent to show Jesus as the model for
victory over temptation. 48 In Jesus’ travail in Gethsemane the disciples are urged to pray in
order to overcome temptation: Matthew 26:41, Mark 14:38, Luke 22:40 (noting that Jesus
in Luke, before starting to pray tells the disciples to do so) and 22:46.49

Jesus, as shown particularly by Luke, is most certainly our archetype for prayerful
dependence on God.

**Jesus’ Dependence On The Holy Spirit Is Particularly Apparent in Luke**

The greatest prophets in the Old Testament, Moses (Numbers 11:17) and Elijah (2 Kings
2:9) were noted as doing great miracles by the power of God’s spirit.50 It would be
expected then that since Jesus is portrayed as doing outstanding miracles in his ministry
there would be reference (if he is dependent on God as were Old Testament prophets), to
God’s spirit being with or upon him to a remarkable extent. Just as is the case with prayer
discussed above that is exactly what we find. From conception onwards (Luke 1:35), “the

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49 For a fascinating look at theological issues and questions regarding Jesus not sinning while being truly
tempted and understanding him as being primarily dependent on God see Bruce A Ware, *THE MAN CHRIST


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whole of Jesus' life is characterized by an intimate union with the Holy Spirit which is first
publicly revealed at the moment of his baptism.”

In each of the Gospels, Jesus is spoken of by John the Baptist as the one who would
the Spirit was coincident with his baptism in water, but distinct from it.” All four gospels
refer to the Holy Spirit coming upon Jesus as a dove at his baptism (Matthew 3:16, Mark
also records that it is as Jesus is praying that the descent of the Spirit occurs. Following
this the synoptic gospels record Jesus being “led by the Spirit into the wilderness”
(Matthew 4:1/Luke 4:1), or in the case of Mark that the Spirit “drove him into the
wilderness” (Mark 1:12 NKJV).

Being ‘led’ or ‘driven’ by the Spirit demonstrates Jesus is under the authority of the Spirit. Luke adds the descriptor that Jesus “full of the Holy
Spirit” is led there (Luke 4:1). All these references, particularly Mark’s, show Jesus as
being submissive to, and dependent upon, the Holy Spirit. They echo the multitude of
sending references in John but emphasis it in submission to the Spirit.

Luke describes Jesus as returning after his forty days of fasting in the wilderness “in the
power of the Spirit” (4:1). Jesus being anointed by the Spirit to do God’s will is also given

53 Keener in discussing the symbolism of the dove sees the new creation context of Gen. 8ff as the most
promising context for drawing out of its significance; The Spirit In the Gospels and Acts..., p.60.
54 O’Brien notes that “by using the present participle προσεευκομένου 'praying' (in contrast to the aorist
βαπτισθέντος 'baptized') Luke evidently intends us to understand that 'the descent of the Spirit [was]
coincident with the prayer of Jesus, not with his baptism, which has already been completed'. This is
consistent with other Lukan references where the Spirit is given in answer to prayer (Luke 11:2 (Marcion),
11:13; Acts 1:14 with 2:1-4; 4:23-31; 8:15-17).”
2012], p. 114.
55 The NIV has “sent” but the NKJV is a fuller translation.
additional emphasise by Luke 4:16-20, when Jesus, in the synagogue at Nazareth, points to part of Isaiah 62:1-2 as being fulfilled by his coming: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me for he has anointed me to ...” (Luke 4:18). Jesus is the one on whom God’s Spirit is, the one who is anointed for what the prophet has described. Bruce writes that Luke “intends us to understand that the whole course of Jesus' earthly ministry is the outworking of that anointing of which he spoke […] but he makes it clear that Jesus' outpouring of the Spirit on others had to await his departure from his disciples after he rose from the dead.”

Jesus’ ministry is inextricably linked to both the Holy Spirit and to prayer.

Luke 4:43 refers to Jesus being “sent” in the context of preaching the gospel elsewhere after healing Peter’s mother-in-law. By contrast Mark 1:38 “only mentions the need to preach elsewhere as ‘That is why I have come.’ We note the extra sense of being “sent” in Luke 4:43 to indicate Jesus being in submission to the Spirit and to the Father. It is remarkably similar to John’s gospel where as already noted there are at least forty distinct references to Jesus being “sent” by the Father. Jesus’ actual commission to send the disciples out into the world occurs in Matthew 28:19ff, Luke 24:45-48, Acts 1:8 and John 20:21 where Jesus says “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (see also John 17:18, 21).

In Luke 5:17 Jesus’ healing is linked to “the power of the Lord [being with Jesus] to heal the sick.” Helland asks why this is the case and finds the answer in the dependence of Jesus in John’s Gospel previously discussed. Whether or not he is right in this, the reference


57 By contrast in Matthew are four, and in Mark are three: Matthew 4:1; Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1; Matthew 10:40=Luke 10:16, Matthew 15:24 and Matthew 21:37=Mark 12:6=Luke 22:11 (parable of the vineyard and finally the Son is sent); Mark 9:37=Luke 9:48; Unique to Luke are 4:18, 43.

58 As noted earlier see the article by Craig Keener, Sent Like Jesus, for detailed discussion of sending in John.
certainly lends weight to the perception of Jesus ministering by God’s power and the power of the Holy Spirit rather than his own.\(^5^9\)

In Matthew 12:15-21 (Jesus’ healing “all who were ill” (v15), yet desiring they keep silent (v16)), Jesus’ mission is seen to fulfil Isaiah 42:1-4 which is then quoted. The first part of this passage as quoted (v18) has a triple designation. Jesus is “my Servant”, “my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased” and most significantly in relation to dependency on the Spirit, the one of whom it is said “I will put my Spirit upon him.”

In Luke 12:10, Matthew 12:24-32 and Mark 3:29, Jesus warns against blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. In Luke 11:20 Jesus speaks of casting out demons “by the finger of God” (Matthew 12:28: “by the spirit of God”) and then seeks to defend the Holy Spirit. In Matthew 12:32 Jesus specifically says that the sin of blasphemy is not against the Son of Man, against himself. Were Jesus responsible for the miracles then the sin would be against him. Because Jesus does not do miracles by his own power but by the power of the Holy Spirit the attack on the miracles as of “Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons” (Matthew 12:24, Mark 3:22, Luke 11:15), is an attack on the Holy Spirit. The “blasphemy” is to ascribe works done by and through the power of the Holy Spirit, (Luke 11:20: done “by the finger of God”) to Satan.\(^6^0\) In Luke 11 this incident is placed after the teaching on prayer which ends “If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your

\(^{5^9}\) Helland, The Hypostatic Union, p.323 “Was that power not there before? The Greek preposition eis used with the infinitive to iasthai indicates purpose. This verse states that a special presence of God in healing power was at that time present for the purpose of healing. This implies that it was not there in the same way before. Jesus would not do or say anything that he did not first see or hear from the Father (cf. In 5:19-20; 8:28; 12:49-50).”

\(^{6^0}\) Combs gives an overview of the wide ranging history of interpretations of what is meant by blasphemy of the Spirit from the early church to the present, the synoptic references as well as other possible New Testament references. Following analysis of all possible interpretations, he makes a compelling case that only seeing blasphemy against the Holy Spirit as the sin of identifying what is of the Holy Spirit as of Satan, fully explains Jesus’ words. He writes: “It is the sin of blaspheming the miracle-working power of the Holy Spirit. It was committed by the Pharisees who were saying that the miracles of Jesus were being accomplished by Satan’s power.” William W. Combs., The Blasphemy Against The Holy Spirit, [Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal 9 (Fall 2004): 57-96]; http://www.dbts.edu/journals/2004/Combs.pdf Accessed March 2012 [Accessed March 2012], p.96.
children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” Jesus’ miracles, his bringing the kingdom of God by casting out demons by the “finger of God”, are dependent on the Spirit. Hagnar writes that given Matthew’s Christological interests it is surprising that the text is not actually reversed and says that blasphemy against the Spirit can be forgiven but not that against Jesus. He sees the explanation for this not being the case in the “Holy Spirit as the fundamental dynamic that stands behind and makes possible the entire messianic ministry of Jesus itself [...].”61 This is an observation with which we concur. Luke 11:13, in placing the giving of the Spirit, as a response to prayer, shows the intimate connection between the Spirit and prayer.62

Both Luke-Acts and John make clear that the witnessing of the Church to Jesus, her empowerment and her ability to minister to others, will be dependent on the coming of the Spirit. In Luke 24:49 the risen Christ tells the disciples: “I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” This echoes the words about Jesus which Peter spoke (Acts 10:38) and the power of the Holy Spirit in which Jesus returned from the wilderness (Luke 4:1). Lamb writes that in Luke 24:49 the promise of the Spirit “corresponds to the Annunciation. Like Mary the apostles are to be endued with ‘power from on high’ (Luke 1:35). At Pentecost they actually receive the power of the Spirit in which Jesus had preached, healed, and exorcized.”63

Jesus in the synoptic Gospels, particularly Luke, ministers in human dependency on God’s Spirit.

61 Matthew 1-13 ... p.348.
62 O’Brien, p. 119 “The Holy Spirit given in answer to prayer [...] is a significant theme in the Lukan writings.”
Acts Shows the Church and her Witness Dependent on the Spirit, and Prayer

Both the beginning and the ending of Acts imply continuity with Jesus’ ministry. Acts 1:1 refers to what “Jesus began to do and teach” and in v2 to Jesus “giving instructions through the Holy Spirit.”64 Stott quotes A. T. Pierson in reference to the lack of a closure of Acts, that it is “because it waits for new chapters to be added [...] as the people of God shall reinstate the blessed Spirit in his holy seat of control.”65

In Acts 1 Jesus says to “wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit (v5). [...] But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (v8).” This power clearly parallels that present in Jesus’ ministry.66

Although they are written to two different communities and at different times there is a considerable overlap between Acts and John regarding the witnessing by the Spirit and the empowerment of the Church to witness.67 In Acts the witnessing to Jesus and the working of miracles, signs and wonders are linked to being filled with the Holy Spirit and to prayer.

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65 Stott, Acts, [The Bible Speaks Today], p.33.

66 Keener in, Power of Pentecost, asks, “What does Luke mean by power? Although not all references involve healing and exorcism, these constitute the most common expressions of that power in Luke’s narrative. Thus Jesus casts out demons with power in Lk 4:36; power was present for healing in Lk 5:17; power was coming from Jesus to heal in Lk 6:19; power came from Jesus to heal in Lk 8:46; and Jesus gave the Twelve power over demons in Lk 9:1. Likewise, in Acts 3:12, Peter insists that it is not by their own “power” or holiness that the man was healed, but by Jesus’ name. The authorities demand in Acts 4:7, “By what power, or in what name,” the man was healed, inviting the same emphasis. In Acts 6:8, Stephen, “frill of grace and power,” was doing wonders and signs.’ In Acts 10:38, Peter declares that Jesus healed all who were oppressed by the devil because he was anointed with the Spirit and power. When John Wimber and others have spoken of “power evangelism,” they have echoed a frequent Lukan motif.” See p.49-50.

67 Bruce writes in relation to the witnessing of Acts 1:8 ““there is a remarkably close relation between the narrative of Acts and the Paraclete promises in the upper-room discourses of the Gospel of John” [...] “We are witnesses to these things,” said those same disciples to the Sanhedrin when testifying to the exaltation of the crucified Jesus, “and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him” (Acts 5:32).”” Bruce, Luke’s Presentation of the Spirit in Acts, p. 18.
On the day of Pentecost the disciples are “filled with the Holy Spirit” (2:4) and later we read of “the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles” (v43). Peter’s witnessing on the day of Pentecost follows the filling (v4). Later on we again read of witnessing being linked to the Spirit’s infilling when “Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit” speaks to the “Rulers and elders of the people” (Acts 4:8).  

In Acts, just as in Luke, prayer and the Spirit are the context for all key events. Navone writes that

“Because prayer enables men to become subject to the dynamic influence of the Holy Spirit, Luke regards the gift of the Spirit as the answer to "prayer" (Luke 11.13). The Christian community carried on the constant prayer of Jesus, according to his command (Luke 21.36). Like Jesus, it prayed above all at the decisive moments of its life.”

While the community are praying (Acts 1:14) Pentecost occurs; prayer is at the heart of the spiritual life of the new community (Acts 2:42); it results in being filled with the Holy Spirit and the building being shaken (Acts 4:24,31); it precedes the choosing of an apostle, ordaining of deacons, sending out of apostles and ordaining elders (Acts 1:24, 6:6, 13:3, 14:23); it precedes the receiving of the Spirit at Samaria (8:15); it is the context for revelation and guidance to Cornelius (by an Angel) and Peter (by the Spirit) and the Gentiles receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:2, 4, 9, 30, 31); it precedes miracles of healing (Acts 9:40, 28:8); it precedes revelation and guidance (Acts 9:11, 11:5, 13:3, 22:17); it precedes acts of deliverance (Acts 12:5,12, 16:25, 27:24). Like Jesus, Stephen prays to God to forgive those who persecute him, and for his Spirit to be received by Jesus (as

68 Fitzmyer, The Acts Of The Apostles, [The Anchor Bible Vol. 31] writes regarding 2:4 and being “filled with the Holy Spirit” that it is “a typically lucan expression (Luke 1:15, 41, 678; Acts 4:8; 31, 9,17; 13:9), denoting the empowering gift of God’s creative or prophetic presence. So empowered, the early Christians are suited for their ministry of testimony and emboldened to confront the Jews gathered in Jerusalem. P.238-239.

69 Navone, Prayer, p.120-121.

70 See Keener, Power of Pentecost, p.56, who notes that “A key element that frames the section about preparing for the Spirit's coming is the emphasis on prayer together and unity (1:14, 2:1).”

71 As already noted above this parallels Jesus’ prayer before choosing the apostles in Luke 6:12.
opposed to by the Father in the prayer of Jesus).\textsuperscript{72}

There are some 57 references to the Holy Spirit in Acts compared to 17 in Luke’s Gospel. The Holy Spirit is directly linked to: witnessing to Jesus (Acts 2:4, 4:8, 31, 5:32, 6:10), being effective in ministry (6:3, 11:24); guidance in the form of direct speech (8:29, 10:19, 13:2); guidance in the form of inspired speech through another (2:18, 11:28, 15:28, 21:4, 21:11); directional guidance (8:29, 13:2, 16:6, 16:7); transportation (8:59!); revelation (2:17, 7:55, 11:28, 20:23, 21:4, 11); God’s discipline (5:3, 9, 13:9); and miracles (6:8, 10:38).\textsuperscript{73}

According to Bruce, “so completely is Acts pervaded by the presence and power of the Spirit that it has been called (with Chrysostom in the 4th century and A. Ehrhardt in our own day) etc ‘The Gospel of the Holy Spirit’; or (with J. A. Bengel in the 18th century and A. T. Pierson in the 20th) “The Acts of the Holy Spirit.”\textsuperscript{74}

In Acts 4:31 we see the threefold link of prayer, the Spirit and witnessing present throughout the book both explicitly and implicitly; “After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.”

**Following Jesus’ Example and Teaching: Humbly Serving Others**

\textsuperscript{72} See Stott, Acts, [*The Bible Speaks Today*], p. 142; Compare Luke 23:34 “‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing’”; and 23:46: “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit” (a quote of Ps.31:5, with Stephen words in Acts 7:59-60: “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” […] “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”

\textsuperscript{73} According to Helland, *The Hypostatic Union*: “Luke is making a paradigmatic point: that just as Jesus was baptized, anointed, filled, led, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be the Father’s messenger, so the Church is to be baptized, anointed, filled, led, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be Christ’s messenger. This is in fact the pattern revealed in his two volumes (cf Lk. 24:48-49; Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-42; cf In. 14:15-18; 15:26-27; 16:5-15; 20:21). What he began to do and teach the Church is to continue to do and teach (Acts 1:1-2). He is a model to be presently followed by his disciples-in his words and works of preaching and practicing the Gospel of the Kingdom.” P.327.

\textsuperscript{74} Bruce p. 18.
In Philippians 2:8 we read that “being found in human form, [Jesus] humbled himself becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” Noting the theological debate as to how exactly Jesus “emptied himself” (“heauton ekenōse”), Robert R. Wicks writes that “Paul is here not primarily concerned with any theological problem.” Rather in his view “Christ emptied himself; instead of aspiring to a higher status he gave up that which he had. He abdicated his divine rank and assumed the form of a servant (literally “a slave”).” Martin citing Moule writes of Jesus coming as “a slave with no rights or privileges in contemporary society. [...] [Doulos] is used in direct antithesis to kyrios (Lord).” Vincent writes that the phrase expresses the completeness of Jesus self-renunciation, that it “includes all the details of humiliation which follow, and is defined by these.”

Jesus is our archetype in the humility which verse 8 refers to. It is this humility of mind which Paul exhorts disciples to share and which Jesus lived out in humble service to others in the three years of his ministry culminating in the cross. That humility is also referred

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75 Robert R. Wicks, The Epistle to the Philippians, [The Interpreter’s Bible Volume XI, Parthenon Press, Nashville, 1955] Introduction and Exegesis by Ernest F.Scott, “The phrase “in the likeness of men” was “used in early controversy to support the strange Docetic view that while Christ appeared to be a man, his human body was only a kind of mask or disguise in which an essentially divine being walked the earth”. P.49.

76 Ibid P.49.


79 Dickson writes of humility that “the peculiar Western meaning of “humility” derives from the usage of the Hebrew-speaking Jews, Latin-speaking Romans and the Greeks, in particular Greek-speaking Christians of the first century. In all three languages the word used to describe humility means “low”, as in low to the ground: the Hebrew anawa, the Greek tapeinos, and the already-familiar Latin humilitas. Used negatively, these terms mean to be put low, that is, “to be humiliated”. Positively, they mean to lower yourself or “to be humble”. The two uses are radically different. One is the awful experience of being conquered or shamed, and this was the dominant usage of the term in ancient times. The other is the noble choice to redirect your power in service of others.” John Dickson, Humilitas, A Lost Key to Life, Love, and Leadership, Zondervan, 2011, p.24.

to in the famous “Come onto me, all you who are weary” passage. In it Jesus says “learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart” (Matthew 11:28-30).\(^8\)

In John 13 at the last supper, Jesus takes the lowest place at the feast by choosing to do the job of the slave. He disrobes and washes the feet of those present to the horror of Peter who says in v8 “you shall never wash my feet.” Beasley-Murray notes Peter’s shock is not unlike that recorded in Mark and Matthew of Peter’s reaction to Jesus describing the Messiah as suffering (Mark 8:32-33, Matthew 16:22-24).\(^8\) Wenham writes that “it would normally have been a servant's job to wash the dust of the road off the feet of guests at a meal, if you had a servant (though we are told that a master could not require a Jewish slave to do this particularly menial task). It was certainly not right for an honoured teacher and master like Jesus to wash his followers' feet.”\(^8\) Jesus once again draws the contrast between their understanding of leadership, of greatness, of authority with that which he represented. “Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”\(^8\) We note the new commandment of Jesus to his disciples, to “love one another as I have loved you” in John 13:34, 35 and 15:12. According to Beasley-Murray the Greek construction in John 13:16 “just as I ... you also” (\textit{kathos ego ... kai humeis}), recalls the use of the formula in 13:34. “Christlike, Christ-inspired love will enable fellow believers so to act toward one another.”\(^8\) Jesus’ example of servanthood is done out of love not compulsion, is voluntary not forced, is self emptying not self serving. It is a kenotic

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\(^8\) Wilkins, \textit{Matthew}, “The yoke of discipleship brings rest because [...] Jesus is “gentle and humble in heart” (11:29). P.428.
example which Paul elsewhere will call to be imitated in his letters to the churches at
Philippi (2: 5-7 discussed above, 3:17) and Corinth (1 Corinthians 4:16, 11:1).

Conclusion

To follow Jesus is to follow him in his relationship with the Father and the Spirit, his
relationship with the community of disciples (the Church) and his relationship with others
to whom he poured himself out in kenotic humble service.

We are called, in following Jesus, to be as Jesus was in the world and to the same
dependency on God, empowerment by the Holy Spirit, care for each other, and kenotic
service of others of which he is our archetype. This is our part in God’s continuing Missio-
Dei to reconcile humanity in relationship to God’s self. It is a mission in which we
participate as we follow but we can only follow if we are dependent on God in prayer and
the Holy Spirit. It is a mission of love and that love is other centred, humble and serving.
Chapter 5  Criteria for Evaluating Pastoral Care

Overview of our work

This dissertation is a response to perceived breakdown in pastoral care.

In Chapter 1 we saw evidence of this in correspondence to the Church of Ireland Gazette which included that of clerics with decades of experience. It was also noted in Church audits.

In Chapter 2 we began by looking at the three dimensions of pastoral care set in the context of God’s Missio Dei. We outlined these as being unselfish love in relation to God (the first great commandment: Matthew 22:38), in relation to one another (Jesus’ new commandment: John 13:34) and in relation to others (the second great commandment: Matthew 22:39).

We considered the triple mandate of Christ in the Pastoral Great Commission of John 21:15-17 to care for his flock, and the appropriateness of the dissertation’s primary metaphor as that of “under-shepherd” and “sheep.” We looked at the Trinity as a model of community which the Church is called to emulate. In our conclusion we emphasised that for Trinitarian Church life to be present there must be intimacy, openness and sharing.

In Chapter 3 we saw agreed commonalities on the need for pastoral care to be individualised but that the context for care could vary. We saw it was critical for “under-shepherds” to be examples who could be followed. “Under-shepherds” needed to exemplify: God dependence, to be humble in relation to God with a healthy spiritual life; Collaborative interdependence, to be to be humble in ministry in relation to others; Incarnational outflow, to be humble in offering loving service to others.
In chapter 4 we considered Jesus as the model of leadership for “under-shepherds.” We discussed the nature of God’s relational love and then looked at Jesus’ leadership. We observed that it was characterised by a dependency on the Holy Spirit and prayerful spiritual life. It was also characterised by a kenotic humble servanthood.

**Evaluating Criteria**

Our work suggests criteria to evaluate both pastoral care *giving* and pastoral care initiatives *given*, both present and future.

(1) God dependent: Are “under-shepherds” serving out of love for God, out of dependence on God? For God’s flock, does it facilitate growth in unselfish love for God and promote and encourage dependence on God, on a prayerful spirituality?

(2) Trinitarian communality: Are “under-shepherds” serving out of love for one another in a manner that is collaborative, mutual and interdependent, out of Trinitarian communality? For God’s flock, does it facilitate and promote growth in unselfish loving community in the manner and model of the Trinity (open, sharing, mutual, vulnerable and intimate)?

(3) Kenotic service: Are “under-shepherds” serving out of love for others, out of a desire to offer unselfish kenotic service? For God’s flock, does it facilitate and promote growth in unselfish kenotic loving service of others, for them being “under-shepherds” to others?

We shall now attempt to test our criteria with reference to three different pastoral care initiatives. We shall be looking not simply at what they intended to promote but how the initiatives themselves were promoted.
Examining a pastoral care initiative to generate vision

Description

Church 21 is the Church of Ireland's programme for parish development, one intended to be “of real help to ordinary parishes seeking change.” ¹ The aims of the programme are stated as being to “help parishes formulate a vision, devise an action plan and begin to put it into practice together.” ²

In response to the question “what will the journey require” is listed:

A recognition that patterns of ministry which worked well in the past do not necessarily meet the needs of people today; [...] An openness to share with and learn from churches from a wide variety of outlooks; An acknowledgement that there is a cost to change which is at the heart of Christian discipleship; A commitment to work together as a team. ³

According to its website three key concepts lie behind Church21: Envisioning – because we need to have a clear sense of the kind of church God is calling us to be; Motivating – because we want others to catch the vision and get involved; Resourcing – because we can only be enriched as we share God’s gifts with one another. ⁴

Church 21 states that at the heart of the programme “are 5 values: Openness to God; Learning together; Honest sharing of experience; Mutual accountability; Gentle challenge and encouragement.” ⁵ The programme strengths are said to be that: “It’s a process not a one-off event. It puts forward practical examples of fresh initiatives in a way that is honest,

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⁵ Ibid.
realistic and hopeful. It offers parishes the opportunity to benefit from the wisdom and experience of an outside facilitator over a period of 18 months.""6

It is a two year journey. Over a six month period the parish formulates the vision and over the following 18 months the implementation of vision is facilitated. The preparation part of the Church 21 programme involves discussion groups meeting over several weeks. Guidelines for these meetings include: “For discussion divide the participants into groups (probably between 5 and 8 works best). Each group should have a leader to chair the discussion, encourage participation from all, keep to the subject and involve everyone.”7

The preparation course guidelines for theme discussion involve scripture passages being discussed and prayer and reflection occurring in relation to the six themes of the six sessions (Welcome; Fellowship and Sharing; Worship and Nurture; Service To Others; Communications; Ministry).8

At the end of this period there is a three day conference with worship, fellowship and workshops.”9 The theme of the three day conference in 2009 was “Vision: What It Is, How To Get It, Share It And Implement It.”10 During the second day of the conference a number of workshops are available. In 2009 these were: “A Church for All Ages? Doing Church Differently; Growing Closer: Growing Deeper; Managing Change; Team Talk; Strategic Outreach; Small is Beautiful?”11

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6 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
There is then an 18 month period when the parish is offered partnership to aid it in implementing its vision. Their facilitator meets them “a minimum of three times over a 6-9 month period.” Finally there is a review day to offer further mutual encouragement and help to churches in continuing with their programme.

**Evaluation**

(1) God dependent. The programme’s journey description acknowledges “a cost to change which is at the heart of Christian discipleship.” This reflects love of God. A key concept is seeking to help a parish discern “the kind of church God is calling us to be.” This implies the parish is looking to God. The first of the five values is “Openness to God.” God is clearly in the foreground not the background. Preparation course discussions are in the context of seeking to hear from God in scripture and prayer. Both reflect promotion of spirituality. One of the preparation course themes is that of “Worship and Nurture.” This is consistent with seeking to grow closer to God. Church 21 promotes a dependent spirituality and love for God. It does so gently and implicitly.

(2) Trinitarian communality. This is by far the greatest strength of the programme. Church 21 emphatically promotes this. A key motivating concept is “We want others to catch the vision and get involved;” and “we can only be enriched as we share God’s gifts with one another.” Vision is being sought bottom up, by a shared open-ended journey. There is openness, sharing, gentle encouragement, mutual accountability, listening and learning.

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15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
from each other and others. The participation of all is encouraged in discussion. It is non-
directive, egalitarian and serving in providing help and assistance but without either
coercion or an attempt to define the outcome. Even the extended time over which the
programme operates facilitates this beautiful sense of divine space and freedom. This is
entirely in keeping with what we have discussed of the nature of Trinitarian relational
community in Chapter 2, and at the start and end of Chapter 4.

(3) Kenotic Service. Motivations for the programme are stated to be to help “parishes
seeking change” as “patterns of ministry which worked well in the past do not necessarily
meet the needs of people today.”¹⁷ Three of the preparation sessions focus on the needs of
others “Welcome”, “Service to others”, “Communications”. Two of the talks at the three
day conference in 2009 may be assumed to have also done so: “Doing Church differently”
and “Strategic Outreach”. Church 21 is kenotic and serving in seeking to help facilitate
parishes meet the needs of others through consideration of change and listening and
learning.

Overall Church 21 is an excellent pastoral initiative promoting love for God, one another
and others.

Examining a Pastoral Visitation ‘Method’

Description

In the 1980's the Bishop of Lewes, the Right Revd Wallace Benn was a curate in Cheshire
where some 60 young people were meeting regularly for Bible study. Having long been a
fan of Richard Baxter and often wondered about seeking to try to apply his pastoral
consultation method, he decided he would “invite each member of the youth fellowship to

come and see me for half an hour. I called [...] it my 'surgery' and assuring them that there would be no amputations!"\textsuperscript{18}

In a talk some years later he reflected that the degree of unsupervised access with the young people would not be possible to replicate today. At the time the presence of his wife in an adjoining room and an open door took the place of current recommended best practice.\textsuperscript{19} Reflecting on the experience he found it to be wholly positive. “I discovered the hidden problems and heartaches behind smiling faces, and was able to discuss real questions and problems which were holding people back.”\textsuperscript{20}

At his next church despite “the congregation [being] a growing and lively village church” the 'Baxter method' never seemed quite suitable.\textsuperscript{21}

In the 1990's at the time of writing his booklet \textit{The Baxter Method}, which outlines his experience of seeking to use Baxter today, he was the vicar of St Peter's, Harold Wood, in suburban north-east London. There were some 500 parishioners and again he tried the consultation. “After much prayer, I launched the idea at the annual house party one September. I told everyone that I wanted to get to know people, that in a large church this was not easy, and that this idea was a way to help.”\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{21}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{22}Ibid.
Married couples were encouraged to attend together and to bring children if they couldn't get a baby sitter - his wife would provide distraction in another room. 23

He would ask questions in relation to “three areas”: How they came to a personal faith; How their Christian life was going; “How they were serving the Lord in the church family and in the world - what are your gifts and/or how can we help you find and use them?” 24

Regarding the second area it was encouragement to join a home group which ended up being emphasised. “With most people this is the main area to address, as it encourages them to get the necessary help and support that they need. It is the key area of spirituality and Christian living.” The third area was “What are you doing to serve.” 25

The practical difficulty of finding the time to meet people was highlighted with encounters though relaxed proving “very tiring and draining. [...] I try to spend one evening a week doing this, if at all possible. Recently that has proved difficult.” 26

Benn emphasises his belief that “a Christian needs access in an emergency to his or her pastor, and the 'Baxter method' encourages that. It also provides a supplement to the basic pastoral care of groups, to the benefit of both pastor and people.” 27

Many benefits are seen to derive from this by Benn. They include discovering needs of those who might not be vocal, getting to know parishioners, better preaching, unused talent discovery, demonstrating love and care, encouraging a rector’s spiritual dependency on God.

**Evaluation**

(1) God dependent. This initiative appears to have a healthy level of dependency on God in

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23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
The emphasis on prayer before starting the Harold Wood implementation, along with a failure to proceed in the previous church suggests a healthy awareness of the initiative needing to be God dependent and to be empowered by the Holy Spirit. It was clearly a kenotic act of service in both occasions motivated by a genuine desire to encourage assist parishioners. Prayer at each meeting also facilitated God’s working as did the encouragement of people in their faith in Christ if this was lacking. The consultations may be seen to promote love for God and spirituality.

(2) Trinitarian communality. He is also Trinitarian in recognising that being in community (home groups) “is the key area of spirituality and Christian living.” Communality is affirmed in people being directed to home groups and encouraged to use gifts in service of the church family. However the example of only the rector visiting is not a Trinitarian one despite the many obvious benefits for both rector and parishioners. In terms of Trinitarian promotion of community a basic question that could be asked is why is it the rector alone who is doing it? Given the difficulty in scheduling such an activity should there not be others to either take the burden away from him or to share in it? Could this kind of pastoral 'surgery' not be facilitated by either lay people who are trained or by the home groups which he sees as being the main source of pastoral care. Why is there no team involvement?

(3) Kenotic Service. Because it is clearly grounded in a desire to serve the Church and to discover and meet needs it is most certainly promoting service to Christ. Additionally spotting unused talents also facilitates this. However as only implemented by the rector this is a top-down initiative which does not model encouraging the development of others by example. There should be others in the parish who could offer this kind of systematic
support and encouragement so that the rector would just be one of a number of individuals doing this.

Benn’s pastoral consultation is an excellent way for parishioners and rectors to connect with many benefits. If done alongside home groups, and by, or with others, then it could also be described as promoting excellence in pastoral care. Done solo it is a valuable tool but falls short of promoting Trinitarian communality by example.

Examining the Apparent Strengths and Weaknesses of a Parish’s Pastoral Care

Description

Crinken Church of Ireland parish is situated in the South of Dublin and one which I became familiar with in 2007 when I attended services and spoke to the then rector and curate. The Rev Trevor Stevenson took over in 2011. I interviewed him by phone before completing this evaluation as the website information was partly inaccurate and also incomplete.

Under Vision & Values, the Church web site has the following: Under the Lordship of Christ, we want to be a Church that Loves, Engages and Grows.28 As part of this relationships with the local community are emphasised.29 There are about 14 parish appointed pastoral carers.30 Each person attending the church, or associated with it, who is

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29 Ibid “Local Community: In five years we will be on target if the local community see us as a ‘community church’ (that is, very closely linked with the local community) because we are engaged in reaching out to the needs there, and we are perceived as being relevant and challenging.” [Accessed March 2012].
30 This information was provided when I interviewed the rector in April, 2012.
not in a home group is allocated (with their consent) a carer to maintain pastoral contact. These carers have anything from 3 to 15 people to ring up once in a while to check all is ok and have a chat. This care is in the wider context of the parish having a well developed home group system consisting of seven home groups. Each has two leaders, one to provide spiritual care and one to provide pastoral care, for each of the home group members.

Of particular interest, given Chapter 3 which looked at Rick Warren and three others, is seeing that under the last question, “What do we need to do?” are listed the five purposes from *The Purpose Driven Life* but with the parish’s own details put in.

There is much reference throughout the website to Jesus being lord and the intent to implement biblical teaching. The parish is obviously within the evangelical stream of the Church of Ireland and its emphasis on being faithful to scripture and the lordship of Christ is at the fore.

The church supports a number of Christian workers overseas and also the “Fields of life” programme. The church runs three “Parent and toddler” groups in their church hall. Separately there is a “Time out” discussion group for parents which provides a crèche. They also run, in conjunction with Rathmichael Church of Ireland Church and St Ann’s Roman Catholic Church, an Alpha “Good parenting” course. These are run for parents of teenagers and also for parents of 0+ to 10 year olds. Though non-evangelistic they are run in the Church Hall at Crinken and that of St Ann’s. Lastly there is an ongoing project to

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32 The website information listing 13 home groups is not accurate. The information here is directly from the interview with the rector. See [http://www.crinken.ie/what_we_do/homegroups/](http://www.crinken.ie/what_we_do/homegroups/) [Accessed March 2012].
33 Under Fellowship and Discipleship are listed: “Fellowship: We were formed for God’s family; We want to be a Biblical, prayerful, loving and caring community. Discipleship: We were created to become like Christ; We want to be a community in which Christ is Lord, where we are good stewards of Christ’s gifts (both spiritual and material), and we live consistently with Christ’s teaching.” [http://www.crinken.ie/who_we_are/visionvalues/](http://www.crinken.ie/who_we_are/visionvalues/) [Accessed March 2012].
make use of a former pub which has been given to the Church to use in whatever form in order to serve the community. Activities planned for this summer are a free barbeque event and free distribution of strawberries and ice-cream in a give-away.

**Evaluation**

(1) God dependent. A focus of pastoral care in this church is clearly to make disciples and for them to be conformed to Christ’s image. With such a focus, growth in personal spirituality and love for God is greatly emphasised. There is frequent reference to scripture and prayer throughout the website and the promotion of discipleship and love for Christ is clear.

(2) Trinitarian communality. They are seeking to meet the relational needs of members in community and have a commendable level of individualised pastoral care as well as a large number of home groups which promote Trinitarian communality. It is particularly encouraging to see the church working collaboratively with other churches in collaborative service. The involvement of lay people in pastoral care and of a dispersed and varied number of home groups appears excellent though the rector desires more.

(3) Kenotic service. While the rector sees this as having been the weak point in the last few years, steps have been taken to increase service to, and involvement with, the local community. Practical outreach to the community has increased and more events are planned for the future. The challenge will be to increase the number of volunteers to allow envisaged opportunities to serve to come to fruition.

This Church recognises the need to provide excellence in pastoral care in all three dimensions of Christian life. It has been seeking to do so in the first two dimensions, that
of love for God and a dependent spirituality, and love for one another and facilitating
Trinitarian community, and is seeking to do so in the third area – that of Kenotic service.
There is a recognition that it has been weak in the area of Kenotic loving service to others
and it is seeking to increase this. A challenge is getting sufficient volunteers to increase
this incarnational outflow without putting additional pressure on the same willing
volunteers. This is a commendable pastoral work in progress.
Conclusion

The surprise for me in doing this dissertation was how that model which seemed to initially offer so much promise, Benn's adaptation of Baxter, became more questionable as time went on. Both the challenge of emulating Trinitarian community in church life and Rick Warren and John Wesley’s assertion of the criticality of support groups, challenged my conception of what could be considered pastorally healthy. Other more apparently “loose” models seemed to better reflect the Trinitarian needs of Christians and to be more in keeping with best practice. This was because the manner in which they led appeared to be more kenotic and serving. They seemed to better exemplify a best practice model so that you could say ‘Follow me.’ I became conscious of how questionable it was as to whether many of our churches did in fact reflect authentic Trinitarian communality.

Pastoral visitation, though sought by many as the key pastoral activity has as its main benefit the strengthening of relationship between “under-shepherd” and sheep. This is certainly a worthy goal. However, there is no reason that equally excellent, or even superior, pastoral care cannot be provided by pastoral visitation teams as a complement to that which occurs by a rector.

Trinitarian communality additionally suggests that one to many care is inferior to that offered through small groups. Trinitarian communality requires intimacy, openness, sharing, mutual accountability and friendship. Without these in a church community there is no true community. One to many visitation by itself, falls far short of the Trinity as a model of community which the church is called to emulate.

To feed Jesus' lambs and sheep, to care for the flock, means seeking excellence in pastoral care for God's people. “Under-shepherds” are required to be examples in order to be effective. Jesus himself is the example for doing so in dependence on God and in kenotic
service of others. It is his teaching we must follow in seeking to love one another. He is *the* example of what it means to love in community and to exemplify in community the love of the Trinity. His ministry in the Gospels suggests that prayerfulness and a consciousness of being God dependent are inextricable from healthy leadership.

Whatever pastoral care is present or intended to be undertaken, it needs to address all three dimensions of the Christian life, love for God, for one another and for others. Excellence in care will promote love for God reflected in a prayerful dependent spirituality, love for one another reflecting Trinitarian communality, and love for others in kenotic service which will include enabling sheep to also become “under-shepherds”.

In under-shepherds promoting and valuing these three things as essential they will, however tentatively, be responding to Jesus’ command: to “Feed my sheep” (John 21:15-17) and to “Follow me” (John 21:19, 22).

Keith Marshall

April 2012

**Word Count 21713**
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