Exploring the commonalities between Stanley Hauerwas and James H Cone's narrative approaches for moral formation for post-Apartheid South Africa

By

Allistair Brown

A full thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Masters degree in the Department of Religion and Theology, University of the Western Cape.

Supervisor: Professor John S. Klaasen

15 November 2019

Key words

Stanley Hauerwas

James Cone

Ethics

Narrative

Community

Agency

Moral formation

Reconciliation

Nico Koopman

Robert Vosloo

Abstract

This thesis will investigate the narrative approach to moral formation by comparing the narrative paradigm as espoused by James H. Cone and Stanley Hauerwas and will apply the findings to post-Apartheid South Africa. I am interested in the extent to which the principles of modernity forms part of the society and the shaping of morality, yet the thesis does not focus on modernity, but on narrative as ideal ethical framework for moral formation. This thesis will look at community, narrative and agency through Stanley Hauerwas' notion of virtue and James H. Cone's views of black theology and oppression as means for narrative informed moral formation. This thesis is divided into three major parts. First; an investigation into narrative which includes the arguments made against modernity, narrative and history as it pertains to moral formation and how narrative is understood. Second; James H. Cone and Stanley Hauerwas' views on narrative and moral formation followed by closer look at Cone and Hauerwas and the critiques of their views. Third; contextualising the findings in a South African context by using the findings in conjunction with South African scholars. The aims are to investigate if moral reform is possible by means of narrative ethics through justice; by means of reconciliation and transformation.

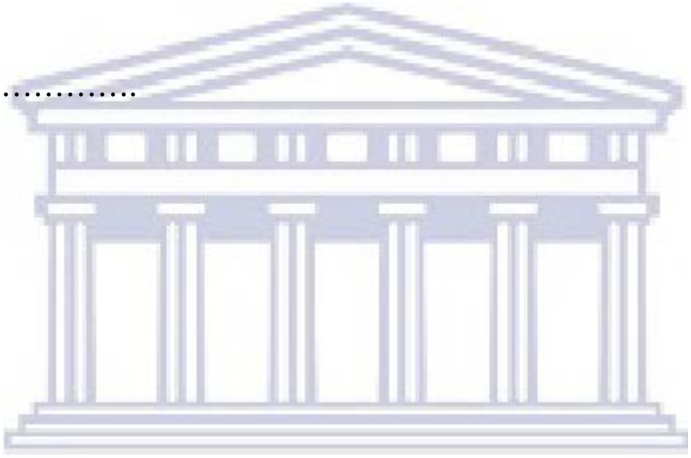
DECLARATION

I declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously, in its entirety or in part, submitted it at any university for examination and that all the sources I have used and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Allistair Brown

November 2019

Signed:…….



Contents

Chapter 1
Research question

This study will investigate the moral formation approaches of Stanley Hauerwas and James Cone. Both authors express their views of using narrative as a guide to moral formation. This study will thus describe the different ways in which these authors express their thoughts. On this basis, the problem that will be investigated in this study may be expressed as follows:

> *What are some of the commonalities of Stanley Hauerwas and James H. Cone's narrative approaches of moral formation for post-Apartheid South Africa?*

a) Moral formation for Hauerwas and Cone takes place in a specific community and context. The notion of moral formation will be examined as it could be argued that a specific narrative is responsible for moral formation. Not all narrative contributes to morality and an investigation into the literature will delineate the areas of moral formation. The interest of the researcher is to investigate whether there are commonalities in the two approaches of Cone and Hauerwas that can be applied to societies as post-Apartheid South Africa.

b) How is narrative to be understood? There are two basic camps in narrative ethics; pure and impure narrative. The differences between the two will be explained as well as situating Hauerwas and Cone's work within these two camps. The research does not seek to select one over the other as both views have strengths and weaknesses and clarification on the basis of the arguments should shed light on the outcome of the thesis.

c) One of the biggest criticisms against Hauerwas is that of sectarianism. Cone can be criticised for using a Marxist ideology for the basis of his liberation theology. This research project does not aim to outright defend, refute or even ignore possible shortcomings of their work. It is more interested in finding how Cone and Hauerwas can contribute to the debate of moral formation and their interaction with other scholars on the debate.

d) One of the greatest concerns when using American scholars and dealing with a South African milieu is that the historical context differs. There are unique nuances to the lived experience of South Africans living through the legacy of apartheid as compared to oppression was experienced in the USA. The research will not seek to hold Hauerwas or Cone as an authority on narrative or moral formation but use their work, in conjunction with South African authors to find a synthesis in the debate that can be applied to the South African context.

Context and relevance of study

Since the fall of apartheid a multitude of promises were made, none of which were expressly moral in nature, but very little has been done to honour those promises. Our transition from the old regime to the new was facilitated by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which sought national reconciliation through forgiveness, yet the wounds does not appear to be healing. Some twenty years ago there was a call for an African Renaissance by Thabo Mbeki and little has materialised from that. In 2003 Thabo Mbeki, then president of South Africa, started the Moral Regeneration Movement[1] (MRM). It was spearheaded by Jacob Zuma (SACC) to the president (Siwa and Mpumlwana, 2017: np; SACC, 2015: np; SACC, 2016: np). At the start of Zuma's tenure as head of the MRM, he turned to the church for assistance. He conscripted Ray MacCauley of the Rhema church to partner in the MRM.[2] It was not too long and the fissures in the relationship between church and state started to show. Tensions arose between the state, with its secular constitution, and religious institutions: The South African Council of Churches, the Ecumenical Foundation of Southern Africa and the National Religious Leaders Forum.

After Mbeki was removed from office, Jacob Zuma became president and it seems as if our society has taken a few steps back as outlined in an open letter written by the South African Council of Churches (SACC) to the president (Siwa and Mpumlwana, 2017: np; SACC, 2015: np; SACC, 2016: np). During Zuma's terms as president, he was constantly dogged with allegations of corruption and seemed untouchable in his position.[3] Was the basis of the MRM fundamentally flawed? Was the person at the helm of the MRM the incorrect choice? Was Zuma the wrong choice for the presidency? This research does not seek to address the MRM or its failure, or Jacob Zuma's term as president, as the state is not solely to blame when/should moral decay occur. A society is not constituted by its leaders, but the members of the society they govern over.

So has our society gone the way of moral decay? Zheng, Luo, and Wang (2014: 415) notes of the moral decay in business that it is characterised by widespread unethical business practices

[1] This will be referred to as MRM
[2] West, G. 2010. Jesus, Jacob Zuma, and the New Jerusalem: religion in the public realm between Polokwane and the Presidency. *Journal for the Study of Religion*, *23*(1/2), p.43-70.
[3] Resane, K.T. 2016. "Ichabod"–The glory has departed: The Metaphor showing the Church's prophetic failure in South Africa. *Pharos Journal of Theology*, *97*, p.1-12.

in which these business entities strategically decide how to act in a demoralised environment in transitional economies.[4] We have been sold the notion that it is moral to satisfy our "wants" and "needs," but "wants" and "needs" have become increasingly vague. The idea of 'freedom of the individual' has become a means and end to itself. High levels of corruption, lawlessness, increased poverty and serious crime indicates that freedom is not exercised in a responsible manner. Most do not have the vaguest idea of what to do with their freedom. It has become more difficult to trust a stranger the more we have become dependent on exaggerated forms of protection (Hauerwas, 1981: 81).

There is a general perception amongst South Africans that we should be concerned with moral decay, as usually manifests itself in social, political, economic and religious issues. What are the causes of the moral decay in South Africa? Could it be so easy to lay the blame at the feet of modernity: individualism, abstract rationality and universal principles that negatively affect at the fibre of communities? Liberalism assumes that by making morality a matter of the 'private sphere' freedom can be sustained. This is however not the case because 'private' morality has always followed the interests and form of private life. Citizens feel that it is their public duty to pursue their own interests as far as possible, curtailed only by the rule that their freedom does not infringe or unfairly limit other' freedom. As a result, procedures and competition has become a substitute for the lack of public virtue (Hauerwas, 1981: 80).

In 1996 we had a Truth and Reconciliation to address the segregation of the South African society. This was one attempt to address the moral fibre of the South African society through reconciliation. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has come under renewed scrutiny by both civil society and the academia. At a recent conference hosted by the Department of Religion and Theology all the keynote speakers including Dr Wilhelm Verwoerd, Professor Antjie Krog and Father Michael Lapsley who were part of the work of commission highlighted the shortcomings of the work of the commission and the effect it has on the South African society.[5] This thesis will assert that there needs to be a rediscovery of humanity in our

[4] Murder, arguably the more serious of offences, has increased by 6.9% in 2017/18 as compared to 2016/17. The basis of any moral decline, the communitarian's stance, is the widespread individualism and deterioration of communal bonds that erode communal moral life. This concern includes the weakening of religion and the rampant rise of consumerism. There is a lack of communal moral consensus and framework for common values that fuels the weakening of a community (Hookway, 2013: 845-46).

[5] These issues were written by Swartz as far back as 2006 where she highlights the issues Krog, Verwoerd and Lapsley spoke about in her paper; *A long walk to citizenship: morality, justice and faith in the aftermath of apartheid.*

communities (Ubuntu)[6] and a celebration of the 'rainbow people' we were promised after 1994. This thesis proposes that the most suited ethical framework for nation building is one that takes narrative seriously. Narrative ethics focusses on contextuality and social collectivity. The centrality of the community is the story it tells through its shared history and those convictions that are formed through socialization. The assertion is that the 'self' is in an interdependent relationship with the community and the self is discovered through the community's narrated traditions.

Modernity holds the view that we are not creatures of history; society believes that they have the possibility of a new beginning. Governments can be created "on the basis of principle rather than the arbitrary elements of a tradition." This assumption has a profound ability to distort history. What makes liberalism so successful is that it provides a myth that appears to make sense of our social origins (Hauerwas, 1981: 78). As a result, this thesis will critically engage with liberalism in so far as it 'lacks any foundation and can only function to mask manipulation'[7] (Schneewind, 1982: 654).

Rossi (1979: 239-41) notes that narrative, and the framework thereof, helps shape concrete moral existence. It holds promise that enables the community members to give an account of moral formation which has the capability to shape hearts and minds. Phelan (2014: np) notes that narrative ethics is situated in the juncture between that of stories, storytelling and moral values. Moral values, in narrative ethics, is considered as a vital part of stories and storytelling "because narratives themselves implicitly or explicitly ask the question, 'how should one think, judge, and act.'" Lucie-Smith (2007: 5)[8] affirms this by saying that narrative is to be grasped by the whole person; members of a tradition and community and moral formation occurs when the community gathers. This leaves narrative with a broader base as starting point and wider epistemology.

What is important here is agency (Herdt, 2012: 207). Hauerwas placed significant emphasis on agency, but narrative and community are important for character formation. The extent and power of agency depends on the adequacy of the descriptions we learn from our communities. Within the community we receive freedom, but it is dependent on us being initiated into a truthful narrative (Klaasen, 2008: 129-30). In order to understand the self it has to be framed

[6] The concept of Ubuntu will not be discussed. What the research hopes to express is something akin to Ubuntu: finding meaning in community because we are in relationship with others.
[7] This is not a direct quote of Nietzsche, I paraphrased it.
[8] Lucie-Smith believes that moral formation takes place through liturgy, in a Christian community.

in the idea of being an agent. This means to be the self is to act on the world (Hauerwas, 1983: 38). The discussion of narrative ethics can be viewed as equipment for living. In other words, we use narrative as a means to express how we think, feel and interact in society. As a result, we will then learn what the best ethical way of interacting with others is. Narrative assists us in making sense of life. Narrative also helps people make sense of their lives by the stories available to them and subsequently seek to tailor their lives to the available stories (Adams, 2008: 175-76).

Aims of the Research

This research project aims to contribute to the debates on narrative and moral formation. It seeks to investigate the relevance of narrative for moral formation in South Africa. Two popular ethical frameworks, modernity and post modernity, will be briefly analysed to demonstrate the connections and disconnection to narrative for moral formation. Narrative will be defined as well as the kinds of narrative (pure and impure) and outline the debates on narrative. The research will then turn to Stanley Hauerwas and James Cone and express their stance on narrative; both of which expresses it through community. Stanley Hauerwas expresses his narrative through agency and virtue and James Cone through the lenses of the oppressed. The project will seek commonalities and make comparisons between their views. It will also look at the criticisms Cone and Hauerwas received and the scholarly debates thereof. Once this has been accomplished the research will investigate how their contributions for moral formation in societies such post-apartheid South Africa can be achieved. Both Hauerwas and Cone are American and their history is not the same as ours and for that reason the work of African scholars will be analysed. Robert Vosloo and Nico Koopman express their views of moral reform through justice, transformation and reconciliation.

Literature review

Since modernity's rise as a result of the Enlightenment, there seems to be no justification for morality nor a correlation between morality itself and the people it seeks to guide (Schneewind, 1982: 653-54). Nonetheless, morality is held as universal and binding on all people, having been enculturated into modernity (MacIntyre, 2016: 115-17). The product of this is what Hauerwas calls political liberalism, making morality a personal matter (Hauerwas, 1981: 80-81). What we are currently experiencing is 'ethics' being challenged by postmodernity (Long, 2010: 96). This thesis proposes narrative as a suitable model for ethical reflection. Narrative

ethics is concerned with linking moral values to storytelling (Phelan, 2014: np). And to this dialogue, characterisation and history are linked (Stoicoiu, 2008: 2). There are various genres to narrative though, literature being one of such or a narrative through literature, as with scripture (Stroup, 1981: 89).

The majority of narrativists agree that narrative is an ontological quality of being (Adams, 2008: 176). Narrative is however not predicated on rules but a wider sense of reception, that of who hears the story: the community (Lucie-Smith, 2007: 5). Narrative is subjective and intersubjective; subjective in that it answers who the agent is and intersubjective in that a story is being told (Kearney and Williams, 1996: 35-36). Scholars categorise narrative into two classes, pure and impure narrative. Pure narrativists oppose abstract reason and impure narrativists that ignore genre, but not the importance of the story being told (Comstock, 1987: 688). Narrative is best explained as having history, which is not bound by the past only, but also the present and future (Stroup, 1981: 76). Lacking a shared history we seem to lack anything in common that could foster social unity (Hauerwas, 1981: 78).

For Hauerwas, Christian ethics, among other ethics, are tradition dependant; making sense through the story of Jesus, doing extraordinary acts Jesus commands. For Hauerwas this ethics arises as a result of a creation of a people, a colony and a family (Hauerwas and Willimon, 1989: 71-72). For Hauerwas the source of being historic is that of agency. Not that one is free from all determination, but we are responsible for what we have become. Hauerwas situates ethics in the community, particularly the church. He says that the church is a social ethic, embodied as a community of virtues (Hauerwas, 1983: 38-39, 99, 103).

Hauerwas (1985: 1-2) is somewhat concerned that the idea of religious education is something separate from the church. It would have it seem that that which is done in worship is something different from what done in education. He contends that everything the church is and does is ‘religious education.’ To put in other words: the church does not ‘do’ religious education, but rather a form of education that is religious. This ties into his view that the church does not have a social ethic; but rather is a social ethic. It is the place where the story of God is enacted, told and heard, not principles or policies for social action: but the story of God’s calling of Israel and the narrative of Jesus. Because the church is a social ethic, it is thus a community that can be clearly distinguished from the world. It is therefore incumbent on the church to help the world know it is the world. Being separate from the world does not underwrite an ethic of self-

righteousness, for both the world and the church remain under the judgement of the Kingdom of God.

Like Hauerwas, Cone also situates his ethics within the community. Cone also speaks of the church, but his vantage point is that of the oppressed. He says that anyone who ignores the link between the gospel and liberation from oppression has ignored the purpose of the gospel (Cone, 1997b: 9). He notes that Jesus' work was that of liberating people (Cone, 1997a: 9); yet for over 2000 years, the cross was detached from the unending suffering and oppression (Cone, 2011: xiv).

According to Cone the discourse of the revelation of God, must comprise of the politics which takes its stand with the poor, against the rich. Failure to see God as unquestionably in control of history down plays that the vindication of the weak against the strong. When addressing the Christ-culture problem, the relationship between ideology and social determination needs to be examined. Ideology is deformed thought; certain ideas are the function of the subjective interest of an individual or group. Story can serve as a check against ideological thinking, particularly from a biblical perspective. To retain the dialectic of narrative as a vital ingredient of the gospel message, language about the message has to be less of philosophical principles and more of concrete events in the lives of people (Cone, 1997b: 60, 83, 94).

For Hauerwas, moral formation is exclusively formed within the church by religious training, by virtues of hope and patience which are essential to learning the story of God (Hauerwas, 1985: 3). One such method of training is found in the Eucharist, which is an essential part of worship (Hauerwas and Wells, 2011: 4). Cone, on the other hand, says that moral formation, though it does take place within the church community, takes place in social settings. Music plays a large part in dealing with oppression and cultural spiritual music has prime significance on the community (Cone, 1972: 3). Hauerwas is well known for his views on the role the church plays in the world, that it is separate from the world, but not withdrawn from the world (Klaasen, 2008: 139). He is also a well-known pacifist (Ballor, 2012: 122). Cone on the other hand says that a rhetoric of nonviolence distorts the vision of violence committed to blacks (Cone, 1997b: 199).

Since the fall of apartheid, something needed to be done to avert a civil war. As a result, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established. The TRC was a state-sponsored, government-funded, quasi-judicial, and legislated body that drew heavily on religious personnel with a theology of forgiveness and reconciliation and significant moral authority.

The TRC introduced a new kind of secular political theology focussed on the nation under the umbrella, "the rainbow nation" and Ubuntu (Leatt, 2007: 38). The Minister of Education, however, succinctly expressed the government's displeasure, saying: 'the Truth Commission will not be able to fulfil its implicit mandate to create a new moral order, if it does not make a distinction between those who fought against Apartheid and those who defended it.' The primary criticism however, was the manner in which the TRC was perceived to have sacrificed justice for truth (Swartz, 2006: 553).

The next logical step was a government intervention concerned with morality and citizenship dubbed the Moral Regeneration Movement which began in July 2000. Common manifestations of the moral crisis are, according to the report, murder, robbery, violence, abuse, rape, fraud and drug trafficking, while more subtle manifestations include the 'devaluation of people, racism, breakdown of family, the gap between the haves and have-nots, laziness, individualism and selfishness'. Values that serve the common good, were promoted, rather than narrow 'pietistic values' and therefore abstinence from drinking, smoking, premarital sexual relationships and such things was not to form part of the MRM's focus. The MRM was criticised along three lines: government should not be involved in promoting moral values at all, morality is the domain of the religious sector, and the MRM may be an uncritical instrument of nation-building which fails to identify other issues contributing to moral decline (such as a lack of socio-economic justice) (Swartz, 2006: 555).

One of the marked changes since the days of apartheid is the decline of the public voice of the churches, in particular the "prophetic voice". This is to be expected now that Christianity is not politicised by the government in office. But there is evidence of competition between the ANC government and the once-powerful church groupings. Consider the South African Council of Churches (SACC). It does not represent Christianity as a whole, the African Independent and most Pentecostal churches not affiliating themselves with the body, but its 26 members nonetheless speaks on behalf of the ecumenically orientated churches. These churches are comprised of mostly mainline Christian denominations since the early 1990s (Leatt, 2007: 38). Since then the ANC has traditionally drawn on the mainline churches represented by the SACC for guidance and support. However, the SACC entered into a phase of "critical solidarity" with the government after the transition to democracy and then into a phase of "critical engagement" through the establishment of the SACC's Parliamentary Liaison Office in 1996 (Conradie, 2013: 16).

Hauerwas says that the church is to witness to the world (Hauerwas, 1983: 101). What is central to the witness is the character of the people doing the witnessing and this is (the Aristotelian) virtue and a return to that (Herdt, 2012: 208). Cone says that there cannot be transformation without liberation. He goes on to say that the notion of forgiveness and reconciliation is not so much a problem as it is problematic because of the people asking the question; there needs to be a balance of power (Cone, 1997b: 139, 209). Building on what Cone says, Nico Koopman (drawing on Aristotle) says that true humanity is being in relationship with others (Koopman, 2007b: 183). The basis for his views is drawn from the Belhar confession that deals with transformation: hoping that Christians will join together to transform their communal and personal lives (Koopman, 2002a: 447, 444). Robert Vosloo in turns speaks of hospitality, not based purely on tolerance and peaceful co-existence, but the ethos of hospitality. He says that the opposite of cruelty and hostility is hospitality (Vosloo, 2003: 66). The public will showed interest in restorative justice that leads to reconciliation when the public starts engaging in repentance, forgiveness, apology or confession (Vosloo, 2014: 74).

Methodology

The methodology that will be employed will be that of a literature review. The data used will be archived material, namely books, journals and websites on the topic. The reason for a literature review is that it provides an overview of the scholarly material in the specific discipline through the analysis of trends or debates. A literature review is an exercise in inductive reasoning where one works from sample texts to come to an understanding of the literature within a specific disciple. The limitations of literature reviews can, at best, only summarise and organise existing scholarly debates, and can thus be criticised for not producing new, or validate existing, empirical insights[9]. The strengths of a literature review is that, for starters, it is essential to any study and it facilitates a good understanding of the issues and debates in the area of research as well as previous studies and their results.

The hypothesis of this research will look at narrative as a suitable ethical framework for moral formation. It will do so in three phases.

[9] It should be noted that the aim of this is not of an empirical nature at all. This research is purely research based and does not seek to set up interviews or the like. This is not to say that the result of the literature review will not spark an empirical study as much of what I have read so far I intend to further in my doctoral dissertation as I seek to develop the concepts, interview people and apply what I would have learned.

First, the investigation into narrative will start out by looking at 'modern ethics,' what scholars say about modernity and postmodernity and the repercussions thereof. The assumption is that those ethical frameworks have shortcomings and that there could be a plausible case for a narrative approach for moral formation in a society in transition. The concept of narrative will be unpacked which will include the kind of narrative that will be used in this thesis and its relation to society.

Second, the views of James Cone and Stanley Hauerwas' narrative will be unpacked in subsequent chapters. Both authors deal with narrative as a means of moral formation, yet from varying perspectives. The section will conclude with a with a critique of both scholars and a brief defence of their views, followed by a look at how Hauerwas and Cone expresses their ideas of narrative, community and agency.

Third, the use of American scholars as a canon for moral formation I believe would not suffice. Both authors are well respected in their fields of expertise, but South Africa has a unique history. For that reason, the thesis will conclude by looking at African scholars; R. Vosloo and N. Koopman, dealing with the concept of justice through the lenses of reconciliation and transformation. Their similarities will be highlighted and conclude with some markers for moral formation through open-ended narrative.

The research question and hypothesis will be tested and developed through a survey and critical analysis of the available literature and therefore it will entail a literature based study.

Chapter 2
Ethics: Modernity, Postmodernity and Narrative

This chapter looks at the ethics of modernity and postmodernity and what scholars say about its contribution to society, as well as Kant's contribution to the discipline. The history of narrative will be investigated as well as the two major camps of narrative ethics. This would be followed by an examination of narrative, looking at narrative as stories, accountability and how narrative compares to principles. Narrative as history then follows, looking at the relationship of history and modernity's attempt to detach history from narrative. The chapter concludes with the narrative nature of the church and how larger church communities, those of mega churches, could assist I understanding how narrative could be expressed.

Ethics is an academic discipline that has developed since its formal structuring in Greek philosophy. Since the formulation of virtue, ethics has had many iterations, one claiming superiority over another. With the advent of the Enlightenment ethics became secularised, with a detachment from divine commands (MacIntyre, 2016: 115). Subsequently the product of this is called liberalism and it assumes that we are not a product of our history (Hauerwas, 1981: 77). It is my contention that ethics has left its original framework. This chapter will give a brief overview of ethics and render a critique to modernity as well as postmodern ethics. Narrative will be argued as a more suitable ethical construct, the framework the church has been moving towards of late.

Ethics: modernity and postmodernity (Ethics and the modern story)

Adams (2008: 177-79) says that scholars have various definitions for ethics; 'the world of human activities that has significant moral intent,' 'the study of morality,' 'a means of better understanding of issues,' to name but a few. One may assume then that it is the role of an ethicist to possess an acquired knowledge of ethics, or better understand how ethics works. This does not imply that ethics is a logical system of rules that one can apply when a moral issue presents itself. It rather emerges as a lived experience from the moral agent. There are no definitive rules, nor universal principles that can inform one precisely on how to act, or what to do in any given situation or encounter with other moral agents. When engaging with ethics, one soon realises that expecting a specific outcome is not always guaranteed. How moral agents moralities are shaped vary from person to person. One simply does not know how other moral agents will interpret ones work and/or respond to it. There remains a certain vagueness in

ethics, simultaneously welcoming and valuing endless questions, never really knowing if the results of our ethical reflections are "right" or "wrong."

Morality as we know it is in a state of crisis globally. Societies are divided on moral issues and controversies that cannot be settled because the premises of the arguments presented are so dissimilar that no rational choice is a possibility for either side. Despite the differences, moral language retains its objective meaning, but is usually used to bolster personal, or class ends where principled commitments are viewed as contingent choices. As a result, individuals today lack a necessary social content as well as a social identity. This phenomenon can only be understood by looking it its origins. In the seventeenth century, as a result of the Enlightenment, Northern Europe rejected Aristotelianism with its vocabulary of functional terms which was centred on the concept that humans have a natural end, or *telos*. Modern science has aggravated long-standing ethical issues and conversely introduced new ethical quandaries. Along with this the idea of a natural human good vanished which brought about two consequences (Schneewind, 1982: 653; Grenz, 1997: 15, 16).

First, Schneewind (1982: 653-54) continues; it has now become "impossible to give any rational justification for morality." Second; there is no correlation between morality itself and the humans it was meant to guide. This problem does not stem from the simple failure of theory because theory and practice is inseparable. All action, Schneewind says, is inseparable from more or less theory-laden beliefs and concepts. Modern liberal ethics has surplanted Aristotelian morality, stressing individuality; having the freedom to choose what kind of person one can be and how life can be lived. What Nietzsche observed about this form of morality is that it lacks any foundation and can only function to mask manipulation. When belief in determinate human function and a correlative human good is given up on, an ethics of rules is a result.

The 'modern story' and ethics

MacIntyre (2016: 114-16) calls the moral system, characteristic of early and late capitalistic society; Morality.[10] It is flourishing across the globe since the early eighteenth century when Central Europeans colonised various lands and has six striking characteristics. First, adherents of Morality view it as a secular doctrine, a mode of practice, with no appeal beyond itself to

[10] MacIntyre notes of modern contemporary philosophy that their findings of their enquiry on morality is unproblematic. MacIntyre spells it "Morality" and not "morality/ies" because it consists of "a set of rules, ideas and judgements concerning duties and obligations that are to be distinguished from religion, legal, political and aesthetic rules, ideals, and judgements."

divine commandments. Second, Morality is held as universally binding on all moral agents, irrespective of the culture or social order to which they belong, and then assumed that its precepts are knowable by all. Third, these precepts acts as a set of constraints upon the moral agents, demarcating the ways in which, and the extent to which, the moral agents may act so as to satisfy desires and pursue interests. Four, Morality's precepts are generalised and highly abstract, yet they are offered as binding on individuals. Individuals themselves are characterised by Morality in generalisations and vague terms. Five, Morality thinks itself as superior to all other moralities, present or historic. Six, Morality teaches that it needs to be obeyed.

For the vast majority of individuals who have been enculturated into modernity, they see their ethical position as normal. Even if they come to learn that there are, and have been, various kinds of moralities from whose perspectives moral issues have completely different outcomes, this has no effect on their stance and they remain oblivious to the views of Morality. One way to highlight the distinctiveness of Morality, to show how it differs from other moralities, is to compare it to an Aristotelian moral stance. First; for an Aristotelian the purpose of moral conformity, the precepts of morals, is a failure and will obstruct us from achieving our goods qua human beings. For Morality, those goods are open for questioning and thus this makes it possible for the individual to pursue their desires, no matter how conceived, as long as it allows others the same freedom. There is however no agreement as to what the human good is, only acknowledged that the human good exists (MacIntyre, 2016: 117-18).

Second; for an Aristotelian, the individual goods can only be attained if those goods are what the others have in common and is shared with others, i.e.: family members, work colleagues, friends and fellow citizens. For proponents of Morality, the requirements are abstract and generalised to govern relationships individuals have, and those universal requirements are detached from the particularities of the individuals' relationships and circumstances. Third; the Aristotelian views 'the moral' of political, legal, economic, social and the aesthetic as being in relation to each other. For adherents of Morality, these are distinct aspects of human activity and can be treated as academic disciplines and studied, for the most part, without any relation to the other (MacIntyre, 2016: 118).

Proponents trained into Morality characteristically view success, or what is believed as success by members of the economic, political, financial or other frameworks, as successful competition with others in an attempt to satisfy personal needs over those of others. For such

competition, the law is necessary to prohibit certain means of ill-gain such as fraud or force, by stipulating conditions to which contracts must conform to guarantee competitive success. As a result, we find in the societies of modernity structures in place that shape much of our desires, attitudes and expectations. It permits some types of desires to flourish in our action, all the while suppressing others desires, or redirecting it. These norms give expression, an attitude to some types of desires and as well as the desires of others and as a result, they provide us with grounds for our expectation of others. These norms, however, are insufficient for two reasons. First, the law has too many loopholes, leaving too many opportunities for aggressively and competitively pursuing satisfaction of desires. Second, even when the law is successful in taming desire (to some degree), it is only so because moral agents conform to the law on the basis of moral consensus of those subject to it. This consensus is grounded in a set of moral norms which the moral agents generally internalised so that what they deem the limit of their desires are derived from an internal ascent, rather from external sanctions (MacIntyre, 2016: 135-36).

A product of modernity is what Hauerwas (1981: 77-78) calls: political liberalism. He notes that liberalism is a multi-faceted and "historically ambiguous phenomenon" that portrays itself in many factors in social life which qualifies its impact. The product of this liberalism is the assumption that we are not creatures of history; that there is a possibility for a new beginning. Governments are built on the notion of principle, rather than the arbitrary elements of tradition. Being a country with a varied history, the lack of a shared history fosters the idea that we lack anything in common which could be the foundation for social cooperation. How liberalism seeks to resolve this quandary is that it says that we really do not need a 'shared history' Hauerwas says, instead all that is needed is a system of rules that would constitute formulae for resolving disputes. The undergirding rationale is that liberalism is a political philosophy committed to the idea that "a social order and corresponding mode of government can be formed on self-interest and consent." From this perspective, the constitution serves as a buffer against tyranny where the interests of both the leaders and citizens can be satisfied, as well as the necessary conflict between the citizens who do not have a common history.

Liberalism assumes that by making morality a matter of the 'private sphere,' how we deal with our freedom, it could have a sustainable, indirect public impact. This is however not the case because 'private' morality has always followed the interests and form of private life. Citizens feel that it is their public duty to pursue their own interests as far as possible, curtailed only by the rule that their freedom does not infringe or unfairly limit other' freedom. As a result,

procedures and competition has become a substitute for the lack of public virtue. The problems we encounter is not as a result of the intricacies of industrialisation, but of an individualistically organised social order. We have been sold the notion that it is moral to satisfy our "wants" and "needs," but these have become increasingly vague. The idea of 'freedom of the individual' has become a means and end to itself, but most do not have the vaguest idea of what to do with their freedom. It has become more unthinkable to trust a stranger the more we have become dependent on exaggerated forms of protection (Hauerwas, 1981: 80-81).

This costs of distrust is perhaps the most expensive as we are increasingly forced to view one another as strangers, not as friends. The outcome of this is that we have become increasingly lonelier. In an attempt to mitigate the loneliness, we renamed it as autonomy and/or freedom. But the freer we believe ourselves to be, the more desperate we become for various forms of 'community' or 'interpersonal relationships' that offer a measure of contact with other people. Freedom is not an all-encompassing ethic as it has nothing to say about what the person does with his/her freedom. One of the major aims of liberalism is to set the ethical quandary at the feet of the individual to wrestle with. This individualistic freedom the individual holds is incompatible with the freedom of the family. Leaving the ethical issue with the individual, it "cannot engender or sustain the virtues necessary for providing the individual or the family the power to resist the state" (Hauerwas, 1981: 81).

The 'postmodern story' and ethics

We appear to find ourselves in the midst of a broader cultural transition. Forsaking the modern era, one that was entrenched in science, the quest for the supracultural truth and the quest for a universal ethic, we find ourselves in the unfamiliar territory of postmodernism (Grenz, 1997: 17). What sets modernity and postmodernity apart is that the latter denies the peculiarity between the real and unreal in our representation of things (Kearney and Williams, 1996: 44). Modernity divorces 'ethics' from 'God' and sets it in a category greater than God. It achieves this in two steps. First, 'God' is distant and unknowable, completely, entirely transcendent, yet a possible source of ethics. God remains a possibility without affecting its material content. Second, ethics takes on a stable referent for God. What is believed to be ethics is either duty or the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Knowing this, God becomes a hypothesis, still holding a 'place' in modern ethics, but only as a hypothetical possibility or private preference (Long, 2010: 94).

Postmodernity calls all that modernity stands for into question, challenging the 'stable referent' of modernity. It does not necessarily deny the stable referent's existence, for doing so would replace God, or nature, or ethics with the security of 'nothing.' Postmodern philosophers, at best, circumvent this easy critique by avoiding the closure of any totalising account of what is true or good. Similarly to modernity, postmodernity adopts the modern diagnosis of 'truth' and 'goodness,' aligned with political, cultural or philosophical power, but fails to offer a secure foundation of 'good' or 'true' that would afford a surer footing in ethics. Nietzsche was known to be an ardent critique of modernity ethics, particularly 'moral philosophy.' He suggested that it was a 'soporific appliance,' meaning that much like anaesthesia before a surgery, it put you to sleep, remove that which is vital, and you would never feel it (Long, 2010: 95).

Long (2010: 96-97, 82) notes that if Christianity is fundamentally challenged in modernity on the side of ethics, then 'ethics' is challenged in postmodernity. He traces the disputed relationship between God and ethics in some quotes that set forth various philosophers understanding on the matter. Kant says: "If the freedom to be moral exists, God can be hypothesised" Rousseau says: "If the moral simplicity of the heart is, God is permitted." These two represent modernity's attempt to make a place for God that makes theology subordinate to ethics and makes the latter the primary category. He next renders a critique of that attempt by drawing on what Dostoevsky, Nietzsche and Žižek had said. Dostoevsky said: "If God is dead, everything is permitted." Nietzsche said: "Those who reject God cling all the more firmly to ethics." Žižek said: "If God is, everything is permitted." Kant's stance is furthest from Dostoevsky and Nietzsche. Kant is convinced that because humans have freedom, they have the ability to be moral. However, what he does not know is how moral agents can account for that freedom without God. God essentially functions as plausible grounds for our freedom to be moral. Essentially, Kantian ethics, and its political correlation, seeks to foster solidarity between people who do not share a common *telos*, other than that of their own construction.

Kant and ethics

Kant's idea can be approached as follows, by thinking of a common scheme in practical discussion. Should we attempt to stop people from acting in a certain way, a good question often presents itself: 'What if everybody did that?' If the outcome is that anything would go wrong if everybody did that, then we have just cause to feel badly about doing it. This test is at times called the 'universalisation' test. Kant drew from the universalisation test and ran with it. Kant not only made this a particular argument within ethics, but *the* central basis for ethics.

For Kant, this was the cornerstone for ethics, situating ethics in reason alone; affording us reasons in the field of prescriptions or imperatives. Universalisation sounds very much like the Golden Rule: "Do as you would be done by," a rule oftentimes claimed by Christians. But is to be found in most ancient ethical traditions which even includes Confucianism. Kant denied that his idea is as the Golden Rule. According to him, his idea has more substance to it (Blackburn, 2001: 100-01).

What Kant seeks to distinguish, from that which he seeks to talk about, he separates and calls 'talents of the mind' i.e.; understanding, wit and judgements from advantages of temperament such as courage, perseverance or benevolence. He also makes a distinction between fortune, happiness and moderation. For Kant, none of these qualities are good in and of themselves. These can be misused, or lamented. Not even happiness is admirable, if the villain is happy. Benevolence may afford people enjoyment they have no right to possess, thus leading us astray. The only thing left is a good will, despite the moral agent being handicapped from actually doing much good in the world. If the intent is there, a good will present and it is sufficient to make it shine like a jewel for its own sake. Kant defines the 'good will' as one acting from a particular good motive, an act out of a sense of law or duty. For Kant, duty is the "necessity of an action from respect for law." Being able to represent laws of action in ourselves, good will is thus the acts in accordance with that representation. Kant sees the core of morality not as something that we do, but in the motives of the act (Blackburn, 2001: 101-02).

Do we want people to act out of love, gratitude or duty? Do parents take a child for entertainment out of a sense of duty or because they enjoy the child's pleasure? Kant does not deny these dimensions of benevolence, but they are not, for him, the moral dimension. For Kant, moral excellence is only found in the strength of the sense of duty. But the difficulty with Kant's stance is that he believed some things got onto the list of duties 'in the first place.' It is no benefit to say that one needs to act from a sense of duty if when asked "what is my duty?" to respond "to act from a sense of duty" (Blackburn, 2001: 103).

The church and ethics

Many questions arose regarding the basis for ethics. Is it God? If so, which God? How do we know that a God is worthy of our ethical obedience? If these questions remain unanswered, then we cannot give a satisfactory account of ethics, let alone 'Christian ethics.' Many questions arose in the 20th century due to its unmatched violence. The liberation from Christendom into secularised nation states, which is marked by the modern era, did not end in

the desired "Enlightenment," except in the blinding blaze. It is not to say that we should return to religious rule as Christendom. However one can see religions revival in the postmodern culture because modernity has obviously failed (Long, 2010: 99). As a result, there has been a concerted reappraisal of Aristotelian ethics, labelled as 'virtue ethics.' Authors like Alasdair MacIntyre and Stanley Hauerwas have been applying it to the Christian church in the context of community. This Christian community serves as an alternative structure which is the embodiment of a distinct social ethic (Johnson, 2010b: 29-30).

Hauerwas (1981: 72-75) highlights that the government demonstrates its non-competency in religion where it fails to understand the human condition.[11] This thus presents a significant challenge to Christian social ethics, even not so well understood by the church. As a result of this, Christians who are rediscovering the profound nature of the gospel inadvertently express, and justify, their convictions from a secular vantage point. This secular expression for many Christians is not seen as a problem because the secular, and democratic polity, provides what seems to be an adequate means for Christian social concerns. As a result of this, Christians assume that social ethics implies that they need to transform basic social and economic edifices in order to assist those in need. Many assume, Hauerwas continues, that the liberal society is partial to, if not advantages for the church and there is a failure to understand the gravity of the moral challenge our society faces. As Christians, the model of creating a free people through the instrument of democratic government is widely assumed. But the irony of our society is by attempting "to make freedom an end to itself," our society has become extremely legalistic. Hauerwas (1981: 86) advocates that the church stands as an alternative to liberalism; to help free the social imagination. Hauerwas is however not calling the church to have a 'conservative stance of church,' but rather to demonstrate a level of trust in the community.

As a practical demonstration of what Hauerwas said, Smit (1996: 277-78) details it in the following way. First, there is a desperate need for an ethic of responsibility. Church, public and political leaders are calling for a social investment in the *masakhane* campaign. This campaign seeks to social cohesion to help build a new society[12] by accepting responsibility, paying the rent on houses and social services, getting involved and caring for the sustainability of society participation in local government, forgoing the notion of entitlement, etc. The main protagonist of this call was Archbishop Tutu, appearing regularly on public television urging people to get

[11] The "human condition" is referred to by Hauerwas as sinfulness.
[12] Smit wrote this in 1996, shortly after the fall of apartheid and birth of our democratic society. His observations thus is in the light of this transition.

involved. Black and white South Africans naturally had different (historic) reasons, different narratives, that fuelled their experiences of irresponsibility towards society. There is a need for a collective story, a 'divine' covenant in which they would be able to discover their own identities and serve God and their fellow human beings anew. It was to liberate a nation from its "lack of care for the public sphere" and senseless violence against others. Since 1996, a language of community, ethics of being, narrative and friends was becoming more popular in South Africa.

Second, responsible people are formed in communities of character. In order to successfully face our challenges, there needs to be an ethics of role models and inspiring characters, responsibility and commitment, mutual acceptance and living with the other; all of which is found in an ethics of being. As a vehicle for the plan of cultivating ethical citizens, the government rolled out the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) which at its heart was to form, empower and develop people. It attempted to reconstruct South Africa by strengthening civil society. The proposal is independent and overlooks the role the church and religious institutions will play (Smit, 1996: 278-79).

Third, there was (and still is) a need for an ethics of liberative solidarity; a dedicated struggle is needed from the people. A common moral vision is needed to act as social glue binding our society as well as in the political, educational, cultural, environmental, economic and crime fighting arena. Late president Mandela frequently spoke about the 'rainbow nation,[13] people spoke about 'nation building' and 'national reconciliation,' but there was a need for a dream that could act as a unifying symbol, uniting people in 'mutual commitment.' Fourth, there is a strong need for an ethics for a public church as they faced uncertainties about their role in society. During apartheid, churches, those supporting and opposing apartheid, focussed their attention on 'church and state' relations. Since democracy, churches were battling to free themselves from this paradigm. For those who defended apartheid, felt like withdrawing, arguing that it was a serious mistake to get involved in politics. For those who fought against apartheid, they too wanted to withdraw citing that there is no longer a need to mind the state and its function because the country is now in the right hands[14] (Smit, 1996: 279-80).

[13] This is a term coined by Archbishop Desmond Tutu to describe South Africa after its first democratic elections in 1994.

[14] This is not to say that the tie between church and state has completely been severed; it is just not as pervasive as in the past. The ACDP is a prime example. It does not represent 'the church' as a whole, but is a 'representative' of the church in politics.

The importance of narrative is grounded on the need for community and social cohesion that is difficult for the modern project to attain. As I had pointed out above, our society is built upon the premise of freedom to do as one pleases, but not only is the idea of freedom not understood, it has left our society with more and more isolated people. We are able to pursue our own interests, afforded by the 'freedom' individualism brings. With this individualism, people no longer share a common story and as a result, we have been divorced from history that plays a substantial role in our moral formation. I will thus investigate if narrative for moral formation addresses these limitations.

The history of narrative

Phelan (2014: np) places the clear demarcation of the start of narrative ethics, as a realm of study, in the 1980s. But its ability to shape an audience, for good or bad, goes as far back to Plato and Aristotle. Narrative ethics is situated in the juncture between that of stories, storytelling and moral values. Moral values, in narrative ethics, is considered as an vital part of stories and storytelling "because narratives themselves implicitly or explicitly ask the question, 'How should one think, judge, and act—as author, narrator, character, or audience—for the greater good?'" The investigation into narrative ethics is wide ranging but is understood to focus on one or more of four matters: "(1) the ethics of the told; (2) the ethics of the telling; (3) the ethics of writing/producing; and (4) the ethics of reading/reception." The ethics of the told, moreover questions about it, focuses on characters and events. The ethical dimensions of the characters actions and the dimensions of the interactions with other characters.[15]

Stevenson (2016: 2) elaborates, saying that narrative is more than the mere telling of an agent's story. One could interpret narrative through a "point of view, dialogue, plot, characterization, personal, and communal and historical experience; it might even emerge through silence, through modes of articulation that emphasize the very failure of narrative; and finally, narrative may emerge through thought and knowledge systems not grounded in rational autonomous subjectivity, or notions of objective reasoning." In any narrative experience, there is also a need for the agent to deal with the possibility of ethical failure; that is in the possible ways communication might fail in its attempt to flawlessly translate any narrative experience. Issues of transparency may come to the fore, either from the storyteller or audience.

[15] I will not elaborate on the other 3 matters as they do not directly pertain to the nature of this thesis.

van Huyssteen (1989: 767-68) says that narrative sprouts forth from a deep conviction related to the substance of personal human identity: that basic state of what it means to be human. This can be described as the ontological condition for humans telling stories of any genre: and without it there can be literature, history, philosophy and surely no religion. For Oakes (1992: 37-38) narrative transcends a literary genre that is related to the telling stories of human life, but it is revelation itself. Narrative is an ideal genre for theology, well suited to pastoral needs, highlights areas of scripture that is more central to its identity than tradition and removes the 'surprises' out of revelation when revelation is seen as a from narrative. There is, however, what seems to be a fault line to the understanding of narrative theology[16], among advocates of narrative theology, that are unable to decide if their understanding yields truth or meaning. Does it add value to those who already believe, or does it open understanding to what is perceived as truth that has otherwise evaded theology? It is this very dilemma that has sparked narrative theology: the challenge brought about by Enlightenment thinkers in relation to Christian doctrine.

During the pre-Enlightenment era of doing theology, narrative was never ignored or denied, despite how it was seen as having many proposition flaws. The thematizisation of narrative, as a privileged 'category,' came about as a response to Newtonian physics and not long after that an Enlightenment critique of the particularity of revelation. Narrative as a category, in other words, drew attention because it showed no direct interest in the world as such, but reflected on the distance between stories and the *reality* they depict. Newtonian physics changed the way people viewed the universe with laws that were held to be universal and predictable and as a result, history emerged as unsettling and near inexplicable. Narrative thus no longer gave universal coherence to the world and was relegated to the history/story of the more problematic areas of nature; those parts that could not be explained by science and the all- governing laws of nature (Oakes, 1992: 38-39).

The problem of trying to define narrative does not stop there. Apart from what had just been expressed, there is another question that needs to be asked. What is the relationship between narrative and history? As highlighted above, narrative ethics can refer to many genres; those of scriptural genres as well as biography. But are there generic features of narrative, or does it refer to some specific, easily discernable genre? Or does is not deal with a specific literary genre, but a form of human experience that finds it expression in various literary genres that

[16] Oakes uses narrative theology as a synonym for narrative ethics when he notes that narrative is an ideal genre for theology.

cannot be restricted? Or if it is nothing that was just mentioned, but more of a primordial yet concrete form of human understanding that is rooted in human understanding and identity? If so, then the hermeneutical process and common features of the different forms of narrative needs identification. For the purpose of this thesis, narrative will be classified as a literary genre. For example, Christian narrative could be understood as religious autobiography (confession). Christian narrative is no different from any other form of autobiography, being universally and primordially the articulation of personal identity. When narrating one's life, only certain events are selected, and the reasons for this may only be partly known,[17] as constitutive of a person's identity. As a result, when we explain who we are, a certain narrative is recounted that interprets personal history. This comes about due to the clash between that person's personal identity narrative and the Christian community and its respective narrative that community uses to identify itself. Very similar to individuals, communities also demonstrate its own narrative form which re-presents and interprets that community's specific history and experience (Stroup, 1981: 89-91).

Two major camps in narrative

If the terms of clarifying narrative, as above, was not wrought with hermeneutical clarification issues, tension in the narrative still exists. There are in fact two distinct camps within the proponents of narrative, and their relationship between the two are anything but friendly. Hauerwas and Frei are among those who can be considered as *pure narrativists* as they believe that narrative is best suited to the work of theology. They oppose discursive prose and abstract reason and insist that the best was to understand the Christian faith is to grasp the grammatical rules and concept of the text and praxis. Ricoeur and Cone, among others, can be classified as *impure narrativists*. Although they agree that stories are a critical and a neglected genre that is important for religious truth, but deny its unique theological status. They neither believe that narrative is either pure, or autonomous. The impurists have no problems building on liberal traditions and revise categories. Purists do not venture there and subsequently built their own categories, new paradigm (Comstock, 1987: 687-88).

Pure narrativists insist that the best way to interpret the bible is to see narrative operating within the particular journeys of individuals or the community that already exists by those stories that drew it into the congress of God. It is believed by some that narratives express an internal world

[17] This would happen subconsciously as the sheer amount of information is way too much to share in otherwise short periods of time to people who we meet for the first time, or with those one has relationships with.

that is not available to those outside by means of argumentation and/or apologetics. For impure narrativists, Ricoeur as an example, they hold that in certain cases, all narratives make a referential claim. Narratives do not simply signify the isolable and unique in human communities. They are not created as mere projections, informing us exclusively of the inner physic mechanism, excluding the universe about which it is narrating. Such a view rests on deep-seated epistemological beliefs and needs to be resisted and also critiqued (Oakes, 1992: 42-44; van Huyssteen, 1989: 768-70).

For the pure narrativists, explaining the Christian story using other language games would be improper, yet impure narrativists would seek conversation with other language games and should critically correlate with insights of contemporary philosophers, ethicists and social scientists. Pure narrativists also seek to bring theology to a halt once Christianity has been described and explained narratively. Impurists naturally disagree, citing that Christianity demands metaphysical inquiry to determine of what Christians believe are rationally acceptable as well as their ontological and epistemological grounds (van Huyssteen, 1989: 770).

Narrative

Thinking about or with stories

Morris (2001: 55) says that narrative is not merely story telling when we think *about* stories. As a response to the Western practice (thinking about stories), we need to start thinking *with* stories. The narrator becomes an object when thinking about stories occurs. The thinker and the object of thought are theoretically distinct. To think with stories is a process whereby the thinker does not labour so much on narrative as take a drastic step back and allows narrative to work on us, much like returning to a childhood experience. Comstock (1987: 687) notes that the renewed interest in narrative was revived by Niebuhr in his 1941 work titled; “The Story of Our Lives.” Since that work, it laid dormant till the 1970s and had garnished widespread interest with various branches of narrative: of the bible, theology, morality, tradition, practice and even truth. The conversation around narrative is a lively one and had produced some lasting contributions by attracting some quality minds: Paul Ricoeur, David Tracey, Hand Frei, Stanley Hauerwas, George Lindbeck, Julien Hartt, Sallie McFague and Johann Baptist Metz to name a few.

The discussion of narrative ethics can be viewed as equipment for living. In other words, we use narrative as a means to express how we think, feel and interact in society. As a result, we

will then learn what the best ethical way of interacting with others is. Narrative assist us in making sense of life. Narrative also helps people make sense of their lives by the stories available to them and subsequently seek to tailor their lives to the available stories (Adams, 2008: 175-76). The task of narrative is not to tell us who is right or wrong. It actively undermines that false confidence, which finds its origin in absolutist, objective theories of morality, that moral dilemmas attempt to clarify with a single action (Morris, 2001: 64). This approach to narrative is representative thinking, when one relates themselves to others. It is an emancipation from the narcissistic enclosure from the ego.[18] Narrative is to play a significant function in an ethic of responsibility. Narrative, in terms of identity, is both subjective and intersubjective. Being subjective, it seeks to answer the question 'who is the agent,' the telling of one's life. The story being conveyed tells about the 'who,' and the 'who's' identity is a narrative one (Kearney and Williams, 1996: 34-36).

Narrative as being intersubjective is when someone relays something to someone else. No one tells themselves stories. Therefore, if the storyteller remains harmonious in life by amalgamating the past, present and future, this takes place in an intersubjective context. One notable use of narrative in this form is psychoanalysis or psychotherapy. The therapist 'asks the question,'[19] "who are you" and the client responds by telling a story. By telling stories, the client is committed to working through the fragments of life until some form of narrative configuration is established. Through this process, the story of life is reconstructed through a series of rectifications applied during therapy. The therapist concludes that the client's narrative is inaccurate and dysfunctional and replaces it with a more accurate and functional narrative. This reconstruction of narrative is a joint venture between therapist and client with a goal of an overarching narrative that guides the client's understanding of life, the world and action (Kearney and Williams, 1996: 36-38; Stam and Egger, 1997: 71, 74).

Narrative and accountability

For MacIntyre (2016: 231-32) accountability is a distinctive human characteristic. Unlike other animals, we may be asked to give an account of ourselves, what we had done, are doing or plan to do; making out actions intelligible by clarifying our motives and reasons for our actions. As a result, we may be called to account for something we did recently, or many years ago. What is important is twofold: if we are guilty, or not, for the action, and why that particular group,

[18] I would link the 'ego' to the strong adherence to rules and regulations.
[19] The question is not a once off with an expectation that the client automatically knows how to respond. The therapist is trained to ask the right questions to induce the relevant responses from the client.

or individual, feels that there needs to be an account given of the action (and what is owed to them). This we could see play out in the TRC sessions. Those called to apply for amnesty were called to give an account of their actions and tell the story of their lives at that particular timeframe in their lives. During these hearings one could question how much of the story was actually being told and how much of it was being carefully selected from a larger narrative of that person's life. Has the deception, as espoused by psychoanalysis (if any were present in their stories), been too deep in the realm of fantasy that they believed it to be truthful and deceived themselves first and then others?

When telling stories, it is narrated in a specific way because we start with the end in mind to (try to) ensure a specific outcome. There is no outcomes guaranteed in live, no outcome for actions are completely known: life just happens. An enacted story of our lives begins at conception and finds its end at the point where we have either achieved or failed as rational agents, having completed, or not completed, our lives appropriately. Stories about success and failure has to be considered together, or not at all. Which is why philosophers such as Aristotle, Aquinas and Marx have "provided ways of understanding ourselves that require a retelling of the stories of our lives, the replacement of a less[20] by a more adequate narrative."[21] The challenge faced by a culture of advanced modernity is the general populace could struggle to narrate their own lives because of what has happened to storytelling and the life experiences of those people. One of the causes of this may stem from the lack of listening to stories as part of social activities that is of crucial importance to a society that is to aid in helping us to understand ourselves and others. For the ability to be able to narrate, we first need to learn to listen to be able to tell stories (MacIntyre, 2016: 233, 236-37).

Accountability can be taken out of context if it is not entirely understood. Accountability can be seen as a principle to live by and thus live in a principled manner, reinterpreting narrative as 'principle ethics.' McCarthy (2003: 66) says that principled ethical decision making negotiates between fundamental principles, making three basic claims. First; basic principles and the subsequent rules governing action derived from them is central to the person's "ethical decision making process." Second; any action, based on the principles, rules judgements and background theoretical framework, are morally justified. Third; the success of the justification is measurable by "the degree to which it achieves an overall cohesion of all of the elements of

[20] This is an incomplete version of the story, omitting certain negative elements to make the storyteller appear 'better.'
[21] The 'more adequate' is a more realistic version of the storyteller, one who shares successes and failings to the appropriate audience.

the decision making process." These principles are believed to be universal in nature and transcends culture, tradition and individual whims.

It is believed that principles were derived from a common set of norms that are shared by all morally serious people, unifying persons in all places and lean towards the idea of international human rights. Making a moral decision thus is determined by whether or not the intended action is in accordance with four basic principles: autonomy[22], non-maleficence[23], beneficence[24] and justice.[25] When faced with morally difficult situations, where principles conflict or a conflict between principles and certain judgements occur, the framework specifies that none of the principles "is a priori privileged." The principles have to be considered in that specific context and informed by a universal accepted theory of human nature and life (McCarthy, 2003: 66).

Narrative versus principles

McCarthy (2003: 67) continues by saying that narrative and methodologies, on the other hand, draws from literary criticism and philosophy tools of assessment and moral understanding. Narrative is a more suited medium for information about the unique lives of people. Narrative supplants principlism in that it is more robust by affording alternate ways of justifying ethical decisions by focussing on communicative and relational aspect of moral situations. There are three central views McCarthy highlights. First; every moral situation is distinctive and cannot be repeated and therefore its meaning cannot be derived by appealing to rules or law like universal principles. Second; any decision, or course of action, is justifiable in relation to the person's life story. Third; any justification for decisions or actions does not seek to unify moral beliefs, but to start a dialogue, to challenge norms and explore the tension between people and shared meanings.

For narrativists, in order to understand the relationship between human life and moral agency, there needs to be a deployment of narrative methodologies in order to read and interpret it. Moral justification is questioned by narrativists by claiming that what is unique about humans is not their ability to make decisions, but their social embeddedness and in so doing people will obey, or disobey, universal rules. The capacity for decision making is inextricably tied, to and given, meaning by the community. Narrative's ethical claims do not seek to use moral justification as a unifying concept. On the contrary, narrative focusses on acknowledging and

[22] Respect the views, choices, and actions of others.
[23] Avoid causing harm.
[24] Act for the benefit of others.
[25] Treat people fairly.

embracing the diversity of meanings that can be found in any given situation. There are many readings of moral situations in any given person's life. Narrative does not seek to reduce rival perspectives, but to involve as many people as possible in dialogue (McCarthy, 2003: 68).

Christian narrative ethics

For Christian narrative ethics, reflecting on what Barth had said, there is no satisfactory standard of moral norms that can settle the requirements of God's commands. That, however, does not imply that Christian narrative ethics is unable to provide substantive norms for the Christian moral life, situated in communities where concrete moral guidance is offered. The aim thus is to institute a substantive morality for Christians (Anderson, 1998: 295).

Narrative helps situate religion in the human experience and what "faith" means to people when encountering other people and the world. An uncertainty that frequently emerges is whether narrative is the framework through which individuals get to the reality of religion in the human experience, or is it an occasion for the encounter with the divine; being the bearer of the sacred itself (Stroup, 1981: 72). This uncertainty is somewhat mitigated by the community's common tradition. Lucie-Smith (2007: 3-5) notes that "tradition can be understood as the furniture of the mind" that makes conversation possible; a shared understanding of language and thus the community finds cohesion. This 'tradition' is not supposed to present itself as a set of rules, for if so; the community has an impoverished morality. Narrative is to be grasped by the whole person; members of a tradition and community and moral formation occurs when the community gathers. This leaves narrative with a broader base as starting point and wider epistemology.

There are forms of narrative theology that gets bogged down with discussions of what is and what is not narrative. Biblical theologians would point to specific scriptures as examples of narrative and progress to how these texts function as narrative in the lives of the community. One question thus does arise regarding biblical narrative: is it a distinctive genre? Following this, one can ask if it is even possible to speak of biblical narrative. Is scripture not replete with varying forms of narrative and thus it would be impractical, or misleading, to have biblical narrative as a distinct genre? To have any measure of 'success' in forming a genre for biblical narrative, the foundation of this narrative is to be located in a scriptural agent. The textual narrative centres on the identity of Jesus Christ by means of the description of him. Being who he truly is in the narrative account of him, his story is recorded as well as his self-manifestation in his passion (Stroup, 1981: 79-81).

For some scholars, Frei in particular, it is believed that the separation of the biblical narrative meaning from its truth is driving a wedge between story and 'reality.' During the 1700s, most theologians agreed that biblical stories had some realistic or historicity aspects, but these aspects were later ignored because the scholars lacked the hermeneutical method for isolating them and accounting for their inclusion in scripture. As a result, scholars lost sight of the character and primacy of biblical narrative. Biblical stories since lost their historical sense, being relegated to being primitive, prescientific formulations. Consequently, biblical narrative was divorced form human experience: reduced to an inessential source which ended up not adding value to other theological settings. Historical criticism abandoned with the notion that biblical narrative narrated human history with an end in mind. The argument was framed so that the real reference of the text was separate from the text (Stroup, 1981: 156-58).

Stroup (1981: 159-60) continues by noting that the argument was twofold: first; the original meaning of the text was intended to the original audience and second; the manner in which the text recorded events fit or failed to fit what actually happened. This theological strategy continued from the 1700s to the middle of the twentieth century. Having left biblical narrative behind, theologians were forced to utilise other frameworks for meaning, such as radical: hope, faith, obedience or authentic being. Biblical narrative was not abandoned for a "more directly available world or reality," it was exchanged for *another story* believed to portray a reality that was truer or more meaningful.

The literal link to the text in biblical narrative may describe the precise intention of what is to be understood in the text. The human author 'created' by the text for the original audience has to be added, or the divine 'author' in the community's understanding of the text as sacred. If divine inspiration is to be assumed, then the literal can overlap with the figurative that may form part of the literal sense of God, but not for a human author. This literal sense may also refer to the descriptive between signifier and signified. Central to the Christian tradition is the signifier of the New Testament, the narrative believed to be the structure of the story itself; and the identity of the agent cumulatively illustrated by it was signified. The literal aspect of the text was generally used by the community as an appeal to love God and neighbour. No other text has such a clear message, an identity applicative framework, as the communal context of Jesus: understood as both his narrative identification and an emblematic function for communal life (Hunsinger and Placher, 1993: 102-04, 110).

Ward (2006: 439, 443-44) points out that the role of narrative ethics, particularly Lindbeck's cultural-linguistic model, suggests that there are well defined boundaries separating the Christian community from the secular world. But Christians are not isolated from the world around them and find themselves secular-social and in psychological spaces far removed from Christian narrative. Engaging in any genre of written literature is an example of this. The reader engages in a phenomenological experience,[26] a physical event (the eyes moving while reading) and an emotive affectivity. This is also true of scripture, but not so much that the reader 'enters' another world, but participate in the process of disclosure and responds to textual stimuli.

Narrative and communal identity

A community is a collection of people that share a common past, recognises the present events as being significant for interpreting the present and anticipate the future through a shared hope; expressing their identity through a common narrative. How community differs from a crowd or a mob is a collective memory, expressed in traditions and institutions. If a person only has a casual acquaintance with a community, it is questionable to what degree the person is a member of the community. Community membership is linked to remembering with the other members, past present and future. This is relevant for both for the person as well as the community. That member's identity, through participating in communal life, is shaped by the community's story, symbols and rituals. It is fitting to say that a community is founded by a common memory through which the past is remembered and interpreted (Stroup, 1981: 132-35).

Our identities, as individuals that constitute a community, and responsibility for our past actions can only be realised in terms of the narrative unity of our lives. In order for us to understand what people do it is needful to understand what reasons they have for their actions. It is the intentions of the moral agent that make their behaviour intelligible. Every life is an unfinished narrative and therefore each person's goal, in terms of success or failure, is not completely known. Therefore the quest of all lives, particularly in the unity of community, is to seek the good and learn more about it by reflecting on our character as live proceeds. Virtues are there to sustain the community's social framework. This happens because the individual's identity is derived from the community they were born in (Schneewind, 1982: 654, 658-59).

[26] A cognitive event in which the person is transported into the realm of the text, and can even live vicariously through certain, or various characters in the text.

Narrative as History

There is an essential intertwinement of ethics, time and narrative. It can thus be argued that no full human ethics is possible without narrative. Narrative communicates a shared experience of time in the community in which the moral agents have common values shared through collective emotions. Time is essential to narrative, but philosophies of time cannot account for it in the human experience (Kearney and Williams, 1996: 49, 51). One of the conditions for being human is the capability for having a history, and that procession through time is intrinsically narrative. This means that the manner by which an active consciousness assumes its experience of their world is in narrative form. This is expressed in three modalities; past, present and future. To fully grasp the elemental status of narrative in the human experience, the arbitrary and mundane stories people recite is not the only vantage point. What needs to be considered are 'sacred stories,' not that they are stories linked to the divine, but man's sense of self and subsequently milieu is created through them (Stroup, 1981: 75-76).

Relational ethics is more applicable to instances of life writing. People have intimate others in their lives, there are bonds with friends and family and it is very difficult to remain anonymous. To maintain these ties, people constantly renegotiate interpersonal bonds and intimate conversations. Much of these conversations centre around (oral) history; an authentic attempt to develop awareness of other people's culture, values, attitudes and experiences (Adams, 2008: 185-86). Within Christian narrative, 'history' is used to interpret the past, make sense of the present and an expectation of the future. Should a myth, or fantasy, be narrated, such an encounter would not make the narrative meaningless or invalid (Stroup, 1981: 92).

Goldberg (2001: 148-50) notes that Niebuhr realised that the concept of history is ambiguous. On what grounds do people single out certain events and string them together in a story? Or, even more basically, what are the fundamental claims that a story exists at all? But history can be considered as revelation and revelation is intelligible and therefore it makes all other events comprehensible. Niebuhr notes that there are two kinds of history: internal and external. The "I-It" is an expression of the person's relationship with the events of external history. "I-You" illustrates the internal history. External history is concerned with: ideas, movements and interests among other things. It describes what is happening from the point of view of a metanarrativist. Internal history is of a personal nature. It narrates the course of events from the view of an involved participant. Both internal and external history could converge through experience where truth is transformed, searching for continuous relations in the world which

is liberative. Through this process, the purely neutral and descriptive becomes normative and prescriptive. History thus is not just *any* story, it is *our* (the community's) story.

The result of detachment

On the notion that we are not creatures of history, Hauerwas (1981: 78) notes that society believes that they have the possibility of a new beginning. Governments can be created "on the basis of principle rather than the arbitrary elements of a tradition." This assumption has a profound ability to distort history. What makes liberalism so successful is that it provides a myth that appears to make sense of our social origins. There is some validity in the claim that we, at one point, did not share a common history. This absence of a common history seemingly is the basis for a lack of commonality that could serve as social glue. Liberalism thus 'came to the rescue' by giving a philosophical account of a society to deal with that exact issue: the non-existence of a shared history. All people need is a system of rules that constitutes procedures for dealing with disputes. The result of this was the formation of a constitution and the theory behind this was that "the individual is the sole source of authority."

The basis of this theory was that the system would only work if one could continue to assume that people were virtuous. Morality was thus made 'private,' "meaning what we do with our freedom," and believed that it could be sustained and have an indirect impact. But private morality has followed the way of public life: expressing their 'public duty' by following their own interests, curtailed only by the rule that no one else's freedom may be infringed upon. Subsequently, virtues were replaced with competition and procedures. Most societies believe that it contains good people, or at least those who strive to be, but the problem is society has not the slightest idea of what it could possibly mean. It is unheard of these days to trust a stranger and subsequently homes look like prisons, depending on more and more elaborate forms of protection. The cost of this distrust is arguably the most destructive: people are more readily viewed as strangers rather than friends. The result of this is that people are becoming more increasingly lonely. Loneliness was renamed 'autonomy' and/or freedom, but the more this freedom people have, the more desperate people are for forms of community and interpersonal relationships that offer some form of contact with others[27] (Hauerwas, 1981: 79-81).

[27] I do wonder if social media is not in response to this. But *friends* on social media is no 'friend' in reality. It is so easy be 'unfriend' with little to no emotional impact because of what someone's convictions are (or any other 'justifiable' reason), as the social profile is inanimate and lacks real time, in person conversation.

Narrative nature of the church

Hauerwas and Wood (2006: 62-63) make the claim that the Christian witness in modern literature has been tainted because of what the gospel of Jesus Christ is, seems so much like the gospel of secular society. Since the Edict of Milan in 313 that made Christianity a tolerated faith, it soon became the official cult of the Roman Empire. This misalignment has also changed the focus of their confidence in God. Prior to Christianity being the state religion, established by Constantine, Christians believed that God worked in both the church and the world, but primarily the church. There was no reason to believe that God had any dealings with the affairs of the Roman state, believing that the gospel sustained them amid governmental torment. This all changed after Constantine when Christians firmly believed that God was primarily active in the world.

With this, the church seeks to be of service to the state and this should not be so. The church may be able to assist in social transformation, but this is to be accomplished on the church's own terms and not those of the state. One way the church may contribute is the cultivation of certain virtues, those that are central to an ontology of peace. This idea of centrality is not a licence for the church to assume a position of power, but rather to be on the side lines. The church is not to be bedfellows with the state, but rather demonstrate an existence as Israel did during their Babylonian exile: "Israel made do with the peace of Babylon without seeing its ultimate peace as residing in Babylon." The church is not to prescribe solutions to the moral crisis because this could end up with the church being grafted into the narrative of the state without there being a critical assessment of the story. Narratives are imperative because narrative forms people and subsequently serves political function. So when Christians invest into the narrative of the state rather than that of the church, their narrative formation is by the state rather than the church (Ngong, 2015: 95-96).

Rossi (1979: 239-41) notes that narrative, and the framework thereof, helps shape concrete moral existence. It holds promise that enables the community members to give an account of Christian moral formation in which, by faith, the images and symbols given can be rendered has the capability to shape hearts and minds. The discussion around "story," and associated notions thereof, has clarified that the individual's moral life is tethered to the life and history of the community in virtue. For any inquiry of Christian moral life to take place, moral theologians and ethicists are obligated to investigate the relationship between worship and the moral life. Strong images are present in Christian worship of God's living and saving presence

which are empowered in communal worship to both give assurance and establish human narrative in ways that assists people to be authentic worshippers of God, and morally responsible moral agents.

For some Christian cults, pilgrimage is part of their 'worship'[28] and plays a large role in narrative moral formation. The pilgrimage deemphasises the place and physical objects because the formative experience resides entirely in the events that happening in that space that is transferrable into a more communal context (Ingalls, 2011: 258-59). This practice of pilgrimage and worship are the things the community does over time that is to address fundamental human needs in light of, and response to God's active presence for the life in the community. There is a growing consensus that corporate worship is a communal practice that shapes narrative theology. However, worship should not be reduced to mere socialisation, nor can a utilitarian approach to spiritual formation be adopted, as if the worship is but a means to an end. Therefore the question is not whether the community will engage in narrative theology on Sunday mornings, but what narrative will be practiced. There needs to be careful attention given to the community's faithfulness by deep reflection on the biblical theology of worship and an equally deep analysis the significance of the worship practice (Johnson, 2010b: 30-31).

Narrative and large communities

The larger the community, the less likely it is to realise the social cost of individual misbehaviour. People thus are less likely to behave appropriately since the person's gain is markedly smaller than that of the community. The majority of communities are large enough for interaction to place outside the family groups, but not extensive enough for the individual to make personal contact with all the members of the community. Here, organised religion can provide some valuable social goods. It is not uncommon for a church to enforce appropriate behaviour in large communities. One example of this is the Medieval Catholic Church (Hull and Bold, 1989: 10).

Wells (2002: 67-68, 72-73) notes that even in mega churches, members are reminded of three things: they are in the presence of God, it is a skill to be able to name the presence of God and this skill is inculcated by scripture. By committing to meet regularly, Christians practice the skills of politics; the nonviolent resolution of conflict in communal life. They also practice welcoming strangers and valuing children. Weekly meetings mould the community's virtue of

[28] By 'worship' I am implying not the act of corporate singing, but, as some traditions *re*-interpret it, a life lived to obedience to God, adhering to the requirements of the church for not all churches have similar requirements.

faithfulness and taking time to worship the community is shaped in the virtue of patience. By confessing sin, the community is formed in the virtue of courage and by sharing communion, the community is shaped in the virtue of generosity and hope; the hope of the heavenly banquet they look forward to. van der Walt (2005: 160-63) says that parents, as well as other teachers in the community, should model the disciple they hope to instil in young people. But due to the deficiency in the adults, they are not able to effectively nurture young people. The development of the community narrative needs to happen together and this by: reading the bible together, taking part in rituals together, prayer and doing acts of faith together.

Conclusion

Modernity had, to some success, convinced society that history was irrelevant and one should rather seek to satisfy wants and needs, as long as it does not infringe on the rights of others. People live individualistic lives in a community and there is a need for social cohesion. In recent years narrative has made a resurgence. Narrative is inextricably linked to history, with a strong focus on community. Narrative is not law or principle based in that it focusses on the communicative and relational aspect of moral formation. Identity is also linked to community because people partake in communal life that expresses a communal narrative. One such community is the church which, by faith, has the capacity to shape hearts and minds.

Chapter 3
Stanley Hauerwas

Stanley Hauerwas is a professor of Theological Ethics at Duke Divinity School and arguably best known for his work on narrative and advocacy for ethic of nonviolence and Christian passivism (Ballor, 2012: p122). He is a prolific writer who believes that he has been criticised too much for writing, too quickly. He considers himself as a theologian rather than an ethicist. His greatest influencers on his writings are Barth and Wittgenstein where he would often stand in contra-distinction to the Protestant ethics of the Niebuhr's while at Yale. During his time at Notre Dame, John Howard Yoder and Alasdair MacIntyre became a seminal influence on him and when Hauerwas moved to Duke, John Milbank and Charles Taylor were notable influencers then (Gay, 2006: 9-10).

Narrative

Stories differ greatly and there is little agreement on how to separate them into categories. Some offer a lucid account or recurring plots in successive stories. Some are considered myths as they offer a type of shorthand that refers to some dilemma people faced. The common feature for most stories is that they irradiate real-life situations via a narrative structure. The goal of narrative is to draw attention to the connectedness which characterises a novel, or community. It is not the materialistic connection of the events of the individual, but the associated unfolding that is known as the *plot*. This can be identified as the actions, events, situations, etc., which is not one logical sequence or consequence. This connection is best suited to move our understanding of the situation forward by the development or unfolding of the story (Hauerwas and Burrell, 1977: 177).

The rules regarding the unfolding of the story are not logical because narrative links contingent events. In like manner, the intelligibility of the plot is not necessary because the events do not demonstrate a recurring pattern. There is thus no reason for narrative to require an explanation the way a scientific theory attempts to draw connections between occurrences. What is required of narrative is the manner in which it displays occurrences as actions. The intentional behaviour of the agent is purposeful, but not a necessity. It is however the intentional nature of the agent that evokes a narrative account. Action has an end goal in mind which has an impact on forces that may be characterised, yet remain unpredictable (Hauerwas and Burrell, 1977: 178).

What narrative reveals

What narrative is seeks to reveal is the character of the moral agent. Character is not a theoretical concept, but the descriptor of the cumulative source of human action. As the story unfolds, recurring patterns are discovered and predictions arise for the recurring ways of acting. Expectations develop and how people deal with those reveals some of the aptitudes of the human spirit. As a result, character is able to adopt the role of an analytic tool, even though it is not an explanatory notion itself. Character may not be explanatory in origin and use, because it cannot be formulated before or autonomously from the story that established it. It does act as an illuminating or analytic concept by drawing attention to what is happening in a narrative as the plot unfolds: offering a baseline for further development. Likewise, actions informs traditional repertoire. A narrative should then set out the antecedent actions in such a manner so as to clarify how these patterns become a tradition (Hauerwas and Burrell, 1977: 178-79).

Klaasen (2012: 109-10) notes of Hauerwas that he makes three important claims regarding narrative. First, narrative is epistemical: fundamental to our knowledge of God and ourselves, showing the self and the world as creatures. Second, "narrative is the characteristic form of our awareness as historical beings that give an account of the relation between temporary discrete realities." The self exists in relation to other selves in a living tradition, a view that is consistent with the dominant African philosophy of community. Third, the narrative history of Israel and Jesus is the best way to understand God's revelation. This narrative is the history of the covenantal relationship between God and the nation Israel and the relationship between Jesus and the church.

Some years ago, Hauerwas responded to the confusion regarding narrative. He noted that there was a poor understanding of what is at stake and the proponents talk past each other, leaving onlookers perplexed and bemused. Hauerwas was accused by Gustafson that his narrative theory generates a truncated, sectarian ethic which is incapable of useful dialogue with other ethical perspectives. Hauerwas retorted that Gustafson was too quick to abandon the Christian narrative in his quest for foundational dialogue and common moral principles. The principle concern Gustafson has with Hauerwas is what he believes, his uncontroversial sociological fact – being the product of a communal narrative that shape our character – and elevates it to the level of the normative (Reynolds, 2000: 396, 398).

For Gustafson, Hauerwas requires a Christian to ignore contrary evidence from other sources of human knowledge of God and God's purposes and remain faithful to the biblical narrative.

For Gustafson, the problem is exacerbated by Hauerwas' uncritical acceptance of the biblical narrative. He thinks that Hauerwas erects a cultural-linguistic wall between the world of the bible and other texts and thus reject dialogue necessary to arrive at meaningful warrants for belief. Hauerwas is also accused of sectarianism, to such an extent, that Hauerwas' church is to depart from all constructive dialogue and become a modern form of Gnosticism (Reynolds, 2000: 398-99).

For Hauerwas it is no surprise that Gustafson misunderstands him because according to him, Gustafson is still continuing to presuppose the "dominant philosophical and theological intellectual habits of the last hundred years." Although the current age is marked by ethical diversity, Hauerwas is less troubled by it than Gustafson and subsequently less prone to think it is correctable. Hauerwas believes that Gustafson has departed from the distinctive Christian narrative in an attempt to overcome diversity and ambiguity by cultivating conventional spanning methods of moral judgements. He believes that Gustafson seeks and illusionary autonomous knowledge of an autonomous nature to make a common morality possible (Reynolds, 2000: 399-400).

Christian ethics

Although Hauerwas (1983: 72-74, 81) tries to provide a hermeneutical framework to situate the gospels in, he is by no means trying to settle to what extent the "real Jesus" can be known by. The witness in scripture, the way the writers portrayed Jesus, is central to understanding the kind of kingdom they thought possible through his life, death and resurrection. Jesus did not call attention to himself, but to proclaim the presence of the kingdom presently and eschatologically. The life of Jesus is thus a window through which we can see God's way with people. He does not impose his will upon anyone, but calls people into communion with Him. Through the cross we can see the one who is all-powerful become vulnerable and make a covenant with not only Israel, but with many.

Jesus' execution was not a mistake, but an expected response of a violent world. Jesus embodied peace and through him we can rest in God because we are no longer driven by the notion that we are to control history, to ensure things turn out right. This peace is not only between people, but between people and the world. It is a genuine eschatological peace that harkens back to creation, where man and animal did not depend on another's destruction for survival. Thus being members and citizens of this kingdom, we are to extend God's peace

through caring and protecting his creation. An evil person is not resisted, not because life is innately sacred, but because life is God's. The preservation of life is of an eschatological nature (Hauerwas, 1983: 87-88).

Life is also not an end in itself because all life is valued, even the life of our enemies because God values them. It is through the resurrection of Jesus that we see God's peace as a present reality and this reality is manifest in the possibility of living in peace by the power of forgiveness. It is fundamental that we understand that this is only possible if we are also a forgiven people. The first thing that should be remembered is that our first task is not to forgive, but to realise that we are a forgiven people. Forgiveness can be misconstrued as a way of exerting control over others. We might even fear forgiveness from others because it might be perceived as a sign of weakness, making us powerless. But when accepting God's forgiveness we can acquire the power that comes from learning to give up control (Hauerwas, 1983: 88-89).

The Christian ethic of peace

The kingdom of peace can be viewed as a kingdom of love initiated by Jesus and this is no more evident in the obligation for the Christian to be hospitable. The community should be ready to share a meal with strangers and be ready to be stretched by the unknown. Friendship is a way of life then as we learn to rejoice in the presence of others and without friendship this journey in the kingdom would be impossible. The notion of peace as a moral ideal could so easily replace the good news of salvation. Justification can likewise not be the denial of the ethical simply because of faith. Faith is our appropriate response to salvation and it is fundamentally a moral response and transformation (Hauerwas, 1983: 91-92).

Hauerwas (1983: 93-94) says that the apostle Paul recognises that faith has no mystical powers, but initiates a person into the kingdom. Faith is essentially fidelity to Jesus, the initiator of God's kingdom of peace and not so much a combination of belief and trust. Faith is finding our true life within the life of Christ and this life is ultimately a social life. To be "in Christ" is to be a part of the community we had made our pledge to be faithful too. But Christians belonging to this kingdom often times do not look very new or even feel very new. Although the label of being redeemed is also held, not much in the way of feeling has changed much. But this kind of thinking simply indicates that there is a failure to recognise the challenges of the kingdom in our lives. A tempting way to remedy this is to want to grow into a story of moral purity, but this would be wrong for the basis is the story, the journey and the truthfulness

thereof. It is through the story of Jesus that we can learn to be what we ought to be; a participant in God's community of peace and justice. This story will reveal how much violence is present in the soul, a violence that will not vanish overnight, but what must be recognised and worked at to lay it down.

Virtue

The message that liberalism brought is that people are able to make up their own stories as they see fit. As a result, by having no story to begin with, there is a failure to recognise how that view governs our lives. The church has adopted this strategy because it seemed to express a humility about the stance of the state in that it holds fast to the belief that God limits all earthly power. The church preached the gospel in such a manner that it assumed the destiny of the state and social order was akin to the kingdom of God. This is not the stance the church should be adopting. The church is an alternative polity and should help its community to experience a politics of trust, more accurately, what trust should be like. Not only is the community a vehicle to demonstrate a politics of trusting one another, it is to map out a way of life that aids in the advancement of virtue and character as social concerns. Liberal society fails to develop public virtues without the acceptance the left's totalitarian and the right's elitist strategy. It is the mandate of political theory that people are to have an experience of trust rather than the idea thereof (Hauerwas, 1981: 84, 86).

Although it is widely accepted that virtues are important, philosophically and theologically there is no consensus on how it is to be understood or how significant they prove to be in accounts of morality. Is virtue one or many? Are there primary virtues? Can they exist in conflict with each other? How does one acquire them or the locus of virtue? These are all questions to which there is little agreement and more so even fewer discussions. Yet these questions presuppose that virtue is a fundamental concept for moral reflection, a central concept that modern theories do not share. Virtue, *arete*, "was an excellence of any kind that denotes the power of anything to fulfil its power." It is that which, intrinsically, made something perform its function to the best of its abilities. The discussions surrounding virtues has brought forth pluralities of different notions that indicates that virtue is in fact context-dependent. It is deemed more a general stance of the self that has "more normative significance than do the individual virtues." Case in point, virtues such as honesty, kindness, humility and courage are more related to the embodiment of praise, whereas being a 'person of virtue' is more ambiguous (Hauerwas, 1981: 111-12).

The virtue of 'how'

Hauerwas (1981: 113-14) continues that the significance of our morality is not located in what we do or not do, but "how we do what we do." The apprehensions of our behaviour contributing to our moral character is an indicator that what is done should be done in a modus that lines up with our history as moral agents. One may assume that this is based on an ethic of duty that locks us into the responsibility of roles we find ourselves in, even if we feel that there is no other alternative and we should do it. These 'duties' thus require the moral agent to make choices and decisions, where virtue makes no such requirement. Virtue is thus not a choice or a decision. Duties requires us to make decisions and act upon them, while virtue encompasses dispositions that "may or may not entail decisions." Taking this stance one could deem the decision making process as morally secondary. A virtuous person still has to make decisions, but it is reliant on a more profound moral reality.

In this profound moral reality, it is not easy to define happiness as our highest good, or *telos*, as it varies from person to person. Hauerwas does not define acts, passions, vices, habits and virtues in relation to one another or devise categories of specific virtues as perfecting our agency in the light of particular challenges. There is no mention of the doctrine of the mean, moral and intellectual virtues, cardinal virtues, theological virtues and so on. For him what is on the table is agency. Although Hauerwas wants to rethink Protestant theological ethics through the lens of the traditional Catholic virtue and character, the Catholic moral theology was also in need, at the time, of a ressourcement in the ethics of virtue and character. Although the Protestant and Catholic rejuvenation of an ethic of virtue went hand in hand, this does not imply that everyone was up to the same thing (Herdt, 2012: 207-08).

The language of virtues was being retrieved within philosophical circles in a hope to find a way past the stalemate between utilitarians and deontologists, but it was done with a new interest in moral psychology and emotion. Moral decision having made way for a more holistic reflection on practical reason. The interest in virtue ethics for some went hand in hand with a broader anti-theoretical turn. Virtue ethics would not establish a rival agent-centred moral theory alongside the deontological and utilitarian approaches, but a non-theoretical articulation of common sense. But for Hauerwas, character is both corrective to both characteristically Protestant and characteristically secular modern ailments. Character makes moral growth speak possible and intelligible, allowing an articulation of the autonomous centre of activity capable

of self-control and self-mastery. Character is thus not what we are naturally, but what can decide (Herdt, 2012: 208-09).

Agency

Society at large, our enemies or our past cannot define, or govern the significance of who we are since Christ has already done that for us. Society today is prolific in producing victims, people who have been effected by economic injustices, social class, race, education or psychological problems that are told that they are hapless victims that should rather accept their fate if they want to be happy (Hauerwas and Willimon, 1989: 67-68).

There exists a connection between freedom and self-possession within a virtuous person that points to the significance of the agent for the ethic of virtue. Virtue is nothing more than the self, which is expressed as an agent with certain gifts, experiences and history. This 'self' is the character and character is associated to being a person of integrity. Integrity, by definition, is "the courage to march to a different drummer." Although such people can be admired, it is assumed that a full ethical life requires more than integrity. Persons of integrity, at times, commit extreme actions to preserve their strength. As a result, it is assumed that the very meaning of morality suggests we qualify agency using a more universal or impartial point of view. From this view a moral life would not be lived because the ethic of virtue would then seem to imply the person is not an artist, but an art-critic. Virtue has to be one's own character and refusal to ignore the moral agent's subjectivity for moral formation (Hauerwas, 1981: 116).

Character

Character is a reminder that it is the self that needs development. It is not informed of just one narrative, but multiple roles and stories. It is a constant conversation between these stories that allow us to live appropriately to our character of existence. This could be the reason why moral philosophers are reluctant to analyse the different 'stages' of moral development. As a result, moral philosophy is constructed from the final stage, as if everyone had attained this stage, or are close. This then sets the moral development theory as how to reach the final stage where moral growth ceases. For the most part, childhood is mostly ignored and is seen to represent a pre- or non-moral stage of growth. Theories such as utilitarianism and formalism assumes that in the absence of any one moral principle, lives would turn on chaotic. Narrative, incorporating character as a concept, expresses the moral importance of integrity without assuming that one moral principle is available. As a result, integrity is not to be linked to one basic moral principle

or an end goal in moral formation, but is more applicable to a narrative adequate to guide us through a narrative sufficient for the illumination of the virtues that forms the self. Growth is thus not antithetical to integrity, but essential to it. Character is entrenched in a coherence of our activities by claiming them as our own (Hauerwas, 1981: 133-34).

Klaasen (2008: 129-30) notes that Hauerwas placed significant emphasis on agency,[29] but narrative and community were important on character formation. The extent and power of agency depends on the adequacy of the descriptions we learn from our communities. Within the community we receive freedom, but it is dependent on us being initiated into a truthful narrative. The ability to have character does not require theorizing a transcendental freedom, but it demands recognition of the narrative of our existence. That which ensures agency then is not freedom, but narrative. Freedom is frequently associated with decisions and actions: meaning to be free is to have a choice.

This view says nothing about factors beyond one's control. As a means to break through such a limitation, Hauerwas says that we turn to the self as an agent. Being the 'self' is what it means to act on the world, the agent as being responsible for what it does. The agent is the first person and the self is not something other or deeper than the agent, but the agent itself. In like manner, character is neither the choices we make nor actions we take, but the form our agency demonstrated through beliefs and intentions. Therefore, character is the self. Behaviour is not casuistic, but intentional and purposive. Action belongs to the self as it is able to fit into a narrative, not something I cause as though it is external to the self (Klaasen, 2008: 130-31).

Hauerwas (1975: 28-29) is also of the notion that it is not possible to understand the motivational force for ought judgements apart from the conception of formed human character to which those judgements appeal. He also believes that the notions of actions, which provide the material content of our ought statements, always contain assumptions and stipulations of the agent's intentions. For Hauerwas, morality is no more 'reliant' on religion, as virtue to obligation. The relationship does not harbour priority, nor conceptually, logically or causally, but rather of how each contributes to the formation of the moral self. If ethics is seen as primarily a matter of obligation removed from an ethic of virtue, one would then fail to see how religious convictions embody and order the moral life. Religious beliefs would then, much like virtue, be relegated to the subjective or motivational side of the moral life where they can have no influence on how the moral life conceived or lived. Therefore the contemporary

[29] For Hauerwas, agency is compatible with character (Hauerwas, 1983: 39; Klaasen, 2012:130).

emphasis of the ethics of obligation has misplaced the relation moral life and religious convictions.

Community

Hauerwas (1983: 38-39) posits that in order to understand the self it has to be framed in the idea of being an agent: the meaning to be the self is to act on the world. It means that our first person affirmations – "I made that" – can never be interpreted as a third person description. Agency thus encapsulates that which we are responsible for, and what and who we are. Agency is compatible with character,[30] but it is not as a result of our choices, but rather the form of agency our agency takes as a result of our beliefs and intentions. Agency therefore helps us to see that character is not a surface manifestation of a deeper reality we would call the "self": we are our character. But for some this is not enough for they seek the self to be free. The transcendental "I" is thus required to ensure that we will never be constrained by our character.

The problem with this is that the "I" has to be impersonal then, free from history, which is the very essence of what makes us what we are. Agency is necessary, not to ensure that we can always "act," but rather to demonstrate that we are not without resources to make our lives our own. Agency is located within an ongoing history and community of language users. We are agents because certain things happen, not because we are able to "cause" things to happen. This is not a cause and effect result of "causation," but the agent's power of description. Our actions are not something we cause, as if it were something external to us, but ours because we are able to "fit" it into our ongoing story (Hauerwas, 1983: 39, 42).

Character in community

Our characters are acquired through the expectations of others. Other characters not only invite us to an imperfect imitation, but highlights how our vision is restricted by our own self-preoccupations. It is therefore the kind of community we encounter that makes all the difference (Hauerwas, 1983: 45). The church and the world are thus relational concepts. They are companions on a journey that are inseparable and thus make it impossible for the one to survive without the other. The church does not withdraw itself on the basis of a being called the church and thus can 'enforce' a withdrawal ethic, but rather to be a community which tries to develop the resources to stand in the world witnessing the peaceable kingdom, all the while

[30] Hauerwas describes character as: qualification or determination of our self-agency, formed by our having certain intensions (and beliefs) rather than others (Hauerwas, 1983: 39).

rightly understanding the world. Therefore Christians are the community of a new age that has to continue to exist in old age; simply on the grounds that they are a people 'on the way' and require better way of living, or make certain virtues central that other communities do not possess (Hauerwas, 1983: 101-03).

What is central to this community is the story it tells and those convictions they take from it. The Christian ethic is not predicated by emphasizing rules or principles, but by calling our attention to a narrative that tells the story of God's dealing with creation. Hauerwas believes that narrative is neither incidental nor accidental to the Christian belief: for there is no more fundamental way to speak of God other than in a story. This story of situated in the recounting of the Israel and life of Jesus which is decisive for understanding the God we worship. For Hauerwas, narrative displays our existence in the world as creatures and is epistemically fundamental for our knowledge of God and ourselves because we come to know ourselves only in God's life. It also forms our awareness of ourselves as historic beings. The 'self,' in history, is subordinate to the community, not vice versa, because the self is discovered through the community's narrated traditions (Hauerwas, 1983: 24-25, 28).

Social ethics

For Hauerwas, holding a position is a bad idea for Christian theologians because they often interpret thought; something that could be misconstrued, as if it is the business of theology to represent something new. The only thing that is new for Hauerwas is the new age we find ourselves in, which is made manifest through the cross and resurrection of Jesus. The theologian's task thus is to help the church know what it has been given (Werpehowski, 2012: 228). Hauerwas draws on social theory to inform his social narrative the church should perform over and against the world (Healy, 2014: 508). Hauerwas' claim for the social ethic is framed in his statement: 'the church does not have a social ethic, it is a social ethic.' What needs to be fleshed out in Hauerwas' language is the 'having' or 'being' a social ethic (Gay, 2006: 24-25).

Hauerwas believes that the modern, post-Kantian conception of ethics has already foreclosed the possibility to bearing witness to the gospel in key respects. Once this tradition has been established, the ethical witness of the church becomes incommensurable with that tradition and its language. This is why a rhetorical move is necessary to permit the tradition from imposing a limit and distorting the churches witness, which is why the 'church is a social ethic' sounds strange. Hauerwas agrees with Alasdair MacIntyre that there are no untraditioned ethics – no

ethics without a qualifier – yet the methodological claim should be seen as a strong substantive assumption about the churches status and necessity to act as a locus for ethical reflection. This ethic is not written for everyone, but for a particular people formed by the narrative of Jesus and Israel and thus the first social ethical task of the church is to be the church. And thus by being the church, it shows the world that it is the world. "World" here implies everything in all of creation that has made use of their freedom not yet to believe (Gay, 2006: 24-26).

Drawing on Barthian language, there is no public language for the church to have without denying what it is called to be. Hauerwas uses rhetorical replacement in which he uses theological, very often ecclesial, language inserted where philosophical language of modernity is typically used. What it means to be ethical plays second fiddle to the question of what it means to be the church. The church is axiologically prior to the world, Christ is the centre that must guide critical value choices. For Hauerwas, theology and ethics are not in binary opposition, but run on parallel tracks. Christians then are taught, by the church, what is 'ethical' through church practices. They are taught what it means to be forgiven and this is how we learn what it means to be sinners (Gay, 2006: 27-29).

Social ethics as servant hood

Hauerwas uses the church as his model of servant community and shows how different the church is to the world, yet the church is not to abandon the world for it is its social tack. The church's agenda of peace and truth does not follow that of the world; injustice and violence. The world can thus measure itself against the church in light of its disunity and divisions because the world does not see that it 'is the world.' The church thus needs to direct the world to the kingdom of God. The church does have its shortcomings and is not always what it should be, a peaceable kingdom, remembering and telling the story of God. In one respect the world is not all that different than the church, having been created by God, and the church is no different than the world, somewhat distorted and in rebellion. Nevertheless, the church is not to withdraw, but to engage in the form of witness to the kingdom and an understanding of the world. The servant community does not find its strength in dominion, but in servant hood while engaging in the values of the kingdom (Klaasen, 2008: 139-40).

The servant community that constitutes the church must also be a people of virtue which is sustained by the virtues of faith, hope and love. These virtues do not have the same origins for Christians and non-Christians. For Christians what they hope in, have faith in and how their love is informed, is derived from a narrative that forms the community. For the world hope

means being in control, for the church it means not having control. Where the world seeks to manifest its plans through coercion, the church is an eschatological people who assume that God will be faithful and make his kingdom a reality. Belief in God necessitates that the Christians see themselves as creatures and not creators. This stance creates division between those who insist on moral autonomy and the Christian community. The church is not to identify with secularism. For Hauerwas, this notion of the church has it so different from the world that the church community has become alien to the world (Klaasen, 2008: 140, 142).

Social ethics and faithfulness

The measure of the Christian story, Kallenberg (2004: 203-05) says, is the ability to be embodied by a community whose characters live faithful to the narrative. For Hauerwas, witness is the only way the truth of Christian convictions can be known. Even if everyone in that community fails to live faithfully, the story is not negated. This is applicable to the Christian because they claim to still be in training. Moreover, the litmus test for Christians is the ability to deal with unfaithfulness (via forgiveness); which is essential to the story. It thus must enable some to live faithfully, or the story would be a fairy-tale. Those who live faithfully are witnesses to the narrative's character shaping reality. The good news would be unintelligible without such witnesses. On the other hand, the unintelligibility of the message is possible because the church is the "foundation of truth," and not the world. Furthermore, a witness of the community is the only mode for displaying the truth of the Christians convictions, and it is not self-defeating. The peaceable nature of the witness stems from the Christians belief regarding the very nature of God.

Vosloo (2013: 303) notes that Hauerwas criticises the moral presuppositions of the Enlightenment on which many base their rationality qua rationality. For Hauerwas, moral judgements are inseparable from the character, and visions and virtues (story or narrative) of the moral agent. Hauerwas has a different notion of the moral life, yet he does not deny the importance of obligations and rules. Hauerwas' scepticism is based on idea that ethics gives a central place to obligations and rules. He affirms that integrity, not obligation, is the hallmark of moral life. For Hauerwas, prior to the kind of choices we make as agents is the question of the kind of person we should be. Thus, character is prior to choice, and virtue to decision. He strongly accentuates that virtues, much like skills, are acquired through the practice of the communities. For MacIntyre the emphasis is on polis as the locus of moral formation;

Hauerwas turns to ecclesia. The Christian community, shaped by the true narrative of Israel and Jesus, are the true schooling environments for the virtues.

Social ethics and narrative

Giedd (2016: 2-3) notes that that which underpins the entirety of Hauerwas' work is that all communities are, by nature, narrative. Every community and every polity includes and requires a narrative. It is not just that every community requires a narrative, but that every community requires a specific kind of narrative that is central to and determines its life. People must therefore recognise which community they are in and how they got there. Hauerwas affirms that no community can exist without a narrative. The community interacts with the story central to them, and must remind themselves of their origin. Every person in this community yearns for a sense of security they identify themselves with.

This does not however translate to humans who find their security in God, who along can give peace, forsaking their human nature. It is rather the essence of human nature; this peace as a resting assurance on God for all things at all times. To be most secure in our nature is to be secure in God's providence. If we live outside of the narrative, seek our own 'adventure,' then we never truly rest in God. As every community is rooted in a tradition that is a narrative, every narrative's goal is to tell a story of truth. It is thus the task of the church, not to try to develop social strategies to make countries to work; but rather for the church in the country to become a polity that has the character to survive as a truthful society. This should be the quintessential understanding of what it is to be the church (Giedd, 2016: 3-5).

Within an African context, Ngong (2015: 97) notes that Hauerwas' emphasis on the community as the locus for moral formation should remind us that moral formation is not and should not be individualistic. This claim that moral formation is communal should be taken seriously because there is an increase of individualism in many African societies. Where Hauerwas' ethic focusses on the church community as the context for moral formation, African indigenous ethics focusses on the village community. Both communities are informed by different narratives: the various narratives of different village communities and the different theological inflections of the various Christian communities. Another influential way in which Hauerwas' theological ethics may be supportive in the development of African Christian ethics is its assertion that ethics is made manifest through witness.

Peace

Hauerwas never really gets to a point at which he suggests that Christians are to withdraw from the world as radical reformers did. He does however insist that Christians are primarily called to be a peaceable community distinct from a violent world. Christians are not called to engage in the political task of seeking social justice, but a polis unto itself that seeks its own transformation and witness to the world by virtue of its distinctiveness (Ott, 2012: 248).

The kingdom is not a set of ideals that the community tries to realise in society. Tension in the kingdom is not caused by unrealised ideals, it is a tension created by faithfulness and unfaithfulness. Christians are not tasked to make the "world' the kingdom, but be a people who can witness to the world what it means to be confident in God. In a violent and unjust world, Christians can risk being a forgiven and forgiving people and thus break the cycle of violence as they refuse to be a part of the institutions of fear that promises safety by the destruction of others (Hauerwas and Sider, 2003: 134).

Rest, or peace, is not accomplished by a withdrawal from the world. Peace is only possible when we discover that the kingdom is not an inert space or way of being, but a journey we have graciously been offered as a community to undertake, and thus are a particular kind of people formed by a particular set of virtues. In the light of what the apostle Paul writes, he tells us that the works of the flesh, the works of this world, are:

Immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21)

This is not a list of trifling moralism, but a list of behaviours that manifest our distrust and fear that there is no God that we can trust as the good Creator of this world. This is neither a matter of 'personal' ethics, but an indication of the kind of character that is unacceptable in the community that not only witnesses to, but manifests God's peace. In contrast to this, the community knows that the:

[F]ruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against these such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (Galatians 5:22-23)

The fruit of the Spirit is no accident as the community can risk being: peaceful in a violent world, kind in a competitive society, faithful in an age of cynicism, gentle among those who admire the tough, love when it might not be returned, because there is a confidence in Jesus that we have been born into a new reality (Hauerwas and Sider, 2003: 134-35).

Polity of the kingdom

The political and social character of the kingdom is to serve as a reminder that any Christian ethic that is not a social ethic, first and foremost, is less than Christian (Hauerwas and Sherwindt, 1982: 128). Hauerwas remarks that John Colwell argues that contemporary Protestantism is ill equipped to proclaim the Christian narrative because they misappropriate the Reformation doctrines of sola fide and sola gratia. They have an impoverished account of justification and sanctification that fundamentally denies the ethical essence of faith. Protestants also tend to view the scriptures as a book of rules, rather than an embodied narrative (Hauerwas and Sider, 2003: 227).

The kingdom is but a glimpse of God's future and a program for concrete change in human history which functions as sufficient guidance to direct Christians in social action. The kingdom is not an ethical ideal that requires our willingness to bring it to completion; it is set up by God alone with no human effort. Determining the meaning and context of the kingdom, the theological and ethical significance of Jesus, implies that history assumes an importance of other ethical reflections that cannot be ignored. The church, particularly, proclaims Jesus, but has to understand that the kingdom starts as a hope of a people called by God who is defined by the life, death and resurrection of Christ (Hauerwas and Sherwindt, 1982: 129, 133).

The Beatitudes is an ordering of God's kingdom, the character of his commonwealth. This community is only possible, however, because they had learned to be forgiven. It is only through this forgiveness by God that we learn to forgive each other. This is not to cultivate an utopian ideal, but a reality that we are to live out. In this violent and unjust world, Christians can take the risk of being forgiven and forgiving. The cycle of violence can be broken as Christians can refuse to become part of those institutions of fear that destroy others under the guise of safety. For Christians, the fruit of the Spirit is no happenstance of being peaceful in a violent society; it is the confidence that in Christ we have been born into a new reality (Hauerwas and Sherwindt, 1982: 133-35).

Governments are known for its non-competency of religion, failing to recognise God's sovereignty and understanding of human sinfulness. This failure by the state leaves Christians with a Challenge to social ethics that the church fails to grasp. Although Christians might understand the social significance of the gospel, the terms of that expression, and justification thereof, is expressed through the secular. Many Christians believe that this presents no problems because the nature of democratic polity is a sufficient means for articulating their social concerns. This 'social gospel' presumes that there is a need for the church to transform social and economic structures in order to assist individuals. As a result, political involvement is deemed necessary to aid in transformation (Hauerwas, 1981: 72-73).

Assuming that secular society is partial to, or in any way beneficial to, to the church; there is a failure to grasp the depth of the moral challenge facing society. Naturally society has problems, this is well known, but it is assumed that society itself, and politics, is the means to deal with it. And in an attempt to make freedom an end in itself, society has become increasingly, excessively at it, more legalistic. One major problem that has fuelled this is our liberal society. Liberalism is a multi-pronged and ambiguous phenomenon. Historically, as well as culturally, there are many factors that encapsulate its impact on society. One such impact is the removal of a shared history and the promise of a new beginning. On this premise, governments are formed on the basis of principle and not the arbitrary elements of tradition. Liberalism provides a myth that rationalises our social origin. Although there is some truth that we have different histories, this absence of a shared history is the basis of the notion that since we have different origins; there exists no basis for societal cooperation (Hauerwas, 1981: 74-75, 77-78).

Hauerwas and Politics

Hauerwas' criticism of American liberalism began in the 1960s and was in response to the black power movement. In his first published essay he argued that white liberal Christians dislike black power because they see it as a rejection of their efforts to promote justice and equality through racial integration. He was however much criticised for not standing up for blacks, women and the poor in light of Christian justice. He did however represent black power as an epistemological and ethical tactic that can tear down the white American dream, while giving them a truer story about the nature of moral struggle (Northcott, 2012: 265).

There is a common theme in Hauerwas' criticisms of ethics and ethicists. In the United States, the theological ethics discipline treats the nature and exercise of power in a society as a settled matter. It will then set out to demonstrate how the moral Christian content must guide and

govern our use of power. In other words; the ethicist observes that the American society is structured by a capitalist market economy, restrained by a representative democracy, and then assess these social arrangements according to Christian principles (Reno, 2008: 302-03).

In like manner, the ethicist might use a particular Christian framework and superimpose it on international affairs. The ethicist could consider the needs of the modern man and weigh up the pros and cons of new developments in morality and social thought. The question needs to be begged: whether, according to Christian principles, the given framework of just or unjust forms of power ought to be preserved, modified or overthrown on the basis of those same principles. In other words, power is an extra-Christian reality that needs to be moderated and modified through the lens of Christian truth; and it is this tradition of ethics Hauerwas dislikes. It is thus with this disjointed approach that ethics, as practiced in the United States and much of what is passed as 'political theology' elsewhere, is fundamentally misguided. A true political theory recognises Christian truth as a power in its own right. Therefore a political theologian would recognise that Christian truth that would make a difference in the world (Reno, 2008: 303-04).

The locus of Hauerwas' stance

Hauerwas' primary Christian aim in the public arena is not to transform liberalism. His focus is to call Christians back to a peaceable faithfulness that only makes sense inside a set-apart community of 'resident alien' Christians. For Hauerwas, the church is to stand against the encroachment of the dominant liberal moral ethos of American society. American liberalism, according to Hauerwas, believes

"that the best or only moral community we can have is based on guaranteeing the principle of the freedom of each individual citizen to do as he or she pleases, so long as he or she does not violate the legitimate equal freedom of others."

Liberalism cannot pass the litmus test for what is truthful because the only 'truthful' social arrangement – the church – represents the only social condition through which necessary virtues can be sufficiently developed in the service of right human desiring. Liberalism presumes that a society can be structured without a narrative that is commonly held to be true and thus tempts us to believe that rationality and freedom are independent of narrative. For Hauerwas, it is essential that church and society realise that social arrangements that are truthful emerge out of common lived 'traditions' or narratives (Logan, 2006: 522-23).

Hauerwas sees the church as devoted to a particular God and a particular way of life that follows Jesus and not devoted to the principles of memoryless liberalism. Although the members of the church view themselves as autonomous and free individuals, yet they are bound to God, their shared narrative, and one another. That which is fundamental to ensuring human agency is not freedom, but narrative. This distinctive narrative embodies the virtues of trust, gratitude, patience, hope, hospitality, and forgiveness and seeks not to control history, but to witness God's rule within history (Logan, 2006: 523-24).

In an attempt to control society and history, Christians had mistakenly accepted liberalism as a social strategy appropriate to the Christian narrative. The result is that Christians have forfeited the moral skills that enable proper decision making regarding the Christian narrative. There is no need for Christians to feel compelled to comport themselves in accordance with the dominant social and political views of justice, success or victory. From Hauerwas' point of view, the preeminent Christian *telos* in history is holiness; the content of which is faithful obedience to the nonviolent politics of Jesus. What the Christian community is to offer is a counter-cultural testimony of hope in a world devoid of transformational hope made manifest through the cross (Logan, 2006: 524).

Hauerwas and conflict

Hauerwas brings his Christian nonviolent political witness into critical conversation with the just war theory. He opposes the just war ethic because it is used to justify Christian loyalty to the order of violence rejected and overcome in Jesus. The just war theory is used as responsible political involvement which becomes a mode of Constantinian accommodation to secular power. Constantinianism for Hauerwas, who agrees with Yoder, is the identification of the church's mission and meaning of history and aligning it with the function of the state in organising a sinful society. Hauerwas is also speculative in the affirmation of just war thinking if, and only if, it is embedded in the common life of Christian discipleship. He is of the opinion that if he were able to force just war thinkers, even those in the church, or the type of communities necessary to sustain the discourse and practices necessary for just war, it would make it increasingly difficult to accuse pacifists of sectarianism and/or hopeless idealists (Werpehowski, 2012: 241-42).

Hauerwas also seeks to engage with the just war theory, assuming that the theory is socially located in the church, so as to undermine it as much as possible, if not entirely. He, as well as Edna MacDonagh, is appealing to abolish war as a legitimate means of resolving political

conflict. Hauerwas' stance is more than a disputation about the logic of a just war, but fundamentally subsidiary to a biblical, historical, and theological account that establishes nonviolence, peaceableness and peace-making as the essence of discipleship in the Christian community (Werpehowski, 2012: 242).

What is at stake is not a lack of courage on the community's behalf. For political virtue theorists, courage is a difficult case especially regarding the justification of self-sacrifice. The challenge philosophical arguments face regarding courage is often characterised by the acknowledgement of the tension between the individual's flourishing and the community's flourishing. For Aquinas, courage is the conception of (self) sacrifice associated with military battle, especially with martyrdom. Therefore within the Christian tradition, courage (martyrdom) is associated with the pursuit of justice (Dunn, 2013: 39).

Both soldiers and nonviolent activists can be considered courageous because of their willingness to take risks on behalf of others. For Hauerwas, courage had three important features, its connection to: first; peace-making and martyrdom, second; right reason and will, third; patient endurance and the identity of the Christian community. Peace-making is emphasised as the preeminent Christian virtue and Hauerwas develops a view of Christian courage that closely follows Aquinas' writings (Dunn, 2013: 39-40).

Final thoughts

Since Hauerwas started writing, he has been concerned with what he calls the 'practical force of Christian convictions.' If his earlier writings appeared to verge on a pragmatist theory of religious language, his later work seeks to uncover what it might mean to be 'evangelically catholic.' It is his goal to recover the sense of social concreteness of Christ's presence, something classic Christianity assumes, but is overshadowed by modernity. The theological concreteness for Hauerwas is framed in an entirely different set of questions. Hauerwas sets his crosshairs on two targets. First; "what he considers the false universalism of modernity." Second; how he sees "modernity's tendency to take metaphysical refuge in individual consciousness or the self" (Mangina, 1999: 283-84).

When Christians allow these modern habits of thought to undermine their basic commitments, theological abstractness occurs. Theological concreteness is achieved when Christians counter the modern claims to drink from their own wells: *this* narrative, *this* community, and *these* ethical and liturgical practices. The countering of modern individualism is by an embodied and unapologetic proclamation of faith. Hauerwas' idea thus can be summed up by his dictum: 'the

church does not have a social ethic, it is a social ethic.' It also functions as a kind of grammatical remark that is designed to undercut the modern assumption that the church's moral life is somewhat coincidental to its existence (Mangina, 1999: 284).

Hauerwas' fundamental stance has him focus much of his attention on the church and matters of Christian formation, e.g. the virtues required for discipleship. The Christian narrative is not merely a formal concept of Hauerwas' work, but rests on a definite Christological foundation.[31] To affirm that God rules from the cross is to emphasize the historic and public dimensions of God's divine action, and to assert that the kingdom takes shape in the realm of the moral life (Mangina, 1999: 285-86).

Although we find ourselves in a violent world, our immediate context, it is not our ultimate context. Because of the resurrection of Jesus, Christians are no longer subject to the cycles of sin, deception and violence. One can only learn the peace of God as far as we allow ourselves to be drawn into Jesus' narrative through participation in the life of the church. Hauerwas agrees with Barth that the church's particularity is an important feature of its serviceability for God's purpose. The church thus functions as a lived narrative because it occupies the social and temporal space created by God, and models the way of life made possible (Mangina, 1999: 287-88).

Conclusion

Hauerwas is well known for his stance on narrative, and an ardent critic of modernity and how it has eroded the basic commitment to narrative. Hauerwas says that narrative seeks to reveal the character of the moral agent. Of this character, agency and peace are central to it. It is the kingdom of peace, initiated by Jesus, which would allow Christian hospitality to flourish. For Hauerwas, our morality is expressed in how we do what we do and this is linked to virtue and agency. Agency, expressed through character and virtue, is to refuse to ignore the moral agent's subjectivity for moral formation. For Hauerwas the church is a model of servant hood expressing its virtue to the world to demonstrate how different it is from the world. This is a community of virtue sustained by the virtues of faith, hope and love.

[31] Mangina does think that Hauerwas' Christology is inadequately developed, yet does not expand on it.

Chapter 4
James Cone

James Cone (1938–2018) was an American theologian born in Arkansas. He was a well-known advocate for black liberation theology as a result of the church teaching him how to deal with the contradictions of life: how to survive during oppression, without losing one's dignity. He completed his PhD dissertation at Garrett Theological Seminary and after that was faced with the contradictions of his education and teaching black students the significance of theological discourse. Cone considered the response of white preachers and theologians to oppression of blacks as insulting, and wrong. He turned to scripture for a response, to try to reclaim agency for blacks, and this is to be found in his first book: *Black Theology and Black Power*.[32] Writing on Black suffering, the oppression of Black people and the history of racism in the church (in a theological context), Cone presents an ideal rhetorical situation that requires, not just a response, but a prophetic one as well.[33] Although Cone does not explicitly state his theological ethic, his ethic can be seen embedded in his work.[34] In response to his work, Cone has been lauded as presenting a stance that removes theology from its stage of irrelevance and abstract theory, making it tangible to the end of black liberation.[35]

A brief backdrop on black theology

A compelling appdach to social transformation started gaining traction in the late 1800s and early 1900s namely the social gospel. This activist hermeneutic of the gospel hit the church agendas with people such as Walter Rausenchbush.[36] He urged the church to apply their faith so as to alleviate poverty. Other religious leaders saw the industrialisation, which started in the twentieth century, as a blessing, but at a cost. It promoted wealth and stability for America, but only a small number of people were going to benefit from its capitalistic boom. In 1967 the 'Black Manifesto' was drawn up and it sparked a great deal of conversation due to its controversial content. It was constructed in the context of the Black Economic Development Conference. It critiqued "the historically documented oppressive behaviour of Europeans" and called on blacks to recognise themselves as associated with Africa. It called for an end of white

[32] (Cone, 1997b: 1-2, 5-6; Johnson, 2010a: 266)
[33] (Johnson, 2010a: 269)
[34] (Williams, 1972: 483)
[35] (Johnson, 2010a: 267)
[36] Walter Rausenchbush (1861-1918) was an American theologian and Baptist pastor.

exploitation that had violated their bodies, minds as labourers for centuries (Pinn, 2007: 218, 223).

Black theology was a response to slavery, focusing on scripture, aimed at discriminatory practices and laying the burden on the white political establishment with a call for a change in its behaviour, or to face God's wrath when he sees fit. When slavery ended, black theology became more 'professional' with the founding of seminaries in the post-Reconstruction period. The impetus for whites treating blacks as they saw fit was the infamous "Hamitic curse"[37] and the NT Pauline text that admonishes slaves to be obedient to their masters. Since blacks were now theologically educated in seminaries, they were equipped with Western Christian theology, but incorporated a defiance motive. The defiance motive was politically driven, created by themselves: addressing the racial, historical and moral wrongs of the dominant power structure (Clardy, 2011: 207-10).

Ethics

Just as the question of heresy was address by the early church, it has to be addressed in our time, but not to set about a witch-hunt, but for the well-being of the church's life. The emphasis is not merely a theological conceptualisation of Jesus Christ, but something that can be translated into theological praxis; the church being true to its proclamation of living in the world on the basis of what it stands for. Based on this, theology and ethics, although not identical, are closely interrelated: the church's mission is defined by its proclamation, and vice versa (Cone, 1997b: 34). What Christian theology is tasked with is to analyse the meaning of hope in God. This is done in such a way that the oppressed community will risk anything for earthly freedom, a freedom made possible by the resurrection of Jesus. The theological language is then to challenge society's structures for it cannot be separated from the suffering community. This would have far-reaching implications for political, economic and social institutions. These will no longer have claim over human life and the oppressed can then be liberated, free to rebel against all power that threatens human life (Cone, 1986: 4, 3).

Cone (1972: 96) links black eschatology to the certainty of divine liberation from earthly bondage, citing that it provides the best theological foundation for a "truly radical interpretation of the future." Long have American and European theologians discussed humanising the world according to God's promised future. This future is, however, too abstract and unrelated to the

[37] Genesis 9:1-27.

culture and history of black people who have been, and still are, being dehumanised and dehistoricised by white imperialism. Cone believes that the authentic Christian hope should be demarcated by the oppressed's vision of the future and not philosophical abstractions. A hope that includes the resistance of injustice and slavery and a new framework of justice and peace. If theology does not take the hope seriously for those in need of historical liberation, then the gospel, the good news of freedom, will remain irrelevant for the oppressed. Cone notes that white theologians are silent on black liberation, advocating for a theology of modern liberalism that assumes that blacks would rather assimilate the way white people live. These theologians themselves need liberation which would only happen when they face the authenticity of Black Power and what it means for an oppressed people.

Theology's social context is not only evident in the language we use bearing on certain political and social interests, it is also implied in divine revelation. The God of the bible, unlike the Greek gods who are removed from history, is involved in history and his revelation is inseparable from the political and social affairs of Israel. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is not an absolute ethical principle people appeal to for knowledge of good. He is known, and worshipped, as the one who freed Israel from bondage and who raised Jesus from the dead. To speak about this God, theologians must become interested in politics and economics, understanding the there is no form of truth in God if the truth of freedom is not realised for the oppressed of the world (Cone, 1997b: 57). It seems that the nature of the oppressors is that they are not genuinely concerned about *any* oppressed group. It appears that the white rejection of black theology starts from a realisation of the implications of its very name: the rejection of whiteness and unwillingness to assimilate the way of life. Furthermore, black theology shuns all abstract principles that deals with 'right' and 'wrong' courses of action. The only notable principle of black theology is the unqualified commitment to the black community as it seeks to define its existence through God's liberating work in the world (Cone, 1986: 8-9, 11).

This then affirms that black theology will not be led by concepts and ideas that are alien to blacks and conversely, whites encountering black thought will look upon it and judge it to be "irrational." Black theology is also to reject the advice of those who seek to impose limits that society places on them. This fees up blacks to revolt against the societal structures of white social and political power when they affirm their blackness. This is not done because blacks believe they are in it to 'win.' It is done because they have no other recourse (Cone, 1986: 11, 18). Blacks are to adopt this view because liberalism wanted to remove doubt in religion thereby enabling believers to justify all kinds of oppression. The lived experience for blacks

during slavery is that they were encouraged to be obedient because it was "the will of God." Most blacks are not interested, or have not heard about Kant, Aristotle or Descartes and are not concerned with the interrelationship between theology and philosophy. If what is proclaimed is not related to liberation, blacks can reject it. Liberal theologians, although highlighting God's love and neighbourliness, have fallen into the same trap by associating God's love with white experience; not defending the right blacks have to stand up against white racists (Cone, 1986: 33, 88).

Cone's Christian ethic and liberation

Since black liberation theology implies a radical break from the political and social structures and a realignment of black life in light of black power and self-determination, this would expectantly draw questions about the means and methods. A pertinent question would be if violence is the appropriate means for attaining black liberation; how is violence reconciled with Jesus' command to "turn the other cheek" and go the extra mile? Does violence not repudiate the gospel? Cone says that whites are not all that concerned with violence, not unless they are the victims thereof. They are silent when blacks are beaten or shot and seemingly unawares of the brutality committed against the black community. There was virtually no outcry from so called non-violent Christians when blacks were violently enslaved, lynched and 'shoved' into the ghetto, all in the name of democracy and freedom. Violence is a practical question, not primarily a theoretical question and should be viewed contextually as Christian ethics relating to the struggle of liberation in particular (Cone, 1997b: 179-80).

Typically, Christian theology as the question, "[w]ho is God?" and ethics, "[w]hat must we do?" are theoretically separate questions, but practically answering the theological question includes the answer of the ethical regarding human behaviour. This connection is not only found in current theologies of liberation, but in other theologies as well. Why is does not seem as evident is because the point has been obscured by Greek philosophy. This philosophy has permeated Christianity to such a point that it began to make strong claims about the 'universal' nature of their discourses and ended up divorcing theology from its biblical base. On this grounds it became easy to minimise the connection between ethics and theology. What's more, Western theology seldom deals with an ethic of liberation based on the God of freedom. Rather, the status quo is maintained; Greek philosophy and the churches political interests where it receives special favours from the state. God is viewed as static and the political thrust of scripture is overlooked (Cone, 1997b: 180-1).

Cone (1997b: 182-3) notes that Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, even Martin Luther and John Calvin, also perpetuated the status quo. Although they differed on what faith and reason is in theological discourse, they all affirmed that a "slave should not seek to change his civil status through political struggle." The social and political setting has historically determined the Church's ethics. Thinking that this historical determination did not affect the essential truth of church theology is wrong. What is wrong with theological ethics cannot be remedied by a debate of the prescriptive, deliberative and intentional motifs of ethical norms. Neither can it be remedied by "the relative merits of the institutional, operational, and intentional motifs in the implementation of ethical decisions," yet is the latter important to Christian ethics. Cone says that the error needs to be unmasked by analysing the theological origin. One cannot argue that Calvin, Luther, and other prominent theologians, were limited in their time regarding their ethical judgements on oppression. They were ethically wrong because there were theologically in error. They were theologically in error because they failed to listen to scripture; through the eyes of those oppressed politically.

If Luther, Calvin, and other theologians', error was due to the period they lived in, then one would not expect to find similar instances in the present time Cone (1997b: 184-6) continues. Cone is quite critical of Paul Lehmann, a contemporary American theologian. Lehmann notes that there *is* a problem with theological ethics, but does not situate its essential location. Cone notes that Lehmann's chief mistake was to lean excessively on sixteenth-century Protestant reformers as his starting point for his analysis, not taking into account their glaring theological limitation. Where Calvin and Luther did not interpret God in the light of liberation for the oppressed, Lehmann came close to dealing with that issue of liberation for the oppressed: but he would have reached that point if he had listen more to scripture and less to the Reformers. Lehmann did call for a return of theology, and ethics, to a Christological base, but he did not follow through and stops short of noting what is needed to remain faithful to the biblical account God liberating oppressed people from bondage.

Cone on ethics and violence

Black theology has a hermeneutic of suspicion when it comes to those who petition for a universal, ideal humanity. Those who oppress are actually lovers of humanity, even black people because they are able to intellectually categorise blacks as 'humanity.' From this vantage point they are able to participate in civil rights and help the oppressed purely on the bases that they are part of a universal category (Cone, 1986: 90). But they were never oppressed

and never victims of mental and physical dehumanisation. The oppressed thus cannot allow the destruction of humanity as an end in itself. This would be a contradiction of the struggle for freedom. The goal is not to make the oppressors slaves, but a transformation of humanity. Hatred and vengeance thus has no part in the struggle for freedom. Hatred is in fact the denial of freedom, an overthrowing of the struggle for liberation. The ethic of liberation is situated within the context of love, love for all humanity. Yet, the white rhetoric of non-violence and Jesus should not cloud the violence committed against black people (Cone, 1997b: 199).

Cone (1997b: 199-201) continues that violence is not only something that blacks do to whites in an attempt to change the structure of their existence; it is something white people did as they cultivated, and maintained, a society for themselves. The black power, or Black Panther movement, did not spark violence in America. Despite the popular view whites have, America has a long history of violence. Born in a violent revolution in 1776, it has sustained itself by violently eradicating the native Indians and violent enslavement of blacks. As a result white people have a distorted view of violence. Yet Cone contends that the problem of violence is that of a societal structure that is wrought by psychopathic obsessions and delusions: that of racism and hatred. Furthermore, victims of oppression should not rely on oppressors to make the terms of liberation, which is tantamount to stupidity. Nor, Cone adds, can one be non-violent in an unjust society. By taking a non-violent stance one is siding with the values of the oppressors.

Cone (1997b: 204-5) does not agree with idea of violence versus non-violence as not being the issue. What is of importance is a new humanity. He notes that one simply has to ask a critical question; if Jesus committed violence or if violence is theoretically consistent with reconciliation and love. One cannot use Jesus as the absolute ethical guide for this will lead to becoming enslaved to the past, making people slaves to principle and removing risks in ethical decision making. The gospel means liberation. Cone's issue with white theologians is how they use the idea of Jesus as being non-violent as being their starting point for the oppressed to be non-violent. They affirm that Jesus preached love and thus imply, in their preaching, that one has to accept the status quo. The gospel is portrayed as relating to spirituality or eschatological and had nothing to do with a political, revolutionary struggle. The coming kingdom that Jesus preached of was related to a revolutionary usurping of the value system.

On Cone's ethics

Sundiata (1970: 733-5) notes of liberation theology is that it has its roots in political theology and that it is not without ethical significance. There is however no full systematic treatment of this ethics, but it does have its own kind of "ethical sophistication" in light of "its synthesis of critical social theory and praxis-directed theological reflection." Political theology emerged around the mid 1960s in several places.[38] Political theology was known under a few names: theology of hope, theology of the world, theology of revolution and theology of liberation. Political theology is seen to be closer to the revisionist principle: the Frankfurt School of Marxism, rather than classical Marxism; the principle of historical determination. The premise of political theology is that of religious protest: a divine promise of a kingdom of peace that is to evoke a responsive action on behalf of those who are oppressed.

Williams (1972: 483-6) notes that what Cone has not set out to do in his writings is to clarify his theological ethic, however; the significance for ethics can be found embedded in his work. At the time that Cone writings, his notion of God's liberation of the oppressed black man is not based on empirical evidence. For Cone to 'win' is not the correct way to judge God's activity. He likens his views to 'divine revelation' as the means to discern of God's liberating work of the oppressed. Williams uses James Gustafson's model to investigate Cone's stance. Typology A is related to Cone's convictions that are "associated with a disposition for persuasive assertion and revolutionary activity." For someone that does not share Cone's beliefs, this account will not resonate with them. His views are based upon race, scripture and how he sees God's activity. Essentially, one can only accept Cone's evidence once his perspective is accepted. Williams notes that Gustafson believes that one can only appreciate Cone's ethical reasoning when typology B is employed. Authentic Christianity affirms that God liberates all oppressed people, particularly blacks, and this is evident in the exodus right up to the early church around the time of Constantine. The gospel message is expressed in a way that remains true to scripture and tradition.

Cone's views on racism

Virtually all pressing social challenges are predicated on, or exacerbated by, racial bias; Cone has a fundamental challenge. The failure of the church to deal with issue of racial injustice compromises its theology and renders its praxis of justice ineffective. On answering the

[38] These would be in the Second Vatican Council (1965), the World Council of Churches' Conference on Church and Society (1966) and the Conference of Latin American Bishops at Medellin, Columbia (1968).

question ‘what is racism,’ the response would be that racism is morally wrong and being racist is unchristian. Yet given the relevance of the question, few can articulate how they understand it. For most it is articulated as a personal phenomenon which may, or may not include, an institutional element. Cone gives a forthright definition that encapsulates the essence: “a context where color means rejection and humiliation.”[39] Cone is adamant that colour, not ethnicity or social standing, is the real reason why black people are subject to rejection. For Cone, racism is not situated in attitudes, behaviours or policies that categorise people on the basis of colour: it is based on the purpose to subordinate or ostracise a person or group. In a racist society, skin colour is the basis for maintaining social hierarchy (Massingale, 2000: 700-1, 704, 706, 715-6).

Cone speaks of racism as an ‘ethos,’ ethos of a culture, entrenched in the spirit of the age, so deeply embedded in the political, social and economic structures that white people are unable to fully comprehend its destructive nature. He notes that “[r]acism is a cultural phenomenon.” It is something that permeates the collective convictions based on the way humans interpret colour differences. Cone calls racism: ‘the American way.’ Cone’s theology is derived from his interpretation of the Genesis account: God creating humans in his image and commanded to care for creation. Humans have then since deviated from this command and separated themselves from God and redesigned creation to their liking and intentions, wanting to become like the gods.[40] Thus sin is the denial of ones creature status and the attempt to become the Creator. One such demonstration is the desire to make one’s self, or social group, the source of one’s loyalty and redesigning way of life according to one’s own design. Based on this understanding of sin, one can see why Cone’s theological understanding of racism is sinful because subordination, and domination, based on the colour of one’s skin colour is the crux of racism. Cone believes blacks are racist when they ascribe, and cooperate, with the system of white structural advantage and privilege (Massingale, 2000: 717-20).

Massingale (2000: 721-2) notes that Cone is critical of scholars, and himself in his earlier work, of the adherence to moral suasion. Moral suasion is using reasoned arguments and appeals to faith convictions that seeks to point out the inappropriateness of racist attitudes and behaviours within the Christian identity in the hopes that personal conviction will happen that will spark a transformation in society. By his own experience, Cone had dim hopes that this process would be successful and says his expectations were naïve because he had a lack of serious social

[39] Cone, J.H. 1972. *The Spirituals and the Blues*. New York: Orbis Books.
[40] Genesis 3:5.

analysis that took into account the deep-rooted character of American racism. Scholars that still adhere to the construct of moral suasion are blissfully unaware of the ideological tolls used to justify the injustices. Cone believes that it is self-defeating, counterproductive and therefore ineffective to try to eradicate instances of social sin based on an appeal to the individual's conscience. What is needed is an appeal to virtue.

Dunn (2013: 28, 42-3) says that since MacIntyre's influence in the field of virtue, there have been scholars that attempted to develop the political implications of virtue theories more explicitly with a focus on moral context that shapes character. It is quite possible that virtue ethics can provoke, and support, radical politics. It is 'radical' in the sense that it resists the status quo; moreover having serious consequences for liberal views of moral agency and power. One such example is the idea of agency that profoundly shifts the focus from "the ideal moral agent as an autonomous reason-giver to an agent who cultivates virtuous traits through practice of resistance in the context of a particular community." One should ask if radical virtue would undermine democracy. This is where liberation theologians, Cone in particular, finds themselves. However, liberation theologians had drawn attention to the resistance of the oppressed, but have not explicitly developed a theory of virtue. The requirement for justice, and how understanding God's justice when he brings about his kingdom on earth, is what drives their desire for political and social reform. What is needed is a reappraisal of narrative by both the oppressor and oppressed to bring about meaningful change within society because people who occupy the highest ranks in social structures are subject to the greatest moral damage due to the nature of the character traits they have acquired that 'allows' them to dominate those who are less privileged.

Narrative

Cone (1986: 24-6) says that there can be no black theology that does not take the black experience of oppression seriously. This is the starting point of God-talk. Being black will prevent people from turning the gospel into catch phrases. There is no need for introspection to gauge the ego; no time for navel gazing. Blacks have to make decisions for themselves, their identity, and decisions that involve whites. It is at this point that blacks will become aware of self and able to set limits on people's behaviour towards them. Cone (1997b: 9, 47) notes that in order to do theology, the correct questions need to be asked and then the correct sources used for the answers. The right question is: 'what has the bible to do with oppressed and their struggle for liberation?' Failing to use this as the starting point for God-talk will have any

theologian miss the essence of the gospel. The essence of the gospel is liberation from oppression, a liberation from socio-political humiliation to a new freedom in Jesus.

Cone (1986: 89-90) says that according to Sartre,[41] "there is no essence or universal humanity independent of persons in their concreteness of their involvement in the world." People have the ability to define their own being by participating in the world by making decisions that has bearing on them and others. For humans, existence has to precede essence. This means that the quintessential human has to be the starting point for any phenomenological analysis of human existence. But this stance had led Sartre to dent the reality of God. Camus,[42] on the other hand, appealed to the common good value, the value that makes it capable, and hold people responsible, to revolt against oppression. Camus left the door open for the possibility for God which makes his common good approach popular among religionists. Should the oppressed take Christology seriously, then the meaning of anthropology is to be discovered in, and through, the oppressed condition.

Black experience, as a starting point for theology, is deeper than the so-called 'church experience.' It is more than the singing, preaching and praying. The flipside of the black experience is not necessarily to be deemed 'secular.' It is not antireligious, or nonreligious. Black experience is secular only so far as to say that it is earthly and seldom uses Jesus, or God, as symbols for its dreams. But it is sacred because it finds its origin in the same historical community as the church experience and is framed by the people's attempts to live according to their hopes. Central to this hope is truth and it is this encounter of the truth, as it relates to black experience, which allows black theologians to know that they have a responsibility to speak the truth to people. If truth is not identified, it cannot liberate from untruth. Truth is not merely a reflection on theory: it is divine action sustaining human action of liberation. For Cone Jesus is the truth and therefore stands "in judgement over all statements about truth." Truth is not independent from Jesus as it relates to the oppressed; their culture and history (Cone, 1997b: 22, 28, 31).

For Cone (2011: 33-4, 37-8, 44), Niebuhr, who was well known for his realist approach, rejected pacifism, idealism and perfectionism: the notion that people themselves could achieve the standard of love and compassion revealed in Jesus. For Niebuhr love was is the absolute, the transcendent standard that stands as judgement over what people had done in history. The

[41] Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) was a French philosopher.
[42] Albert Camus (1913-1960) was a French philosopher.

tendency for humans to deny sin makes reaching an ethical standard difficult. Niebuhr placed justice, over love, at the heart of Christian social ethics. As a result, he makes it the starting point for Christian realism, the evidence of experience, the readiness to consider all factors, principally those of self-interest and power. This starting point has great significance for the question of race. But Cone says that Niebuhr was blind to the oppression in his own time. His focus on realism and tragedy should have directed his eyes to the oppression in America. He did call racism the cruellest of all human vices, but calls the founding fathers of America, despite them owning slaves, virtuous and honourable men, not villains. This despite his belief that denying anyone church membership based on skin colour was a denial of Christian identity.

How blacks dealt with their social situation

For blacks it was not important to ask if God existed or if divine existence could be rationally demonstrated, nor did they devise various philosophical arguments. God was the point of departure for their faith and therefore divine existence was taken for granted. Slaves thus needed to develop a language appropriate to their social situation; which is why they engaged in narrative: the telling of stories. The form and content of the stories were dialectical: the medium by which truth was communicated, and believed as truth itself. With this medium they created vivid pictures of their past and present, using biblically historic images of how God dealt with the oppressed. Jesus was not abstract, he was the word made flesh came to free people from oppression. Where white preachers, or theologians, would focus on Jesus as the spiritual saviour, delivering people from sin and guild, black people were preachers were historical. If God was able to deliver Israel, then he was able to deliver them from slavery and oppression. The preacher took the biblical account of God's narrative and wove it into the fabric of their lives. This made the theme of liberation, in narrative form, central to black religion (Cone, 1997b: 50-3, 55).

Cone (1997b: 67, 24; 2011: 33, 5-6) notes that the narrative of Jesus was not that about a good man who met a terrible fate, but disclosed the divine plan of salvation. Cone likens the plan of salvation as deliverance from the shackles of human bondage. One such way was through song. Music helped blacks deal with the concreteness of life. Black music is communal; unity music. It has the ability to unite love and hate, joy and sorrow and the hope and despair of the black people; moving people towards liberation. Black music is functional: it is the means by which black existence was defined and created cultural structures for black expression. It is also a

living reality and once understood, one could grasp the contradiction characteristic of black existence. Black music is also theological, speaking of the Spirit that moves people to unity and self-determination.

(Cone, 1997b: 93-6, 98) says that the world is not "reducible to our own subjectivity." Something that is expressed in narrative is indeed embedded in narrative. Narrative is the history of people uniting in a struggle to shape life according to communal held values. Everyone has a story to tell, to say something to themselves, children, or the world about how they live and think. The narrative both articulates and participates in the wonder by moving from nothing to something. But people are not imprisoned within their narrative. When truth is understood as narrative, people are open to accept other people's narrative. Narrative can serve as a check against ideological thinking, particularly from a biblical standpoint. If the dialectic of narrative seeks to be retained by the gospel, then theologians should speak less of philosophical principles and more about concrete events in people's lives. Truth is objective in narrative in the sense that what is held as truth is not derived from human consciousness. It is something that happens to everyone, often against our will. For blacks there is a narrative of being forcibly removed from Africa and despite seeking justice, narrative was structured in a manner that enabled them to survive. Narrative also relates individual stories of triumphs in struggle. There should be no desire to 'prove' one's narrative, but only to bear witness of it and this would make one open to other narratives.

On Cone and black theology

The liberation theology that Cone espouses is situated within the context of Jesus Christ and the narrative of Israel in the Old Testament. Black theology does not differentiate between the reality of Jesus and that of the present world. Jesus' ministry, which included exorcisms, is seen by Cone as a demonstration of the theme of liberation because deliverance can only be made manifest by overcoming evil (Boesak, 2011: 5-6). Not only that, but liberation theology should empower blacks to stop victimising one another: such as black on black crime or proliferating poor self-esteem. Theory and practice should work together to counter the forces of oppression. The church should do liberation theology small scale, starting within the local church (Harris, 1990: np).

Clardy (2011: 205, 04)[43] notes that the decisive assessments of black liberation theology that criticises the supposed inconsistencies in society; the white controlled power structure, has been a crucial component of the black worship experience. Johnson (2010a: 268) notes of Cone that it is not to say that he *was* a prophet, although many do feel that he was, but Cone adopted the *persona* rhetoric strategy to articulate his message. For Johnson the persona is a rhetorical strategy, an assumed character to build authority and entreat the cultural traditions of his audience. A persona has many guises, one of them being that of a prophet and when it functions as such, the speaker seeks to dictate the rhetorical situation.

There is not a single, homogenised expression of black theology. Cone's form of black theology is often considered the most militant. He characterises sin to the white community only. As for blacks, sin is trying to be white, to refuse to accept what you are and thus the loss of identity. For Cone God is black because he loves blacks because they are black. Cone's views of the historical Jesus is that he was a revolutionary. Jesus must have been black because he was poor and oppressed. Jesus clearly chose sides, on the side of the poor against the wealth and the weak against the strong. Black theology in America in not exclusively interested in the black community, it seeks to restructure American society, politics and economics. Black theology is a livewire through ecclesial life; so much so that one of the few theologians who grappled with it, Frederick Herzog, said that the decisive issue is not if God is dead or alive, but if he is black or white (Bosch, 1974: 2-5).

Cone's hermeneutic of liberation

Scott (2011: 150-1) notes that theodicy lays on the margins on God's preference for the oppressed; defending the poor, orphan, widow and alien, showing special concern for the most vulnerable in society. Scott refers to Matthew 25 as proof text for what he calls "an ethic of 'the least of these.'" Christians are to care for the hungry, thirsty, sick, naked, stranger and imprisoned. Jesus said that the relation to people in this condition determines our relation to him. By doing it for the least of these, it gets done unto him. "This provides the ethical paradigm to follow and a spirituality of suffering in solidarity with Christ." Because Jesus was victim of oppression, he is in unity with those who are victimised. Cone (2008: 703) says that no one can escape God's judgement. Those who oppress might live well, for a time, but sooner or later "we reap what we sow." The slaves did not use the term 'heaven' lightly, to describe an

[43] For his work on liberation theology, Cone is considered to be of the prophetic tradition, something Johnson also affirms.

otherworldly place characterised by evangelical Protestantism or current black prosperity preaching. It was used to describe their understanding of hope: a means to express their humanity in a world that made them second class citizens. It was them affirming that they were created for freedom, not slavery.

Slaves attempted to resolve their theological and existential dilemma by turning to two biblical texts: Exodus and Psalm 68:31.[44] The Exodus text was their belief in God liberating the oppressed from oppression and Psalm 68:31 was an "obscure reference to God's promise to redeem Africa." Cone says of Martin Luther King Jr. that he believed there could be no beauty without tragedy, no resurrection without the cross and no liberation without oppression. Blacks would not only liberate themselves from feeling inferior to whites through non-violent suffering, but tear at the conscience of whites to free themselves from their ideas of superiority. King initially rejected the notion of black power because of its undertones of revenge, violence and hate. There could be no healthy community of blacks and whites could be created out of bitterness. Cone continues that blacks have still to deal with white supremacy and it is so pervasive; no black person can escape it. So when black churches are asked to address this, they respond with worn out clichés: "God will make a way," or "all things work out for the good…" As a result, contemporary black preachers are able to give people transcendent entertainment that surpasses Broadway. This is why prosperity preachers are so popular, the likes of T. D. Jakes and Eddie Long (Cone, 2008: 704-6, 710-1).

Clark (2013: 389-90, 377, 382-4) says that the Christian is a double-edged sword in relation to the black experience. It was both a weapon of oppression and a source of resistance. Christian faith, from an Afrocentric liberationist hermeneutic, is understood from the underside. Blacks have used the Christian 'language' and idioms to envisage and accomplish new ways of being human. These ways undermine racial containments. One such example is the passion narrative of Jesus that was read in light of black historical experience. Within the Roman Empire it was a disgrace to die by crucifixion; but through God's action it was turned into the beauty of a new life. The impact liberationist theology has, on its respective community, been likened to the 'second reformation' since the life of Jesus has been translated in the contemporary world through the struggle for freedom. Western Christianity is a danger to the self-determination of blacks. Blacks were converted to Christianity through violence or coercion. The result was that blacks were uprooted from their history and culture. Gayles (2008: 151) notes that the only

[44] Psalm 68:31 "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God."

way to return from the margins of history, culture, literature, economics, or any other part of life is to reaffirm "a centred place within one's own experience."

The impact of racism

Since the establishment black liberation theology, in the context of the Civil Rights movement, it has provided a theological hermeneutic for black people's pursuit of liberation. It recognised and criticised the structures that marginalised and dehumanised black people. Black liberation theology focused on racism as it believed it was the root ideology that legitimised the oppression black people experienced (Phelps, 2000: 673). Because black people are considered the primary objects of racism, and has it appear the racism could be considered largely ecological. However, no one escapes its affects; even if the effects are experienced as forgetfulness, denial, or indifference (Hart, 2012: 99). The role tradition and religion played in black communities is that it has shaped the social thought and moral vision of the black leader's response to racism (Dyson, 1993: 32).

In what seems to be a functioning of the white controlled system in the social sphere, film maker Spike Lee has experienced significant pushback from the industry. If it was really his concern or not, or just seeking to be sensationalist, he ranted at how little black writers there are at white publications. Furthermore, black editors were very upset at white publications with regards to advertising. Black adverts would get a lot less real estate on a page as white ads would (Boyd, 1992: 25). There are more pervasive impacts that Dyson (1993: 44) points out: African American culture and history has been distorted in the education system. Black intellectuals have difficulty securing cultural and financial support to "develop self-sustaining traditions of scholarly investigation and communities of intellectual inquiry," being stigmatised and grossly underfunded. One plausible view is that blacks would excel at nonblack subjects and that black studies are insignificant. Furthermore, there was a significant invasion of white intellectuals in black studies and subsequently black students found it hard to secure appointments.

Phelps (2000: 690) notes that there are three reasons why the church seemingly omits and neglects the pattern of racism as sin. First, the methodological assumptions the church has of moral theology that likens Christian ethics to human ethics. As a result, Christian ethics is formed into an abstract and unhistorical understanding of humanity, and this to such a degree that concrete and particular beliefs have virtually no effect on moral thinking. Second, church ethics and moral theology has failed to engage with blacks about their experience of racism

and thus rendering themselves incapable of producing an ethics of justice that transcends 'enlightened self-interests.' Third, black experience is neglected because the church is characterised as having 'too much fantasy and not enough reverence and repentance.'

History

Cone (1997b: 35, 14, 37, 42; 1986: 2) says that any interpretation of the gospel that is void of any reference to any historical period, that does not proclaim Jesus as the liberator, is heretical. Cone affirms that anyone's social and historical context decides "not only the question we address to God but also the mode or form of the answer given to the question." When God delivered the Israelites from bondage and establishing the covenant on that historical event, we see God as being involved in their history: liberating them from bondage. What humans think about God cannot be separated from their place and time in an indisputable history and culture. God may exist in an unseen realm to humans, but humans are unable to transcend time and space. They are restricted to the specificity of their finite nature. Although contemporary white theologians have accentuated the contingency of faith in history, they have, for the most part, failed at applying it to the colour line. This is because of their conceptual framework that has been formed by white socio-political interests.

The challenge is expressed in their difficulty to fathom the connection between black experiences and black theology. This is so because they fail to "appreciate the dialectical character of theological speech" when it relates to liberation. The dialectical model is frequently used when dealing with the divinity and humanity of Jesus or justification and sanctification. But the dialectical model fails when their constructs of Jesus are applied to the historical present. Jesus was an event of liberation and to have encountered him is to see him in the history of the oppressed. There can therefore be no knowledge of him that is independent of history. Where white preachers would emphasis Jesus as a spiritual saviour, delivering people from sin and guilt, black ministers advocated God as historical: the liberator in history (Cone, 1997b: 32, 51).

Cone (1997b: 58-61) continues: when God freed Israel from oppression, he took Israel's history in hand and gave them a divine future, doing for them what they could not do for themselves. After that God made a covenant with them and this was an invitation to live in a responsible relationship with him. This covenant requires obedience to his will and by accepting the covenant, they could live as his liberated people; becoming the personification of freedom. By

doing theology, on the foundation of the revelation of the God of history, it should involve the politics which takes a stance against the oppressor. Theology of the Exodus-Sinai tradition ceases to be theology if it fails to accept God as indisputably in control of history, justifying the oppressed. What angered God the most was when the prophets affirmed that Israel had broken the first commandment. They failed to recognise God's sovereignty in history and began to trust in their own abilities and political affiliations with other nations.

Because black theology has its emphases on black history, there can be no theological interpretation of God's work as divine activity as being inseparable from black history. Black culture is interrelated to black experience and black history. The black experience is what they feel when trying to carve out a living in a society that dehumanised them. Those experiences are retold in order for the black community to remember them. It is also retold because of the mythological power inherent in the symbols for the revolution against racist oppression (Cone, 1986: 28). Black theology is also eschatological. Cone notes four assertions in relation to this. First: it is "based on historical possibilities." To believe in God's plans for the future is to accept the risk of escape for a slave. Second: when slaves realised their historical possibilities were restricted, they defended their humanity with structures of affirmations. Third: they also affirmed life after death. Heaven was an affirmation of God's sovereign righteousness. Fourth: the most important ingredient in black eschatology was historicity. Despite the seemingly hopeless situation slaves found themselves in and not seeing God's historical evidence of liberating the oppressed, slaves' image of "God's future righteousness was always related to their present existence on earth." Eschatology primarily functioned as a religious perspective that allowed slaves to comprehend that their existence transcended any historical limitation (Cone, 1972: 95).

Liberation is to be understood as not being a human possession, but a divine gift of freedom for those struggling against oppression. Liberation is not a thing, but a project of freedom. The oppressed realises that the fight from liberation is a divine right of creation. Liberation cannot take place without transformation, and this can only happen with a struggle for it. Liberation needs a commitment to revolutionary action against oppression, slavery and injustice. In scripture divine revelation is linked to history and salvation is demarcated as political. "Salvation is a historical event of rescue" because it is cemented into history and is equal with God's righteousness when the oppressed community is freed from bondage (Cone, 1997b: 127, 139-40).

Community

Cone's (1986: 1) definition of theology is equated with a communitarian view. Cone (1997b: 75-6) notes four things of theology. First; Christian theology is intrinsically social and political. Second; it is also prophetic, distinguishing the relativity of language and its impact when it proclaims God's word to the oppressed. Third; theology also cannot ignore tradition, being a means of interpreting the gospel and a way of gaining insight into the past and present. Fourth; theology is about liberating the humiliated and oppressed. And who is this who is oppressed that partakes in Christian theology? Cone (1997a: 63-6) affirms that it is the church, a people called into existence by the power and love of God to be partakers of his radical act of liberating the oppressed. When God chose Israel, he demonstrated his concern for the weak, not the strong. Through the work of Jesus in the New Testament, God establishes the *ekklesia* (congregation) to be his envoy till the second advent of Jesus' coming. Unlike Israel, membership is not limited by ethnicity or political affiliation, but it depends on the person's response in faith. The church is to proclaim Jesus' victory over hostile forces.

Not only does the church proclaim God's liberation, it becomes partakers in his work of liberation. Although a significant battle has been won over racism, the war has not ended. The church has to identify with the oppressed entirely so that they also suffer for similar reasons oppressed people do. The church is also fellowships and does so by establishing, in its own community, what is preaches and hopes to achieve in the world. There needs to be a visible demonstration of what the church stands for (Cone, 1997a: 67, 69-70). This is so because "black thought on Christianity has been influenced by its social context." Their religious concepts had been shaped by their cultural and political existence (Cone, 1997b: 49). Black people did not just wholeheartedly accept the Western interpretation of scriptural language. There was no "I" in black religion, no religious individualism. The "I" in black religion was born in the context of brokenness in the black experience, where the decision to be a slave was forced upon them. The "I" then was both self-affirming and being-in-community; and they are inseparable (Cone, 1972: 61).

Black theology and ideology in the community

Cone (1986: 11-6) speaks of black theology as survival theology. For him it is the condition of the community in which black theology is birthed. He notes three characteristics of the black condition. First: there is a tension between life and death. The community has to focus its

energy on surviving an antagonistic environment. The black community has to work very hard at making a living in a world that dehumanised them. Second: the black community also suffers an identity crisis. One needs to understand what it means to be a person with a shattered, or no past to know what survival is all about. There is thus a concerted attempt to recover the past that was deliberately destroyed by the oppressor. Black theology thus aims to afford a theological dimension for the recovery of black identity. Third: black theology is a hermeneutical expression of a people that were deprived of social and political power. Whites that were poverty stricken were able to transcend the social oppression, but blacks found it virtually impossible to escape the social and financial humiliation of the oppressor. Black theology therefore communicates to blacks that they should focus on their own self-determination.

Without an attempt to delineate black theology, white theologians will be tempted to justify black theology as simply an ideological justification for radical black politics. Although some black theologians will not mind this identification, Cone maintains that the focus of black theology is to point to the divine one who is not restricted by any historical manifestation. Though Cone is critical of Niebuhr, he deems his work as brilliant in *Christ and Culture*. He notes that Niebuhr says of faith in God, humans are incapable of escaping culture. Divine revelation is not identical to culture, we are called to be obedient to God *in* culture. Where Aquinas held the position that Jesus is far above culture, Niebuhr, although he initially was drawn to this position, says that it does not take the historical relativity of thought seriously enough (Cone, 1997b: 77-9).

Cone (1997b: 83-6, 88-90) then deals with the Christ-culture issue by examining the relationship between ideology and the social determination relating to knowledge as each of these relates to biblical revelation. For Cone, ideology is deformed thought. He notes that certain ideas are nothing more than the functioning of the idiosyncratic interest of either an individual or group. For that person, truth is shaped by individual desires. Social determination is not necessarily a distortion when compared to ideology. Social determination relates with the construction of thought. It is the foundation from which categories of thought emerge. When one considers ideology in relation to scripture, one can see how it was used in the social and economic interests of a few. In a complete sense, ideology excludes a priori of the biblical truth. Cones says that Jesus' relation to culture is dependent on the situation, people and time. Thinking biblically is thus thinking in light of liberation. When liberation occurs, the actions of the oppressed become the words and actions of God.

Villa-Vicencio (1997: 248) says that history that theology is about memory, particularly those of the victims. Everyone has a story to tell and when people are no longer interested in listening to other's stories, they become socially self-centred and find ways to destroy other's stories. Phelps (2000: 677-8, 692; Cone, 2008: 702) says that the desire of slaves for community was not destroyed, but strengthened. There was a deep seated longing for family and clan. To fill this void, they carved out an extended family and culture from the diverse African cultures when they formed their new community, merging their knowledge of their cultural history and Western Christianity. This community was not blood relatives, but the idea of black community became the metaphor for community. Black liberation theology that focuses on the community should have five characteristics. First, it needs to suffer with the oppressed. Second, it should proclaim the "kerygma of liberation" to the oppressed. Third, it should join in the liberative struggle against oppressive political, economic and social structures. Four, it should represent, in its own community, what it says and seeks for the world. Five, it should challenge both black and white churches to address the dehumanisation of oppressed people in their respective communities.

Final thoughts

There might be no sufficient intellectual or theological answer for the struggle. The mystery of evil's existence should be met with resistance. Faith is only tangible when it empowers the oppressed to fight. Having hope while being black was not easy. But the faith in God's pending justice was the primary reason slaves could serve and, on occasion, fight back (Cone, 2008: 701, 703-4). This struggle led to the formation of black theology. It was then in 1966, Cone (1977: 147-9) writes, that Black Power was penned and it challenged the church to "move beyond the models of love defined in the context of white religion and theology." The black church was then faced with a dilemma: side with the white church and call Black Power a contradiction to Christian love, or accept it as a socio-political expression of the gospel truth. To reject Black Power was to deny the church's responsibility to empower black people. But locating Black Power in the Christian context was not easy for two reasons. First, by accepting it, it would separate the populous from King Jr. King advocated Christian love and non-violence and this was seen to line up with white theology. Second, black preachers were taught in white seminaries and had, like King, internalised their definition of Christianity. Black Power thus, if accepted as Christian, meant the blacks were to rethink what it means to be black in the world.

Cone (1977: 152-5) affirms that black liberation theology emerged out of, and is accountable to, the black church that has been involved in the historic fight for justice. But Cone's early discussions with young blacks in tertiary institutions leaves many of them surprised that the fight for liberation exists. They then conclude that the church, bar a few, are not involved with liberation but more interested in raising funds for a new church building or the preacher's anniversary. Cone quotes Frantz Fanon: 'if we wish to live up to our people's expectations, we must look beyond European and American capitalism.' Cone agrees King Jr. when he said that if one seeks to make substantial change in the socio-economic structures of people, it requires scientific analysis. This is what King was known for, his social analysis that characterised his civil rights movement. One simply cannot tell people what truth is, there needs to be participation. Liberation cannot be quantified in words, no one can express how people should struggle for it. It is a process that is found and understood within the oppressed community. One should not listen to anyone if they do not take racism seriously.

Cone (2004: 144-6, 149) gives some insights why he feels white theologians ignore racism. It is not a straightforward as there are varying reasons for different people in different parts of the country or world. But he ventures with four insights. First, there is no need for whites to speak about racism. They wield economic, social, political, cultural, intellectual and religious power. Powerful people speak what they see as important. Second, white 'supremacy' stirs up much guilt, and guild is a heavy burden to bear. The wealth of America and Europe was made on the back of black slaves. Third, they do not want to incite black rage. Whites do not mind speaking to blacks, as long as they do not become emotional about the historical hurt experienced while oppressed. Four, whites are not quite prepared to relinquish power freely, not ready for a drastic redistribution of wealth. This also implies that white privilege needs to be dismantled in society, the church and theology.

Conclusion

Cone is considered the grandfather of liberation theology. His work, in response to the oppression and marginalization of black people during the Civil Rights movement, has sparked a new way of doing theology; black theology. It is in direct response to slavery and the church's failure to address the injustices. Liberation theology is eschatological in that it offers a radical interpretation of the future. What Cone seeks is a new humanity, but this is not at the expense of the debate of violence versus non-violence. Jesus himself was a victim of oppression, he is in unison with those being oppressed. In order then for slaves to make sense of their existential

dilemma, they would turn to scripture, believing God would liberate them as he did Israel. Cone believes that through narrative blacks will be able to make decisions for themselves. Not only is the church to preach the message of liberation, it is to actively partake in it.

Chapter 5
A closer look at Cone and Hauerwas

This chapter covers the critiques of Cone's liberation theology and what Hauerwas is criticised for, sectarianism. Liberation theology has been identified by some as being socialist in its nature and application. Socialism is intrinsically Marxist and this ideology has not been successful in any country it had been implemented. Hauerwas is criticised of being a sectarian, the notion that the church has to create its own community and reject the world. This accusation is tabled by Gustafson, because of how he understands Hauerwas' interpretation of theology. He believes that Hauerwas' theology it is purely descriptive and thus an ideology. A brief defence will be given for their views. The second half of this chapter deals with the areas Cone and Hauerwas converge; their thoughts on narrative, community and agency.

A critique of liberation theology

In order to best understand Cone's stance on liberation theology, it would be best to deal with the concept of liberation theology and understand the criticisms it receives. Novak (1986: 106-09) says of liberation theologians that they seek to differentiate their point of view by creating a distinctive category for it, rather than if their assertions are true or valid. Liberation theology does situate itself within narrative and history; conceiving of a story to enact. Liberation theologians start conceiving themselves as oppressed; victims, dominated or oppressed by others, usually a specific class or system. On this grounds liberation theologians create a powerful milieu: they are oppressed and the oppressor are 'others.' Novak questions this idea, calling it divisive. It is merely a means of shifting responsibility? If people are really oppressed, then they need not assume any responsibility for their condition: the oppressor shoulders it. Furthermore: if they are oppressed, then it is their duty to fight the oppressor.

This stance has three consequences. First: people abdicate responsibility for their position. Second: life is reimaged primarily as conflict, division and war. Third: it situates the oppressors vision, historically at least, comparable to Marx or Lenin; the struggle between oppressor and oppressed classes as central to history itself. It is a history of combat, struggle, one class against another. Consequently the basic ethical question is which side you chose: the oppressor or oppressed. What Novak says is on the table here is the Marxist and Christian philosophies of history and liberation theologians has attempted to integrate both. The error here resides in their first claim; declaring themselves as being oppressed. In doing so they have sided with

Marx and Lenin and 'Christianised' them. To bolster their moral claims liberation theologians need a moral conception of their first claim. If their first claim is historic liberation and justice for all, then the description of the initial stages of history is not to be quite expressed as "oppression" (Novak, 1986: 109).

Novak's (1986: 114-15, 117) assessment of the claims for socialism is not for an overhaul of the economic institutions, but what they call a 'new man.' There is a desire for a society that demonstrates caring, compassion, generosity and selflessness. But the problem of socialism is its lack of checks and balances. There is no restraint to selfishness. This selfishness manifests itself in political power: the pursuit of military and bureaucratic power. The danger though is "[p]olitical power is morally far more dangerous than economic power." There is very little market competition in socialism and the consumer has very little choice. Socialism as a *moral ideal* and an *economic institution* causes incoherent idealism that, when put in motion, will shipwreck itself on the rocks of reality; along with all the other socialist experiments. Liberation theologians are willing to overlook the historic failure of the socialist experiments in favour of focussing on, what they believe to be, the real enemy: capitalism. The oppressive economic system of the United States is the primary target.

McGovern (2009: 33, 36) notes that liberation theologians are strongly criticised for the Marxist connotation of praxis and its perceived criteria of truth. Praxis is understood as Christians demonstrating faith, in so much that it must be revealed in the light of the word of God. This approach is inadequate. Some general goals are to be considered, such as political and economic participation as well as self-determination of destiny. It may also involve differing strategies of change, such as armed or non-violent struggle. The main point for liberation theologians though is the notion of doing liberation before doing theology. Liberation theologians see liberation play out in three main stages: seeing, judging and acting. In *seeing* the cause for poverty and oppression is questioned. It first investigates socio-economic poverty, rejecting the claims that poverty is caused by laziness or backwardness. It is understood in the dialectical explanation of the result of capitalism (an economic system) exploiting workers and excludes others from the productive process.

In *judging* it tries to respond to the question: 'what God has to say' about oppression and what can be gleaned from scripture regarding oppression and liberation. How liberation theologians use scripture, their hermeneutic, fails to deal with all the important themes of the bible, nor is the only legitimate way of reading scripture. Its sole focus is the themes more relevant to the

poor. Subsequently it favours certain books of the bible; namely Exodus for the account of Israel's liberation, the prophets for the vindication of the poor, the gospels because of the centrality of Jesus' message of liberation and his actions, Acts for the rendering of the liberated Christian community and Revelation for the symbolic expression of the struggles between the Christian community and the monsters of history. In *acting* it relates to commitment and involvement and leads back to judgement and love; the regeneration of church and transformation of society. This includes a faith that is intrinsically 'political,' but a kind of faith that cannot be reduced to politics because it includes "contemplation and thanksgiving that transcend political realities" (McGovern, 2009: 36-7).

McGovern (2009: 58) summarises the major criticisms to liberation theology as follows. Liberation theology is seen as *reducing faith to politics*; believing that there are no consequences for such a reduction. Although there is some consensus in the belief that God does act in history, there is contention in so far that this formula tends to reduce salvation to an earthly progress, the neglect of eternal life, transcendence and many other areas of personal spiritual growth. Liberation theology also focuses on social sin, not so much personal sin. There is also an uncritical use of Marxist and socialist ideas. Although some would acknowledge, even validate, the Christian intentions of liberation theology, the reliance on Marxist ideas, and support of the socialist model, would lead the faithful down the wrong road. The utopian ideal is the only hope in liberation theology, despite the deficiencies of the theory or the historic failure of the ideology in past and present regimes. The end result of liberation theology seems to be the creation of a separate church. Critics of liberation theology strongly believed that its goal was to create a popular church, separate from the institutional church. This view originates from the stance liberation theology has against the hierarchy: the church authorities who uphold the status quo of the 'oppressive church.'

A Critique of Cone's Understanding of Liberation Theology

Contemporary black religionists categorise black consciousness with a definite theological method. Blacks are inauthentically attracted to white theology, the theology of oppression. Therefore black consciousness nurtures the development of a theology of liberation. Cone does not express the 'why' of black suffering, nor does he relate it with God's will or purpose.[45] Cone is satisfied to lay the burden of guilt at the feet of white racism. Cone's strong claims that

[45] This is not to say that it is God's purpose for someone to suffer oppression. Cone is not clear if God has a hand in the suffering or not. It is not a concept he deals with.

blacks can know God as liberator presumes that God is only on the side of blacks, and this Cone himself has not established (Jones, 1971: 543, 550-52).[46] Roberts (2018: 58) points out how theologians have been weary of criticising Cone. White theologians were generous, if not indifferent to Cone and ignored other black theologians that used Cone's arguments as 'straw men' for their arguments. Black theologians, Roberts says, were very uncritical because they approve of his motif for liberation in his writings. Roberts' first point of contention is Cone's 'autobiographical' accounts in *God of the Oppressed*. He criticises Cone for imbuing his private revelation as if it is the norm for the oppressed community. It is the task of the theologian, Roberts continues, not to dwell on personal experience but interpret the faith of the community. Personal experience is only relevant to "unlock the experience of the community to which he belongs."

Roberts (2018: 59) notes that Cone is also believed to be dogmatic and narrow despite the fact that he claims to 'speak the truth,' which should be renounced by serious scholars. Cone neither lends assistance to sociologists and historians of religion because his approach is too subjective. Cone fits the data he presents into his readymade theological structures. Phelps (2000: 687) notes that black theology is rooted in indigenous art and thought forms of the black community, but Cone lacks "social location as an authentic source for his views."[47] Roberts (2018: 59) also accuses Cone of misappropriating scripture, not allowing the text to speak for itself. Although liberation is a crucial theme in scripture, it is not the only theme. God's judgement in neither reserved for one class of people, it resides on everyone. Roberts says of Cone that he is a weak biblical exegete; deciding beforehand what he wants to find before consulting the text. Judgement is present in the text, but so is mercy. But for Cone the judgement of God is the only message.

Furthermore his interpretation of liberation is 'other-directed.' But the stark reality is that the oppressed target each other because of external oppression. Cone does want the oppressed to instigate their own liberation, but he does not deal sufficiently with the internal dynamics of black on black oppression. Cone's liberation idea is also not applicable in other countries with different structures of oppression (Roberts, 2018: 60). Pato (1997: 41-42) notes Mbiti's critique of Cone, that African theology is distinct and therefore cannot rely on imported theologies. The main points of departure is the religio-cultural context. Black theology is not able to, and never

[46] Cone, according to Bosch, has affirmed that God is black, because God loves blacks (Bosch, 1974: 2-5). Jones has missed this statement of Cone, or Cone made it after Jones wrote his views on him.
[47] Todd (2011: 207) notes that Cone was also accused of using sexist language in his early writings, something he later corrected in his work in 2003.

will become African theology, but will share nothing more than a "coincidental interest in each other."Mbiti says that black theology has mythologised the concept of liberation and does not take into account other important theological issues that are not related to liberation directly.

Mbiti (1974: 41) says that black theology is a painful phenomenon; not because of what it advocates, but because since the pilgrims arrived in the seventeenth century, America has claimed to be a Christian country. Black theology stands as a judgement on Christianity. The ideal would have been that black theology would have no reason to exist, but it was forced to exist due to the particularities in American history. Born from pain and sorrow, it is a cry of protest against oppression that has endured for many decades. It comes as no surprise then that black theology asks for what black Americans should have had from the beginning: justice, equal opportunities in social, political and economic life.

Mbiti (1974: 42) continues that Cone is of the impression that white theology is not Christian theology. The issue of racial colour is not to be found in scripture. He says that Cone's book, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, starts with the assertion Christian theology has everything to do with a theology of liberation and that liberation is the content of theology. Black theology has a strong eschatological stance, but the eschatological hopes not clearly defined. What are the oppressed to gain once liberation is achieved? Black theology does address pertinent themes such as the church, community, the world, violence, ethics and the bible. These are however subservient to the emphasis of liberation.

In defence of liberation theology

Liberation theology seeks to look for revelation anew in four decisive factors in its methodology. First; the experience of reality leads one to suspect the ideologies functioning in society. Second; this suspicion leads to questions and analysis of the complete ideological structure of society, which includes theology. Third; being suspicious of the manner in which the bible has been interpreted, for example only responding to charity and not justice. Fourth; the exegetical suspicion leads one into a new understanding of the message of the bible, that of God being dedicated to; liberating the poor. The criticism lobbied against liberation theology is that it had succumbed to a false ideology, that of Marxism being the primary attraction, or having distorted the teachings of Christianity. Liberation theology's retort is that the church itself is guilty of succumbing to false ideologies when it supports unjust and repressive rulers, or its view that the Christian message is apolitical. While some might have distorted the

message to portray themselves as defenders of Christianity, military rulers or oligarchs, much of the church's teachings have developed unintentionally: reflecting the dominant culture, upholding it as what seems best for the society (McGovern, 2009: 41, 43).

There are three very important issues liberation theology address. First, in the *socio-analytical mediation*; it looks at the causes of poverty and oppression as structural. This exploitive construct is usually the capitalist system and subsequently the position liberation theology takes is to critiquing this ideology in an attempt to draw attention to how the church was historically and socially conditioned. Second, in the *hermeneutical mediation*; salvation is seen as transcendent, the eternal salvation in heaven. Poverty and oppression requires more than a hope for eternity. Liberation theology also questions the church's 'gospel' of individualisation and spiritualisation. The kingdom of God started to be expressed as spiritual development within each person. In this regard, the assumptions and method of European theology is strongly questioned. Third, in the *practical mediation*; questions are raised in respect to expressing one's faith. The church was also guided into the notion that its proper mission is religious, not spiritual. Consequently liberation theology questions the very nature of the church (McGovern, 2009: 43-5).

Cone defends his views

For Cone (1981: 52-53), obedience is central to human liberation: a creative response to God's liberating presence in history, transforming passive belief into vibrant faith. Yet faith is unable to analyse the socio-economic factors of oppression. Faith needs to look to social theory if it seeks to avoid sentimentality or misguided activity. Liberation theology should commit itself to the oppressed and must use what analytic tools are at its disposal to ensure that its labour bears fruit. A common view held within, and outside, of organised churches is that Christianity is more concerned with the spiritual reality, but not the material state of the people. This view upholds the conservatives' position that the church has no role in politics. If faith is no more than the cultural and political interests of the rulers converted into theological categories, then Marx's assertion is correct; that religion is nothing more than the opiate of the people and should be eradicated, along with other legitimising agencies in an oppressive society. But if religion, particularly Christianity, is imaginative and apocalyptic in its vision about transforming society from the starting point of the historically oppressed people; then describing it as a tranquiliser is to fundamentally misunderstand religions essential nature and underlying revolutionary and humanising thrust in society.

What Christianity means is derived from the bottom and not the top of the socio-economic ladder, the holy challenges the legitimacy of the secular structures. The gospel bears an inherent narrative of refusing to accept the status quo. Since Christianity became the state religion during the reign of Constantine, the interpreters of scripture advocated a view of the gospel that alienated the confession of faith from the practice of political justice. This was evident in Augustine's stance on slavery and the sin of the slaves, Luther's stance of disagreeing with the peasant revolt or white American church's endorsement of black slavery. When the gospel is spiritualised to the degree that it draws a distinction, particularly of the economic kind, between those who "have and the have-nots," the dialectical relation between faith and political justice becomes obscured. It is to this cause that liberation theology seeks to speak out for the victims of economic and political injustice signified in racism, classism and sexism (Cone, 1981: 53-4).

Cone (1981: 55, 59-60) notes of liberation theology that it was born in response to the rise of Black Power and black theology was understood to be the theological arm thereof. Cone, and fellow black theologians at the time of Martin Luther King Jr, respected King's nonviolent struggle for justice, but felt that his methods were not radical enough; too dependent on the likelihood of change in the hearts and minds of the white oppressors. Christian faith is to be found in the struggle for justice on behalf of those who are oppressed by the societal structures, standing with the victims who are economically and politically oppressed. For Cone this is practically expressed in praxis, that he notes is philosophically and theologically closely related to the philosophy of Marx. He says that "[p]raxis is that directed activity towards freedom wherein people recognize that truth is not primarily a question of theory, but it is a practical question." Broadly speaking, praxis is associated with the Christian notion of obedience because oppressors do not reorganise societal structures on the basis of the practical implications of faith. Since Marx studied the economic forces at play in society, liberation theologians, as well as feminists, find praxis as a relevant social theory of reality because Cone, and other liberation theologians alike, share the conviction that truth is to be found in the "active transformation of unjust societal structures."

Hopkins (2005: 455) affirms Cone's stance on liberation that Jesus is the means of liberation for the materially poor. Therefore, civic society, educational institutions and ecclesial formations are called by God to attend to the liberation of the marginalised, broken hearted, wounded and oppressed in society; those subject to structural poverty. For Cone, black and African churches are not doing enough in the vocational witness regarding their faith. Cone's

liberation theology, according to Phelps (2000: 673), is a call for the church to be a model pattern of the relationship it seeks to establish in the world.

Cone (1979: 26, 36) responds to Mbiti's critique by drawing a parallel to how African theology has separated from European theology, just as black theology had done. And not only has African theology separated from European theology, it also separated from black theology. Cone and Mbiti had taught a yearlong course on black and African theology and had had many discussions on the subject. Cone however believes that Mbiti misrepresents black theology. According to Cone, his views hampers substantive dialogue and excludes black American theologians from engaging in the development of African theology. Cone also asks the question what right he has to engage in African theology. His concern is that if the question is not faced, the relationship between the two theologies will remain superficial. Cone does not make a distinction on "the black world," he says that no matter where you find yourself, in Africa or America, "the black world is one." This oneness is a common historical narrative to both African and black American. Black Americans had suffered at the hands of white racists and Africans at European colonists.

A Critique of Stanley Hauerwas

Gustafson (1985: 83-85) is arguably Hauerwas' biggest critic because he believes Hauerwas is separating the church from the world, accusing Hauerwas of being a sectarian. Christianity is a religion fraught with an identity crisis as Western culture has many ways of interpreting how things really are. The West has a variety of moralities that are defended in modern ways of understanding the nature of persons and morality itself. Secular cultural conservatives speak worryingly about the drift in traditional values and reminisce of the historic past form of religion. As a result sectarian ethics and theology would become a seductive temptation, providing Christians with a clear uniqueness from other beliefs and moral behaviour. It provides a clear identity, freeing persons from uncertainty and ambiguity; but isolates Christianity from science and culture and restricts Christians from participating in the ambiguities of social and moral life. Gustafson says that he believes "purely descriptive theology becomes sectarian theology, isolated from other scientific endeavours which can rightly be seen to have implications for it."

Doctrine, Gustafson (1985: 86-87) says, is to maintain a characteristic culture and language and to socialise persons into a particular way of living. What doctrine does not do is enter into

dialogue with other ways of viewing the world. Doctrine can thus be viewed as becoming sectarian, also defensive and ultimately become ideology. Gustafson posits that if theology is a product of social construction that is grounded in a community that is history orientated, then he believes theologians would affirm this. The Christian community would contrive the means to "absorb the universe into the biblical world." Theology would then no longer be interested with its object, God, but the continuation of an ideology. Hermeneutics, for Gustafson, is also a contributor to sectarianism. How the text is chosen to be interpreted plays a vital role. Rigorous principles of interpretation can ignore whether the text actually refers to something beyond itself. Bennett (2012: 150) notes the danger of this that it lends itself for a too narrow account of the church, where some could be viewed as 'real Christians' while others are not.

It is for this reason that Gustafson (1985: 88) calls 'narrative theology,' sectarian theology. He (somewhat) singles out Stanley Hauerwas who has had a considerable impact on Christian ethics. Gustafson notes of Hauerwas' views of narrative that we grow up in communities that affords us the ability to share narratives. Gustafson agrees with this, but only partially, in a descriptive sense. Our participation, through narrative, in the community, in this case the church,[48] shapes our characters. Our characters, in turn, find expression in our actions, deeds and how we interpret life. For Hauerwas then, according to Gustafson, Christian morality is not to be found in a concern to be a responsible participant in the ambiguities of public choices. Rather, it is central to its fidelity of the biblical narratives, particularly the gospel narratives. Christian behaviour is to conform to Jesus' narrative and must subsequently be pacifist because Hauerwas reads the gospel narrative as pacifism.

Gustafson (1985: 89-90; Nikolajsen, 2013: 468) also highlights that Hauerwas believes that an attempt to move past the particularistic historic tradition (as being defined by him), to either justify, criticise or alter it, is 'universalism.' Theologians who yield to the sectarian lure assume that the church, the Christian community, is culturally and socially isolated from the broader culture and society where it finds itself. It is somewhat assumed that there can be a Christian tribe whose members are shaped be their religious passion, inner disposition and moral outlook almost exclusively by Christian narrative.

Reynolds (2000: 398-99) sums up Gustafson's claims as follows. First, there is an illusion that the church is sociologically separate from the broader culture it finds itself in. Gustafson

[48] Gustafson is not pleased with Hauerwas' lack of explaining what he believes the church *is*. He thinks Hauerwas is too abstract in his thought.

believes that this views was never historically held by the church and, even having been formed into distinctive biblical way of life, never lost touch with the patterns of life and meaning. Second, Christianity has become a distinct cultural-linguistic enterprise simply because sectarianism mistakenly assumes that knowing, in religious terms, is so radically dissimilar from other ways of knowing. Gustafson might agree with this to an extent, but religious and scientific knowing overlaps sufficiently so as to allow widespread correction and revision across discourses. Third, the church Hauerwas envisions seems to distance itself from constructive dialogue and could end up being a modern form of Gnosticism. God then becomes a tribal deity, only accessible to a small community. Worse yet, Christian ethics, and theology, become embroiled in maintaining faithfulness to the narrative of Jesus over and above providing external justification for that faithfulness.

Hobson (2007: 301, 304) finds Hauerwas' pairing of Aristotle and Yoder and interesting, yet questionable, pairing: a conservative pagan philosopher and a radical pacifist Anabaptist theologian. He suggests that this pairing is "basically incomparable" and that by trying to unite them caused confusion that infected his theology. Hauerwas' pacifism, Hobson believes, is his way to set a firm boundary between the church and the world. What sets the church apart is not just the invisible or spiritual, "because it rejects the essence of human power." The church's pacifism is not a means to rid the world from violence, but a manner in which Christians should live in the world. Since Hauerwas learned his ecclesiology from Yoder, Hobson believes that it is a form of utopian sectarianism. A church society that is to reject the ways of the world to ascertain small scale political perfection. The glaring problem is that there exists no empirical reality which resembles such an account of church. Hobson believes that Hauerwas' utopian sectarianism is sustained by his belief in the doctrine of sanctification. Sanctification is the belief that Christians "are in the process of becoming perfect," able citizens in the kingdom of God.

By this means the church has become its ideal self. Moral perfection is attainable, but only through grace. Hauerwas is thus, according to Hobson, speaking about the church in unrealistic terms. It is God's perfect society, yet he denies that he is engaging in such idealism. Hauerwas does not commend the invisible church, but the actual church: a perfect society as it is intended to be. Hauerwas contends that the church should be its ideal self, and by grace it is. Hobson calls this 'fantasy theology' which is not beneficial to theological clarity. Hauerwas is a preacher of corporate sanctification, but he fails to honestly grapple with the problems of ecclesiology. By being a 'revivalist preacher' Hauerwas disguises himself as a serious

theologian, and draws on the latest philosophical wisdom. Hauerwas' 'preaching' discourse is that of sanctification, essentially exhortation; that the church is to be a pure community, yet he includes what he had gleaned from Aristotle. Hobson claims that Hauerwas' synthesis of Aristotelian ethics an ecclesiology rooted in sanctification is a massive category mistake that muddies the waters of ecclesial reflection (Hobson, 2007: 305-06).

Against the Accusation of Sectarianism

It would be too easy to lambaste Hauerwas as a sectarian Mathewes (2000: 345-46) notes, and yet he might agree with some criticisms, but those who responds to Hauerwas in this way are themselves 'sectarian' by simply 'othering' him is a very similar way he is accused of 'othering' others. Hauerwas' central critique is lobbied against modern religious thought, liberalism or modernity in favour "of a more particularistic stance that is anchored in the particularity and transcendence of the Incarnation." Kenneson (1990: 67) notes that Hauerwas rejects Gustafson's characterisation of his position, the accusation of sectarianism, by admitting that his position is a temptation he hopes people will yield to. Hauerwas does admit that the charge begs the very epistemological and sociological questions at hand, yet appearing to stand above them. In other words, the charge of sectarianism can be interpreted as him being wrong because he does not take responsibility for the world as others do. The charge in fact masks the fact that how the church understands and exercises its responsibility in the world, something Hauerwas wrote at length about.

Hauerwas continues in his defence against Gustafson when he called him 'irresponsible' for wrongly presupposing the he imply Christians should take an all or nothing attitude toward a society. Hauerwas asserts that the issue at hand is how the church can help Christians better understand the positive and negative aspects of the society they find themselves in and guide their subsequent selective participation. This is only possible if the community sustains certain practices that are proficient at throwing into relief aspects of society the community cannot affirm. Hauerwas' articulates his view in this manner; the church is to denounce the state's willingness to resort to violence and can only do so if they embody that virtue which is essential for life and witness to the world; the virtue of peace-making (Kenneson, 1990: 68).

Matthew 18:15-22 would be a helpful passage of scripture to turn to that displays the virtue of peace-making and who Christians believe themselves to be as members of the community that follow Jesus. There is a relational connection between a community called to live in peace as

a forgiven people, and that extent to which it commits itself to truth. This community will certainly stimulate conflict. Hauerwas recognises this tension and says that because they appear irreconcilable is itself indicative of the problem. A portion of the problem is that the notion of peace is infrequently theologically formed, holding the truncated view that the complete absence of conflict is peace. This is a false peace construct of the world which is built on power, rather than truth. Adopting the world's notion of peace will hinder us from recognising that genuine peace-making cannot be separated from speaking the truth. This truth speaking is not directed to the world first, but ourselves (Kenneson, 1990: 68).

The Christian church is to be distinctive in the way in which it responds to politics and public life, withdrawing from 'civil republicanism' when violence has been authorised. Hauerwas supports the Mennonite avoidance of suing in civil law courts. The distinctive holiness of the Christian community is highlighted in Hauerwas' work at every turn, framed in the context of his ecclesiology which is enclosed in his ethics. This distinguishing mark for Hauerwas is the church to be non-violent. His eschatology also bears the same narrative and same inseparable relation to community. Being redeemed, for a Christian, is becoming part of the shared history that God had intended for all of creation by following a way of life inducted by Christ. This then has a Christian live 'out of control' because it is the cross that determines the meaning of history (Hawksley, 2007: 32-33).

The arrival of the kingdom, that Jesus preached, enables and establishes a community of people able to live in peace. Christians are also to learn to see the world eschatologically and live by a different narrative. Therefore: discipleship is dispossession in response to the cross. Jesus, through the cross, conquers the powers of this world and frees us from the lie of the stories we created for ourselves. It is through Christ that God had laid down our weapons before we take them up (Hawksley, 2007: 33, 35).

Since Hauerwas started writing, he has been concerned with what he calls the 'practical force of Christian convictions.' If his earlier writings appeared to verge on a pragmatist theory of religious language, his later work seeks to uncover what it might mean to be 'evangelically catholic.' It is his goal to recover the sense of social concreteness of Christ's presence, something classic Christianity assumes, but is overshadowed by modernity. The theological concreteness for Hauerwas is framed in an entirely different set of questions. Hauerwas sets his crosshairs on two targets. First; "what he considers the false universalism of modernity."

Second; how he sees "modernity's tendency to take metaphysical refuge in individual consciousness or the self" (Mangina, 1999: 283-84).

Theological abstractness arises when Christians permit these secular patterns of thinking to weaken their fundamental commitments. Christians seek biblical concreteness by combating secular claims to drink from their own wells: this narrative, this community, and these ethical and liturgical practices. The articulated and unapologetic statement of faith counters modern individualism. Hauerwas' idea thus can be summed up by his dictum: 'the church does not have a social ethic, it is a social ethic.' It also serves as a kind of grammatical comment designed to undermine the modern that the spiritual life of the church is somewhat coincidental to its existence (Mangina, 1999: 284).

The concreteness from below leads Hauerwas to focus much of his attention on the church and matters of Christian formation, e.g. the virtues obligatory for discipleship. The Christian narrative is not a formal concept of the work of Hauerwas, but is based on a definite Christological foundation.[49] To affirm that God rules from the cross is to stress the historical and public aspects of the divine intervention of God, and to say that the kingdom is taking shape in the domain of moral life. Even though we are in a violent world, it is not our immediate context. Christians are no longer subject to the cycles of sin, deceit, and abuse because of Jesus' resurrection. Only so far as we permit ourselves to be drawn into the story of Christ by involvement in the life of the church can one experience the peace of God. Hauerwas agrees with Barth that the particularity of the church, for the good of Christ, is an important feature of its serviceability. The church therefore acts as a lived narrative because it occupies the social and temporal space created by God and model the way of life that has been made possible (Mangina, 1999: 285-88).

The Social Ethics of Hauerwas and Cone

Hauerwas

Hauerwas believes that the modern post-Kantian conception of ethics has discouraged the possibility in key respects of bearing witness to the gospel. The ethical witness of the church is incommensurable with that tradition and its language once this custom has been developed. Therefore, a rhetorical move is needed to prevent the tradition to impose a limit and distort the

[49] Mangina does think that Hauerwas' Christology is inadequately developed, yet does not expand on it.

witness of the churches, which is why the ' church is a social ethic ' sounds strange. Hauerwas is in agreement with Alasdair MacIntyre that there is no untraditioned ethics – no ethics without a qualifier – yet the methodological claim should be viewed as a strong substantive assumption about the status of churches and the need to act as a locus for ethical reflection. This ethic is not written for everyone, but for a particular people formed by Jesus and Israel's narrative and thus the church's first social ethical task is to be the church. And so it shows the world that it is the world by being the church. “World” here implies everything in all of creation that has made use of their freedom not yet to believe (Gay, 2006: 24-26).

There is no public language for the church, drawing on the Barthian language, without denying that it is called to be. Hauerwas uses rhetorical replacement in which he uses theological language, very often ecclesial, inserted where philosophical language of modernity is typically used. What it means to be ethical is second fiddle to the question of what the church means. Christ is the centre that must guide critical value choices, placing the church axiologically before the world. Theology and ethics are not in binary opposition for Hauerwas, but are running on parallel tracks. Then, by church activities, Christians are taught what is 'moral.‘ We are taught what it means to be forgiven, and this is how the community learns what it means to be sinners (Gay, 2006: 27-29).

Cone

People of colour have a different lived experience than that of whites due to their immediate environment predicated on race. Race is a socio-cultural construct. Historically, white people controlled the movements of people of colour, hindered economic growth and appropriated land and other resources. Whites had the freedom to express themselves in a multitude of ways, least of all live where they want to. People of colour endured struggles of self-determination. Black identity was strengthened by Cone’s work, developing a theology of liberation out of white oppression. Cone notes that theology is not to be considered as a universal language. Theology is a language that is to reflect on goals and aspirations of “a particular people in definite social setting.” Black theology seeks to tear down those structures of white power that encumbered their being and blackness. Black theologians and preachers were to reject the white idea of a long suffering meek Jesus, concentrating on a revolutionary black Christ who preached the gospel to the poor and oppressed (Spencer, 2008: 289, 298). In doing so one sides with the oppressed in the struggle for liberation and imitates the God who has historically made such an identification (Nasuti, 1986: 22).

Cone and Hauerwas' ideas on narrative, community and agency

Narrative

Cone locates his narrative idea with the biblical story of creation. Humans are created in the image of God and instructed to care for, and continue "the divine work of creation through the exercise of dominion and stewardship." But humans rejected this call and separated themselves from God and remade creation, of which society is the product, to their own design. Humans had capitulated to the temptation to be like the gods. For Cone this denial and yielding to the temptation to remake creation is sin. Sin, according to Cone, is a concept that describes the separation from God and instead of avowing their identity in the source of being, humans reject it and seek to be what they are not. It is living a lie, a false sense of importance. This is Cone's basis for his theological condemnation of racism. It is when white people desire to play God in the area of human affairs: particularly in defining black existence in such a way so as to serve their interests. Slavery did not result by the actions of a few individuals, nor upheld by slave owners alone. Slavery was legal, and to so was lynching any disobedient black person with impunity (Massingale, 2000: 718-20).

It is for this reason that Cone expresses his black historical experience as narrative. It is an ecclesial and eschatology proclamation of hope. It is story, expressed as a reflection of past events whether it is real or imaginary. It also affords a new perspective on life and the future and represents the nature of the impermanent human existence. Narrative can be understood as bearing the weight of the past; establishing a unity of past, present and future in the potential for being laid bare in the plot. Black theology then relates the history of a people who survived slavery, discrimination and oppression. For Cone there is a truth claim in black narrative and this is the experience of the black people in America. Therefore his narration is the retelling of a specific course of events that has meaning to a specific people. This truth is embedded in the history and culture of the black people. A black heritage is seen as being part of every black person; if they are cognisant of it or not. They share a communal destiny, not an individual one; having unrestrained freedom to communicate, not only with those who are alive, but those who in the past and future (Hayes, 2000: 622-24).

Klaasen (2012: 109-10) points out that Hauerwas makes three important claims regarding narrative. First, narrative is epistemical: central to our knowledge of God and ourselves, presenting ourselves as beings and the world as creatures. Second, "narrative is the

characteristic form of our awareness as historical beings that give an account of the relation between temporary discrete realities." The self exists in a living tradition in relation to other selves, a view that is consistent with the dominant African philosophy of community. Third, Israel's and Jesus ' narrative history is the best way to understand the revelation of God. This background is the history of the God-Israel covenant relationship and the relationship between Christ and the church.

Hauerwas reacted to the narrative ambiguity a few years ago. He noticed a poor understanding of what is at stake and the proponents were talking past each other, leaving onlookers perplexed and bemused. Gustafson accused Hauerwas of creating a truncated, religious ethic through his narrative theory that is unable to engage in meaningful discourse with other moral viewpoints. Hauerwas answered that in his search for foundational discourse and common moral values, Gustafson was too quick to abandon the Christian narrative. Gustafson's main concern with Hauerwas is his uncontroversial sociological reality – the product of a communal narrative that shape our character – and lifts it to the normative stage (Reynolds, 2000: 396, 398).

For Gustafson, Hauerwas requires a Christian to ignore contrary evidence from other sources of human knowledge of God and God's purposes and remain faithful to the biblical narrative. For Gustafson, Hauerwas ' uncritical acceptance of the biblical narrative exacerbates the problem. He argues that Hauerwas erects a cultural-linguistic barrier between the biblical world and other texts and thus avoids dialogue needed to arrive at substantive, meaningful warrants of belief. Hauerwas is also accused of sectarianism in such a way that the church of Hauerwas leaves all constructive dialogue and becomes a modern form of Gnosticism (Reynolds, 2000: 398-99).

It is no surprise for Hauerwas that Gustafson misunderstood him as he assumes that Gustafson tends to follow the "dominant philosophical and theological intellectual habits of the last hundred years." Although the present age is marked by ethical diversity, it is less troubling for Hauerwas than Gustafson and, subsequently, less likely to think it can be corrected. Hauerwas believes that Gustafson has moved away from the distinctive Christian narrative in an attempt to overcome diversity and ambiguity through the cultivation of conventional methods of moral judgment. While Gustafson accuses Hauerwas of sectarianism, Hauerwas claims that Gustafson seeks autonomous awareness of an illusionary nature to make possible a shared morality (Reynolds, 2000: 399-400).

Community

How blacks view history is very different than whites. Once blacks were considered outside the realm of humanity, fit for slave labour. Presently, whites are trying to integrate blacks into white society, which is seen as assimilation. Although less offensive language is used, Cone notes that the power balance has not changed. It is still skewed in favour of whites. Whites are neither concerned about violence unless they are the victims. Violence is not the problem of black revolutionaries, but the social structures which appears ordered and respectable from the outside, but are riddled with obsessions and delusions. Black theology challenges these social structures because it cannot be separated from the suffering community (Spencer, 2008: 301-03).

Williams (1972: 484-85, 490) says of Cone that his writings of God's liberation of the poor is not based on any empirical evidence. Cone does note that 'winning,' however that may be interpreted, is not sufficient evidence of God's activity. Despite black radicals being in the minority in the black community, they will stop at nothing, once having tasted freedom, to express their aversion for white power. Cone's convictions rests, not on fact, but the identification of God's intention for humanity, particularly the black community. Authentic Christianity affirms God's liberative work for an oppressed community. Furthermore, black communities have as much claim on the resources of a country, as do any future-orientated white community. Not affording blacks this constitutional right is exclusivism. Failure to do so, the people of that country can be held accountable for failing to respect the black man's rights.

Hauerwas uses the church as his model for a servant community and demonstrates how unique the church is to the world, yet the church is not to leave the world because it is his social duty. The peace and truth policy of the church does not fit the world's agenda; inequality and violence. Therefore, in spite of its disunity and differences, the world may weigh itself against the church because the world does not see it 'is the world ' without the church leading it to the kingdom of God. The church has its shortcomings and is not always what it should be, a peaceful kingdom remembering God's story and sharing it. The world is no different in some respect to the church, created by God, and the church is no different from the world, albeit distorted and in defiance. The church is not to retreat, however, but to participate in the process of witnessing God's kingdom. The community of servants finds its power not in authority, but in servant hood while engaging in the values of the kingdom (Klaasen, 2008: 139-40).

The community of servants who make up the church must also be a people of righteousness guided by the values of belief, hope and love. To Christians or non-Christians, these virtues do not have the same origins. For Christians, the narrative that shapes the culture stems from what they hope in, have faith in, and how their love is informed. Hope for the world means being in charge, it means being out of control for the church. Where the world seeks to manifest its plans through coercion, the church is an eschatological community who trusts that God will be faithful and make the kingdom a reality. Belief in God allows the Christians to see themselves as people rather than creators. The stance creates division between those who rely on moral freedom and the community of Christians. The church should not be associated with secularism. This notion of the religious is so different from the world, for Hauerwas, that the church community has become foreign to the world (Klaasen, 2008: 140, 142).

The measure of the Christian story Kallenberg (2004: 203-05) says, is the ability to be embodied by a community whose characters live faithful to the narrative. Witness, for Hauerwas, is the only way to know the reality of Christian beliefs. Even if there is no faithful living for everyone in that culture, the story is not negated. This applies to the Christian as they claim that they are still in training. In fact, Christians ' litmus test is the ability to deal with unfaithfulness (through forgiveness), which is central to the narrative. It must therefore enable some to live faithfully, or the story would be a fairy-tale. Those who live faithfully are witness to narrative's character shaping reality. Without such witnesses, the good news would be unintelligible. On the other hand, the message's unintelligibility is probable because the church is not the world but the "foundation of truth." Moreover, a witness of the community is the only mode for displaying the truth of the Christians convictions, and it is not self-defeating. The witness' peaceful nature derives from the teachings of Christians beliefs about the very nature of God.

Agency

In 1935 the NAACP and the Communist Party sponsored an anti-lynching art exhibition that featured drawings, sculptures and paintings in response to the Senates refusal to enact a federal law against lynching. The artists, which included whites, Mexicans, Japanese and blacks, displayed their works. The non-black artists focussed predominantly on the horror of lynching, the brutality against black bodies and the racism blacks endured. The black artists' artwork addressed the communities and avoided portraying blacks as being helpless victims. Their focus was black subjectivity; the dignity of blacks and the suffering of the community, alluding

to spiritual agency in paralleling their suffering with Christ's (Cone, 2011: 100). But Cone's (1997a: 63, 65-67, 70) focused his understanding of agency on the role of the church as the agent of God in the world. Just as Israel was called by God to be his agent in the world until Christ's return, the New Testament church continues this role. The church's New Testament role of agency has three roles: *preaching*; to proclaim what God has done through Jesus for man, *service*; to join in Jesus in the work of liberation and *fellowship*; the church is to be in its own community and represent what it seeks to accomplish in the world.

Since economic growth has benefitted previously marginalised people, previously economically and socially disadvantaged people, the conditions of injustices still require Christians to discern new paths for justice in the world. The actions and teaching Christians espouse should unite people in an invisible way that fosters relationships between men and women, and God. Christians should be willing to 'lay down their lives' for the liberation of the oppressed by defending the dignity and rights of the oppressed, restoring their agency (Phelps, 2000: 675), even recognising the agency of those complicit in upholding structural oppression (Johnson, 2010a: 266). This has been Cone's central message since he published *Black Theology and Black Power*; reclaiming the agency of those who have been marginalised and oppressed (Spencer, 2008: 307).

Klaasen (2008: 129-30) notes that Hauerwas placed significant emphasis on agency, but narrative and community are important on character formation. The scope and influence of agency relies on the adequacy of the descriptions we learn from our communities. We obtain freedom within the community but it depends on us being integrated into a narrative of truth. The ability to have character does not require theorization a transcendental freedom, but it requires recognition of our existence's narrative. It is not freedom, but narrative, that ensures the agency. Freedom is often linked to decisions and actions: it means having a choice to be free.

This view does not say anything about factors beyond one's influence. Hauerwas says we turn to the self as an entity as the means to break through such a restriction. Being the ' self ' is what it means having responsible to act on the world, the agent as being responsible for what it does. The agent is the first person and the self is not something other or simpler than the agent. Likewise, character is neither the choices we make nor the actions we take, but through values and desires our agency is shaped. Character, therefore, is the self. Behaviour is not casuistic,

but deliberate and purposeful. Behaviour belongs to the self as it fits into a narrative, not something that I do as if it is outside the self (Klaasen, 2008: 130-31).

Hauerwas does not describe for our highest good, or telos, what we usually mean by happiness. He does not defines actions, desires, vices, behaviors and virtues in relation to each other or models different virtue categories as perfecting our agency in the light of specific challenges. There is no mention of the doctrine of the mean, moral and intellectual virtues, cardinal virtues, theological virtues and so on. What is on the table for him, as mentioned above, is an agency. While Hauerwas wanted to reconsider Protestant theological ethics through the lenses of traditional Catholic virtue and character, Catholic moral theology still needed a tool of virtue and character ethics at the time. While the Protestant and Catholic rejuvenation of an ethic of virtue has gone hand in hand, this does not mean that everyone has done the same (Herdt, 2012: 207-08).

In the hope of finding a way past the stalemate between utilitarians and deontologists, the language of virtues was retrieved within philosophical circles, but it was done with a new interest in moral psychology and emotion. Moral decision making made way for a more holistic reflection on practical reason. For some, interest in virtue ethics went hand in hand with a wider anti-theoretical turn. In comparison to deontological and utilitarian approaches, virtue ethics would not develop a competing agent-cantered moral philosophy, but rather a non-theoretical articulation of common sense. But for Hauerwas, character is both corrective to both Protestant and secular modern ailments. Character makes moral growth talk possible and intelligible, allowing a pronunciation of the autonomous centre of activity capable of self-control and self-mastery. Character is therefore not what we are, of course, but what can decide (Herdt, 2012: 208-09).

Conclusion

In this chapter critiques, and defences, were lobbied at Cone's Marxist thought and the accusation of sectarianism against Hauerwas. Novak equates the underlying ideas of liberation theology, of combat and struggle, to the Marxist ideology. Liberation theology seems to lay the blame, if not all of it, at the feet of capitalism. Cone, however, blames the racist state for the oppression of blacks. Although socialism, in theory, has (what appears to be) attainable goals, it has never practically worked. Despite the accusations, liberation theology is combatant because it was born due to socio-economic and socio-political oppression. For Hauerwas, the

critique of sectarianism appears to be justified by his critics. Gustafson says that Hauerwas aims to create a community distinct from the world, with its own 'tribal god.' Hauerwas, for Gustafson, is not clear on what the church actually is, yet is plays a central role in character formation. But Hauerwas' ideas was never to actually define the church, rather for Christians to emulate Jesus. What is of relevance of the work of Hauerwas and Cone are their views on agency, community and narrative.

Chapter 6
Some markers for understanding narrative, community and agency for South Africa

Introduction

This chapter will review the previous chapters. It will recap the arguments made of modernity, postmodernity and narrative, then recap Hauerwas and Cone's ideas and draw some similarities between their thoughts on narrative, community and agency. This is done so as to contextualise the work of the South African scholars, Nico Koopman and Robert Vosloo. It should be noted that though Hauerwas and Cone are well known, and respected, theologians in their own right. It is never straightforward trying to implement their views into a country that has a markedly different history to that of the USA. Koopman and Vosloo's work is framed quite similarly to that of Hauerwas and Cone, dealing with narrative, community and agency, but their approach to these themes are from a South African perspective. One unique approach by Koopman and Vosloo is that they deal with agency through the lens of reconciliation. I will thus discuss their notion of reconciliation as agency because it is not possible to practice reconciliation without agents.

An overview of the previous chapters

MacIntyre (2016: 117-18) says that for the vast majority of individuals who have been enculturated into modernity, they find their ethical position as normal. Even if they learn that there are, and have been, different kinds of morals from whose perspective moral issues have completely different outcomes, this does not affect their attitude and they remain unaware of what modernity is. Compared to an Aristotelian moral stance, it varies in these three respects. First; for an Aristotelian the purpose of moral conformity, the precepts of morals, is a failure and will obstruct us from achieving our goods qua human beings. These goods are open to questioning for modernity, and this allows individuals to pursue their desires, no matter how perceived, as long as it allows the same freedom for others. However, there is no agreement as to what the good of man is, only recognizing that the human good exists.

Second; for an Aristotelian, the individual goods can only be attained if those goods are what the others have in common and is shared with others, in community and community can stretch as far as fellow citizens. For proponents of modernity, the requirements are abstract and widespread to oversee relationships individuals have, and those universal requirements are detached from the particularities of the individuals' relationships and circumstances. Third; the

Aristotelian views ‘the moral’ of political, legal, economic, social and the aesthetic as being in relation to each other. These are distinct aspects of human behaviour, for the adherents of modernity, and can be regarded as academic disciplines and learned, for the most part, without having any influence on the other. Modernity also treats achievement as successful competition within economic, political, financial or other frameworks in an attempt to satisfy personal needs above others. The consequence is that a lot of our interests, behaviours and aspirations are influenced by society. This allows other types of desires to flourish in our action thus suppressing the desires of others. For two reasons, modernity is insufficient. First, the law has too many loopholes, leaving too many opportunities for aggressively and competitively pursuing satisfaction for desires. Second, even when the law is successful in taming desire (to some degree), it is only so because moral agents conform to the law on the basis of moral consensus of those subject to it (MacIntyre, 2016: 135-36).

Liberalism, an iteration of modernity as Hauerwas (1981: 80-81) puts it, assumes that by making morality a matter of the private sphere should have a sustainable, indirect public impact. This is however not the case because ‘private’ morality has always followed the interests and form of private life. Citizens feel that following their own interests as far as possible is their public duty, curtailed only by the principle that their liberty does not infringe, or arbitrarily restrict, the freedom of others. As a result, the absence of public virtue has been substituted by procedures and competition. People are more focused on "wants" and "needs," but the distinction has been blurred between these two words. As people become dependent on exaggerated forms of protection, trusting a stranger becomes a foreign concept.

Narrative ethics

Phelan (2014: np) says narrative ethics has its origins in ancient Greece, but places the clear demarcation of the start of narrative ethics, as a realm of study, in the 1980s. Narrative ethics is in the juncture between stories, storytelling, and moral values. Moral values, in narrative ethics, are regarded as a vital part of stories and storytelling “because narratives themselves implicitly or explicitly ask the question, ‘How should one think, judge, and act—as author, narrator, character, or audience—for the greater good?’” Stevenson (2016: 2) elaborates, saying that narrative is more than the mere telling of an agent’s story. One could interpret narrative through a “point of view, dialogue, plot, characterization, personal, and communal and historical experience; it might even emerge through silence, through modes of articulation that emphasize the very failure of narrative; and finally, narrative may emerge through thought

and knowledge systems not grounded in rational autonomous subjectivity, or notions of objective reasoning."

Narrative is not void of internal hermeneutical tension. Hauerwas and Frei are among those who can be regarded as pure narratives because they believe that narrative is best suited to theology. They oppose discursive prose and abstract reason and insist that the best was to grasp the Christian faith is to understand the grammatical rules and concept of the text and praxis. Ricoeur and Cone, among others, can be classified as impure narrativists. Although they accept that stories are a critical and overlooked genre essential to religious truth, they reject its unique theological status (Comstock, 1987: 687-88). It would be unacceptable for pure narrativists to describe the Christian narrative using other language games, but impure narrativists would try dialogue with other language games and objectively associated with contemporary philosophers, ethicists, and social scientists ' insights. Pure narrativists also seek to bring theology to cessation once Christianity has been described and explained narratively. Naturally, impurists disagree, citing that Christianity requires metaphysical investigation to determine what Christians believe to be rationally acceptable as well as their ontological and epistemological grounds (van Huyssteen, 1989: 770).

Narrative

The narrative ethics discussion can be viewed as equipment for living. In other words, to express how we think, feel and interact in society, we use narrative as a means. Then we will learn what the best ethical way is to interact with others. Narrative also helps people make sense of their lives through the stories at their disposal and then seeks to tailor their lives to the available stories. (Adams, 2008: 175-76). The task of narrative is not to tell us who is right or wrong. It actively undermines that false trust, which originates in absolutist, objective morality theories, that moral dilemmas seek to be clarify with a single action (Morris, 2001: 64). Narrative is to play a significant function in an ethic of responsibility (Kearney and Williams, 1996: 35).

McCarthy (2003: 67) says that narrative draws from literary criticism and philosophy as tools of assessment and moral understanding. Narrative supplants principlism by providing alternative ways of justifying ethical decisions by focusing on the communicative and relational aspects of moral situations. There are three central views McCarthy highlights. First; every moral situation is distinctive and cannot be repeated and therefore its meaning cannot be derived by appealing to rules or law like universal principles. Second; any decision, or course

of action, is justifiable in relation to the person's life story. Third, any justification for decisions or actions does not seek to unify moral beliefs, but to start a dialogue, to challenge norms and explore the tension between people and shared meanings.

Narrative helps to position religion in human experience and what "faith" means to people when they meet other people and the world. An uncertainty that often arises is whether narrative is the framework through which individuals come to the reality of religion in human experience, or whether it is an opportunity to encounter the divine, to be the bearer of the sacred itself. (Stroup, 1981: 72). This uncertainty is somewhat mitigated by the community's common tradition. "[T]radition can be understood as the furniture of the mind" Lucie-Smith (2007: 3-5) notes, that makes conversation possible; a shared understanding of language and thus the community finds cohesion. It is not supposed to present this ' tradition ' as a set of rules, for if so; the community has an impoverished morality. The message is to be understood by the whole person, by members of a family or culture, and through the liturgy when the community gathers. This leaves the narrative as a starting point and a broader epistemology with a broader base.

Community and narrative

A community is a collection of people who share a common past, who recognize the present events as important for interpreting the present and anticipating the future through a shared hope; expressing their identity through a common narrative (Stroup, 1981: 132). Our identities, as individuals that establish a community, and responsibility for our past actions can only be realised in terms of the narrative unity of our lives. For order for us to understand what people are doing, it is necessary to understand the motives for actions they do. The moral agent's intentions make their behaviour intelligible. Every life is an unfinished narrative and therefore the goal of each person is not fully known in terms of success or failure. Hence the quest of all lives, especially in communal unity, is to seek the good and learn more about it by reflecting on our character as live proceeds. There are virtues that maintain the social framework of the community. This is because the identity of the person is derived from the community in which they were born (Schneewind, 1982: 654, 658-59).

Hauerwas

Koopman (2002b: 33) says of Hauerwas that there is broad consensus regarding his work by those who investigate his ethics. His ethics can be described in three major themes: agency, community and narrative. They also agree on the pattern of development of Hauerwas'

thinking. Hauerwas first focussed on moral agency. This was categorised by beliefs, character and virtue. The second phase focussed on narrative. This allowed Hauerwas to concretise his earlier themes biblically and theologically in less abstract terms. The third phase was that of community, particularly the Christian church. The overwhelming presence of the church in his thinking caused many theologians to believe his ethics to be of an ecclesial nature.

What the story is trying to show is the ethical agent's personality. Personality is not a theoretical concept, but the representation of human action's cumulative origin. As the story unfolds, recurrent trends are found and predictions arise for the recurring ways of acting. Expectations change and how people deal with these develop some of the human spirit's abilities. Character can therefore assume the role of an analytical tool, although it is not an explanatory notion itself (Hauerwas and Burrell, 1977: 178). Klaasen (2012: 109-10) notes of Hauerwas that he makes three important claims regarding narrative. First, narrative is epistemical: fundamental to our knowledge of God and ourselves (our character), showing the self and the world as creatures. Second, "narrative is the characteristic form of our awareness as historical beings that give an account of the relation between temporary discrete realities." The self exists in relation to other selves in a living tradition, a view that is consistent with the dominant African philosophy of community. Third, the narrative history of Israel and Jesus is the best way to understand God's revelation. This narrative is the history of the covenantal relationship between God and the nation Israel and the relationship between Jesus and the church.

Cone

Since the theology of black liberation implies a radical break from the political and social structures and a realignment of black life in the light of black power and self-determination, this would subsequently raise questions about the means and methods. Violence is not only something that blacks do to whites in an attempt to change the nature of their existence; it is something white people cultivated as they have built and sustained a society for themselves. The black power, or Black Panther movement, did not spark violence in America. The black power, or Black Panther movement, has not sparked violence in American. Despite white people's perception, America has a long history of violence. Born in a violent 1776 revolution, it sustained itself by violently eradicating indigenous Indians and violent black enslavement. But violence versus non-violence as not the issue, but a new humanity. One critical question to contemplate; whether Jesus committed violence or whether violence is theoretically consistent with reconciliation and love. One cannot use Jesus as the absolute ethical guide for this will

lead to the enslavement of the past, the slavery of principles and the elimination of risks in ethical decision-making. (Cone, 1997b: 179, 199, 204).

Black experience is secular only to the extent that it is earthly and is rarely uses Jesus, or God, as symbols for its dreams. But it is sacred because it has its roots in the same historical context as the history of the church and is framed by the efforts of the people to live according to their hopes. It is this discovery of reality that is fundamental to this hope, as it applies to black experience, which helps black theologians to realise that they have a responsibility to tell people the truth. When truth is not known, it will not be able to free itself from untruth. Truth is not merely a reflection on theory: it is divine action that upholds the liberative action of the community. For Cone Jesus is the truth and therefore stands "in judgement over all statements about truth." Truth is not independent from Jesus as it relates to the oppressed; their culture and history (Cone, 1997b: 28, 31).

Cone and Hauerwas' points of interaction

Narrative

Both Cone and Hauerwas' notions of narrative, community and agency will be summarised below. Narrative opposes the individualistic nature of modernity and is deeply embedded in the concept of community. Where modernity sought to create, to a large degree, a people without a history, the slave trade that marked America's past accomplished the same thing. It uprooted people from their communities, shipped them to another country, and made them slaves to an oppressive people. Narrative is expressed as the telling of stories. Narrative is the retelling of a specific course of events that has meaning to a specific people. This truth is embedded in the history and culture. Narrative is not logical because seeks to link contingent events. Both Cone and Hauerwas believes that narrative is the history of people that aims to shape life according to communal held values, despite the fact that the communities they have in mind have a very different history. It is knowledge of ourselves that we are historic beings and as a result we shoulder the burden of the past. This knowledge of ourselves makes us aware of our character. In so doing, drawing on our character, we are to seek to unify the past, present and future. There is a connectedness in narrative for narrative is not an individualistic state of being. No one tells themselves stories; stories are shared to other people in the community, even to strangers. For this reason narrative seeks to unify a community, to strengthen the bonds between its members and move it from disunity to unity.

Community

Although Cone rightly affirms that the lived reality of blacks are vastly different from whites, how he and Hauerwas understands history is not dissimilar. Despite this, Hauerwas' notion of community is that of the church. Cone holds that the oppressed community is the black community. This does not necessarily imply the black church community, but the secular community as well; as long as they are oppressed. They both converge on the idea that the historic community, as experienced through church, frame people's hopes to live virtuous lives. Liberalism has had a negative impact on communities, believing that a society can be structured without a narrative that is commonly held. Christian theology is intrinsically communitarian in its orientation and should oppose the individualistic tendencies of modernity. It is to accomplish this by demonstrating to the world what community should be like. It should be hospitable, sharing food with strangers so as to be partakers in God's community of peace and justice. Both Cone and Hauerwas agree that the Christian community, shaped by the true narrative of Israel and Jesus, is the true schooling environment for the virtues. Every community is rooted in a narrative tradition and it is narrative's goal is to tell a story of truth.

Agency

Hauerwas and Cone also focus on agency; Hauerwas more so than Cone. Hauerwas placed significant emphasis on agency as it is can be seen as central to community, through virtue. The extent and power of agency depends on the adequacy of the descriptions we acquire from our communities. Cone, like Hauerwas, turns to scripture to express agency and uses Jesus as an example. Though their interpretations of how Jesus lived is not on par, Hauerwas interpreting the pacifist nature of Jesus and Cone the 'violent,' liberating side of him, yet they do agree that Jesus stands for truth and community. Jesus embodies the agency that the members of the community strive to emulate. This is expressed through narrative. It is through the narrative of Jesus that we, as agents, learn how we should participant in God's community of peace and justice.

One of the biggest challenges South Africa faces is its history. How does one express the narrative, community and agency Cone and Hauerwas speaks of when the history of this country is so different from that of the USA? I will present arguments made by Nico Koopman and Robert Vosloo as some markers to address this issue.

Nico Koopman

Narrative

Koopman (2007b: 178-79) reflects on the work of Archbishop Denis Hurley, a stalwart of the anti-apartheid struggle. In his work he deals with the dignity of millions of South Africans violated under apartheid. The first distortion of dignity is the westernisation and modernisation that tore down indigenous institutions and made longstanding African traditions irrelevant. The result of this is the disintegration of their narrative and the loss of contact to those elements that gave their lives meaning. It was a violation of the dignity of the husband, wife and children during apartheid. Conversely, this has the potential to assist us to understand the concept of human dignity in post-apartheid South Africa. The tragedy of the head of the household, the father during apartheid, was that he, bearing the burden to provide for the family, was not able to do so. The mother, knowing the hurt to her husband's pride for not being able to provide for the family, would have to negate her maternal role and leave home to work, leaving at daybreak and returning after dark.

Koopman (2007b: 178-80) continues that children went to school hungry and, in most cases, where there was a thirst for knowledge, the school fees were too high or accommodation inadequate. Despite the democratic dispensation we currently find ourselves in, millions of South Africans still experience a violation of their dignity. Progress has been made though by the adoption of the Bill of Rights, that ensconces human dignity in three dimensions. First, civil and politically, second, social and economically and third, developmental and ecologically. There remains yet much work to be done regarding the accomplishment of the third dimension. Various rights need to be reviewed and implemented regarding globalisation. Millions of South Africans are still marginalised from the products the modern world produces. Koopman notes that Jürgen Moltmann calls this 'submodernity.' Koopman turns to Karen Lebacqz's understanding of human dignity in relation to the Trinitarian idea. It is, as Koopman calls it, a synthetic dignity.[50] It is a dignity attributed to humans by the love of God which is expressed due to us being created in his image. This image was corrupted due to sin, but through Christ's redemptive work, God has called us back into fellowship with him. Koopman notes that it is this fellowship with him, the relationship based on love, which constitutes the image of God.

[50] A synthetic dignity is Koopman's phrase for what Helmut Thielicke calls "alien dignity."

For Koopman (2007b: 183-84) true humanity is not to be defined as rationality or independence; but the desire and inclination to enter into relationships with others. One does not find a replica of oneself in the relationship with others. Instead it is during the interaction with others, through narrative, that one finds the essence of being. Our existence precipitates from the hands of others and existence is meaningful because others seek to share their existence with me. A proper hermeneutical skill is needed to understand 'the other.' This skill is to enable us to see the other as "one who helps to constitute my essence as a person." Human dignity resides in the determination of the other, not self-determination. It is not a sign of inferiority to realise your dependence on others. Instead, the call to humanity will be recognised.

Community

Koopman (2007a: 296-97, 300-01) expresses Boesak's view of public life as Christ being involved in every aspect thereof. Being a Christian does not rest on church membership, but the acknowledgement of Christ as lord. For Boesak, a black theology, or a black social ethic, that deliberates the seriousness of the oppression and dehumanisation of the black people will heed the lordship of Christ. This acknowledgement of his lordship calls for the participation in God's humanising and liberating activities in the world. This is a call to engage with the dawning of a comprehensive salvation that Boesak calls the "wholeness of life." This will lead to a realisation of the dimension of salvation: to see God's work in all walks of life; through obedience, faithfulness, public theology, social ethics and public witness. Koopman continues with De Gruchy's view of Reformed Theology. Since its inception in the 16 and 17th century, the theology had an inherent liberating essence, and adherents of this theology themselves suffered persecution. The adoption of the Belhar Confession of 1986 was an example of how Reformed Theology responded to the challenge of liberation.

The Belhar Confession, despite being born in an explicit historic situation, the significance of its contents is not limited by that circumstance or specific situation. The Confession gives a sense of identity and clarifies the calling of the church. For decades the church community found its identity in their struggle against apartheid, but now experiences ambiguity about their calling and identity post-apartheid. This is due to the countries transformation to a pluralistic, secular democracy that upholds individualism, freedom of choice and contemporary success

orientated religions.[51] It is thus the role of the Confession to help the community identify and describe the challenges it faces and address it adequately (Koopman, 2002a: 444, 446).

Koopman (2007a: 302-05), speaking of Dirkie Smit, says that his contribution to public theology is highly influential. Koopman lays out three ways the idea of 'public' can be applied in contemporary society. The first is a "sphere of spaces and practices where an informed public opinion about the normative vision for society is formed and sustained." This is the sphere in which critical discussions between equal partners can take place. In this sphere there is freedom from constraint, threat and self-interest. It is also, more importantly, open to difference and otherness. The second understanding is a concern life in general, the world, creation, culture, history, humanity and reality. The church has to respond to issues regarding the state, power, law, justice, politics and "life in society and community in civil society." The third understanding is the presumptions that any and all theological discourses is public in so far as it addresses specific audiences. Theology is done with certain publics in mind. Communities focus on themes that relate to the relationship between theology, organisations, institutions and movements of civil society that, being independent from the state and economy, seeks to enhance the quality of life.

Koopman (2014: 628-29, 633) draws on Dutch theologian, Harry Kuitert's idea, that the church is not the mother of the contents of moral convictions, it serves as protector and nurturer of moral values. It accomplishes this through "meaning-giving frameworks, comprehensive visions of the good life, and the theological motivation for good living." Liberal societies are always subject to immense problems and battle to accomplish a democratic vision. This is so because the system makes people feel under-valued. John Witte, Koopman continues, says that in Germany it is well proclaimed that secularised states live by the requirement that is unable to guarantee itself. In order for secular democracies not to disintegrate, it needs the moral substance of individuals to uphold itself. Koopman is of the opinion that public theology cannot be used to make democracies work. For him it is an attempt to bring the transcendence into the secular. Religion should not be legitimised in public life; but the other way around. The community is not to forget the basic calling to care, and they are well placed to engage in public theories, systems, policies and practices of justice. It is an ethical concept to uphold the rights

[51] I believe Koopman is referring to the Charismatic Church and is being kind by not naming them. Anecdotally the church equates success in life as evidence of God's blessings.

of every person in the community. We can see it in God's justice that refers to the upholding of the rights of the marginalised.

Agency

Koopman (2002a: 447-449) notes that Stanley Hauerwas is of the opinion that Christians are capable of becoming deistic and even agnostic. This is due to Christians being trapped in the liberal way of thinking, thinking about a moral life in which they do not take God seriously and that there is no expectation of God to make a difference. Koopman says that this is perhaps also true for South African Christians. In South African it is not just liberal democracy, individualism and secularism which can bring about deistic or agnostic Christians. There are various crises in South Africa that are contributing factors. Not following God with regards to the commitment for reconciliation, unity and justice, is to make one guilty of idolatry. In fact, anyone that opposes reconciliation, unity and justice, not only dishonours humans, but God. Disunity in South African church exists and this is attributed to sociological factors. Some of these factors are dealing incorrectly with diversity in terms of culture, language, ethnicity and worship style. Koopman notes that many Christians battle to take the question of unity, koinonia and community seriously. The church has become apathetic regarding these issues and lives self-centredly. Modernisation has led to a culture of individualism among believers.

The Belhar Confession addresses the Christological underpinnings of reconciliation between humans and God, as well as among humans. Traditional theology is seen to emphasis the vertical dimension of reconciliation, reconciliation with God; but neglects the horizontal reconciliation, reconciliation between the agents within the community. South Africa ranks high among the countries with the biggest gap between the rich and poor. The church is thus to stand with the poor and marginalised who have been wronged. The church is not to focus on formulating theories of justice, but, as Hauerwas puts it, be fundamentally just people. One stern critique the church has faced post-apartheid is the silencing of the prophetic voice. This might be as a result of the church (still) battling to find its public theological role in a democratic society. The liberal constitution could also be a contributing factor. The church's involvement with government on legislation is continuingly being minimised. Morality is increasingly being privatised. Individuals can now decide for themselves regarding morality once legislated by government. Examples of these ethical issues are abortion, prostitution, pornography and sexual promiscuity in the media. Nevertheless, the Belhar Confession calls

the church to be servants and agents of reconciliation in a broken world (Koopman, 2002a: 451-53).

Robert Vosloo

Narrative

Vosloo (2013b: 4-5) speaks of history as having a close relationship with memory and identity. How and what is remembered does not only say something about the past, but speaks volumes about the one who remembers; as well as about who the person wants to be. Memory is thus an integral part of identity construction. Seeing as to how memory and identity are so intricately intertwined, some important questions for responsible historiography should be raised. Why are certain events and figures of the past remembered and others not? What are those power structures which, possibly, influence historical recollections? Why are certain events commemorated or celebrated? Why do we consider certain rituals and practices as meaningful? Despite there being a close relationship between identity, memory and how the past is represented, and one should guard against its ideological capacity. Traumatic events create scars which influences our willingness to engage with the past (Vosloo, 2014: 77). People scarred by violence and injustice would need to work through the hurt to bring about healing. In some cases the church has stepped in to facilitate this, but other churches have turned away from the hurting. The church, post-apartheid, is to engage with important theological and ethical categories such as confession of guilt and reconciliation (Vosloo, 2013b: 5).

Vosloo (2013b: 5-6) continues that memory has fuelled violence, yet is at the core of reconciliation. Memory has been used to justify crimes, yet is central to the pursuit of justice. Our capacity for both capability and vulnerability of memory, as we attempt to represent the past responsibly, should be acknowledged. Oral history plays an important role in preserving certain traces of the past through the recollection, and interpretation, of narratives and testimonies. Yet we need to be careful as memory has the capacity to betray us, but it does not diminish memories ability to portray what we deem meaningful and significant. Our emphasis on the importance of memory, and need for oral history projects, should be combined with written history as well as other artefacts which preserves traces of the past (Vosloo, 2015: 6). Our representation of the past, as it can so easily happen, can be subject to generalisations and stereotypes which would lead the narrative to be transmitted uncritically as a result of careless

engagement with memories and ignorance. One simply does not 'forget' the past, but there should be an "emphasis on remembering the past justly and responsibly" Vosloo (2013b: 9).

Vosloo (2012: 223-25) says that Ricoeur considers memory as being trustworthy, yet is suspicious of it. It is self-evident that memory can be subject to abuse, this however is not sufficient reason to see memory as a mere repository of history, or to take refuge in historical objectivity. What should be resisted is the over-confident claims of value-free, detached and 'objective' claims of the past, based on an overestimated confidence in the power of primary sources which provides access to the past. Vosloo notes that Ricoeur describes the historiographical operation as comprising of three phases. First, it ranges from eyewitness reports to the establishing of archives. This process aims to establish documentary proof that is derived from the testimony of memories. "Thus history starts with testimony, and testimonies are collected, preserved and consulted in the archive." Second, Ricoeur says is the explanation/understanding phase. He wants to challenge the contrast often created between explanation and understanding. Third, Ricoeur notes that the product of the historian's work is represented in written form. This then makes history "the learned heir of memory," in which narrative plays a crucial role.

Community

When reflecting on the relationship between the doctrine of the Trinity and Christian ethics, Vosloo (2002: 94-95) says that one possible way is to suggest that it serves as a 'model' for Christian life. Although this might seem overtly biblical, Vosloo believes that it would be very problematic to limit moral life to an ethic of imitation. The shortcoming of this view does not seriously consider the discontinuity between our identity and God's identity. What is implied by 'person,' within the Triune life, cannot be uncritically equated to how we understand human personhood. Vosloo posits that imagination is a more relevant bridge between the Triune life and Christian communal morality. Vosloo says that the appeal for the "moral importance of the identity of the moral agent enables a broader understanding of ethics that creates the space to integrate imagination more fully into our understanding of the moral life." This plea, coupled with imagination, has the potential for a more productive linking of ethics and aesthetics.

It has often been said, Vosloo (2003: 64-65) notes, that "people are more immoral today than in the past." This statement he says is highly problematic and due to a selective amnesia with regards to the country's history. Vosloo does affirm that it seems evident that we are experiencing a moral crisis due to changing cultural situations. Some consider the moral truths

of yesterday meaningless, and others find the new moral direction untrustworthy. There appears to be a complete lack of moral consensus and discussion on moral matters and for some people this is frustrating. One plausible response to this is to search for common values that would unify our different moral worlds to facilitate peaceful co-existence. This call for moral unification sounds much like the Enlightenment, based political and ethical theories which seeks some form of universal morality that has its grounding in liberal democracy. This is not without its criticisms by those who believe that such a morality is not as narrative, or tradition free as frequently implied. It is the case though that people seldom speak of the universal moral language. Furthermore, the search for common values over emphasises the importance of social arrangements and neglects "the importance of the role of social agents."

In response to the growing individualistic paradigm, Vosloo (2003: 66) continues, there should be an outcry to return to community. This stance is held by some as an alternative to liberalism. A critique of the modern, isolating, free-floating self is needed. However, the call for a return to community, in response to the moral crisis, is not without its problems. Which community should be returned to? Are we to live in separate communities with conflicting values and goals? Communities have the capability to be stuffy, narrow-minded, sectarian or totalitarian and therefore it "is not just about choosing between the individual and community, but about creative and responsible ways of relating the individual and the community." Vosloo proposes a constructive way of dealing with the challenge posed that does not seek for mere tolerance and peaceful coexistence, or even an abstract plea for community. Vosloo suggests that there should be an ethos of hospitality. He says that without an ethos of hospitality, it will be very difficult to imagine the means to challenge the lack of communication, economic injustices and racism. For Vosloo, hospitality is a precondition for a moral public life. The concept of hospitality is integral to the Christian and Jewish moral tradition. This virtue also features prominently in other religious and moral traditions.

There is a danger to a more moral public life, and this is a mind-set of an enclosed identity. There is an attempt to protect the identity from what is different and other. The ethos of openness is not to be associated with a liberal, idealistic openness towards otherness, in which the other is seen as an "abstract ideal that serves to satisfy our aesthetic appetite for strangers." Such a view fails to take the identity of the other seriously and isolates the self from the other. Therefore the ethos of hospitality has the potential to challenge the notion of enclosed identity, creating a more creative, responsible way of thinking about the relationship between identity and otherness. The ethos of hospitality requires embodiment within space and time. But

considering the structure of society. Time is the one thing many will claim is in short supply. Society is geared to the survival of the fastest and those lacking in it will be marginalised. But hospitality does not only require a rethinking of our view of time, it also includes rethinking spatial categories. It requires making space for the other. There should be no reason to give up on conversation with the other. It is difficult to image a public morality void of "people who are willing to risk it with each other with compassion and hope through conversation" (Vosloo, 2003: 66-70).

Agency

Vosloo (2013a: 299-301) notes that in the philosophical and theological ethics domain, there has been a shift in emphasis from an ethics of doing, the actions being focussed on the actions of the moral agent; to an ethics of being, the emphasis falling on the acting agent. An ethics of being does not ask the question, "What should I do?" but, "Who am I?" The character, vision, passion, intention and virtue of the agent, as well as surrounding community, requires thorough ethical scrutiny. This shift from an ethic of doing to being is likely to rekindle the age-old tradition that links morality to a virtuous life.[52] Vosloo affirms that virtue has not been given its rightful place in contemporary ethical theory due to the methodological assumptions and influence the Enlightenment had on the ethical paradigm. Religion was seen as a threat due to its emphasis on history and therefore religion and morality were separated. Kant's ethic of obligation was considered to be the dominant ethical framework of modernism. Virtue was labelled as being stuffy, akin to the bourgeoisies and Victorian stuffiness.

There has been, in recent years, a reappraisal of virtue Vosloo (2013a: 302-06) continues. Most notably in the work of Alasdair MacIntyre's most discussed book *After Virtue*. MacIntyre argues that modern people, to a large part, has lost their concept of morality. There was a lack of consensus about moral issues. The reason for this was that the Enlightenment based morality on rationality. Hauerwas also agrees with MacIntyre, and affirms that one cannot separate moral judgements; character, vision and virtue, from the moral agent. This plea to return to virtue is not restricted to MacIntyre and Hauerwas alone. Virtue has surfaced in other disciples, namely philosophical ethics, applied ethics, cultural studies and theology. Virtue is critical of a rigid ethics of obligation. Due to the emphasis of character and virtue of the agent, a position is assumed against the idea of reducing moral life by simply making choices in complex situations. This is not to say that choices are not unimportant, Vosloo continues, but morality

[52] This age-old tradition Vosloo speaks about is the Aristotelian ethics Hauerwas refers to frequently.

has more to do with character and virtue, of the moral agent, than the making of difficult decisions. Virtue ethics, in ethics, also affords the opportunity to consider specific virtues anew, i.e.; hospitality, courage, non-violence etc.

In conclusion

The commonalities of Nico Koopman and Robert Vosloo's ideas of narrative, community and agency I will briefly summarise as follows. Vosloo and Koopman both agree that we find our essence of being when we are in relationship with others. Existence is therefore meaningful because the other seeks to share their existence with us. But our country has a scarred history, people scarred by violence and injustice. These traumatic events has scarred our communities to the extent that people are unwilling to engage with the past. People would still need to work through the hurt of the past. It is this past, the memory of violence, which is at the core of reconciliation. To aid in the process of reconciliation, public theology can be very influential. It allows critical discussion between equal partners and is open to the differences of otherness, encouraging a state to foster growth towards the wholeness of life.

The church should not busy itself with the formulating theories of justice, but to do introspection on an ethic of being; who the church is as an agent, and not what to do. The church has fallen silent in the years since apartheid. The church ought to turn to the Belhar Confession that should point to the identity the church needs to embody to reawaken its prophetic voice. The church is not to fall victim of trying to legitimise religion in public life. It should legitimise public life in its religion, demonstrating hospitality. It is this ethos of hospitality that will assist the church to deal with the diversity of culture, ethnicity and worship style in the church; as well as dealing with a lack of social communication, economic injustices and racism in society. Both Koopman and Vosloo believes that the church is called to be servants and agents of reconciliation in a broken world. What Koopman and Vosloo attests to can also be demonstrated in Klaasen's ideas on open-narrative.

Klaasen (2012: 115) says that in his view that law and principle cannot be rejected from playing a part in moral formation, calling it open-ended narrative. He does uphold that law and principles, or individual rationality, are not sufficient for moral formation, particularly in a pluralistic society. Dialogue is required to settle differences and these differences are to be tolerated. Open-ended narrative permits an interplay between narratives. No narrative is to seek to dominate, but engage critically to form morality. Open-ended narrative would then bear the

following three characteristics. First, in its reflection on moral formation, it has to be critical. This is because since his idea of narrative has an open end, there is opportunity for continuous dialogue and reflection. Second, commonalities with other narratives in any given society should also be pursued. These commonalities provide a normative framework in which moral formation can take place. Third, symbols, and the symboics language that accompanies it, acts as an important link between narratives to create a 'functional whole' (Klaasen and Solomons, 2019: 25)

The Christian narrative, when viewed as open-ended narrative, "places the significant other as constitutive of the identity of selves" Klaasen (2017: 159-62) continues. The other has a quest for life and this quest can be shared symbols and symbolic language, something reason (modernity) has discarded as second order communication. The symbols, accompanied with the symbolic language, connects the people in the community with both the past Israelite communities and the contemporary church. Christian narrative creates the opportunity to transform symbols into meaning making and confronts the church with its mission dei purpose. Open-ended narrative also critically reflects on the experience of the marginalised and poor and aligns itself with the transcendence of Jesus Christ (Klaasen and Solomons, 2019: 28).

Bibliography

Adams, T.E. 2008. A review of narrative ethics. *Qualitative inquiry*, *14*(2), p.175-194.

Anderson, V. 1998. The narrative turn in Christian ethics: A critical appraisal. *American journal of theology & philosophy*, *19*(3), p.293-312.

Ballor, J.J. 2012. Review of "Performing the Faith: Bonhoeffer and the Practice of Nonviolence" by Stanley Hauerwas. *Journal of Markets & Morality*, 8(1), p.122-124.

Bennett, J.M. 2012. Stanley Hauerwas's Influence on Catholic Moral Theology. *Journal of Moral Theology*, *1*(1). p148-169.

Blackburn, S. 2001. *Ethics: A very short introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Boesak, A.A. 2011. The divine favour of the unworthy: When the Fatherless Son meets the Black Messiah. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, *67*(1), p.1-9.

Bosch, D.J. 1974. Currents and Crosscurrents in South African Black Theology. *Journal of Religion in Africa*, p.1-22.

Boyd, H. 1993. 1992: Year of the X. *The Black Scholar*, *23*(1), p.22-26.

Clardy, B.K. 2011. Deconstructing a theology of defiance: Black preaching and the politics of racial identity. *Journal of Church and State*, *53*(2), p.203-221.

Clark, A. 2013. Honoring the ancestors: Toward an Afrocentric theology of liberation. *Journal of Black Studies*, *44*(4), p.376-394.

Comstock, G.L. 1987. Two types of narrative theology. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, *55*(4), p.687-717.

Cone, J. 2004. Theology's great sin: Silence in the face of white supremacy. *Black Theology*, *2*(2), p.139-152.

Cone, J.H. 1972. *The Spirituals and the Blues*. New York: Orbis Books.

Cone, J.H. 1977. Black theology and the black church: Where do we go from here?. *CrossCurrents*, 27(2), p.147-156.

Cone, J.H. 1979. A Black American Looks at African Theology. *Worldview*, *22*(12), p.26-38.

Cone, J.H. 1986. *A Black Theology of Liberation*. New York: Orbis Books.

Cone, J.H. 1997a. *Black Theology & Black Power*. New York: Orbis Books.

Cone, J.H. 1997b. *God of the Oppressed*. New York: Orbis Books.

Cone, J.H. 2008. God and Black suffering: Calling the oppressors to account. *Anglican Theological Review*, *90*(4), p.701-712.

Cone, J.H. 2011. *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*. New York: Orbis Books.

Conradie, E.M. 2013. *South African perspectives on notions and forms of ecumenicity*. Stellenbosch: SUN MeDIA.

Dunn, S. 2013. Virtue Ethics, Social Difference, and the Challenge of an Embodied Politics. *Journal of Religious Ethics*, *41*(1), p.27-49.

Dyson, M.E. 1993. X marks the plots: A critical reading of Malcolm's readers. *Social Text*, (35), p.25-55.

Gay, D.C. 2006. "The Epistemological, Ethical and Political Priority of the Church: The Post Christendom Ecclesiology of Stanley Hauerwas," *A Practical Theology of Church and World: Ecclesiology and Social Vision in 20th Century Scotland*. Ph.D. University of Edinburgh.

Gayles, J. 2008. Anthropology, Afrocentricity, and African American Studies: Toward A Sincere Discipline. *Transforming Anthropology*, *16*(2), p.147-159.

Giedd, N. 2016. Walking With Hauerwas through a Community of Character. [online] Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/26253810/Walking_with_Hauerwas_Through_A_Community_of_Character> [Accessed: 30 November 2016].

Goldberg, M. 2001. *Theology and narrative: A critical introduction*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers.

Grenz, S.J. 1997. *The Moral Quest: Foundations of Christian Ethics*. Illinois: Inter Varsity Press.

Gustafson, J.M. 1985. The Sectarian Temptation: Reflections on Theology, the Church and the University. *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America*.

Harris, J.H. 1990. Practicing liberation in the black church. *Christian Century*, *103*, p.599-602.

Hauerwas, S. 1975. Obligation and virtue once more. *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, 3(1), p.27-44.

Hauerwas, S. 1981. *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

Hauerwas, S. 1983. *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

Hauerwas, S. 1985. The gesture of a truthful story. *Theology Today*, 42(2), p.181-185.

Hauerwas, S. and Burrell, D. 1977. From System to Story: An Alternative Pattern for Rationality in Ethics. In: S. Hauerwas and L.G. Jones, eds. 1997. *Why narrative?: Readings in narrative theology*. Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers. p. 158-90.

Hauerwas, S. and Sherwindt, M. 1982. The Kingdom of God: An Ecclesial Space for Peace. *Word & World*, 2, p.127-136.

Hauerwas, S. and Sider, J.A. 2003. The Distinctiveness of Christian Ethics. *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 5(2), p.225-233.

Hauerwas, S. and Wells, S. 2004. Christian Ethics as Informed Prayer. In: S. Hauerwas and S. Wells, eds. 2004. *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. p.3-12.

Hauerwas, S. and Willimon, W.H. 1989. *Resident aliens: Life in the Christian colony*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Hauerwas, S. and Wood, R. 2006. How the church became invisible: A Christian reading of American literary tradition. *Religion & Literature*, *38*(1), p.61-93.

Hawksley, T.L. 2007. *The ecclesiology of Stanley Hauerwas: resident aliens and die concrete church.* PhD. Durham University.

Hayes, D.L. 2000. James Cone's hermeneutic of language and Black theology. *Theological Studies*, *61*(4), p.609-631.

Healy, N.M. 2014. *Hauerwas: A (Very) Critical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing.

Herdt, J.A. 2012. Hauerwas among the virtues. *Journal of Religious Ethics*, 40(2), p.202-227.

Hobson, T. 2007. Against Hauerwas. *New Blackfriars*, *88*(1015), p.300-312.

Hookway, N. 2013. Emotions, body and self: Critiquing moral decline sociology. *Sociology*, 47(4), p.841-857.

Hopkins, D.N. 2005. Black Theology of Liberation. In: D.F. Ford and R. Muers, ed. 2005. *Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Theology Since 1918*. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing. P. 451-468.

Hull, B.B. and Bold, F. 1989. Towards an economic theory of the church. *International Journal of Social Economics*, *16*(7), p.5-15.

Hunsinger, G. and Placher, W.C. eds. 1993. *Theology and Narrative: Selected Essays – Hans W. Frei*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Ingalls, M. 2011. Singing heaven down to earth: Spiritual journeys, eschatological sounds, and community formation in evangelical conference worship. *Ethnomusicology*, *55*(2), p.255-279.

Johnson, A.E. 2010a. The prophetic persona of James Cone and the rhetorical theology of Black theology. *Black Theology*, *8*(3), p.266-285.

Johnson, H.W. 2010b. Practicing theology on a Sunday morning: Corporate worship as spiritual formation. *Trinity Journal*, *31*(1), p.27-44.

Jones, W. 1971. Theodicy and Methodology in Black Theology: A Critique of Washington, Cone and Cleage. *Harvard Theological Review*, *64*(4), p.541-557.

Kallenberg, B.J. 2004. The Strange New World in the Church. *Journal of Religious Ethics*, 32(1), p.197-218.

Kearney, R. and Williams, J. 1996. Narrative and ethics. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes*, *70*, p.29-61.

Kearney, R. and Williams, J. 1996. Narrative and ethics. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes*, *70*, p.29-61.

Kenneson, P. 2004. Gathering: worship, imagination, and formation. In: S. Hauerwas and S. Wells, eds. 2004. *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics.* Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. p.53-67.

Klaasen, J. 2008. *The interplay between the Christian story and the public story: in search of commonalities for moral formation under democratic rule*. Ph.D. Stellenbosch University.

Klaasen, J. 2012. Open-ended narrative and moral formation. *Acta Theologica*, *32*(2), p.103-117.

Klaasen, J. 2017. Identity and Migration in Post-Apartheid South Africa: The Retelling of the Christian Open-Ended Narrative as Service to the Church and the World. *Diaconia*, *8*(2), p.152-165.

Klaasen, J.S. and Solomons, D. 2019. Nico Botha and Missiology. Quest for Narrative Approach. *Missionalia*, *47*(1), p.18-30.

Koopman, N. 2002a. Christian ethics in post-apartheid South Africa-a Reformed perspective. *Dutch Reformed Theological Journal= Nederduitse Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif*, *43*(3_4), p.443-454.

Koopman, N. 2002b. The role of Pneumatology in the ethics of Stanley Hauerwas. *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa*, *79*(1), p.33-40.

Koopman, N. 2007a. Reformed theology in South Africa: Black? Liberating? Public?. *Journal of Reformed Theology*, *1*(3), p.294-306.

Koopman, N. 2007b. Some theological and anthropological perspectives on human dignity and human rights. *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa*, *95*(1), p.177-185.

Koopman, N. 2014. Theology and the building of civilizing democracy in South Africa. *Dutch Reformed Theological Journal= Nederduitse Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif*, *55*(3_4), p.625-639.

Leatt, A. 2007. Faithfully secular: secularism and South African political life. *Journal for the Study of Religion*, p.29-44.

Logan, J. 2006. Liberalism, race, and Stanley Hauerwas. *CrossCurrents*, *55*(4), p.522-533.

Long, D.S. 2010. *Christian ethics: A very short introduction*. Hampshire: Oxford University Press.

Long, D.S. 2010. *Christian ethics: A very short introduction*. Hampshire: Oxford University Press.

Lucie-Smith, A. 2007. *Narrative Theology and Moral Theology*. Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

MacIntyre, A. 2016. *Ethics in the Conflicts of Modernity: An Essay on Desire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mangina, J.L. 1999. Bearing the marks of Jesus: the church in the economy of salvation in Barth and Hauerwas. *Scottish Journal of Theology, 52*(3), p.269-305.

Massingale, B.N. 2000. James Cone and Recent Catholic Episcopal Teaching on Racism. *Theological Studies, 61*(4), p.700-730.

Mathewes, C.T. 2000. Appreciating Hauerwas: One Hand Clapping. *Anglican Theological Review*, *82*(2), p.343-360.

Mbiti, J. 1974. An African views American black theology. *Worldview*, *17*(8), p.41-44.

McCarthy, J. 2003. Principlism or narrative ethics: must we choose between them?. *Medical Humanities*, *29*(2), p.65-71.

McGovern, A.F. 2009. *Liberation theology and its critics: Toward an assessment*. New York: Orbis.

Morris, D.B. 2001. Narrative, ethics, and pain: Thinking with stories. *Narrative*, *9*(1), p.55-77.

Nasuti, H.P. 1986. Identity, identification, and imitation: The narrative hermeneutics of biblical law. *Journal of Law and Religion*, *4*(1), p.9-23.

Ngong, D.T. 2015. Formed by the village and the church: The reception of Stanley Hauerwas's theological ethics in Africa. *Review & Expositor*, *112*(1), p.92-103.

Nikolajsen, J.B. 2013. Beyond Sectarianism: The Missional Church in a Post-Christendom Society. *Missiology, 41*(4), p.462-475.

Northcott, M.S. 2012. Reading Hauerwas in the Cornbelt: The Demise of the American Dream and the Return of Liturgical Politics. *Journal of Religious Ethics*, 40(2), p.262-280.

Novak, M. 1986. *Will it Liberate? Questions About Liberation Theology*. Lanham: Madison Books.

Oakes, E.T. 1992. Apologetics and the Pathos of Narrative Theology. *The Journal of Religion*, *72*(1), p.37-58.

Ott, D.J. 2012. Toward a Realistic, Public, Christian Pacifism. *American Journal of Theology & Philosophy*, 33(3), p.245-257.

Pato, L.L. 1997. Indigenisation and liberation: A challenge to theology in the southern African context. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, (99), p.40-46.

Phelan, J. 2014. *Narrative ethics*. [online] Available at: <http://www.lhn.uni-hamburg.de/article/narrative-ethics> [Accessed 1 February 2018].

Phelps, J.T. 2000. Communion ecclesiology and Black liberation theology. *Theological Studies*, *61*(4), p.672-699.

Pinn, A.B. 2007. Jesus and justice: An outline of liberation theology within black churches. *CrossCurrents*, p.218-226.

Reno, R.R. 2008. Stanley Hauerwas. In: P. Scott and W.T. Cavanaugh, ed. 2004. *The Blackwell Companion to Political Theology*. Carlton: Blackwell Press. p302-316.

Resane, K.T. 2016. "Ichabod"–The glory has departed: The Metaphor showing the Church's prophetic failure in South Africa. *Pharos Journal of Theology*, 97, p.1-12.

Reynolds, T.P. 2000. A conversation worth having: Hauerwas and Gustafson on substance in theological ethics. *Journal of Religious Ethics*, 28(3), p.395-421.

Roberts Jr, J.D. 2018. A Critique of James H. Cone's God of the Oppressed. *Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center*, *3*(1), p.58-63.

Rossi, P.J. 1979. Narrative, Worship, and Ethics: Empowering Images for the Shape of Christian Moral Life. *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, p.239-248.

Schneewind, J.B. 1982. Virtue, narrative, and community: MacIntyre and morality. *The Journal of Philosophy*, *79*(11), p.653-663.

Scott, M.S.M. 2011. Theodicy at the margins: New trajectories for the problem of evil. *Theology Today*, *68*(2), p.149-152.

Siwa, Z. and Mpumlwana, M. 2017. *A Pastoral Letter to the Congregations From the Leaders of SACC Member Churches Ascension – Eve of Pentecost 2017*. [online] Available at: < http://sacc.org.za/news/pastoral-letter-congregations-leaders-sacc-member-churches-ascension-eve-pentecost-2017-jesus-said-salt-earth-ligh/ > [Accessed 20 August 2017].

Smit, D.J. 1996. Covenant and Ethics? Comments from a South African Perspective. *The Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics*, *16*, p.265-282.

South African Council of Churches. 2015. *Statement From The SACC Following Meeting With President Zuma*. [online] Available at: < http://sacc.org.za/news/statement-sacc-following-meeting-president-zuma/> [Accessed 20 August 2017].

South African Council of Churches. 2016. *A mortgaged state: Trends and patterns, let daylight prevail*. [online] Available at: < http://sacc.org.za/news/mortgaged-state-trends-patterns-let-daylight-prevail/> [Accessed 20 August 2017].

Spencer, M.L. 2008. Environmental racism and black theology: James H. Cone instructs us on whiteness. *U. St. Thomas LJ*, *5*, p.288-311.

Stam, K.J. and Egger, L. 1997. Narration and Life: On the Possibilities of a Narrative Psychology. In: M. Joy, ed. 1997. *Paul Ricoeur and Narrative: Context and Contestation*. Alberta: University of Calgary Press. p. 69-85.

Stevenson, S.A. 2016. Toward a narrative ethics: Indigenous community-based research, the ethics of narrative, and the limits of conventional bioethics. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *22*(5), p.365-376.

Stoicoiu, R.M.M. 2008. Do This In Memory of Me. *New Theology Review: An American Catholic Journal for Ministry*, *21*(1), p.91-93.

Stroup, G.W. 1981. *The Promise of Narrative Theology*. London: SCM Press Ltd.

Sundiata, P.G. 1970. The white reaction to the Black assertion. *The Black Scholar*, *1*(5), p.11-16.

Swartz, S. 2006. A long walk to citizenship: morality, justice and faith in the aftermath of apartheid. *Journal of moral education*, *35*(4), p.551-570.

Todd, N.R. 2011. Community psychology and liberation theologies: Commonalities, collaboration, dilemmas. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, *39*(3), p.200-210.

Van der Walt, B.J. 2005. Growing together in faith-how can it be understood theoretically and be achieved practically?. *Journal for Christian Scholarship= Tydskrif vir Christelike Wetenskap*, *41*(3_4), p.141-168.

van Huyssteen, W. 1989. Narrative theology: An adequate paradigm for theological reflection?. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, *45*(4), p.767-777.

Villa-Vicencio, C. 1997. The burden of moral guilt: Its theological and political implications. *J. Church & St.*, *39*, p.237-252.

Vosloo, R. 2002. The gift of participation: on the triune God and the Christian moral life. *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa*, *79*(1), p.93-103.

Vosloo, R. 2003. Public morality and the need for an ethos of hospitality. *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa*, *82*(1), p.63-71.

Vosloo, R. 2012. 'Memory, History, and Justice: In search of conceptual clarity'. *NGTT| Nederduitse Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif*, *53*(Supp 2), p.215-227.

Vosloo, R. 2013a. Back to virtue? Some remarks on the reappraisal of virtue in ethics. *Scriptura*, 62, p.299-310.

Vosloo, R. 2013b. Remembering the role of the Reformed Churches in the struggle for justice in South Africa (1960-1990): some remarks on the promise and pitfalls of memory and historiography. *NGTT is now Stellenbosch Theological Journal (STJ)*, *54*(3-4), p.1-10.

Vosloo, R. 2014. On historical injustice and the art of forgetting. *Oral History Journal of South Africa*, *2*(2), p.72-84.

Vosloo, R. 2015. Time in our time: On theology and future-oriented memory. *Unpublished inaugural lecture. Stellenbosch*, *5*.

Ward, G. 2006. Narrative and ethics: The structures of believing and the practices of hope. *Literature and Theology*, *20*(4), p.438-461.

Wells, S. 2002. How common worship forms local character. *Studies in Christian Ethics*, *15*(1), p.66-74.

Werpehowski, W. 2012. Talking the walk and walking the talk: Stanley Hauerwas's contribution to theological ethics. *Journal of Religious Ethics*, 40(2), p.228-249.

West, G. 2010. Jesus, Jacob Zuma, and the New Jerusalem: religion in the public realm between Polokwane and the Presidency. *Journal for the Study of Religion*, *23*(1/2), p.43-70.

Williams, P.N. 1972. James Cone and the Problem of a Black Ethic. *Harvard Theological Review*, *65*(4), p.483-494.

Zheng, Q., Luo, Y. and Wang, S.L. 2014. Moral degradation, business ethics, and corporate social responsibility in a transitional economy. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 120(3), p.405-421.