



*W. Coetzer & L.E. Snell*

---

# A PRACTICAL-THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON CORRUPTION: TOWARDS A SOLUTION-BASED APPROACH IN PRACTICE

## ABSTRACT

This article aims to delineate the basis-theoretical and meta-theoretical perspectives on the phenomenon of corruption. It defines solution-based pastoral markers should the research indeed establish a definitive role for pastoral theology in addressing this serious societal ill. Thus it attempts to scrutinize the dynamic factors associated with the phenomenon of corruption in general and as it pertains to South Africa. It also examines the views of both Scripture and related disciplines on corruption, then compare some of the current solutions proposed in the literature on dealing with it. Furthermore, it determines and practically delineate the role and parameters of practical theology in an attempt to address the issue of corruption. Finally, one of the following hypotheses is accepted: Firstly, Practical Theology has a distinct role to conduct in rooting out corruption within society. Secondly, Practical Theology has no defined role in assisting with the eradication of corruption within society.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to Heitink (1999:113) the role of practical theology is to lead the process of renewal in a responsible way from both the perspective of theology and the social sciences. Zerfass (1974) distinguishes between basis theory, meta theory and practice theory. Meta theory provide the introductory scientific points of view which share common ground with other fields of study which are also in the process of examining aspects of the same field of reality (Venter 1996:89).

According to Pieterse (1993:133) basis theory is being fed by interdisciplinary discussions with other theological disciplines and with insights from the related disciplines and with insights from empirical examinations from within the field of practical theology. Meta theory

---

*Prof. W. Coetzer, Faculty of Theology, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa. E-mail: [wentzel7@mweb.co.za](mailto:wentzel7@mweb.co.za) Dr. L.E. Snell, Doctoral Fellow, Faculty of Theology, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa. E-mail: [lutricia@mweb.co.za](mailto:lutricia@mweb.co.za)*

enlightens the basis theory from within the related disciplines. The integration of meta theoretical insights therefore fulfills an important role in the design of a practice theory (Heystek 2000:56).

Against this theoretical background this article aims to focus on both some basis theoretical and meta theoretical perspectives on corruption, with the aim to define some practical theological markers as part of the role of the church and the pastorate to root out corruption within the South African society in the longer term.

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

From within the context of a changing society Practical Theology is called upon to remain dynamically relevant to man within his context and the issues they are confronted with, by pastorally connecting with them within the marketplace.

As a young democracy the South African society is battling many ills, such as soaring poverty, a 50% unemployment rate, a growing black elite divorced from their cultural values of ubuntu, and increased levels of public and private sector corruption exponentially costing rising numbers in government expenditure, despite increased awareness of the phenomenon due to widespread journalistic coverage thereof. Tenderpreneurship has become one of the labels in relation to corruption in South Africa, negatively impacting the heart of the South African economy, due to nepotism prevalent in government funding of projects directed at improving infrastructure, amongst others (Ulimwengu 2012:1-2).

Within this context where boundaries are becoming more blurred and ethical behavior is becoming a relative, intellectualised concept, the question arises whether the church and Practical Theology *per se* has any relevant role to play in assisting with stemming the tide against corruption in South Africa. Corruption continues to permeate individual subconsciousness, workplace dynamics, societal norms and socialization of the maturing youth, who is the lifeblood of the next generation workforce, and it also dictates future economic growth indicators within South Africa.

## 3. GOAL

The goal of this article is to establish the extent to which perspectives from Scripture and the related disciplines, such as political science, the economic management sciences, social psychology, psychiatry and the medical sciences, may contribute to informed insights into the issue of

corruption. A further goal of this article is to examine potential solutions to perhaps enable the stemming of the tide, as well as towards eradicating corruption within the South African society in the longer term. Biblical basis theoretical aspects which will be scrutinized in this article, encompasses the Biblical anthropology of man and the Scripture's views on money. Meta theoretical aspects examined in this article include typifying corruption, some recent metatheoretical research findings related to human behavior and the deep unconscious, and the role of history relating to corruption. In the final analysis conclusions are drawn on the theme of corruption and recommendations are made.

## 4. TERMINOLOGY DEFINED

### 4.1 Towards a definition of corruption

Corruption is defined by Heidenheimer (1970:3-64) as the "destruction or spoiling of anything, especially by disintegration or decomposition with its accompanying unwholesomeness...". Corruption is also "... a making or becoming morally corrupt, a fact or condition of being corrupt; moral deterioration or decay; depravity", as well as "... the perversion of an institution, custom... from its primary purity." Rajivan and Gampat (2009:1) postulates that

- ... corruption generates a sense of injustice and disempowerment
- ... erecting an additional barrier that widens inequality between the more or less privileged.

Corruption includes several behavioral actions: fraud (theft by misrepresentation), money laundering of corporate or private funds, and bribery (payments to benefit from an action or the prevention of private prejudice from a given transaction) (Cavill & Sohail 2007:1).

Makumbe (1999:1, 4-5) regards corruption as the abuse of power. Corruption occur in both democratic, deregulated and regulated, dictatorial societies (Evans 1999:5).

The definition of the United Nations on corruption (UN 2004:24), widely used by Social Scientists and Economists alike, will be used in this paper to explore the phenomenon of corruption. For the purpose of this paper corruption is therefore defined as the misuse of public office (public power, public interest, public authority) for private profit (private benefit, personal gain, family or group benefit) (Senturia 1930-1935:449). This definition is used interchangeably with those of both Heidenheimer (1970), who emphasizes the aspect of moral depravity accompanying and reflecting

corrupt conduct, and Rajivan and Gampat (2009:361-370) who poses the question of corruption perhaps being part of human nature, rendering its eradication to his mind as near impossible.

With reference to the UN's view on corruption as the misuse of power, Lambsdorff (1993:3-64) draws attention to related forms of behaviors, including *bribery* (a specific improper action to gain some benefit), *extortion* (public officials use their power to manipulate citizens to pay for a service they would not usually have to pay for), and *embezzlement* or theft, which is the illegal self-enrichment by a public servant, in the absence of another party.

## 4.2 The Phenomenon of Corruption

### 4.2.1 A Global View

Transparency International (Fukuyama 2005:13) identifies the serious nature of the global phenomenon of corruption from the perspective of an index of 178 countries. In 2010 approximately one third of the countries on a scale from 0 (no corruption) to 10 (total corruption) did not achieve a score of 5.

According to Van Vuuren (2009:3-4) by 2004 the extent of corruption in Africa had amounted to R400 billion, on a global level bribery within corporations had reached R600 billion by 2002, and in 2009 stolen assets in circulation by way of protected tax had reached R7 trillion.

### 4.2.2 A South African perspective

#### 4.2.2.1 Introduction and current prevalence of corruption

Transparency International (Fukuyama 2005:13) shows that South Africa scored only 4.5 on the corruption index scale. Estimated costs related to corruption in South Africa include social grant fraud of R1-2 billion per annum, fraud in the Land Bank totaling R1,1 billion, Fidentia fraud R1,4 billion, with question marks related to figures linked to fraud within the private sector, the arms trade and price fixing on bread.

#### 4.2.2.2 Contributory factors of corruption within the present day South African society

Various contributory factors appear to be at play in corrupt decisions and practices within Africa at large and South Africa specifically.

In an attempt to understand the impact of European civilization on the psyche of the post-colonial African countries, the French psychiatrist Fanon detected unconsciously adopted patterns of the worldviews of the oppressors or colonialists. According to Fanon (as quoted by Philcox, 2008:79) empire and colonialism directly impacts the post-colonial psychological make-up of individuals and groups as well as the political and cultural outlook of liberated countries within Africa, linking the necessary changes directly to the compensation for an intrinsic inferiority complex deep within, at the expense of inherent cultural identity. The solution as proposed by Fanon encompasses the idea of universalism, with the notions of dignity, equality and equity, with humanity's prime task being the preservation of the respect for the basic values that constitute a world of dignity and respect for others (Philcox 2008:79-81).

Makumbe (1999:1) and Cochrane (1999:3) emphasize both the importance of the impact of the more recent, modern day phenomenon of global consumerism trends on the crumbling of value systems as well as moral authority within developing and developed countries as motivational factors in corruption as a phenomenon. The social roots of morality is usually undermined when religion (institutionalized or ad-hoc) is formally privatized to the extent that private morality is being comfortably separated from public morality. Furthermore, Cochrane (1999:5) reiterates the metaphorical reference by Thabo Mbeki (former South African president) to the destructive impact of corruption on the soul of the South African society to emphasize his point.

Evans (1999:5) identifies influential current day factors which create a favorable breeding ground for corruption, including poverty, the overlap of business and politics, and a closed culture within government. However, Van Vuuren (2006:2-4, 21-23) links the current culture of corruption to the colonial rule within South Africa of more than three hundred years as well as the past regime's corruption and theft serving individual interest, at the expense of the majority, along racial lines.

#### **4.2.2.3 Corruption in South Africa: A review of the past and present**

South Africa's history includes colonialism, settler colonialism, racism and Apartheid. British Colonialists and Dutch settlers killed and plundered each other and the inhabitants of the land to reach goals of conquest and domination. Against this backdrop the African National Congress (ANC), who reflected on 100 years as a movement in January 2012, led the struggle towards political liberation of the masses, but once in power became increasingly corrupt in governing conduct (Ulimwengu 2012:1-2).

Williams (2003:42-44) strongly emphasizes the link between the role of colonialism and corruption, as it relates to the types of bureaucracies which developed in the majority of African states. According to Williams colonialism altered the scale of incentives, opportunities and rewards. Disparities in lifestyle incomes, visible in the life of the civil servant's position of privileged access to education, promotion and wealth, stand in stark contrast with the majority in the population living in poverty. The Africanization of the civil service since democratic reforms involved the expanding of the bureaucracy, with the focus centered on power and influence. With such a culture becoming the norm in a government ruled by colonized, oppressed nationals, it is fair to conclude that neither loyalty to the state nor any shared sense of identity and belonging had been cultivated by colonizing powers across generations of imperial rule, having experienced government as distant and impersonal.

The African context seems to provide a pattern of recurring circumstances that appears to invite corrupt behavior. One factor appears to be the so-called "soft state" across Africa, with citizens sharing both a low sense of national interest and of commitment to public service, visible in public service conduct displaying efforts at generating wealth for themselves and their families and friends, while operating on the extremes of unprofessional behavior, inefficiency and incompetence. Inherently the cultural ethic usually favors an obligation to family or friends, rather than civic virtue, rendering the continent and South Africa *per se* an open target and breeding ground for corrupt practices (Mbaku 1998:53).

In an assessment of the scale of crimes of profit within the South African government between 1976 and 1994, Van Vuuren (2006:21) tends to confirm the general observation about colonialism and its consequences in Africa and its aftermath with statements such as "...white supremacy has always been based on greed and corruption", and "...corrupt behavior in South Africa has for centuries (been) perpetrated by individuals within the dominant class..." Van Vuuren (2006:26) furthermore alleged that "...the nexus between private capital and political parties has always been vulnerable to corrupt behavior in South Africa". He illustrates this point by listing various historic moments of such corrupt intent since the 1800's, taking on different masks in changing centuries, for differing and dynamic reasons.

#### 4.2.2.4 The impact of corruption on South Africa

Van Vuuren (2009:5) identifies the following aspects:

- Limitation of service delivery.

- Deepening corrupt elite networks.
- Delayed economic development and consequent growth in unemployment.
- Destabilization of the democracy and institutions.
- Undermined constitutional rights.
- Higher crime rates.
- Political corruption.

#### 4.2.2.5 Views on the role of corruption, morality and religion in South Africa since 1994

In a review on the ANC leadership since the first democratic elections in South Africa, Ulimwengu (2012:1-2) expresses the strongest of attacks on its performance as a far cry from the ideals of its liberation figures to politically, economically and socially free the masses. He states that "... today's ANC is a grouping of shameless nouveaux riches, seeking fabulous wealth through a tenderpreneurship culture...", while its followers still live in poverty.

Since 1994 South Africa is characterized by a plurality of religions, typical of any young and modern democracy, without preference to any particular religious group. However, when religion is regarded within the public sphere as disruptive, archaic and the suggestion is made that it belongs within the realm of private life, history teaches that it leads to the re-evaluation of the practicality of the separation between state and religion. The primary motivation appears to be corruption in the expenditure of state funds and self-enrichment. Thabo Mbeki identified corruption within the South African societal psyche as the hidden power behind the equation of success with wealth as the dominant social value and an entrenched social norm (Cochrane 1999:1).

Since 1994 there appears to have been a growing concern about the decay of the fabric of South African society on the part of its serving presidents, as evident in their respective public addresses.

President Mandela (1999:1) warned against greed amongst government officials. Furthermore, Mandela (2004:1) emphasized the important role of individual morality, and warned against the loss of a humane society. Mandela pled for a transformation (RDP) of the soul. He also called for a separation between church and state, with the state focusing on the social sphere, while the church contributes to the moral and personal spheres within society.

In 1999 president Mbeki emphasized the importance of a national social morality with regard to corruption by quoting from Eccl 2:3-10. Mbeki called for the eradication of unethical conduct, and urged all sectors within society to rebuild value systems (Mbeki 1999:1).

In a 2006 speech Mbeki (Mbeki 2006:1) referred to the Book of Proverbs with reference to just rewards and the refraining from envy regarding allocation, while warning against the corruption within the soul and the suppression of the mass. Mbeki also called for the uplifting of the spiritual dimensions of South Africa's inhabitants.

During 2010 Mbeki reiterated the dangers inherent in the prevalent societal thirst involving wealth as yardstick for success, while hinting at the historically disastrous consequences within capitalist societies regarding the crisis it creates for social cohesion in the long-term. According to Mbeki the logic of God's order is obvious in the portrayal of wisdom (West 2010).

The current leader of South Africa, President Jacob Zuma, does not link the religious with the structural domains, including the economic. Furthermore, he does not support the view of judging social systems as moral versus immoral. In all forms of Africa Christendom the emphasis seems to shift from the other-world to the current world with the assumption of prosperity and wealth being bestowed on the believer now, in the present tense, as reward for suffering and hardships (West 2004:17-18).

## 4.3 Prevention of Corruption

### 4.3.1 Global attempts

International action to root out corruption is supported and strengthened by the stance taken by Transparency International, the World Bank, the European Union, the Council of Europe, and the USA Law on Foreign Corruption Practices. Some Western countries have drawn up legislation on money laundering, and some African countries, including South Africa, Malawi, Zambia, Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya, have put in place anti-corruption units (Evans 1999:5,15,20).

International treaties signed between 1999 and 2003 aimed at maximizing the effectiveness of legislation, include the following (Van Vuuren 2009:7):

- The SADC Protocol against corruption.
- The African Union Convention on the prevention of corruption.

- The UN Convention against corruption.
- The OECD Convention – International Bribery.

### 4.3.2 The South African anti-corruption framework

(Van Vuuren 2009:8):

Constitutional bodies according to the Constitution (chapter 9 and 10):

- The Public Protector.
- Auditor-General.
- Public Services Commission.
- Independent Complaints Directorate.

Criminal justice agencies:

- SAPS (South African Police), NPA (National Protection Agency).
- Asset Forfeiture Unit.
- Special Investigations Team.

Other role-players:

- DPSA (Dept. of Public Service and Administration)
- SARS (South African Revenue Services).
- National Intelligence Agency.

Legislation:

- Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, 2003.
- Public Finance Management Act No. 1 Of 1999.
- Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000.
- Protected Disclosures Act 2000.

In his recommendations on a systematic intervention into the practices involving corruption in South Africa, Makumbe (1999:8) stipulated the following specific guidelines:

- Effective coalition formation between governments, the private sector and civil society.
- Effective information-exchange networks.

- Annual evaluation conventions and strategic future-planning.
- A national data-base on corruption.
- Transparency of the salaries of government officials, together with annual compulsory updating of a register on assets.
- Arms trade transparency.

## 5. BASIS-THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES FROM SCRIPTURE ON CORRUPTION

### 5.1 A Biblical anthropology of man

The Scriptural view on man forms the premise of examining corrupt behavior. Heitink (1992:111) regards Christian anthropology as a combination of Scriptural views on man, insights gained from philosophy and other scientific insights on man. A Scriptural view on man could include the following five aspects:

- Man as a created being, created in the image of God, to glorify God (Gen 1:26-27, 2:7; Rom 1:23), before the Fall from sin upon which the image became distorted (Van Pelt 1999:227);
- man as a bodily being, with the body belonging to God (1 Cor 6:13), inhabiting the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19) and returning to dust upon death before being resurrected as a spiritual body when Christ returns (1 Cor 15:42-49);
- man created as a religious being who is able to have faith in and freedom before God, fear and obey God, and live responsibly before God (Van Wyk 2001:56), able to distinguish right from wrong, having been created with a conscience and able to live in intimate communion with and adoration of God (Joubert 2004:20);
- man as a psychological being who is able to think, feel and exercise free will (Joubert 2004:20), and consisting of a moral and ethical dimension (Louw 1997:297);
- and man as unitary being given all his facets, including body and soul (Phil 3:19, Luk 10:29, Deut 6:5).

Of relevance to this discussion is the impact of the Fall (Gen 3) on man's very nature. Even though Genesis 9:6 refers to man after the Fall as image of God, after the Fall man's estrangement from God and the worshipping

of other gods followed (Rom 3:23; Garlington 1993:102-103; 1 Sam 19:4, 26:21). 2 Tim 3:2-3 describes sinful man as untamed, shameless, unable to exercise restraint, and of being in wild turmoil. McMinn and Campbell (2007:39, 31) concludes that given man's sinful state since the Fall he is unable not to sin. Man's only hope of becoming sinless again is centered in God's act of grace through the saving act in Christ (Louw 1997:161).

## 5.2 Scripture's view on money

Scripture is clear on the meaning man should attach to money. Matt 6:19 says "Do not store up ... treasures on earth..." Luk 2:15 states that "Man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions..."

A study examining the claims of the prosperity theology on wealth being a sign of God's blessing, and poverty being indicative of a questionable faith, concluded that the prosperity theology places a much stronger emphasis on material wealth than on salvation, with God essentially becoming the servant to man (Reynecke 2008:13-18).

## 6. META-THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CORRUPTION AND THEORIES ON HUMAN BEHAVIOR

### 6.1 Social Psychology and human motivational behavior and research

Behavioral and neuro-scientific research on habit formation in human behavior as well as pattern detection within the brain has become an important focus over the past twenty years, and can therefore shed some light on the psycho social phenomenon of corruption. A recent study on habits have found that 45% of daily choices are made on an unconscious level, rather than according to rational, conscious decision-making processes (Yoshii & Constantine-Paton 2007:702-711). Other studies have found that mental activity decreases in direct proportion to behavior becoming more automatic and patterned, an automatic activity termed "chunking" (Duhigg 2012:19-20). However, in the final analysis the study recognized that habits can be changed, replaced and ignored through deliberate effort, or by finding new triggers and rewards through conscious strategic decision-making to develop new neurological pathways, confirming the plasticity of the brain, as reiterated by research findings of fellow clinicians (Minirth 2007:16; Amen 2003:14; Newberg & Waldman 2010: 14).

DiSalvo (2011:12,16) proposes that since the human brain's protective traits are intent on minimizing risk and avoiding harm, the challenge is to develop thought patterns and behaviors directly in opposition to the brain's natural tendencies, to help unlock the development of virtuous patterns of behavior. This could be achieved through the introduction of delayed gratification.

Decision making appears to be mostly an unconscious process of seeking social connectedness, usually linked to the emotions drawn from generations of genes and cultural cues (Brookes 2011:17-18). Personal choices regarding labor are based on man's basic social needs, such as the need to feel significant, accepted and recognized (Taleb 2008: xxviii). Character is evident under severe tests within the workplace (Taleb 2008: xxix).

Recent advances in neuroscience have redefined the ability of the human brain to structurally rearrange itself within about 8 weeks after robust stimulation, a discovery known as neuroplasticity (Newberg & Waldman 2010: 14-15, 29).

## 6.2 Political scientists, business leaders and economists

Political scientists, business leaders and economists have examined corruption and its distinguishing aspects with a view to addressing the devastating consequential losses to governments and the global economy, thereby acknowledging the interconnectedness of the economy with politics, social psychology and the natural environment (Sachs 2011:5). Uslaner (2006:14-18) concluded that individuals learn to develop a sense of trust at a young age through observing parental trust of strangers. Uslaner (2006:16) also observed that where trust is low between strangers, corruption takes root. It thus appears that economic inequality and perceived inequity breeds distrust and corruption. The study concluded that people are drawn into corruption because of their social, political and economic environment (Paine 2006:13).

Fukuyama (1996:6-8) states that the mistaken tendency is to regard the economic life as a facet of life which is governed by its own laws, separate from the rest of society. In his mind economic activity represents an important part of social life, knit together by a variety of norms, moral obligations and other habits shaping society. For Fukuyama the most important lesson on economic life is that a nation's well-being and competitive abilities is conditioned by the level of inherent trust prevalent in society. In *The Great Disruption* Fukuyama (2000:64) explains the strong link between distrust and a history of prejudice, racism, marginalization,

family breakdown, poverty, inequality and crime in a given society. The economist, Samuel Huntington (1994:22-49) shared similar views in stating that the world is moving towards a civilization clash, with people's primary identification becoming cultural, and no longer ideological as was the case during the cold war. The most important comment Fukuyama (1996:4-7) makes for the purposes and intent of this article though, relates to the comparisons which he draws between the importance of family as the core to achieve healthy economic growth, and knowledge and values across generations, citing both the Swedish and Danish societies as illustrative examples. To his mind at the core of a healthy economy is its human capital, the people, with their fundamental desire for recognition. And had this fundamental need not been met within the cultural family of origin, social capital is inevitably unhealthy, and penetrates to the core of economic activity, to the detriment of that economy. The reasons being obvious as working and money are sources of a sense of self, dignity and status (Fukuyama 1996:359).

The concept referred to as "human capital" is explained by Coleman (1988:95-120) as the ability of people to work together in groups and organizations, for a common purpose. Furthermore, Coleman states that human capital starts from the premise that capital today is embodied in knowledge and skills of the peoples, and their abilities to associate with each other. From Coleman's perspective this is critical to economic life and all spheres of social existence. But even more important in this regard is that the ability to associate is dependant upon a degree of communication to share norms and values, and being able to subordinate individual interest to those of the larger group. From the premise of such shared values trust develops, which has the larger, measurable economic value.

### 6.3 Lessons from history

Ferguson (2011:97) argues that in order to understand the current world order and create future politically and economically successful societies influential factors impacting on civilizations past needs examining. Ferguson (2011:97-98) identifies crucial so-called killer applications which distinguishes the West (USA, Europe) from the Rest (Asia, Africa, South America, Australasia, etc.). He identifies applications such as strong institutions, security of property rights, the sanctity of freedom of enquiry and of expression, essential dignity of people being respected and protected, intellectual freedom and the rule of law as ensured by representative and constitutional government, all of crucial importance for economies to grow and civilizations to evolve. These very institutions

transmit values across generations, and preserve human freedoms (Fukuyama 2000:4).

South American history proves that centralized power and concentrated wealth do not result in a unified country. Instead, since 1828 it had only created diffusion and strife, with no rule of law, and the country not a property-owning democracy. At the core of it were racial divisions. North America admitted to segregation and slavery as having its own prize to it, as evident in teen pregnancy, drug abuse, educational underachievement and disproportionate incarceration (Ferguson 2011:122-138).

An examination of corruption within the South African society should not lose sight of both its history, and/or the impacting universal values of consumerism, defining identities and trends of the current world order. Given the increased globalization of production, interconnectedness between markets and rapid electronic communications which are eroding boundaries between cultural communities, mental labor has increasingly replaced physical labor within the Information Age. In this current knowledge-based world economy societies are built around freedom and equality, which has “empowered” the individual, while political and economic hierarchies began to crumble. The recent Arab Spring uprising reflects this very argument, with closed countries such as the USSR and the former East-Germany having lost its ability “to control and harness the knowledge of their citizens” (Fukuyama 2000:3-5). Jeffrey Sachs provides a riveting analysis of the contributory factors to the decline of the USA as global economic market leader in his most recently published book, *The Price of Civilization* (2011:3). He describes the USA’s decline as a moral crisis, attributing it to the collapse of values, since the early sixties. During this era the disruption in social values introduced the disintegration of families and fatherless children, together with serious deterioration in social conditions as crime and social disorder rose, and a decline of kinship (Fukuyama 2000: 4). Sachs (2011:3) offers a warning to developing countries to regard the USA’s most recent economic crisis’ domino effect on the world economy as a vital teachable moment in history. His analysis centers on the impacting factors of greater inequality displayed in the phenomenon of the disappearing middle class, greater wealth for the rich and deepening poverty for the working class. Sachs (2011:3-5) and Murray (2012:236-276) agree on the main underlying disappearing essential elements of the fabric of a healthy society. These include public values, trust amongst citizens, religiosity and morality, with it gradually being replaced over the past forty years by hyper-commercialism and its necessary ills such as corruption and broken trust, inequality, power, psychological destabilization and environmental threats.

Brooks (2011:62) and Fukuyama (2000:5-6) offer hope for a necessary adjustment against the backdrop of systems theory dynamics, based upon man being a social creature, with instincts guiding him towards the creation of moral rules. C.S. Lewis (2002:9-14) and Blaise Pascal (as quoted by Hagerty 2009:284) calls it the universal Moral Law inside each human being, even when science trumps faith as seen with reference to atheists and agnostics (Collins 2007:165). Sachs (2011:5) links sustainable and meaningful economic recovery to a genuine return to respect and integrity, manifested in societal norms.

## 6.4 Some recent contributions of Sociology and Anthropology

Upadhyay (2003:198) assigns the difference between corruption in developing and developed countries to its all-pervasive impact on the poverty-stricken masses, since in developed countries daily rhythms remain unaffected. Upadhyay (2003:199) regards bad parenting as being at the core of corrupt conduct, and propose the key importance of the family system in the socialization process as the main preventative measure. However, Rajivan *et al.* (2009:361-399) poses the question whether corruption is perhaps innate to human nature, without arriving at any definitive answers.

Radjivan *et al.* (2009:368-389), in his challenging views on concepts involving corruption, distinguishes between cultural relativism and cultural pluralism, with cultural pluralism acknowledging that traditional practices do differ, affecting the forms of corruption. It does however remain consistent with a universal set of principles which condemn corruption. In stark contrast, cultural relativism denies the applicability of values in the universal sense, allowing an open agenda for each country to define principles of right and wrong.

## 6.5 Insights and contributions of Modern Ethics

The questioning of the modern view of decisionist ethics, of individuals weighing several tough options, had led to the transitional rethinking of ethics towards that as narrative. The dominating contributions by MacIntyre, Hauberwas and McClendon provide valuable definitional insights to build upon within the current reality (Loewenstein 1989:55-66).

MacIntyre (1981:264-268) holds both a historically contextual and holistic view on Philosophy and society. He consistently regards the world of ideas, i.e. philosophy, and the world of institutions and actions, i.e. politics and society, as closely connected, within any given time period's

intellectual and societal impact. Furthermore, he draws emphasis to the contemporary disturbing replacement of the lost state of morality with its prevalent current serious relativism, subscribing incoherent, conflicting and fragmented philosophies of the day to detachment from the pre-Enlightenment world, with an absence of standards for evaluation of truth or the ability to examine their innate conflicting views, since the contemporary language of morality in essence serves personal preference.

Hauerwas (1983:79,134) views the role of the Church not as the building of culture or the setting of the moral tone of civilization, but instead to preach that the Kingdom of God has come close in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ, and speaking the truth amidst warring spirits. Hauerwas (1983:97-100) surmises that the individuality of each person is only possible in relation to being a social being, and the Church's view on the culture of the day will always remain that of finitude and incompleteness. Before Hauerwas it was Cox (1965:262-265) who, however, pled for theology to remain relevant and responsive to the changing forces within society as they manifest their impact on culture.

Insights from the abovementioned research could contribute significantly towards the formulation of a multi-disciplinary strategic approach in addressing the basic problem of corruption.

## **7. PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON A SOLUTION-BASED APPROACH TOWARDS CORRUPTION**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The South African society's fabric and the soul of its social capital need to be rebuilt. Herein practical theology has a definitive role to play. Cochrane (1999:3) argues that the previous regime tore extended families apart, resulting in a thirty-year loss of character formation within the affected communities, resulting in ethical norms and values being left void, undefined and fragmented. This resulted in an undeniable lagging behind of the development of any real sense of accountability within the psyche. Studies suggest a link between character formation during the childhood years and the crucial impact of religious practices, symbolism and prayer in socializing the human brain (Clinton & Sibcy 2006:16-28). Research by Newberg and Waldman (2010:5) confirm these findings. Man's search for meaning (Frankl 2007:128) finds expression in the thirst after success (Crowley & Crowley 2001:127-130; Stowell 1994:14-16). This is a basic

premise which should be addressed within the South African context by way of spiritually oriented **community educational programs**. The aim of such programs would be to create a **God-consciousness at childhood and teenage level** about man's deepest thirst after God, their Creator, and explain how it may surface, for example by way of the thirsts mentioned in the previous statement.

## 7.2 Suggested solutions

The applicability of the implementation of **Religious Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (Religious CBT)** in **pastoral counseling** is proven, to bring about ethically patterned behavior (Koenig 2011:172-173; Tan 2011:275; Newberg & Waldman 2010:170-212), and appears to be a crucial compatible therapeutic approach on this theme. Koenig (2011:174) reiterates conformational research results on the longitudinal impact of religious CBT when compared to normal psychotherapy and medication as treatment modality. The creation of a safe place within the therapeutic alliance enables the exploration of unsafe places experienced during formative years, pastorally connect to the person's pain within and witness how the Holy Spirit bring about restoration in Christ (Arterburn *et al.* 1997:106-112).

**Biblically-based parenting workshops** are essential in educating would-be parents on healthy communication and good child-rearing practices, including developing spiritual virtues and healthy habits in offspring (Cloud 2011:34; Duhigg 2012:19; Clinton & Sibcy 2006:195).

**Compassionate communication workshops** may be conducted at schools, religious institutions, businesses and community groups to develop and/or improve social empathy and enhance social awareness. Results have indicated the deepening of spiritual and ethical values (Newberg & Waldman 2010:214-249).

The **search for meaning in life** (Frankl 2007:128) which usually manifests in a thirst after financial success (Crowley & Crowley 2001:127-130; Stowell 1994:14-16) ought to be addressed by Practical Theology in the form of both community and school educational programs.

Scripturally motivated and **biblically based programs** ought to be jointly designed by specialists trained in Theology, Social Science and Business, and marketed to both **governmental and private sector** companies with a view to enhancing **ethical behavior** within the workplace.

### 7.3 Areas for further research

Reformed Theological views on systemic estrangement, corruption, crime, punishment and retribution need examination and defining.

Basis-theoretical and Scriptural perspectives on the possible relationship between the role of unfinished emotional business and corrupt conduct as linked to the presumption of entitlement to wealth as a result of a history of oppression, needs exploration. Also of importance is examining the possibility of a link to money disorders, and possible treatment specific avenues to address symptomatology and intervention approaches.

Pastoral perspectives on greed, corruption and emotional woundedness, and the development of a pastoral model of intervention towards forgiveness, restoration and wholeness in Christ warrant investigative research. Scriptural views on punishment, forgiveness and grace need to be examined (Maree 2010:38-46,131-137; Marshall 2001; Stoop 2005:90-106), as do the ability to forgive others given its link to cognitive development (Shults & Sandage 2003:32), and the drawing of a definitive distinction between sin and disease (Welch 1991:29-97, 281-289).

An examination of the relationship between emotional trauma during the formative years and the lack of moral judgment manifested in corrupt conduct starting in the yearly adulthood years (Maree 2010:146-153) is also warranted.

With a view to introducing change to the societal psyche, aspects relevant to parental care and education need to be examined as it relates to the emotional and psychological development of the child into a morally responsible adult. A user-friendly model needs to be developed intent on equipping parents and to be implemented on grassroots level in church organizations, private institutions and NGO's, intent on spiritual restoration of human morality, values and ethics in S.A. Perspectives on socialization and re-socialization within the related disciplines need to be explored for this very purpose.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

The phenomenon of the black swan indicates that the randomness of patterns ought to be respected scientifically and should serve as a cue for continued, objective research, especially if any given suggested implemented attempts at changing corrupt behavioral patterns prove to be unsuccessful (Taleb 2008).

The unconscious is the most powerful reservoir to tap into if socialization was geared at raising an individual with spiritual virtues and sound character (Clinton, Hart & Ohlschlager 2005:229-230).

It can be concluded that Practical Theology does have a definitive role in stemming the tide against corruption in South Africa. At stake is moral decay and moral corruption, and a raging war between light and darkness for the very core of the human soul, against the backdrop of a deep-seated woundedness, buried in the deep unconscious (Schimmel 2002:224). Practical Theology, with its Scripturally based premise and pastoral counseling's *parakletos* metaphor on offer, may provide practical, solution-based tools in addressing this disturbing phenomenon on both government and private sector level, as well as at community, family and individual level, with a view to reaching pastoral care goals aimed at **restorative and preventative work.**

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

AMEN, D.G.

2003. *Healing anxiety and depression*. New York, USA: Berkley Books.

ARTERBURN, S., MINIRTH, F. & MEIER, P.

1997. *Safe places. Finding security in the passages of your life*. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson.

BROOKS, D.

2011. *The Social Animal: The Hidden Sources of Love, Character and Achievement*. New York, USA: Random House.

CAVILL, S. & SOHAIL, M.

2007. *Accountability arrangements to combat corruption*. Leicestershire, UK: WEDC Publications.

CLINTON, T., HART, A. & OHLSCHLAGER, G.

2005. *Caring for people God's way*. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson.

CLINTON, T. & SIBCY, G.

2006. *Why You Do the Things You Do: The Secret to Healthy Relationships*. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson.

CLOUD, H.

2011. *The One-Life Solution. Reclaim your personal life while achieving greater professional success*. New York, USA: Harper Business..

COCHRANE, J.R.

1999. Corruption and the role of religion in public life. In: S. Sangweni & D. Balia (eds.). *Fighting corruption: South African perspectives*, (Pretoria: UNISA, 1999), pp. 41-57.

Coetzer & Snell                      A practical-theological perspective on corruption

COLEMAN, J.S.

1988. Social Capital and the Creation of Human Capital. *American Journal of Sociology* 94:95-120.

COLLINS, F.S.

2007. *The language of God. A scientist presents evidence for belief*. London: Pocket Books.

CROWLEY, V. & CROWLEY, C.

2001. *Your dark side*. London: Thorsons.

COX, H.G.

1965. *The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective*. New York: Macmillan.

DI SALVO, D.

2011. *What makes your brain happy and why you should do the opposite*. Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books.

DUHIGG, C.

2012. *The Power of Habit: Why we do what we do in life and business*. New York: Random House.

EVANS, B.R.

1999. *The cost of corruption. A discussion paper on corruption, development and the poor*. Middlesex, UK: Tearfund.

FERGUSON, N.

2011. *Civilization. The West and the Rest*. London: Allen Lane.

FRANKL, V.

2007. *Waarom lewe ek? Hulde aan die hoop. Nuut bygewerkte teks deur Daniel J. Louw*. Cape Town: Naledi.

FUKUYAMA, F.

2000. *The Great Disruption. Human nature and the reconstitution of social order*. London, UK: Profile Books.

2005. *State-building, governance and world order in the twenty-first century*. London, UK: Profile Books.

1996. *Trust. The social virtues and the creation of prosperity*. New York: Free Press Paperbacks.

GARLINGTON, D.B.

1993. The obedience of faith in the letter to the Romans. *Westminster Theological Journal* 55:87-112.

HAGERTY, B.B.

2009. *Fingerprints of God. What science is learning about the brain and spiritual Experience*. New York, USA: Riverhead Books.

- HAUERWAS, S.  
1983. *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.
- HEIDENHEIMER, A. (ED.).  
1970. *Political corruption: Readings in comparative analyses*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books.
- HEYSTEK, P.H.  
2000. *'n Prakties-teologiese ondersoek van die "mekaar"-opdragte in die Corpus Pualinium met die oog op die kerklike geloofsgemeenskap*. Ongepubliseerde Doktorale Thesis. Potchefstroom: PU vir CHO. (Thesis – Th D.)
- HEITINK, G.  
1992. *Pastoraat als hulpverlening; inleiding in de pastorale theologie en psychologie*. Kampen: Uitgeversmaatschappij J.H.Kok.
- HEITINK, G.  
1999. *Practical theology. History. Theory. Action domains*. Grand Rapids, Mi: Eerdmans.
- HUNTINGTON, S.P.  
1994. The clash of civilizations. *Foreign Affairs* 72:22-49.
- JOUBERT, P.  
2004. *Trichotomous therapy: a practical pastoral paradigm*. (Lesing gelewer by byeenkoms van M en D studente te Potchefstroom op 29 Januarie.)
- KOENIG, H.G.  
2011. *Spirituality and Health Research. Methods, measurements, statistics and resources*. West Conshohocken, PA.: Templeton Press.
- LAMBSDORFF, J.G.  
1993. Corruption and the Underground Economy. Draft paper prepared for publication in *Encyclopedia of Globalization*. Presented at seminar on economics of corruption held in Passua, Germany in October 1993.
- LEWIS, C.S.  
2002. *Mere Christianity. Revised Edition*. London, UK: Harper Collins.
- LOEWENSTEIN, H.J.  
1989. Rethinking Christian Ethics: From Moral Decisions to Character Formation. *Direction* 18(1):55-66.
- LOUW, D.J.  
1997. *Pastoraat as vertolking en ontmoeting*. Kaapstad: Lux Verbi.
- MACINTYRE, A.  
1981. *After Virtue. A Study in moral theory*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.

**MBAKU, J.M.**

1998. Bureaucratic and political corruption in Africa. In: J.M. Mbaku (ed.), *Corruption and the crisis of institutional reforms in Africa*. Lewiston (New York: Edwin Mellen Press), pp. 33-83.

**MAKUMBE, J.M.**

1999. *Fighting corruption in the SADC and Sub-Saharan Africa*. Paper presented at The 9<sup>th</sup> International Anti-Corruption Conference, 10-15 October. KwaZulu-Natal.

**MANDELA, N.**

1999. Mandela speech at a Methodist church service in Langa, February 1999. [Online.] Retrieved from <http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/mandela-speech-methodist-church-service-langa> [17 April 2012].

**MAREE, L.E.**

2010. *Die rol van pastorale berading in die bring van heil en heilservaring aan die geloofsvervreemde*. Ongepubliseerde Doktorale Thesis. Potchefstroom: Noord-Wes Universiteit.

**MARSHALL, C.D.**

2001. *Beyond retribution*. Grand Rapids, Mi: Eerdmans.

**MBEKI, THABO.**

1999. Statement of deputy president Thabo Mbeki at the National Anti-corruption Summit. [Online.] Retrieved from <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UN/UNPAN005192.pdf>. [12 June 2012]

2006. Nelson Mandela Memorial Lecture by President Thabo Mbeki: University of Witwatersrand. [Online.] Retrieved from <http://www.dfa.gov.za/docs/speeches/2006/mbek0729.htm>. [12 June 2012]

**McMINN, M.R. & CAMPBELL, C.D.**

2007. *Integrative Psychotherapy. Towards a comprehensive Christian approach*. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Press.

**MINIRTH, F.**

2007. *Boost your brainpower*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Revell.

**MURRAY, C.**

2012. *Coming Apart: The state of White America, 1960-2010*. New York, USA : Crown Forum.

**NEWBERG, A. & WALDMAN, M.R.**

2010. *How God changes your brain. Breakthrough findings from a leading neuroscientist*. New York: Ballantine Books.

**PAINE, L.**

2006. Human behavior, trust, and corruption. Paper presented March 3-4 at the panel on "Political Corruption" at the Workshop on "Research on Corruption and Its Control: The State of the Art" at the Carol and Lawrence Zicklin Center

for Business Ethics Research, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

PHILCOX, P.

2008. *Black skin, white masks*. Broadway, New York: Grove Press.

PIETERSE, H.J.C.

1993. *Praktiese teologie as kommunikatiewe handelingssteorie*. Pretoria: RGN.

RAJIVAN, A. & GAMPAT, R.

2009. Does Corruption Exacerbate the Human Effects of Financial Crises? In: A Rajivan, R. Gampat & M. Lipscomb (eds) *Perspectives on Corruption and Human Development Vol 1*, (Sri Lanka: Macmillan Publishers for UNDP), pp. 361-399.

RAJIVAN, A., GAMPAT, R., SARANGI, N., BORSATTI, E.

2009. *Challenging Corruption: Prioritizing Social Services for Human Development*. Human Development Report Unit. UNDP. Sri Lanka: Colombo 7.

RAJIVAN, A.K., GAMPAT, R. & UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME.

2009. *Perspectives on Corruption and Human Development. Vol 1*. New Delhi: MacMillan.

REYNECKE, D.

2008. *Selected Jesus sayings on materialism according to the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7) in judging the so-called prosperity theology*. Ongepubliseerde Doktorale Thesis. Johannesburg: University of Johannesburg (M-Thesis).

SACHS, J.

2011. *The Price of Civilization: Economics and Ethics after the Fall*. Canada: Random House.

SCHIMMEL, S.

2002. *Wounds not healed by time*. New York: Oxford.

SENTURIA, J.

1930-1935. *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, vol IV. New York, N.Y.: Cromwell-Collier-Macmillan. p 449.

SHULTS, F.L. & SANDAGE, S.J.

2003. *The faces of forgiveness*. Grand Rapids, Mi: Baker Bookhouse.

STOOP, D.

2005. *Forgiving the unforgivable*. California, USA: Regal.

STOWELL, J.

1994. *Perilous pursuits: Our obsession with significance*. Singapore: Moody Press.

TALEB, N.N.

2008. *The Black Swan. The impact of the highly improbable*. New York, N.Y.: Penguin Books.

TAN, S.

2011. *Counseling and Psychotherapy. A Christian Perspective*. Grand Rapids, Mi: Baker Academic.

ULIMWENGU, J.

2012. The ANC produced the finest people to walk this earth; look at it today and weep. *East African Review*. [Online] Retrieved from: <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/OpEd/comment/-/434750/1306042/-/4oanwdz/-/>. [17 April 2012].

UNITED NATIONS

2004. *Handbook on practical anti-corruption measures for prosecutors and investigators*. Vienna: United Nations.

UPADHYAY, N.P.

2003. Corruption: A psycho-social issue. *Occasional papers in Sociology and Anthropology* 8:198-199.

USLANER, E.

2006. Human behavior, trust, and corruption. Paper presented March 3-4 at the panel on "Political Corruption" at the Workshop on "Research on Corruption and Its Control: The State of the Art" at the Carol and Lawrence Zicklin Center for Business Ethics Research, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, USA.

VAN PELT, J.W.

1999. *Pastoraat inn trinitarisch perspektief*. Heerenveen: Uitgeverij Groen.

VAN VUUREN, H.

2006. Apartheid grand corruption. Assessing the scale of crimes of profit from 1976 to 1994. A report prepared by civil society in terms of a resolution of the Second National Anti-Corruption Summit for presentation at the National Anti-Corruption Forum at the Institute for Security Studies. Pretoria, South Africa.

2009. A civil society perspective: Introducing anti-corruption in the (South) African context. A paper presented 25 November at the workshop on Promoting Professional Ethics in the public service, at the Centre for Business and Professional Ethics, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

VAN WYK, J.H.

2001. *Etiiek en eksistensie in koninkryksperspektief*. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroomse Teologiese Publikasies.

VENTER, C.

1996. *Uitkringende Liefdesbetoon. Kommunikatiewe handelinge in diens van die onderlinge liefdesgemeenskap in die kerk*. Pretoria: RGN.

WELCH, E.D.

1991. *Counselor's guide to the brain and its disorders*. Grand Rapids, Mi: Zondervan.

**WEST, G.**

2004. The Bible and Economics: historical and hermeneutical reflections from South Africa. *African Journal of Biblical Studies* 20(1):93-122.

2010. The ANC's Deployment of Religion in Nation Building From Thabo Mbeki, to "The RDP of the Soul," to Jacob Zuma. In: I.C. du Toit (ed). *Power Sharing and African Democracy: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, (Pretoria: UNISA), pp. 89-120.

**WILLIAMS, R.**

2003. *Political corruption in Africa*. Aldershot, Hampshire: Gower.

**YOSHII, A., CONSTANTINE-PATON, M.**

2007. BDNF induces transport of PSD-95 to dendrites through P13K-AKT signaling after NMDA receptor activation. *Nat Neurosci* 10(6):702-711.

**ZERFASS, R.**

*Praktische Theologie Heute*. München: Kaiser/Grünewald.

**Keywords****Sleuteltermes**

Corruption

Korrupsie

Practical-theological perspective

Prakties-teologiese perspektief

Morality

Moraliteit