

Caught between the sacred and the secular

The pentecostal pastor as a leader in a world in constant flux

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Abstract

The exponential growth of Pentecostalism globally suggests a strong social and economic impact which member churches of this tradition are expected to have on the communities they serve. Pentecostal pastors are expected to be mindful of this perceived impact the church should have on communities and to contribute to the general development of the communities in which they operate. In this regard, two challenges immediately confront pastors—the changed and changing composition of the church membership and of the global community which is in constant flux. As an example, one of the dilemmas that pastors face in their daily functions is the question of whether they should premise their decisions on the fiscal oversight and justice-related responsibilities of faith or on the internal control systems of the organisation. This article investigates the duties and decision-making functions of Pentecostal pastors in changed and changing communities, probing the difficulties they encounter in their daily operations in the context of being missional pastors. The article will also discuss pointers to obviate hurdles in the way of Pentecostal pastors in their quest to contribute to communities in a holistic way.

Key words: Pentecostalism, sacred, secular, missional pastor, initial pastoral training, borrowing from others, eliciting help from the corporate world

1. Introduction

Several studies in biblical and religious spheres suggest that the church—both established church traditions and local congregations—is expected and should in fact make an impact on the communities they serve and help to transform the religious, political and socio-economic development of communities (Akanbi & Beyers, 2017; Van Aarde, 2017). The following titles are associated with the referenced authors respectively, *The Church as a Catalyst for Transformation in the Society* and *Equipping the Poorest of the Poor to Become Agents of Community Transformation: A Case Study of Milk as a Catalyst in Burundi*. These titles suggest that the role of churches in bringing change to the lives of their members should go far beyond what would be regarded as their call of duty, which is, preaching the Word of God for the salvation of souls. However, studies such as the ones mentioned

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here do not always bring to light how churches go about administering projects that are geared towards the development of the lives of community members nor do they shed light on the role pastors play in the development of church members and communities.

The common understanding is that pastors, as leaders of congregations, play a vital role in development projects and in guiding congregations to follow current global trends. In the context of this article, any pastor who received the initial pastoral training and is entrusted to lead a congregation today faces, among others, two challenges—leading a church in the context of the world changing at a dizzying speed, and leading a complex membership consisting of members who hold diverse opinions on how the pastor should go about his/her business. Some church members believe that it is better for the followers of Christ to stay away from what they would regard as ‘worldly affairs’ such as engaging in politics or matters of social justice while others adopt an approach that Akanbi and Beyers (2017:1) refer to as a “holistic growth and development-oriented direction”, which expects that pastors as leaders should play a vital role in all facets of community development. The latter group is usually constituted by the younger generation and more educated members of the congregation who believe that Christians have a role to play in different spheres of life and can bring about a positive change in society. Nel (2019:5) cites Anderson who supports the holistic approach to Christianity, “The preference is built upon the Pentecostal gospel’s emphasis on a holistic approach directed at the whole person. . .”.

It is on the strength of the above exposition that this article discusses the position of the contemporary Pentecostal pastor vis-à-vis the response to holistic needs of the church members as well as the community, hurdles to becoming a missional progressive pastor, and pointers to overcoming these hurdles. The following section will focus on the context in which most Pentecostal pastors find themselves as leaders of congregations.

2. The pentecostal pastor as a missional agent

For one to be recognised as a pastor in the classical Pentecostal churches, it is important that one be born again and filled with the Holy Spirit, profess a call to ministry, and having received the necessary academic training (Masenya, 2014:159). In this article, the concepts pastor, Pentecostal pastor, a qualified pastor, and a serving pastor will be used interchangeably depending on the point being made and will loosely refer to a pastor who is in the employ of a local congregation and has satisfied all the requirements of becoming a pastor in the Pentecostal tradition. A pastor will be designated a missional pastor if that particular pastor has a calling and is sent to communities to serve and to contribute to the welfare of humanity.

The preceding idea is in line with the study of Missiology as a discipline of religion that suggests that those sent to the nations, guided by faith in God, cannot be disinterested in the affairs of the communities to advance them (Kgatle, 2020:86-87). Thus, from the onset, a pastor should not be seen as a superior person sent to some lowly communities who live in darkness to bring the gospel to them, as this was the overriding view of missions in the past.

The scholarly consensus with regard to a progressive view of missions is that at the heart of the Christian mission is the good news, which in the narrow sense implies spreading the message of “the forgiveness of sins through the substitutionary death of Jesus on the cross” (see Acts 10:36-43; Rom 1:16-17; 1 Cor 15:1-5; 1 Cor 1:17-18). Historically, the role and function of a pastor in the Pentecostal tradition was restricted to this view (Masenya, 2014:54). However, considering the broader approach mentioned in the preceding paragraph, the good news that the Christian mission proclaims should be the entire package of blessings that Christ secures for his people (Matt 4:23; Luke 4:18-19; Acts 13:32-33). This, in other words, stresses the point that the *shalom* of God is available to all humankind and that it is the missional pastor’s task to pass it on to different communities.

From the foregoing argument, it becomes imperative to underscore the importance of the Christian mission as an activity that proclaims the *shalom*, which refers to the holistic well-being in the present and in the eternal sense through the instrumentality of the good news of the gospel. Such a definition does not dichotomise one aspect of the gospel *shalom* over the other. On the basis of such a theological underpinning, a pastor who is aware of the need to proclaim the gospel and engage in activities that usher that *shalom* could be said to be missional. A missional Pentecostal pastor should therefore be seen as a leader with a purpose and mission, with his main aim being to proclaim the *shalom* of God in its entirety, and as such bringing holistic change and advancement to communities. In carrying out the mission of God, such a pastor should fight oppression, injustice, discrimination, poverty, and gear up to eradicate all other social ills ravaging communities, in addition to the preaching of the good news of the gospel.

Gender Based Violence, human rights violations and gender disparities are some of the social issues which communities face and which missional pastors should tackle and not ignore. Earth healing is one other matter that should be given due attention. In his foreword to the Earth Bible Project, Archbishop Desmond Tutu commends the organisers and says that as much as feminists call us to confront the patriarchal orientation of much of the biblical text, the contributors in this project confront us “with the anthropocentric nature much of the biblical text” (Habel, 2001:7). The Pentecostal pastor therefore should be part of ongoing discussions around these issues, bearing in mind that a holistic sustainable development sees

the God who cares about spiritual welfare of humans as the same God who cares about these matters and about environmental sustainability and earth healing.

The above understanding cuts the work for a missional pastor in the Pentecostal church tradition as one who should approach his/her tasks with the view of developing the whole person thereby contributing to the development of communities not only spiritually but also in all facets of life. It is in this sense that this sub-section refers to the pastor as a missionary agent. In other words, the pastor should be a servant of God with a mission. In a study which was carried out in 2014 on the management training of pastor trainees, participants were clear that pastoral trainees should not only be 'heavenly-minded' but be useful while they are still on earth. One of the participants emphasises this view:

...we are focusing on training people who will influence for the Kingdom of God when they leave here— whether they are going to secular occupations or to serve in churches (Masenya, 2014:130).

Van Wyk (2017:56) says that it is a prerequisite that “ministers should spearhead” all activities of development and transformation in both the church and the community. This author thus supports the idea of pastors playing a vital role in the current dispensation to advance members of their churches and communities at large. This view states that a Pentecostal pastor should be seen as an agent of change from the onset and that the scope of operation is much wider than being confined to the spiritual welfare of local members. It is unsurprising that the United Nations acknowledges the important role pastors play in all communities, as Phiri (2017:3) indicates:

The perception of a church leader as also a community leader has remained to be true in most rural communities. This position of the church leaders is also recognised by the United Nations who, on 14 July 2017, launched an Action Plan to promote the role of religious leaders in preventing incitements to violence that may lead to infractions categorized in international law as “atrocities crimes”: these are war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity, and crimes of aggression.

Nürnbergger takes the issue of the involvement of pastors in community affairs to a higher level and shows that any matter involving pastors should not be treated as a pastime because it is serious business. He also warned that in the South African context, not taking matters involving pastors seriously, such as paying particular attention to their training, could lead to chaos and anarchy of the new democratic dispensation (Masenya, 2014:37). Could the current situation of the scourge of corruption and wastage of government resources be the result of not heeding this

warning and an indication that pastors do not take their rightful position in society? A missional pastor should take his/her position in society to speak against malfeasance and the looting of resources by government officials. Poor initial training of pastors affects their performance later in their careers as leaders of their congregations. Scholars generally agree that apart from being spiritual leaders in their own congregations, serving pastors should be mindful of serious challenges facing communities such as unemployment, corruption, crime, the mushrooming of informal settlements, the HIV & AIDS pandemic, wars, refugees, and growing levels of poverty, among others (Habib, 2011; Omulokoli, 2002; Rabkin, 2011).

In today's situation, it will be logical to add the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic to this list. Church members and the communities within which religious congregations exist are equally affected by the impact of COVID-19, a problem that a missional pastor cannot turn a blind eye to.

The term Pentecostalism is used in a general sense to refer to the three main groups of Pentecostal origins found in South Africa today. Anderson (2000:xxii) refers to these groups as "classical Pentecostals" and they include the Assemblies of God, the Apostolic Faith Mission, and the Full Gospel Church. These groups are also known as the Pentecostal mission churches—this is because though they operate in South Africa, and thus still maintain strong ties with their mother bodies in North America (Anderson, 2000:8).

On the importance of the Pentecostal movement, Anderson (2000) concluded that this movement grows at an overwhelming rate and that its impact on different communities is apparent. He is not alone as scholars such as Flower, Winehouse, Woodberry, and Hollenweger add that a movement that exceeds half a billion in membership worldwide is worthy of serious and careful research, and should not be dismissed so easily (Masenya, 2014:26). One may conclude that the leaders of such a movement carry a lot of responsibilities on their shoulders and the Pentecostal pastor therefore should be mindful of such responsibilities at all times as a person who serves under the auspices of such an important movement.

A case in point is the study which was conducted in Malawi to show how the church—with the missional pastor at its helm—can impact the lives of people directly. Woodberry (2006) studied the social and economic impact of the Pentecostal movement in Malawi and concluded that its members "have better hygiene, drink less, smoke less, and have fewer extra-marital sexual partners than comparable non-Protestants" (Woodberry, 2006:30). This conclusion can of course be debated.

From the above discussion, it is clear that much more is expected from any pastor appointed to serve a congregation today than was the case in the past, even in the Pentecostal circle. A Pentecostal pastor is perceived as a well-educated and

well-rounded graduate with a missional approach that works towards the holistic advancement of his/her members and the community in general.

The following section will highlight some of the impediments which can hinder pastors from fulfilling their service to humanity as expected. These include unpreparedness due to deficient initial training programmes, negativity towards the administrative component of the pastor's duty, the ever-changing religious landscape, and a diverse membership. These points are discussed below without showing any precedence of one above the other.

3. Hurdles in the way of a missional pentecostal pastor

Everyday observation shows that Pentecostal pastors do not always live up to the standard and expectations of communities they serve as outlined in the foregoing section. Impediments to the achievement of such an ideal could be personal deficiencies in the leadership style of these pastors or matters beyond their control. The following discussion is not exhaustive, but it could shed light on the challenges Pentecostal pastors face in this regard.

3.1 Unpreparedness and deficient initial training programmes

Literature on the initial training and formation education of pastors shows that the programmes are not sufficient to prepare pastoral candidates for their future work. The following sentiment about the training of pastors appears in different sources from time to time, as in the case of an imaginary pastoral graduate depicted by Reid (1969:18):

...his seminary training was inadequate. He had not learned how to be a leader of the congregation. He had not been alerted to the insights into the nature of leadership now available to us from the social sciences. He left First Church unaware that his own leadership style, not the stubbornness and blindness of his people, had guaranteed the failure of his project.

The above scenario did not change much since this assertion was made some years ago. Scholars are of the opinion that seminaries do not do enough to prepare future pastors in management skills. Authors like Bedard and Jackson feel that training institutions concentrate on biblical and theological head knowledge at the expense of practical areas such as strategic planning, the competent handling of church finances, staff relations, as well as policies and procedures (Masenya, 2014:1). Woodruff summarises this state of affairs as follows:

Seminaries... give their graduates skills to study the Bible and theology but not skills to lead the modern church. The seminaries... continue to emphasize ac-

ademics. Pastors believe seminary professors do not understand their need for ministry skills or mentors. Professors often view pastors and the church as 'anti-intellectual.' Seminaries often turn a deaf ear to the needs of the local church and arrogantly defend scholarly education (Woodruff, 2004:4).

Woodruff (op. cit.) goes on to refer to such trained pastors as "professionals of the academy" and not "professionals of the church" to show the emphasis that seminaries place on academic development rather than on preparing pastors as missionary agents in society.

This trend continues to be the same as later studies show. As recent as 2018, publications still showed that there is no improvement in the training programmes that would equip the trainees as the following statement shows:

The church as an organization is exposed to insufficient education in management principles and skills through formal education that, in turn, results in leaders that often struggle to perform the basic managerial tasks expected of them (Chatira & Mwenje, 2018:104).

In one instance, the curriculum followed by the institution was developed in a foreign country with no bearing on local communities, or on how to prepare pastors to manage their churches in an effective way (Masenya, 2016:3). Writing on the preparation for ministry in the African Pentecostal Churches, Kgatle (2020:85) shows the stark reality that some churches still equate seminaries with "cemeteries", and therefore do not see any need for formal training. The overemphasis on being spirit-filled at the expense of being trained leads to the mushrooming of untrained and undertrained pastors who engage in outrageous practices that do not help in building communities but harm them instead. Nel (2018) discusses the question of early Pentecostalism's apathy and disinterest in any formal training of its pastors in detail. He refers to this stance as anti-intellectualism which denotes that Pentecostalism saw the formal academic training of pastors as inappropriate and in that way protested and reacted against what they saw as "the cold and formal religious exercises that characterised the learned reverends and churches" (op. cit.:2). Undergoing training was seen as following a lifeless religiosity of denominational Christianity. Nel (op. cit.:4) concludes that there are indeed remnants of anti-intellectualism in the Pentecostal movement citing the opinion upheld by Vondey:

Even in contemporary times Pentecostal scholars are sceptic about academic scholarship that is overdependent on the intellect at the cost of involving the entire person in the life of faith.

The foregoing reflection shows that reluctance to appropriate proper training by both churches and individual pastoral candidates may hinder a pastor trainee from becoming a pastor who is geared to move with the times and respond to the needs of the community. As a result of the underdeveloped training programmes, the individual pastor's human relations' capacity and under-stimulated intellectual capacity which the pastor could be exposed to through proper academic discipline in the process of appropriate ministry training are affected in a negative way.

Thus, it will not be far from the mark to conclude that poor or no training of pastoral candidates is a setback to any missional pastor performing ministerial duties.

3.2 Negativity towards the administrative component of the pastor's duty

The debate on whether a pastor should be concerned with administrative issues of the church goes back to the beginning of the Pentecostal movement. Hot contestations of this issue are not uncommon among pastors and scholars alike. Jackson (1989:8) relates the two views:

Pastor you must assume tighter control of the church's business affairs. If someone doesn't step in soon, we'll have a financial and spiritual disaster!

The alternative view argues that the church is not an organisation, it is an organism. Pastors should pastor, not manage!

These conflicting views put a huge burden on serving pastors even today. Some denominations and members subscribe to either of the above stances. Jackson (op. cit.) alludes to the fact that many pastors dislike organising and managing tasks as they were trained for ceremonial, prophetic, and care-giving roles. More will be said on this point under the section about the problem of diverse membership which results in differing views on these issues. The pastor who regards the administrative and management functions in the church as burdensome may be thinking of these tasks as 'secular' and 'worldly' in contrast to the pastoral calling which may be viewed as 'sacred'.

The debate about the role of a Pentecostal pastor continues and the following anecdote about a discussion between two pastors situates the challenge Pentecostal churches continue to grapple with to this day. Their divergent views on the administrative function of a pastor will normally filter down to their duty towards their congregations and to the communities they serve. Swanepoel (2000:1) relates a conversation between two pastors who met at a shopping centre one Monday morning:

The one said: The only sad thing is that I must now do a lot of administration. We received some money. This needs to be counted and all the forms need to be completed and the banking must be done. And tonight, I have a meeting of my Church Council. I don't look forward to all the preparations. I would rather get

on with the job. I wish I could only concentrate on my work and forget about planning, administration, managing, and all these things that take up such a lot of my time. If only nobody “discovered” administration!

His friend and colleague was amazed: My friend, I don't want to disappoint you, but I like administration and management. There was a time that I also didn't like doing all the paperwork, then I discovered that things became such a mess that I had to spend a long time to get order. This was when I decided to do a course in management and finance, which opened my eyes. Now I enjoy doing administration because I understand that it is a fundamental part of my work. And what is more, since I am giving proper attention to administration and management, I know why I am doing it. It gave me direction. With good planning I have succeeded in doing even more than I did before. Some members of my congregation even complimented me saying that we now have direction and are motivated to reach our goals. I'm so glad I did that course. Perhaps you should also do such a course.

It is clear from the above conversations that the first pastor regards administration and management as burdensome, and believes that it should not even form part of what he calls “my work”. To him, being a pastor is more about the spiritual side of things than any other matter outside that scope. It cannot be expected of such a pastor to think outside his ‘orbit of operation’ to reach out to the community regarding socio-economic and political issues. He cannot therefore be seen as a missional pastor or a pastor with a mission as shown at the beginning of the discussion.

On the contrary, the second pastor sees value in good administration and management of the affairs of his own church. The fact that he decided to take courses in management and financial administration suggests that he is probably open-minded and forward looking. Such a pastor moves with the times and would not struggle to become aware of the needs in the community around him, and to engage the church in such.

3.3 The ever-changing religious landscape

Much has been written on the commercialisation and commodification of religion as one of the major challenges that churches face today. Pentecostalism is no different as it is equally affected by this development. Masenya and Masenya (2019) consider these trends as the possible cause of the many church splits and breakaways today. Church breakaways cause instability in the lives of members, families, and communities at large. The untold suffering of community members at the hands of unscrupulous pastors is well documented. Members are fed snakes and dog-meat, trampled upon, forced to drink petrol, sprayed with insecticides, and subjected to similar inhuman treatments (Kgatle, 2020:85).

The teachings of the prosperity gospel are popular and widespread the world over today. This is the type of materialistic gospel (Mashau & Kgatle, 2019:1) that promises its members prosperity should they give generously to the church. It promises healing and wealth to its adherents if they give (mainly monetary contributions) to the church and its leader. Resane (2017:4) views this type of arrangement as a celebrity cult type of gospel. Members are encouraged to give more by emulating their leader who possesses flashy cars, houses, and money. When the members give in such a manner they actually further enrich the pastor in his/her personal capacity and the actions of such a leader are not questioned as he/she is deemed to be representing God. On this issue, Resane (op.cit) states:

Celebrity cult in this context refers to the elevation of a leader to some high status of beauty, achievement, prestige and power. The Christian community is subtly and subliminally expected to blindly promote and embrace this personality or character. The success is based on properties such as auditorium, vehicles, and personal adornment such as tailor-made outfits, jewellery etc. The number of followers further enhances this appearance, and the leisure the leader enjoys because of contributions given by congregants.

The report by the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities on the commercialisation of religion in South Africa reveals that it is common for splinter churches formed by breakaway groups to exploit their members. One point raised is that:

Not only were church leaders charging congregants a “consultation fee” before giving them blessings or praying for them, but they were also running fully operational shops where holy water, oil, and clothing were sold to congregants at marked-up prices (Masenya & Masenya, 2019:634).

A pastor that takes advantage of the congregation members cannot be regarded as a missional one. Such a pastor does not have the welfare of the community at heart and therefore he/she cannot be seen as advancing the cause of members and of the community at large.

3.4 Diverse membership

In its early days, members of the Pentecostal movement were mainly the poor and people of lowly status such as disenfranchised people, peasants, artisans, and labourers. Nel (2019:2) and others claim that the challenges faced by these groups, some of which are linked to urbanisation and social discontent, drove them to Pentecostalism in a bid to find solace there. This is no longer the case as converts

from other socio-economic classes like the middle and upper classes now join Pentecostalism as well.

Writing on the Nigerian situation, Akanbi and Dreyer (2017:2) are of the opinion that Christian students' movements added to the exponential growth of Pentecostalism and the diverse nature of the church today:

It was the entry of Pentecostalism into institutions of higher learning... that triggered the spread of the movement in the country as educated youths with widened horizons of experience with their educational attainment promoted this new trend (Pentecostalism) in Nigerian Christianity.

That a pastor in the Pentecostal movement is expected "to lead more diverse congregations than it was the case in the past" was highlighted in previous studies (Masenya, 2014:183). This creates a problem for pastors, as members with conflicting ideas do not always agree on church matters. Handling issues which affect the church and the community where there are the poor and the rich, the educated and the not-so-educated, as well as other dichotomies, can be a hot potato in the hands of the pastor. For example, an accountant in the church would like to see the financial records handled in line with sound accounting principles. Likewise, a doctor would emphasise good hygiene, while other members may see every sickness as emanating from a demonic attack. Again, heated disputes do ensue in congregations where a pastor would deviate from the parliamentary running of meetings under the guise that such an approach is 'worldly' and 'not spiritual'.

Duncan, Flesher and Stocks (1999) use their expertise in the accounting science field to show that internal control management procedures are as important for non-profit organisations like churches as they are for for-profit organisations in the private sector. Churches need some measure of control to safeguard assets, to promote accuracy and reliability in the accounting records, to encourage and measure compliance with company policies, and to evaluate the efficiency of operations (Duncan, Flesher & Stocks, 1999:143-144). The authors are however aware of the difficulties of implementing these control systems in the context of a church and that mismanagement in churches leading to crimes like theft may be attributed to a weak system that "relies mainly on faith to control the flow of cash" (op. cit.:145).

The pastor in settings such as outlined above—more often than not—faces a difficult choice of making decisions based on the belief system within the church or trying to benefit from secular systems of control which work properly in fiduciary responsibilities and choosing proper control over organisational control in other fields.

The question of whether decisions that the Pentecostal pastor takes based on the known systems of control (which are seen as secular) or on the spiritual ten-

ets (which are seen as sacred) remains in such circumstances. In the past, some pastors in the Pentecostal tradition, for example, the Reverend Frank Chikane, were exorcised from their positions for fighting against the atrocities of segregation, oppression, and the like during their time. In other words, such pastors were barred from becoming missional pastors and encouraged to concentrate only on the preaching of the gospel. Such an approach does not help the holistic development and advancement agenda of communities, which is the focus of this article.

Deficiency in training and the inability of pastors to reach out to the community due to ignorance of such responsibilities limit the pastor from responding to the needs of the community.

4. Promoting the status of a missional pentecostal pastor

Based on literature and the ongoing debate about the role of a serving pastor, one can conclude that there is an awareness that a Pentecostal pastor, in addition to localised church responsibilities and activities, should play a significant role in the community to advance its course in real-life issues. Being guided by church polity and personal convictions in going about his/her work will determine whether a pastor will accomplish this important task. Thus, being cognisant of these facts and the hurdles in the way of a pastor's job—outlined in the previous section—this section deals with a few pointers which could help a pastor to become the kind of missional pastor any community would so dearly desire. Issues that will be discussed include candidature for pastoral calling, revisiting initial pastoral training programmes, borrowing from others, and enlisting the corporate world for help.

4.1 Candidature for Pastoral Calling

The calibre of a prospective pastoral trainee will largely determine his/her future performance as a qualified pastor. There was a general perception that candidates that are below par often decide to go into ministry. This happens, it is believed, when these candidates have tried other avenues of work opportunity and found none. Given the high competition between the private sector and the church regarding the enrolment of first time matriculants in their institutions, it is possible to settle for less qualified candidates. As Nürnberger has observed; “The best academic potential is creamed off. . . and the church is left with the leftovers that find no other employment opportunity and join the ministry for opportunistic reasons” (Masenya, 2014:37).

To confirm the possibility of enrolling candidates who may not be suitable for ministry, one participant responded to the question on pre-selection processes in a study conducted on the initial management training of pastors as follows:

I do not think it is a rigorous thing...you just fill in the form and they ask a couple of questions about you and they find out your background...

Different commentators agree that to produce a good enough leader in today's society, institutions should be mindful of the social agenda and have a pool of intelligentsia from which these leaders will be groomed and nurtured. It is therefore incumbent on Pentecostal churches to take pre-selection processes seriously and to conduct rigorous selection tests in order to enrol the right candidates who can attend to societal ills within the communities they serve. The following thought by a younger participant who was already in his third year of study at a seminary at the time of the study referred to above gives hope that there are still young and vibrant prospective candidates for ministry that communities can pin their hopes on. This is in addition to younger people who leave well paying positions to follow ministry, as the author contacted one recently who said:

*I think if you are definitely called... and
In that case, we believe that the first thing, obviously if the person wants to go into ministry, must be a clear call.*

4.2 Revisiting Initial Pastoral Training Programmes

It was shown in the preceding paragraphs that the training of pastors at the seminaries is generally perceived as below the expected standard. On the other hand, the important role that these pastors play in communities cannot be questioned as the former Secretary of the United Nations, Kofi Annan (quoted by Masenya, 2014:150-151) indicated. In his keynote address at the 11th Tutu lecture in Cape Town, he noted that:

There is a crucial role here for Africa's religious leaders in promoting tolerance and understanding of our common humanity. We need them, at every opportunity, to denounce violence, and discrimination, including on the grounds of sexuality. Perhaps above all, they must welcome and safeguard the freedoms of all faiths, not just their own.

The above statement emphasises the importance of well-grounded and well-rounded religious leaders (the pastors in particular) who are able to advance the welfare of communities. The promotion of tolerance and good leadership displayed by spiritual leaders cannot be overemphasised in the context of a world ravaged by terrorism, wars, corrupt leadership, political in-fights, poverty and intolerance. Institutions tasked with the training of pastors should embark on proper training to

have leaders of this calibre. According to Annan, such leaders are a rare breed and communities need them to prosper.

It is important to bear the above in mind when seminaries prepare their training programmes. For example, the Community Needs Responsive Management Training Model (CNRMTM) was suggested in a study which focused on an improved programme at Pentecostal seminaries and which included administrative and management courses in the training of pastors (Masenya, 2014). The course structure of this model includes the following facets:

- Core subjects (Theological Education)
- Basic Training (Foundational Education)
- Compulsory Subjects (Vocational Education)
- Electives/Informal Training (Community Responsive)

Curriculum specialists emphasise the need for a curriculum to mirror the life of the community it is designed for and to be responsive to its needs. It is hoped that the suggested inclusion of electives like Gender Studies, HIV and AIDS Studies, Urban and Rural Development Studies, Poverty Eradication, Conflict Resolution, Additional African Language, and Basic Bookkeeping will open a whole range of possibilities in the initial training programmes for pastors. In that way, graduate pastors may feel more prepared to respond to community needs as expected.

An improved curriculum can benefit serving pastors when they enrol for in-service training programmes. A pastor should indeed be prepared to be a life-long learner.

4.3 Borrowing from Others and Enlisting the Corporate World for Help

“Borrowing from others” and “turning to the corporate world for help” are expressions used in studies relating to church management and other fields of management today (Chatira & Mwenje, 2018; Duncan, Flesher & Stocks, 1999; Masenya, 2020). “Borrowing from others”, is a management strategy which was initiated by Storberg-Walker in 2007. Her article titled *Borrowing from Others: Appropriating Capital Theories for “Doing” HRD* discusses the possibility of borrowing and appropriating theories from other fields of specialisation such as management, education, economics, public policy or political science for application in the field of Human Resource Development (HRD). The thinking espoused here is that management practices, which proved to be successful in other fields of specialisation, may be applied to practices in other fields. The old adage; “after all, management is management” applies here and scholars show that available and useful insights can be interchanged across different fields. It comes as no surprise therefore that scholars in theology and related fields freely employ educational themes like “quality” and “transformational and transactional leadership” in their writings (Carter, 2009; Jones, 1993).

Chatira and Mwenje (2018), authors from the business management field, support the idea that management principles are universal and thus can be applied from one field to the next. It is their opinion that “the other way for pastors to develop management skills is by adopting management principles from the secular world. . . it is already apparent that increasing numbers of pastors are influenced by business publications because the lessons taken from these publications are being incorporated in their ministries”. If such skills are introduced and developed during their foundational years of learning, pastors will be well positioned to manage the ministry effectively and to be leaders of note in their communities.

Related to the above scenario is when the churches intentionally turn to the corporate world to get help on management issues in a bid to improve and refine the management and administrative skills of those in leadership positions like pastors. This approach is so widespread today that church organisations follow its application in their management and administrative endeavours. Chandler’s article titled *The 21st Century Church: Pastors Turning to Corporate America for Help*, clearly shows that those who advocate this approach are unapologetic about eliciting such help regardless of the possibility of being criticised for obtaining ideas from a sector known to be in opposition to the tenets of institutions such as churches. The trend is gaining momentum today and its adherents believe that it is the ‘necessary evil’ as “old ways of doing ministry are not working in a ‘post-modern world’, where the “centers [and] middles are not holding” (Masenya, 2020:182). It is not uncommon to find different institutions which make efforts to organise events in which speakers who are known for their management and administrative flair are invited to share their knowledge.

Other scholars like Martin (2020) disagree with the idea that the church can learn from business and the corporate world which he refers to as “worldly systems”. He equates having a structure similar to a corporate structure, like what he calls a pastor CEO, as moving from the teachings of Scripture. Opponents of borrowing ideas from others, like Martin, believe that those who do that “have abandoned the model of leadership practiced in the New Testament in exchange of (*sic*) a corporate based and consumer structure” which contradicts biblical tenets.

I tend to agree with those who support the idea of borrowing skills and getting help from other fields in the sense of taking the good and using it for the advancement and wellbeing of the people. The following summary by Chatira and Mwenje (2018:118) stresses the idea of borrowing skills from other fields of study—the author of the current article agrees that pastors can benefit from other fields by enhancing their managerial skills and being open-minded to contribute to the development of the community in general:

The management theory applied in business can be generalized to extend to the church as well. The adoption of some secular management principles and practices into the church systems can lead to ministry effectiveness. Furthermore, management skills development in pastoral preparation programs can lead to effective church management.

5. Conclusion

Pentecostal pastors play an important role in denominational affairs and they should be conscious of their role in contributing to the pertinent needs of the communities where they serve. Missional pastors need to be responsive to the needs of the community. However, a missional pastor may encounter various obstacles such as unpreparedness for the task, a personal negative attitude towards becoming progressive, the world that is in constant change, and a diverse membership with conflicting worldviews. Being aware of his/her missional role, a pastor can take advantage of improved programmes at seminaries, borrowing and eliciting help from other fields to bolster this role for the advancement of the church, the society, and humanity at large.

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