A Critical Study of the Newfrontiers Apostolic Network and the Impact of the Transfer of Leadership on Structure, Unity and Mission

by

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted to any institution for a degree.

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ABSTRACT

Newfrontiers is a modern apostolic network of churches. It not only has its origin in and developed from the apostolic gift of Terry Virgo, but also grew rapidly into an international movement based on Virgo's apostolic ministry and an 'apostolic team' of Ephesians 4:11 ministries he had established. As Virgo approached his later years, the international apostolic network faced the question of apostolic succession. A decision was made to release several new apostolic spheres under new apostolic leadership. This amounted to the multiplication of the erstwhile single apostolic sphere into several apostolic spheres rather than simply replacing Virgo with one apostle and maintaining Newfrontiers as a single apostolic sphere. The latter has been the approach of the modern apostolic network known as New Covenant Ministries International, which has led to that movement splintering into several independent apostolic spheres. Newfrontiers has expressed the hope that the Newfrontiers spheres will remain relationally and organically connected as a movement in order to avoid becoming a bureaucratically formalised organisation. The aim of the study is to analyse Newfrontiers' transition and the factors that had an impact on Newfrontiers' transition. It compares the dynamics of Newfrontiers' transition with biblical teaching on apostolic succession in the Pastoral Epistles and applies Peppler's Christocentric principle to the Gospel of Matthew. Bridges' theories on how to manage leadership transitions in organisations are used to further evaluate Newfrontiers' leadership transition, whether the transition conformed to Bridges' principles of best practice. Together, these methods form the lenses through which the impact of Newfrontiers' leadership transition on the mission, unity and structure of the movement is evaluated. The study concludes that the multiplication of Newfrontiers into several new spheres is indeed in accordance with the leadership teachings of the Pastoral Epistles and Peppler's Christocentric principle. It shows that Newfrontiers could have done better if it had a specific transition plan in place for the period of transition from the old situation to the new. The question of whether women can be apostles and elders is also raised, together with how the lack of female engagement in the process at the highest decision-making level may have affected it. Finally, there is also the question of whether Newfrontiers' sense of theological and

ecclesiological certainty, its call to pioneer the restoration of the church to its New Testament glory, and the movement's male bias might produce a movement that is cognitively closed to outside theological and ecclesiological perspectives and therefore may not remain receptive to changes that would sustain the movement in future.

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Chapter One

Introduction to the Study

1. Background

The apostolic team of New Covenant Ministries International (henceforth 'NCMI')[1] comprises men and women who have been acknowledged by an apostle, members of the apostolic team and church leaders as having one or more of the gifts recorded in Ephesians 4:11,[2] whether apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and/or teacher.[3] NCMI has a policy of clearly defining who is on the apostolic team through public appointment and a list of the names of the apostolic team members. The NCMI apostolic team is, therefore, seen as a clearly defined single entity.

On the retirement of Dudley Daniel due to ill-health in 2006, the founding apostle of NCMI, his son Tyrone Daniel was appointed to succeed him as the single presiding apostle of the entire movement. This raised several theological and practical questions about apostolic succession, for example, whether the unity of a modern apostolic movement remains intact when the original apostle is succeeded by one apostle who is unavoidably not going to be regarded as apostolic by all the original churches of the movement. It also raised the question of the impact it will have on the structure and mission of the movement.

To put things more in perspective, NCMI had been formed around the apostolic gift of the founding apostle Dudley Daniel. It was essentially a network of

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[1] NCMI emerged around 1982, at roughly the same time as the Newfrontiers apostolic network of churches, as a charismatic and apostolic movement.

[2] Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

[3] There is debate over whether this list comprises four or five gifts (Daniel 1989; Virgo 1985). The five gifts interpretation is preferred. The debate is also considered as peripheral to the study and would not be pertinent to this thesis.

relationships developed around and through his team of Ephesians 4:11 ministries and local churches that accepted him as an apostle. Up to that point in time, the development of the NCMI apostolic movement had been organic and was a relationally based structure of church leadership. With the succession of a single apostle in 2006, a growing institutionalisation in the NCMI apostolic movement became quite evident. A core principle of NCMI as a movement was that the Ephesians 4:11 ministries and churches had to be seen in a relational and organic way as it was originally accepted by the founding apostle.[4] The apostolic team and all the local churches were then expected to change their view of the nature of that relationship and form an allegiance with an apostle who had been appointed as successor by the founding apostle and his team.[5] That means that the institutional change was in total contrast to the founding principle of succession based on voluntary association and relationships with the founding apostle.

The fact is that Dudley Daniel's son Tyrone Daniel and others, who were part of the NCMI apostolic team, had not pursued a policy to acknowledge, endorse and release some of the apostolic ministries that had clearly emerged among the NCMI apostolic team to form and lead apostolic spheres. As a result, it led to disappointment among a significant number of the members of the then NCMI apostolic team. They had hoped for the multiplication of NCMI into several apostolic spheres and more organic growth of the movement instead of

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[4] This would be true of many of the modern apostolic networks formed at present, for example, Newfrontiers, Salt and Light, New Covenant Ministries, Pioneer People and Cornerstone.

[5] This could be construed as nepotism, but Daniel's son had been acknowledged by several of the members of the apostolic team as having an apostolic gift. The question was whether all the relating churches would consider him as apostolic leader. In 1 Corinthians 9:2, Paul wrote, 'Even though I may not be an apostle to others, surely I am to you!' (NIV). This implies that even the Apostle Paul, although an apostle, was not acknowledged by all the local churches to be an apostle to them. The issue with NCMI was that it was presumed that all the churches would simply accept Daniel's son as apostle to them. The reality turned out to be that some of the churches did indeed acknowledged him as apostle but a significant number of churches did not, hence the fragmentation of the NCMI movement.

replacing the founding apostle with one apostle to oversee the entire movement.

The difficulties that NCMI experienced were observed by Terry Virgo, the founder of Newfrontiers. Conversations Virgo had with some members of the NCMI apostolic team provided him insight into what occurred in NCMI (Interview 7, 2012). Virgo stated that this had an impact on how Newfrontiers proceeded with its transition in apostolic leadership. In contrast to NCMI's decision to appoint a single apostle to succeed the founding apostle and thereby remain a single apostolic sphere, Newfrontiers chose to pursue the principle of acknowledging, endorsing and releasing emerging apostles to multiply Newfrontiers into several new apostolic spheres.

In 2008, Mark Driscoll, a mega-church leader from Seattle, Washington State (USA), was a guest speaker at the Newfrontiers International Conference in Brighton. He declared publicly that he believed God required Newfrontiers to search for and appoint Virgo's successor. Virgo and the Newfrontiers apostolic team took that declaration very seriously (Interview 7, 2012). They immediately committed themselves to prayer and serious reflection on the issue. The conclusion they quite quickly reached was that Virgo was not to be succeeded by a single individual but by several emerging apostles that should be acknowledged and recommended publicly, and that local churches should be encouraged to decide for themselves which of those they wish to consider as apostle to them. In this regard, Virgo (Newfrontiers 2011:5) wrote at the time, 'I commend them to you as men worthy of being followed'. The process seems to have gone ahead relatively smoothly for Newfrontiers.

During an interview conducted with one of the Newfrontiers apostles, he expressed the belief that Newfrontiers have not 'lost' one church in the transition process from one apostolic sphere to multiple apostolic spheres (Interview 7, 2012). By contrast, 57%—16 of the 28—of the then NCMI apostolic team members left the movement. They were judged to be NCMI's most experienced and clearly acknowledged Ephesians 4:11 ministry leaders (Wienand 2012).

By way of summary, the impact of apostolic succession by a single apostle, as opposed to the multiplication of an apostolic movement into several new apostolic spheres, has the inherent danger of institutionalism and possibly the inevitable fragmentation of what has been this point in time essentially an organic modern apostolic movement with a network 'feel' (Hirsch 2006:179-216).

2. The Research Problem

The main research problem which this study takes as its point of departure, when formulated into a question, is as follows: How has the transfer of leadership from the founding apostle to multiple emerging apostles, each overseeing a new apostolic network of the original Newfrontiers network, affected the structure, unity and mission of Newfrontiers? To answer the main research question, the study has been guided by the following six subsidiary questions:

(1)　How has the leadership of the Newfrontiers apostolic network transitioned from the founding apostle to the next generation of emerging apostles?

(2)　What are the various factors underlying the Newfrontiers' approach to apostolic succession?

(3)　What lessons could be learned from an exegetical study of Paul's teaching in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus on leadership and their implications for the transition from a key apostle to the next generation of emerging apostles?

(4)　How does Peppler's Christocentric principle inform apostolic succession?[6]

(5)　What can be learned from the social sciences, such as sociology or psychology, about best practices regarding organisational change and leadership transitions from one form of leadership to another?

(6)　Do Scripture and the social sciences suggest a better way to transition apostleship than the one followed by Newfrontiers?

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[6] Peppler's (2012) insight is that Christ's character, values, principles and priorities should be central in the evaluation of church praxis and is the critical hermeneutical principle in this thesis.

3. The Aim of the Study

The aim of this thesis is to examine (1) biblical teaching on apostolic succession in light of the Pastoral Epistles, (2) to establish and assess the impact of the leadership transition of Newfrontiers on its mission, unity and structure, (3) to establish whether the apostolic transition conforms to principles of best practice, and (4) to establish whether Newfrontiers could have done their transition better. The future effectiveness of apostolic movements after the tenure of their founding apostle will largely be determined by how leadership is transferred to the succeeding leaders. Newfrontiers is considered to be one of the most credible modern apostolic movements (Kay and Dyer 2005:4) and so lessons learnt from Newfrontiers should have value for other apostolic networks who will all experience the transition of leadership at some point of their existence.

4. The Value of the Study

The value of the study is two-fold. Firstly, since very little research seems to have been done on leadership transition in contemporary apostolic movements, lessons learnt from Newfrontiers should have value for other apostolic networks that will all experience transition difficulties at some point. Secondly, the essential value of this study is to provide an answer to the question of exactly how organic in nature apostolic ministry and apostolic networks really are. It is along this two-fold path that this study wishes to enlarge our knowledge and understanding of the dynamics involved in apostolic leadership succession in apostolic movements.

5. Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this study is that Newfrontiers' 'celebrated multiplication' model of apostolic succession has several implications for the structure, unity and mission of Newfrontiers. Firstly, it is believed that it could result in the dissolution of the Newfrontiers movement as a single entity into several new apostolic movements. Those in Newfrontiers that have been interviewed do not seem to see this clearly at this stage of the development of the movement.

Secondly, it will be contended that local church leaders in the movement will experience interpersonal tension and personal struggles as they have to discard the present regionalisation of Newfrontiers under the overall, strong and clear leadership of Virgo, the founding apostle. They will instead be required to identify one of the emerging apostles as apostolic leader of their local church. Thirdly, the study contends that an initial retardation in mission and church planting will occur, but after a settling period during which local churches decide which new apostolic movement they are a part of, the mission of the church and church planting will accelerate. Finally, the manner of transition, while promoting continuity with the past and newness for the future, will sustain the ethos of Newfrontiers. Rather than holding on to the name, longevity and identity of the founding apostolic movement, the movement will multiply in an organic fashion rather than in an institutional-hierarchical fashion.

6. Delimitation of the Research Project

It will not be part of the study to research the validity of the contemporary apostle in Pentecostal or Charismatic churches. That has been done elsewhere (Daniel 1989:37-47; Devenish 2011:15-36; Driscoll and Breshears 2008:39; Eaton 1995:72-76; Williams 1996, 3:164-170; Smyth 2004:8; Virgo 1985:132-141). The validity of the apostolic office is, therefore, assumed. Furthermore, biblical research will be limited to references to Paul's preparation of Timothy and Titus to continue the work that Paul had begun, given Paul's expectation of his own imminent death (2 Tim 4:6). Thomas Hollinger (2013:158) says, the Apostle Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus establish the foundational scriptures for leadership development and succession planning and that 'Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus provide particularly revealing attributes regarding the selection and development processes used by the early church for establishing and perpetuating competent, values-based leadership' (p.157).

7. Definition of Terms

The following terms will be employed throughout the thesis.

Apostle: An apostle is a person who is an Ephesians 4:11 ministry gift to the church and it is taken for granted that this ministry continues to this day (Daniel 1989:37-47; Devenish 2011, ch 2; Driscoll and Breshears 2008:39; Eaton 1995:72-76; Williams 1996:25; Smyth 2004:8; Virgo 1983:132-141).

Apostolic sphere: This is a term used by Newfrontiers to denote the new apostolic networks that have formed out of the original Newfrontiers apostolic network. Alternate terms have been used to refer to the same phenomenon such as, 'Catalyst', 'ChristCentral', 'Relational Mission' and so on. They are each led by an apostle with a team of Ephesians 4:11 ministers and are representatives of the network of local churches that consider the apostle to be their apostolic leader.

Apostolic succession: This phrase is not meant to be understood in terms of the doctrine of apostolic succession of the Roman Catholic Church but the process whereby the founding apostle of a modern apostolic movement begins to transition himself out of his central and pivotal role with the aim of handing on the 'baton' to the apostle or apostles who will succeed him.

Apostolic team: Apostolic teams comprise men who are invited to serve with and aid an apostle in the full scope of his ministry (Devinish 2011:21). This team will often include people who are one of the other Ephesians 4:11 ministry gifts.

Celebrated multiplication: This term is coined by the researcher and is used to refer to a certain approach to apostolic succession. Apostolic leadership multiplication is celebrated by the movement and is regarded as evidence of the fruitfulness of the ministry of the founding apostle.

Newfrontiers: The Newfrontiers apostolic network refers to an apostolic movement founded in Britain by Terry Virgo circa 1979 (Kay 2008:36). Virgo wrote about Newfrontiers and their 'Together on a Mission' national conference as follows: 'So apostolic churches are caught up "together on a mission". That's not just the name of a conference, it's who we are! We are nations, crossing

borders, entering, moving on, trying to recapture Biblical Christianity' (Virgo 2009g).

Organic: This term refers to movements that 'do not have centralised institutions to block growth through control … movements [that] have the feel of a movement, have structure as a network and spread like viruses' (Hirsch 2006:25). In an organic apostolic movement, the ministries mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 refer to spiritual gifts that individuals *are* as opposed to appointment of individuals into positions in an organisational hierarchy. Furthermore, 'organic' means that almost every person within the movement believes in and carries the 'DNA'[7] of the movement and seeks to advance the agenda of that movement without the need of top-down motivation (Brafman and Beckstrom 2006). 'Organic' would also mean that there is no such thing as emerging apostles having to wait for either the death or the retirement of an existing apostle in order to be able to fully exercise their own apostolic gifting. These apostolic gifts are acknowledged at an early stage of leadership in the church, cultivated and then released into full ministry so that the movement multiplies laterally and organically rather than through promotion through the hierarchy found in an institution (Hirsch 2006:21-26).

8. The Central Assumption of the Study

The assumption that underlies the study is that the ministry of the contemporary apostle is biblically valid, therefore, that the role of the apostle amongst the Ephesians 4:11 ministries is pivotal for the church's growth into maturity (cf. Eph 4:12; 1 Cor 12:28).

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[7] This term is used purely as a metaphor in the way that Hirsch (2006) and Brafman and Beckstrom (2006) mean people carrying within them the essence or core values of what a movement is about.

9. Research Design and Methodology

The 'Case Study' model of Nancy Vyhmeister (2001:143-151) is used to structure the research design. The model comprises a four-part structure of observation, analysis, interpretation and action. Although a case study does not lend itself to generalisation, it will have a resonance with other apostolic networks facing a transition in apostolic leadership.

9.1. The structure of Vyhmeister's case study model.

In this section, Vyhmeister's four-part structure is expanded on and described.

9.1.1. Observation: How have Newfrontiers transitioned leadership from the founding apostle to the next generation of apostles and how has this affected structure, unity and mission?

Observation was carried out in the following ways:

(1)   Information was collected on how Newfrontiers approached apostolic leadership succession, how the best way forward was conceived, and how the discussion was viewed by the respondent. Data was also collected on how the actual succession was conducted by those involved.

(2)   Data was collected on how the growth, confidence and effectiveness of emerging apostles and other Ephesians 4:11 ministries have influenced the way Newfrontiers dealt with succession.

(3)   The leaders of churches that form part of the Newfrontiers movement were consulted about the effects on their churches due to succession.

(4)   The effect of apostolic succession on mission and church planting in Newfrontiers was investigated.

The next stage of the research design was to analyse what had been personally observed.

9.1.2. Analysis: What are the factors underlying the approach of Newfrontiers to apostolic succession?

The analysis was carried out through an analysis of

(1)   the theology that has shaped Newfrontiers' approach to succession,
(2)   the sociological influences on Newfrontiers, and
(3)   the psychology of leadership within Newfrontiers.

The study then moved on to interpret the 'thick description' (Dingemans 1996:82-96) of the Newfrontiers' leadership transition and the information gleaned through the analysis stage of the research.

9.1.3. Interpretation: What do Scripture, the Christocentric principle of Peppler and the social sciences suggest ought to have happened?

The following points were taken into consideration:

(1)   The Apostle Paul is the clearest example of a post-ascension apostle.[8] The biblical account of his preparation for the termination of his apostolic ministry and his preparation of his apostolic successors is deemed to be a source of information on apostolic succession. The insights gained from the study of Paul's apostolic succession were then applied to Newfrontiers' transition.
(2)   How the Christocentric principle of Peppler could have influenced the apostolic succession in Newfrontiers.
(3)   Learning from studies on transition in organisations.

The foregoing interpretations of the collected data brought the study into its final stage where the insights of the study are used to suggest ways Newfrontiers' apostolic leadership transition could have been improved.

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[8] That is, *after* the ascension of Jesus Christ (Gal 1:1; 1 Cor 15:8).

9.1.4. Action: How can the insights of section 9.1.3 be applied to apostolic succession in a contemporary apostolic movement?

The following points were considered in the application of the insights gained under point 9.1.1 to 9.1.3.

(1) The application of the biblical emphases on apostolic leadership succession with particular reference to Paul's teaching in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus to the transition of Newfrontiers.

(2) How Peppler's Christocentric principle can be applied to the apostolic succession of Newfrontiers.

(3) How the insights from studies on leadership transition in organisations might have helped to improve the Newfrontiers' apostolic succession process.

9.2. Research methodology

Using Newfrontiers as case study required the gathering of field information about its apostolic leadership transition. It was decided to do this through a tick-box survey questionnaire for a random sample of the lead-elders of Newfrontiers in the United Kingdom and interviews with these leaders and apostolic team members. Besides that, a 'participant-as-observer' role (Osmer 2008:60) was adopted in personal conversations of leaders with Virgo and at Newfrontiers events. It is to that process that we turn to next.

9.2.1. The survey questionnaire

The questions in the questionnaire were determined by first considering which subjects were to be targeted during the leadership transition of an apostolic movement and then establishing the most appropriate questions to probe those subjects for answers. Six subject areas were chosen for the purpose of investigating:

(1) the effect of the transition on the unity of the movement;

(2)   the effect of transition on the diversity of the movement;

(3)   the effect of transition on the structure of the movement;

(4)   the clarity with which the various church leaders understood where they fitted into the new structure;

(5)   the effect of the transition on mission in the movement; and

(6)   the clarity on how church leaders and apostolic team leaders perceived themselves during the transition process.

Questions were then formulated around these six subject areas in an attempt to ask similar questions in slightly different ways at different points in the survey and to check for the veracity of previous answers. The questions pertaining to each subject area were randomly interspersed so that the subject areas from which the questions were derived would not be obvious (see Figure 1 below). In this way the respondents would be unaware of the subject areas which the questions were probing, thus preventing them from answering what they think they should rather than spontaneously.

The questionnaire was then tested on two Newfrontiers pastors in Reading, Berkshire, to see whether they understood the questions and whether the questions were worded correctly to draw out the information that was being sought. Their feedback caused some questions to be amended and some questions to be added.

Proportional, stratified, random sampling was conducted to obtain the sample population (Leedy 1993:185-220). A church namelist of all the Newfrontiers churches and leaders in the UK was obtained from Virgo's administrator. The list was randomised by allocating each church entry a number and then randomising the numbers using the feature in Microsoft Excel. Linking the columns to the numbers resulted in the randomising of the church list.

The next step was to take the first thirty-three churches on the randomised list and email the leaders of those churches a questionnaire to complete. They were requested to complete the survey as representative of their eldership team, if they had one. The survey took about ten minutes to complete. They

were also requested to complete the survey, save it and then to return it via email.

Of the thirty-three questionnaires that were forwarded to the respondents, seventeen completed copies were returned. That is a 52% return-rate. The reasons for the non-returns would appear to be (a) that the surveys were sent at a less than optimal time of year for church leaders (June-July), since they are occupied with the conclusion of the United Kingdom 'church year'; (b) some of the email addresses could have been out of date; and (c) some of the church leaders had no email address and subsequent contact attempted through the church website proved fruitless.

	QUESTIONNAIRE FOR NEWFRONTIERS CHURCH ELDERS PLEASE CHECK ONE BOX TO THE RIGHT OF EACH STATEMENT	I disagree strongly	I disagree somewhat	Neutral	I agree somewhat	I agree strongly
1	This has been a positive step for Newfrontiers.				x	
2	The majority of the apostles appointed by Terry Virgo to succeed him were obvious to us as an eldership.				x	
3	Newfrontiers' should remain a single umbrella movement.			x		
4	I am clear as to who is on whose apostolic team.		x			
5	In the light of the prior regionalisation of Newfrontiers churches, the release of other apostles has caused us a dilemma in terms of who we look to as apostolic to our local church.				x	
6	The momentum of church planting in Newfrontiers has been unaffected.				x	
7	We are clear as to where we as a local church fit in the new structure (spheres) of Newfrontiers.					x
8	We feel as much part of Newfrontiers as we ever have					x
9	We are clear on who the apostles are that Terry Virgo has recognised and released.					x
10	Our church looks primarily to one of the new apostolic spheres.					x
11	We are totally supportive of this new chapter for Newfrontiers.					x
12	Our involvement as a local church in mission *through* the wider Newfrontiers movement is as strong as ever.					x
13	It is clear to us how we are connected to the other apostolic spheres.					x
14	This whole process has been transparent and openly conducted.					x
15	When choosing an apostolic sphere, relationship with the apostle is more important to us than geography (where he is based).				x	
16	We will financially support both our new primary apostolic sphere *and* a central Newfrontiers fund.	x				
17	Newfrontiers' newly released apostolic spheres should be free to each have their own name.					x
18	We are clear as to who, amongst the apostles Terry has appointed, is apostolic to our church in this new chapter.					x
19	We strongly believe that the name 'Newfrontiers' should be kept as the overall name of the movement.				x	
20	Our local church is as actively engaged in mission *through* Newfrontiers as it has ever been.				x	
21	Our church would look to more than one of the new apostles as a source of apostolic input.		x			
22	We feel we have had input into the Newfrontiers transition process.			x		
23	We're clear as to who is on the apostolic team in the sphere that our church primarily looks to.					x
24	All the new apostolic teams should have the same vision statement as the vision statement of Newfrontiers before these changes.			x		
25	As elders in Newfrontiers we feel that we have had an active participation in this process of identifying and recognising emerging apostles.			x		
26	Newfrontiers will remain a single movement into the future.		x			
27	Our local church is as engaged in mission *through* Newfrontiers now than before the changes to Newfrontiers.				x	
28	A church will be planted out of our local church within the next 12 months.				x	
29	Terry Virgo's new role is clear to me.			x		
30	Members of apostolic spheres other than our primary apostolic sphere will minister into our church.				x	
31	We will financially support our new primary apostolic sphere rather than a central Newfrontiers fund.					x
32	The flow of communication and information to us from Newfrontiers is excellent.			x		
33	The primary criterion for us in choosing an apostolic sphere is geography.		x			

Figure 1. Sample of the survey questionnaire for Newfrontiers lead-elders

9.2.2. The analysis of the survey

The responses to the survey were analysed by grouping the questions together under their respective subject areas, namely, unity, structure, 'knowing where we fit in', mission, diversity and involvement. The answers were scored -2 for 'I disagree strongly', -1 for 'I disagree somewhat', 0 for 'Neutral', +1 for 'I agree somewhat' and +2 for 'I agree strongly' (see Figure 2).

The respondents were simply numbered 1 to 16 in order to protect the confidentiality of their answers.

UNITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Q. 1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	-1	2	1	2	1	2	2	2
Q. 8	1	0	1	2	2	2	-1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	-1	2
Q. 11	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	2	2	1	2	2	2	2
Q. 19	0	-1	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	-1	1	0	2	2	2	2
Q. 30	2	2	0	2	0	-2	1	-1	-1	1	1	-2	2	0	1	2
Q. 32	0	0	1	2	0	-1	0	-2	-1	0	0	-2	-2	0	-1	1

Figure 2. Table of scores. Example table for questions on unity and diversity.

The responses to each question in each of the main subject areas were depicted in graph form. In the area of 'Unity', questions 1, 8, 11, 19, 30 and 32 pertained (see Figure 3 below for the graph of the responses to question 1). A graph was produced for the responses to every question.
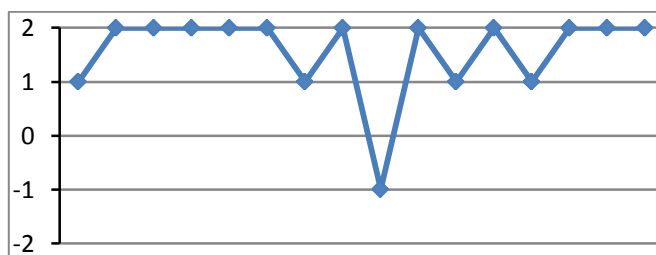
-2 (I disagree strongly); -1 (I disagree somewhat); 0 (Neutral); 1 (I agree somewhat); 2 (I agree strongly).

Figure 3. Graph of responses to question 1.

9.2.3. The interview questions

A separate set of interview questions was compiled for church leaders and based on that, questions for the previous Newfrontiers apostolic team leaders and/or new emerging apostolic sphere leaders. Four lead-elders and five apostolic team members were interviewed.

9.2.4. Personal observation

Personal observation of the researcher as participant-observer of the apostolic movement stretches over a period of more than twenty-five years. During this period many relationships with Newfrontiers apostolic team members and church leaders at Newfrontiers events have been established.

9.2.5. Literature on the transition produced by Newfrontiers

A number of publications have been produced by leaders of Newfrontiers, particularly the apostolic team members of longer standing. These provide insight into the thinking and theology of the movement's leadership. Newfrontiers has its own website and has been used as the medium through which the thinking, theology, vision, direction and priorities of the movement, especially those of Virgo, are conveyed. The Newfrontiers magazine has served a similar purpose. Copies of every magazine have been sourced and proved a useful resource in that the magazine has been extensively used by the Newfrontiers apostolic team to communicate with local churches during the leadership transition.

9.3. Method of analysis

The raw data was analysed to see whether it could be broken down into themes, patterns, relationships and trends. This was done as objectively as possible, without trying to force the data to support a particularly favoured hypothesis. Reading of material on leadership transition in fields other than the church helped in the process.

9.4. Method of interpretation

The data collected was considered in the light of five important fields: biblical exegesis, systematic theology, sociology, psychology and studies in leadership transition. The first and second fields carry the greatest weight in order that this study be based on the Scriptures and Christology as far as possible. Sociology, psychology and leadership transition studies were consulted in order to shed further light on the subject albeit that these insights were treated as subsidiary to biblical and theological values.

An exegesis of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus was done and focused on the following question: What is there to be learned from Paul's teaching in the epistles to Timothy and Titus about transition leadership? Put differently, what can be learned from a key apostle about a transition from one generation of apostles to the next generation of emerging apostles? A study of Matthew's gospel, based on Peppler's Christocentric principle, was conducted to see how it would inform apostolic succession. Insights from leadership transition studies on best practice in organisations were incorporated into the process of the interpretation of the data.

9.5. Action methodology

Action planning involves a lot of reflection and humility in order to suggest a realistic future plan of action that could serve as an alternative to a current practise. It also involves consideration of what has emerged during the interpretation stage and how insights could shape strategy development and implementation. Caution was exercised to prevent generalisations from a single case study.

10. Study Outline and Chapter Overview

What has been described in the forgoing sections is the study problem and research questions, the design of the study, and the methodology to be applied in the next seven chapters. The next chapter, chapter two, represents the data

that was collected during observation of the Newfrontiers leadership transition from the founding apostle to the next generation of emerging apostles and how that affected the movement's structure, unity and mission. The sources used for that purpose are literary sources, blogs, talks found on the Newfrontiers website and the websites of Newfrontiers churches, as well as completed questionnaires and interviews that were conducted with Newfrontiers members. Chapter three comprises an analysis of the factors that shaped Newfrontiers' approach to apostolic succession. The aim is to understand the major influences on and the theology that has shaped Newfrontiers' approach to apostolic leadership succession. Chapter four explores the lessons that could be learnt from Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus about leadership and what their implications are for a key apostle's leadership transition to the next generation of emerging apostles. The method used comprises the use of commentaries on the Pastoral Epistles. In short, an attempt is made to identify some key principles of apostolic leadership succession. Chapter five examines how Peppler's Christocentric principle informs apostolic succession. The aim is to develop a Christocentric hermeneutical principle that could be applied to apostolic succession and the chapter's scope is confined to the Gospel of Matthew as a source for the application of the principle. Chapter six will present Bridges' theories of organisational change and how knowledge of these theories could have improved the implementation of the leadership succession in Newfrontiers. An attempt will be made to identify the relevant principles that have emerged through other avenues of research and apply them to apostolic succession. Chapter seven considers the impact of the Newfrontiers transition on the movement's mission, unity and structure. Chapter eight aims to answer the question, 'What could Newfrontiers have done differently?' It concludes with suggestions for possible improvements of the process. Chapter nine concludes the study with a summary and the implications of the study.

Chapter Two

The Newfrontiers Multiplication Model of Apostolic Succession: Its Effect on Structure, Unity and Mission

1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to describe the Newfrontiers leadership transition from the founding apostle to the next generation of emerging apostles and to indicate how the transition affected the movement's structure, unity and mission. The information

Firstly, the information gathered through interviews and the responses of people in the questionnaires that were forwarded to them by email. Secondly, the information gathered through personal observation during leaders' discussions of theology, culture and demography at Newfrontiers' national prayer and fasting meetings and attendance of leadership meetings and local church meetings. Thirdly, the information gathered during personal discussions with Terry Virgo, members of the apostolic team and leaders of local Newfrontiers churches. Finally, books, blog discussions, video recordings and articles in Newfrontiers magazines. The data from these sources has been arranged into nine headings, and it is to these that we now turn.

2. A Pivotal Moment for Newfrontiers

In July 2008, Mark Driscoll, the then pastor of the Mars Hill mega-church in Seattle, Oregon, was the guest speaker at the annual Newfrontiers international conference in Brighton called, 'Together on a Mission'. He brought a pivotal message for Newfrontiers. His message was that just as Virgo would look for a husband for his daughter, so the Newfrontiers movement should seek out a 'husband' to take on the leadership of the 'daughter' that Virgo had 'fathered', namely, the Newfrontiers movement. Virgo recalled Driscoll's words at that conference: 'Your founder is not getting any younger, and you need to honour

the future, not over-honour the founder.' Virgo then added, 'I believe God helped him to challenge us' (Virgo 2009b).

A central nucleus from within the wider Newfrontiers apostolic team took this message to be worthy of serious contemplation. This core team comprised Virgo, David Holden, David Devenish and Colin Baron[9] (Interview 7, 2012). Very quickly, however, they concluded that it was not God's will for Newfrontiers to be handed over to a single successor, but believed it to be the will of God that a number of emerging apostles be acknowledged and released. This would have the effect of multiplying Newfrontiers from one apostolic sphere under Virgo into several new apostolic spheres each under an emerging apostle (Interview 7, 28/12/2012).

Thus, in 2010 it was announced that that year's 'Together on a Mission' conference in Brighton would be the penultimate one, the last one to be held in 2011. The movement was informed that Virgo would be retiring from his role as overseer of the single apostolic movement called Newfrontiers and that the apostolic team's hope was that several new apostolic spheres would emerge from within Newfrontiers, hopefully remaining a unified group under the name of 'Newfrontiers'.[10]

At the penultimate conference referred to above, Virgo 'recommended'[11] men to the movement as men local church eldership teams might consider worthy of choosing to be the apostle to their church. They were not presented to the

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[9] This core team comprised a small group of Ephesians 4:11 ministries that Virgo had gathered from amongst the wider group of Ephesians 4:11 ministries in Newfrontiers (Interview 7, 2012). The team consisted of 'senior' members and served as the link between the regions and Virgo. This smaller team made the leadership of Newfrontiers by one man feasible.

[10] This was communicated to the movement in the Newfrontiers Magazine in an article by Virgo (2012) entitled 'The future of Newfrontiers. Part 2'.

[11] Virgo used the term to signal that these emerging apostles were not being foisted onto churches in the movement. Virgo and the apostolic team were merely giving fatherly advice out of much experience, the grace of their apostolic gift and their knowledge of these men. They were not dogmatic or emphatic that these were the apostles (Interview 7, 2012).

movement as designated leaders of apostolic spheres, but as *potential* apostolic sphere leaders. The elders of the local churches would 'vote with their feet'[12], as the saying goes, as they weighed up and discerned the ministries of these men (Interview 5, 2012).

3. The Preparation of Ephesians 4:11 Ministries

The people that Virgo recommended had emerged out of the lengthy history of Newfrontiers. From 1990 to 1993[13] Newfrontiers had conducted what the leadership referred to as 'TIM Training', meaning 'Training Itinerant Ministries'.[14] It denotes the training of leaders from Newfrontiers churches. These were leaders that were considered by the apostolic team to exemplify signs of possessing Ephesians 4:11 gifts. However, none of these trainees were designated as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors or teachers. Instruction on how to serve the churches itinerantly was provided, such as the kinds of things to observe, the principles to establish, and so on.

Besides the TIM Training, and well before Driscoll's personal word at the Brighton conference referred to above, Virgo and the international team convened what they called 'An Apostolic Forum'. They called for a gathering of leaders from the UK and from other nations in order to fellowship, pray for one another and to present theological papers on apostolic ministry. These papers dealt with topics such as 'What is the apostolic?' and 'What are essential ingredients of apostolic ministry?'. The training and discussion referred to here was conducted at a higher level than what Virgo calls 'the nuts and bolts training' of the TIM Training program (Interview 7, 2012).

Furthermore, when Virgo had relocated to the USA for two years to develop the Newfrontiers movement there, Newfrontiers in the UK, under the leadership of

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[12] It means people will go where they choose to go, regardless of where others think they might or might not go.

[13] Dates received from David Holden who led the TIM training (Email 03/09/2013).

[14] In Newfrontiers, 'Itinerant Ministries' is used as a synonym for Ephesians 4:11 leaders.

David Holden, had formed into a regional structure (Interview 9, 2012). Regional coordinators were appointed to coordinate church activities over clearly demarcated geographic regions, and the Newfrontiers churches were required to cooperate with the regional coordinator of their geographic region (Interview 1, 2012). The result was that the period of regionalisation provided opportunities for genuine Ephesians 4:11 ministries amongst the regional leaders to emerge and for their gifting to become more visible to all believers in Newfrontiers. When Newfrontiers made the decision to multiply the apostolic spheres, this regional system was abandoned.

With respect to the history of the development of Ephesians 4:11 ministries within Newfrontiers, Virgo also referred to a young leader, Simon Petit, an emerging apostle of Newfrontiers. In 1990, Petit relocated to Cape Town, South Africa, and was given a large degree of freedom to exercise his apostolic gifting in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, long before the idea of multiple apostolic spheres had ever been raised (Interview 7, 2012). Tragically, Petit passed away suddenly in January 2005 as the result of a heart attack. His legacy is that he modelled for Newfrontiers the role of an emerging apostle. Petit was considered the favoured and obvious individual to succeed Virgo as the leader of Newfrontiers, as the thinking was at that time (Interview 7, 2012). Furthermore, immediately upon Pettit's death, there appeared almost identical prophecies from three different continents that were submitted to Virgo. In broad terms, they stated that a great tree had fallen, that it was not to be replaced by another tree, but by a number of saplings who should now be cultivated. The prophecies also stated that Newfrontiers should let these saplings multiply what Petit had done through his ministry and for Virgo not to search for a replacement of Petit (Interview 7, 2012). Virgo acknowledged, 'So we had that image in our ranks and had been working on that already' (ibid).

At the turn of the millennium the Newfrontiers international team had also already begun to talk about the fact that Virgo would not be there forever and what the next steps would be and how the movement would proceed in future. But it was particularly Driscoll's public word at Brighton that expedited

everything. In the words of Virgo: 'I really felt that it was God helping us not just to talk about it but to get on with it' (Interview 7, 2012).

4. The Values of Newfrontiers

During the months leading up to the transition of Newfrontiers in 2011, a concerted effort was made to communicate the Newfrontiers values to the whole movement through blogs, talks[15] and the Newfrontiers magazine[16] and were expressed in seventeen statements. An article on each value appeared in the Newfrontiers magazines and had been written by one of the new apostolic sphere leaders. The articles emphasised that Newfrontiers was a single overall movement with a shared vision and values despite dividing into several apostolic spheres. In an article in one of the magazines, Virgo wrote the following words:

> So what could hold the new spheres together? It could be like it is in Southern Africa: there are different apostolic men coming through, church planting and serving churches in their individual spheres but they are keeping in touch. They remember God's word to us at the beginning, "You can accomplish more together than you can apart." By acting corporately, they have more punch. Walking away would break their hearts. We are integrated with profound love. Unity of doctrine and common values are prized. I don't want to walk away from that, it's too precious (Newfrontiers Magazine, 2010b:29).

5. The Change from One Period (Era) to Another

In 2012, Virgo took the fairly radical step of closing the Brighton office which had been the hub of Newfrontiers and from which he had led Newfrontiers up to that point in time. Virgo's secretary, together with his administrator of many years, were retrenched. Virgo and his wife sold their home in Brighton and

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[15] These can be found at www.terryvirgo.org.

[16] Four issues from 2010 to 2011 were dedicated to vision and values.

relocated to live in Kingston-upon-Thames near London and became members of his son Simon's local church. The intent was to send a clear signal to the movement that an era had come to an end and that a new era had begun (Interview 7, 2012).

In June 2011, Newfrontiers held their final 'Together on a Mission' conference in Brighton as a single movement under the leadership of Virgo. At that conference, Virgo announced the release of several potential apostolic leaders who would replace him as the leader of the single apostolic sphere called Newfrontiers. The men were 'recommended' to the movement as apostles and potential leaders of new apostolic spheres. Furthermore, an edition of the Newfrontiers magazine was produced leading up to the final 'Together on a Mission' conference in 2011 wherein all fifteen of the new apostolic leaders wrote an article under the title 'How I see it' (Newfrontiers Magazine 2011). The title of this magazine was, 'Forward Together' and so the unity of the movement was being stressed, while at the same time endorsing these leaders to the movement.

In terms of Newfrontiers finances, it was decided by the apostolic team that the voluntary contribution of the local churches to the central Newfrontiers account should come to an end in December of 2012 (Interview 6, 2012). It would then be the decision of each local church as to which apostolic sphere they would contribute financially (Interviews 1, 4, 5 and 7, 2012).

6. The Effect on the Unity and Diversity of the Movement

From the interviews and surveys, it became evident that there remained a very high degree of unity within Newfrontiers as a whole. The various apostolic spheres seem to have retained a sense of belonging to the overall movement, which is still called Newfrontiers at this point in time. In fact, in one of the interviews it was stated that not a single church had left the movement because of the transition.[17] The overall impression was an air of excitement and

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[17] Recorded and transcribed during interview #7.

anticipation about the future, albeit that some of the churches were uncertain about which particular new apostolic sphere they would be willing to integrate with.[18]

In what follows, the responses to the survey questions that probed the first two of the following six areas[19] relevant to the leadership transition will be analysed:

(1)   The effect on the unity of the movement.
(2)   The effect on the diversity of the movement.
(3)   The effect on the structure of the movement.
(4)   The clarity with which the various church leaders understood where they fitted in to the new structure.
(5)   The effect on mission in the movement.
(6)   How involved church leaders and apostolic team leaders perceived themselves to have been during the transition process.

The charts that follow reflect the grouping of the responses to the questions under the area those questions sought to probe. The responses to the questions have been reflected in chart form for a visual depiction of the responses.

Simplified headings have been used for the subsections below. Thus, '1. The effect on the unity of the movement', has been condensed to '6.1. UNITY', and '2. The effect on the diversity of the movement', has been condensed to '6.2. DIVERSITY' and so on through the various sections.

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[18] Recorded during interview #1.
[19] See Ch.1 Sec. 9.2.1.

6.1. Unity

The following charts depict the mapping out of the various responses to each question.
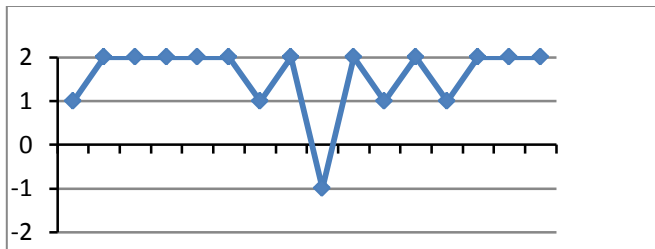
Figure 4. Question 1. This has been a positive step for Newfrontiers.

Agreed strongly	69%	Neutral	0%	Disagreed somewhat	6%
Agreed somewhat	25%			Disagreed strongly	0%

As can be seen, there is just one disagreement with this statement. This means that almost all respondents exemplified a general sense of support for the change from an old to a new era in Newfrontiers. Nevertheless, there was a sense of loss for some of the leaders. In interview 1 (2012), one of the lead elders said, 'Right now for us, I'm more aware of what I'm losing than what I'm gaining… I'm catching up with central thinking'.
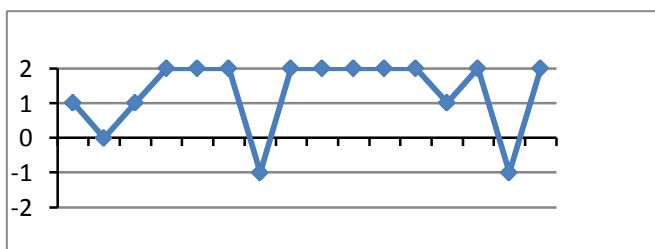
Figure 5. Question 8. We feel as much part of Newfrontiers as we ever have.

Agreed strongly	62.5%	Neutral	6%	Disagreed somewhat	12.5%
Agreed somewhat	19%			Disagreed strongly	0%

The responses to question 8 (Figure 5 above) give the impression that the majority of local church leaders continue to feel they belong to Newfrontiers. One of the respondents who disagreed somewhat with this statement was from a church that, at the time of the interview, still indecisive about which apostolic

sphere they would choose to belong to (Interview 1, 2012). This uncertainty about their future, coupled with the dismantling of the past structures of Newfrontiers, could be one reason for their feeling less being part of Newfrontiers than they felt before.
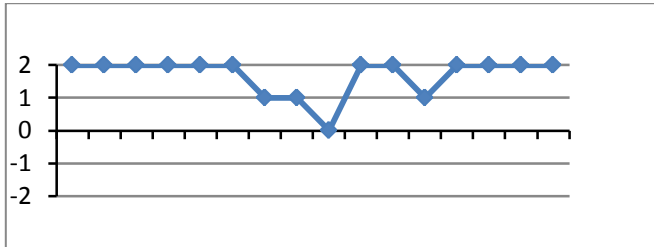
Figure 6. Question 11. We are totally supportive of this new chapter for Newfrontiers.

Agreed strongly	75%	Neutral	6%	Disagreed somewhat	0%
Agreed somewhat	19%			Disagreed strongly	0%

Wit h only a single neutral response and 75% agreeing strongly and 19% agreeing somewhat, again, the impression is of almost total support for the new era which Newfrontiers was about to enter.
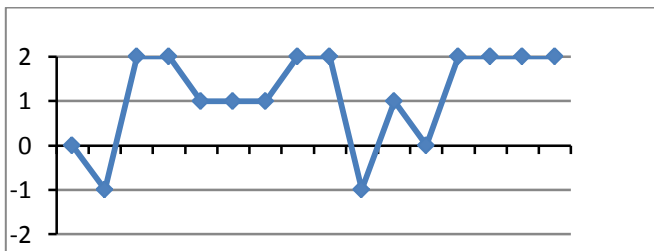
Figure 7. Question 19. We strongly believe that the name 'Newfrontiers' should be kept as the overall name of the movement.

Agreed strongly	50%	Neutral	12.5%	Disagreed somewhat	12.5%
Agreed somewhat	25%			Disagreed strongly	0%

There were no respondents who disagreed strongly with keeping Newfrontiers as the overall name of the movement. The view that was strongly expressed during interviews was that each apostolic sphere should have its own name

(Interviews 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, 2012). Each of the new apostolic spheres has in fact adopted a unique name. One of the church leaders interviewed went so far as to pose the following question: 'What is Newfrontiers if it has ceased to exist as an apostolic sphere?' (Interview 3, 2012). He questioned the validity of maintaining the name 'Newfrontiers' because he believed that it represented something that had ceased to exist. Notwithstanding his view, the overwhelming support was for retaining the name Newfrontiers as an icon and means to bond and hold all the apostolic spheres together. Interviewees also expressed the sentiment that the name Newfrontiers is so well known and has such credibility that it would be foolish to discard the name and thereby lose so much in terms of the years and years that it took to establish a credible and respected ministry across the world (Interviews 8, 9 and 10, 2012).
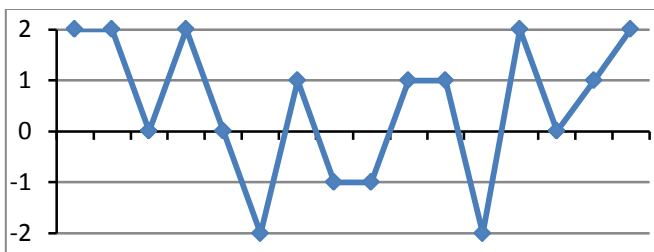
Figure 8. Question 30. Members of apostolic spheres other than our primary apostolic sphere will minister into our church.

Agreed strongly	31%	Neutral	19%	Disagreed somewhat	12.5%
Agreed somewhat	25%			Disagreed strongly	12.5%

The four negative responses to this statement seem to indicate that some respondents were more insular about the apostolic sphere that they belong to and less inclined to approve of Ephesians 4:11 ministries crossing from one apostolic sphere to another, even though they all originated from Newfrontiers. One would imagine that this will have some negative impact on the ongoing sense of overall unity in the Newfrontiers movement. Nevertheless, the positive responses made up 56% of the overall total and the neutral 19%. This indicates that there remains a great deal of goodwill within the church leaders of Newfrontiers towards a cross-over between the apostolic spheres through the interchange of Ephesians 4:11 ministries.
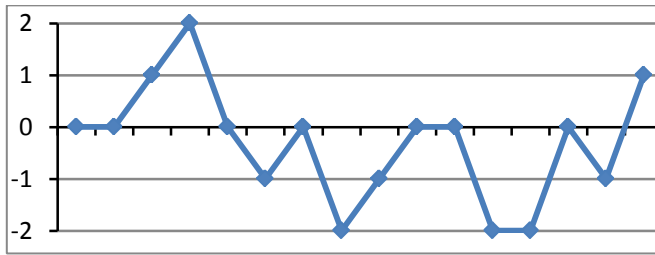
Figure 9. Question 32. The flow of communication and information to us from Newfrontiers is excellent.

Agreed strongly	6%	Neutral	44%	Disagreed somewhat	19%
Agreed somewhat	12%			Disagreed strongly	19%

Figure 9 indicates the most negative overall response to the questions grouped under the subject of unity: communication to the elders in local churches is seen as inadequate and continues to be so. This is somewhat surprising because Newfrontiers did put a lot of effort into communicating the transition through blogs, magazines, national conferences and prayer days. However, one of the lead elders during an interview said, 'Because I'm not in a sphere I'm not getting all the communication and all the stuff I really valued. For the two days of prayer and fasting, I didn't get an invite and didn't know anything about it' (Interview 1, 2012). It points towards a problem in this transition period where some of the Newfrontiers churches have yet to join one of the spheres and are thereby not receiving the communications that the churches in spheres are receiving. In other words, Newfrontiers have been good at publicly communicating information in a unilateral way but not as good at fostering two-way communication with individual church leaders concerning the succession of Virgo. This subject will be returned to at the end of the study.

This concludes the questions related to the subject of unity. The next group of questions revolve around the theme of diversity.

6.2. Diversity

Diversity is closely linked to the theme of unity in that there is a dynamic tension between the two. The comments on figures 10 to 18 below highlight this.
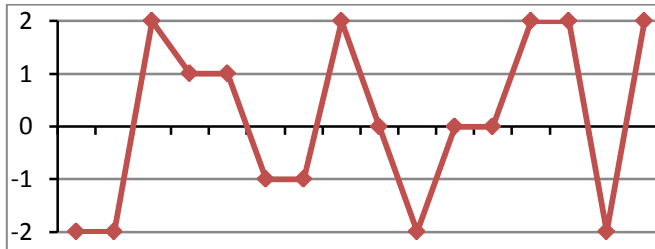
Figure 10. Question 3. Newfrontiers should remain a single umbrella movement.

Agreed strongly	31%	Neutral	19%	Disagreed somewhat	12.5%
Agreed somewhat	12.5%			Disagreed strongly	25%

The agreement and disagreement in figure 10 is almost the same. The reason for this would appear to be that although some church leaders have a great deal of affection and positive feelings towards Newfrontiers as the progenitor of the apostolic sphere that they now belong to, they now, however, have a desire to develop the unique nature of the new apostolic sphere that they are now part of (Interviews 3 and 4, 2012). The expression of the desire gave the impression that they neither wish to be independent nor to be separated from their past, but rather to get on with developing their new identity without it being smothered by the past. Put differently, they wish to remain connected to all the other apostolic spheres that have emerged from Newfrontiers but in a relational way rather than a structural way of all being placed under a single, central headquarters. Virgo even went so far as to write in the Newfrontiers magazine that 'Anybody who tried at this present stage to become the successor and to turn what is currently "Newfrontiers" into one apostolic sphere would pull everything back'

(Newfrontiers Magazine 2010b:27)[20]. Perhaps one could say that those that agreed with Question 3 wished to give more emphasis to the unity of Newfrontiers and slightly less emphasis to its diversity, and that those who disagreed wanted to give more emphasis to the diversity of Newfrontiers and slightly less to its unity. Both groups of respondents did, however, appear to desire to retain both the unity and the diversity of Newfrontiers.
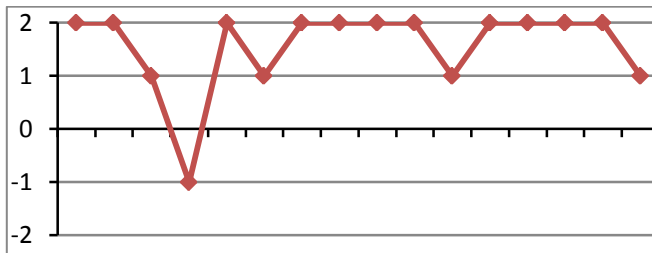
Figure 11. Question 15. When choosing an apostolic sphere, relationship with the apostle is more important to us than geography (where he is based).

Agreed strongly	69%	Neutral	0%	Disagreed somewhat	6%
Agreed somewhat	25%			Disagreed strongly	0%

Answers to question 15 indicate that church leaders place a high value and importance on their relationship as an eldership team with particular Ephesians 4:11 ministries rather than on what is geographically convenient (Interview 3, 4 and 6, 2012), although some expressed the opinion that relationship is established *through* geographical location (Interview 1, 2012). To the latter group, geography was important in that relationship is made a lot more practicable if the apostle is in relatively close proximity (Interview 5, 8 and 9, 2012). Overall, there was a greater emphasis on the history of their relationship with an apostle rather than geography being the determining factor in choosing an apostle. Part of the explanation for this is what is known as 'gift

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[20] By 'pull everything back' the researcher understood Virgo to be saying that all the positive gains that have been made by releasing several apostolic spheres would be lost and damage would be done to Newfrontiers as a result.

recognition'.[21] Church leaders might not believe that an Ephesians 4:11 ministry near their geographical location is an Ephesians 4:11 ministry to *their* church (Devenish 2011:202-205; Virgo 1985:138). They would prefer someone who *they* regard as being an Ephesians 4:11 ministry to their church, even if that person is located at some geographical distance (Interview 9, 2012). The implication of this is that apostolic spheres are not neatly dispersed geographically but can overlap one another geographically. In other words, the spheres are distinguished not by geography but rather by who each local church considers to be an apostle to them. So, it is conceivable to have two Newfrontiers churches in the same town but belonging to two different emerging apostolic spheres (Interview 9 and 10, 2012).

In the next question, the issue is to what churches will lend financial support to. It will be seen that finances seem to be a strong indicator of where each local church's allegiance lies.
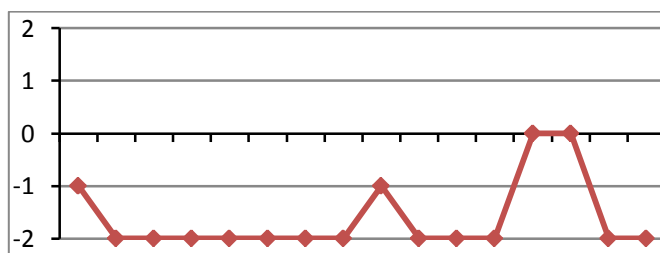
Figure 12. Question 16. We will financially support both our new primary apostolic sphere and a central Newfrontiers fund.

Agreed strongly	0%	Neutral	12.5%	Disagreed somewhat	12.5%
Agreed somewhat	0%			Disagreed strongly	75%

As can be seen in the answers to question 16, the majority of local churches are unwilling to continue their financial support to a central Newfrontiers fund as most have done to date. It is indicative of a clear shift of local churches'

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[21] This term is used within Newfrontiers and NCMI and refers to the discernment by others in the body of Christ of a person's spiritual gifts, particularly the discernment of (1) whether a person is an Ephesians 4:11 gift or not, (2) which Ephesians 4:11 gift they are, and (3) whether they regard them as an Ephesians 4:11 gift to *their* church.

financial support from the old central administration of Newfrontiers to the emerging apostolic spheres. It is, therefore, a strong indication of support for the local churches' new structure.

The response to question 17 (Figure 13 below), is an indicator of the healthy tension that exists within Newfrontiers about the unity of the overall movement and the diversity of the emerging spheres. The broad affirmation of the freedom for each apostolic sphere to adopt a unique name manifests the acceptance and even desire for each apostolic sphere to develop in its own unique way. One of the lead elders interviewed said,

> There's a philosophy we're trying to work out. We're needing independence to get to interdependence… so we have *got to* [emphasis in the tone of voice] break into these spheres. I think we're losing momentum to get interdependence and so these guys [the new apostolic sphere leaders] are going and then they'll realise, we hope, we need interdependence, but you've got to do it that way round. So, it feels like we're multiplying our way into smallness, but we are doing it to ultimately give us interdependence (Interview 1, 2012).

The less positive responses to this question reflect the commitment of leaders to the ongoing unity of Newfrontiers.
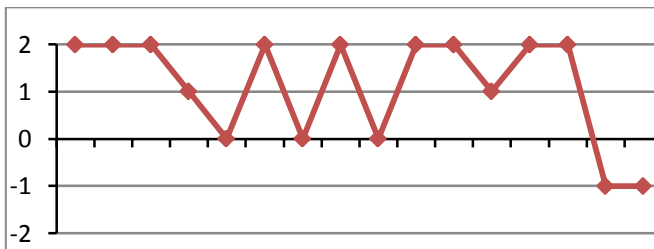
Figure 13. Question 17. Newfrontiers' newly released apostolic spheres should be free to each have their own name.

| Agreed strongly | 56% | Neutral | 19% | Disagreed somewhat | 12.5% |
| Agreed somewhat | 12.5% | | | Disagreed strongly | 0% |

Responses to question 21 (Figure 14 below) need to be carefully analysed because the question is about 'apostolic input'. Although there is quite a mixed response to the question, the reasons for this seem to be two-fold:

(1) Local church leaders wish to pay attention to the development of their apostolic sphere's relationships before they invite apostles from other spheres to minister in their churches. This does not mean that they have any inclination to isolate themselves from other apostles within the overall movement (Interview 3, 6 and 10, 2012).

(2) Local church leaders believe that the apostle they have chosen for their local church has a unique relationship with them and no other apostle will have this relationship with them (Interview 6, 8 and 9, 2012). This unique relationship is referred to as their 'primary relationship' and they are therefore sceptical about another apostle being able to provide them with that type of apostolic input.

The positive and neutral responses, however, indicate that local church leaders are open to receive ministry from other apostles who are part of the overall emerging network that was Newfrontiers, as long as that input is not perceived as competing with or cutting across the input of *their* apostle (Interview 6 and 9, 2012).
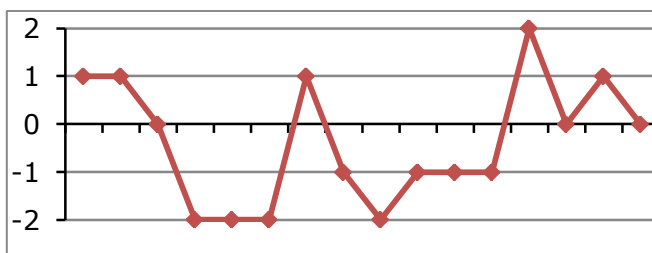
Figure 14. Question 21. Our church would look to more than one of the new apostles as a source of apostolic input.

Agreed strongly	6%	Neutral	19%	Disagreed somewhat	25%
Agreed somewhat	25%			Disagreed strongly	25%
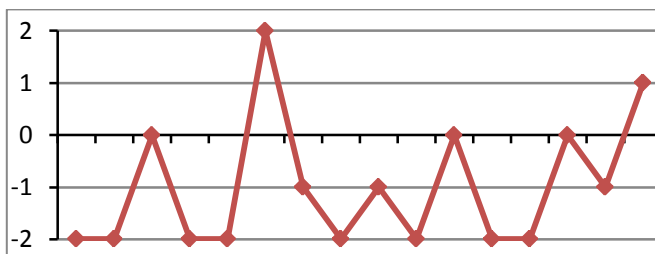
Figure 15. Question 24. All the new apostolic teams should have the same vision statement as the vision statement of Newfrontiers before these changes.

Agreed strongly	6%	Neutral	19%	Disagreed somewhat	19%
Agreed somewhat	6%			Disagreed strongly	50%

Only 12% of the local church leaders answered positively to question 24. There appear to be a strong agreement that each emerging apostolic sphere should develop its own vision statement and not merely to duplicate the original Newfrontiers apostolic sphere.

Figure 16 below (question 26) indicates that 62% of the respondents did not think that Newfrontiers would remain a single movement in the future. This could be because of two different patterns of thought: (1) that Newfrontiers as a single overall organisation (as it was) will cease to exist but that the overall unity between the emerging apostolic spheres will continue (Interview 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and10, 2012) or, (2) that Newfrontiers as the an overall name for a network of apostolic spheres may well cease to exist because the apostolic spheres will each develop in their own right, slowly losing connection and relationship with each other and each becoming an independent sphere (Interviews 3 and 6). The interviews lead to the conclusion that view (1) is the predominant pattern of thought.
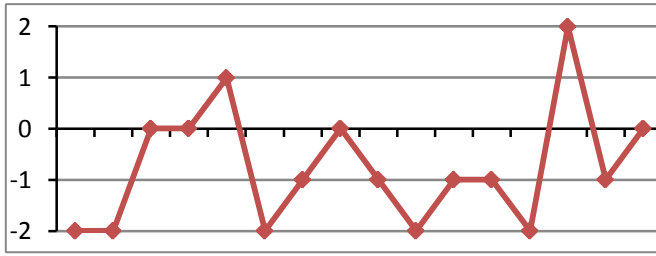
Figure 16. Question 26. Newfrontiers will remain a single movement into the future.

Agreed strongly	6%	Neutral	25%	Disagreed somewhat	31%
Agreed somewhat	6%			Disagreed strongly	31%

Question 31 (figure 17 below) once again returns to the question of finances.
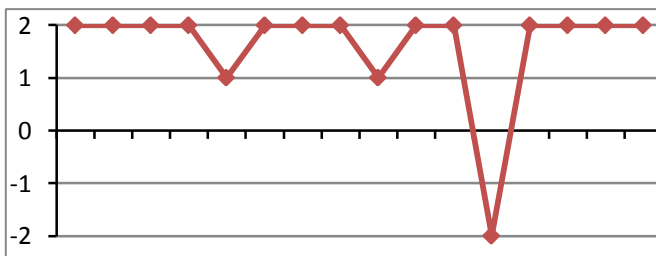
Figure 17. Question 31. We will financially support our new primary apostolic sphere rather than a central Newfrontiers fund.

Agreed strongly	81%	Neutral	0%	Disagreed somewhat	0%
Agreed somewhat	12.5%			Disagreed strongly	6%

Figure 17 describes a dramatic and almost universal shift in local churches' view of financial support, from the old central administration of Newfrontiers to the emerging apostolic spheres. The sentiment was clearly evident in interviews and discussions with pastors and attendees at Newfrontiers events. For these church leaders it is not a matter of choosing between Newfrontiers and the emerging apostolic spheres, for they consider the apostolic spheres to be the ongoing development and metamorphosis of Newfrontiers into the next chapter of what God is doing through apostolic movements in history.

Figure 18 below (question 33) returns to the question raised in question 15 (Figure 11 above), namely, the influence of relationship or geography on the choice of an apostle. The responses indicate that almost all these leaders do not regard geography as the primary criterion in their choice of an apostolic sphere.
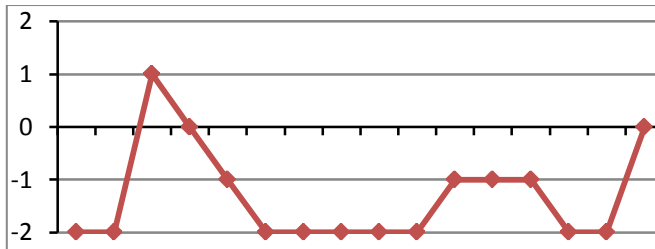
Figure 18. Question 33. The primary criterion for us in choosing an apostolic sphere is geographical.

| Agreed strongly | 0% | Neutral | 13% | Disagreed somewhat | 25% |
| Agreed somewhat | 6% | | | Disagreed strongly | 56% |

It was gratifying to see that the answers to question 33 are quite the opposite of the responses to question 15 where the majority of the respondents stated that relationship was more important than geographical location. There is, therefore, a consistent indication that local church leaders are primarily looking for the Ephesians 4:11 gift of an apostle, and whether they get along relationally with that apostle, more than geographic proximity to an apostolic leader.

7. The Effect on the Structure of the Movement

Both section 6. and 7. of this chapter explore the structural implications of the leadership transition of Newfrontiers. Up until 2011, Newfrontiers was a single, well defined organisation. Leaders of local churches that were part of Newfrontiers knew who formed part of the apostolic team of Newfrontiers and who not. Thus, the need for acknowledging the gift of Ephesians 4:11 ministries had in a way been removed from the local church leaders. In reality it meant that the Newfrontiers apostolic team under Virgo would, when declaring an individual part of the apostolic team, be declaring to the movement as a whole

that that person was in fact one equipped with the ministry-gifts referred to in Ephesians 4:11. Notwithstanding this, the acknowledgement of Ephesians 4:11 ministries by local church elders has always been a core belief of Newfrontiers (Devenish 2011:202-205; Virgo 1985:138).

With the emerging of new apostolic spheres, however, the burden to discern and acknowledge Ephesians 4:11 ministries has shifted even more onto local church leaders, along with the emerging apostolic teams. As figure 19 below shows, a minority of local church leaders indicated that they already had clarity on who is emerging as APEPT[22] ministries across the emerging spheres, whereas the majority do not. It also reflects the very early stages of the development of the various apostolic spheres which continue to be fluid and emerging. However, it can be assumed that in time the local churches across the spheres will gain more information on who is part of the various apostolic teams in each of the spheres. Nonetheless, one wonders whether there will ever be the same level of clarity that prevailed under the one apostolic sphere of Newfrontiers. There are simply too many new and emerging APEPTs across the various spheres for any local church to keep up with, particularly as they will now have less contact with members of other spheres.

In contrast to this lack of knowledge of APEPTs across the various other spheres, figure 21 shows that the majority of church leaders do know who the APEPTs are within their own apostolic sphere.
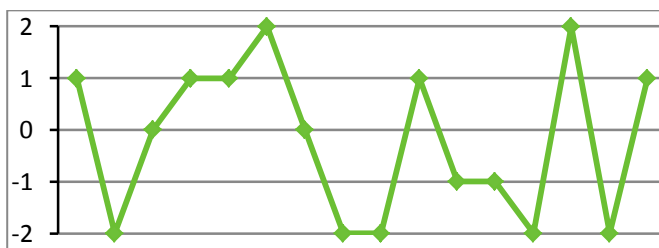
Figure 19. Question 4. I am clear as to who is on whose apostolic team.

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[22] APEPT is used as an abbreviation for the five ministries of apostle, prophet, evangelist pastor and teacher in Ephesians 4:11.

Agreed strongly	13%	Neutral	12.5%	Disagreed somewhat	12.5%
Agreed somewhat	31%			Disagreed strongly	31%

Figure 20 below (question 9) may appear at first glance to be a contradiction of figure 19, but it is not.

Figure 20. Question 9. We are clear on who the apostles are that Terry Virgo has recognised and released.

Agreed strongly	69%	Neutral	0%	Disagreed somewhat	0%
Agreed somewhat	31%			Disagreed strongly	0%

Virgo has been very clear on who he has recommended to the movement as leaders of emerging apostolic spheres and had their pictures and biographies published in the Newfrontiers magazine (Newfrontiers Magazine 2011). Figure 21 below (question 23) indicates that the majority of leaders (62.5% strongly agree; 12.5% agree somewhat) are also clear about who makes up *their* emerging apostle's apostolic team. This is not in conflict with the responses to question 4 (figure 19) where they were evenly spread across positive and negative responses to the statement, 'I am clear as to who is on whose apostolic team.' Those who answered negatively to this statement reflect the fact that church leaders within each developing apostolic sphere do not have as much knowledge about the development of the apostolic teams in other spheres as opposed to what is happening in *their* sphere (figure 21).

It is not, however, necessarily negative. It is rather a corollary of the organic development of a developing movement. As a movement multiplies in membership, it is expected that the emergence and release of Ephesians 4:11

ministries will increase as well. These ministries will work within the church network of their apostolic sphere and it is likely that only the APEPTs with a high level of gifting would become known *across* the spheres. This would occur because church leaders or apostolic team leaders within a particular sphere would search across the other spheres for individuals with an exceptional level of Ephesians 4:11 gifting, to invite them to minister in their sphere. The probable outcome would be that only highly gifted APEPTs would be known across the spheres. They would then carry a *de facto* responsibility to promote the unity of the overall movement. If they do not, it seems unlikely that the overall movement will hold together.
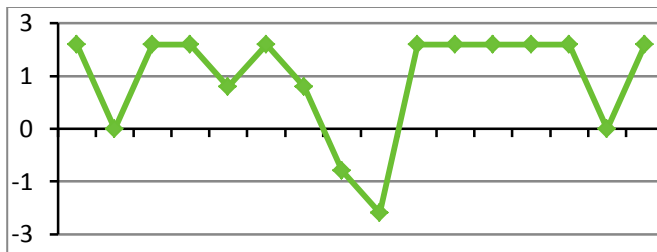
Figure 21. Question 23. We're clear as to who is on the apostolic team in the sphere that our church primarily looks to.

| Agreed strongly | 62.5% | Neutral | 12.5% | Disagreed somewhat | 6% |
| Agreed somewhat | 12.5% | | | Disagreed strongly | 6% |

Figure 22 below (question 29) reflects the question of the clarity of Virgo's new role in the new dispensation of Newfrontiers.
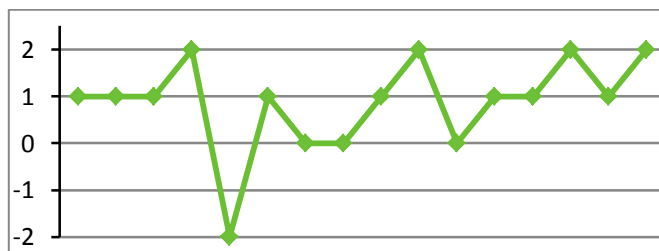
Figure 22. Question 29. Terry Virgo's new role is clear to me.

| Agreed strongly | 25% | Neutral | 19% | Disagreed somewhat | 0% |

Agreed somewhat	50%			Disagreed strongly	6%

The fact that 50% of the church leaders agreed only somewhat to this statement and 19% were neutral indicates that Virgo's ongoing role within Newfrontiers is not clear to the majority of the members of the movement.

8. The Clarity with Which the Various Church Leaders Understood Where They Fitted in to the New Structure

This section continues to explore the impact of the Newfrontiers' transition on the structure of Newfrontiers. When Newfrontiers was a single entity and based on a regionalised structure, it was clear to church leaders where they fitted into the structure of Newfrontiers. This section seeks to explore how the structural changes within the Newfrontiers movement have affected this clarity.
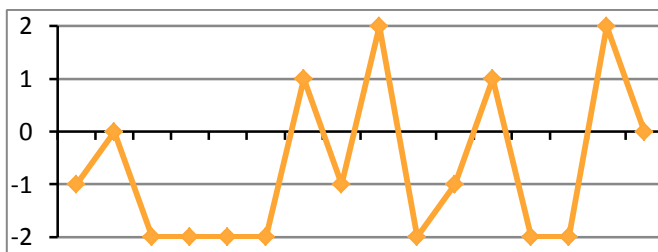
Figure 23. Question 5. In the light of the prior regionalisation of Newfrontiers churches, the release of other apostles has caused us a dilemma in terms of who we look to as apostolic to our local church.

Agreed strongly	12.5%	Neutral	12.5%	Disagreed somewhat	12.5%
Agreed somewhat	12.5%			Disagreed strongly	44%

In figure 23 above (question 5), 56.5% of the church leaders do not feel that the changes from regionalisation to apostolic spheres has caused them too much of a dilemma. Yet 25% did feel some degree of dilemma in terms of who they depend on for apostolic leadership for their church. In one instance it was noted that the dilemma of a particular church leader was that a particular leader whom his church had considered to be apostolic to them had *not* been recommended by Virgo (Interview 1, 2012). They were therefore left with the problem of

choosing someone else if they wished to conform to the new structure of Newfrontiers. There was no doubt in the mind of this church leader that his church would be required to choose one of the spheres if they wished to remain part of the ongoing metamorphosis of Newfrontiers. In his words, 'This has caused us a massive dilemma' (ibid).
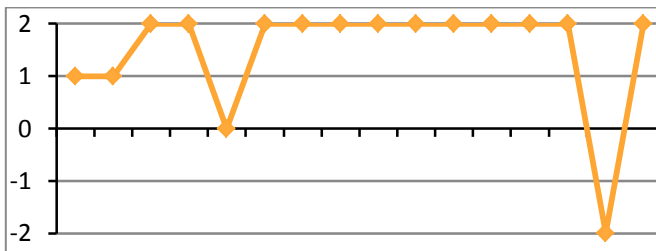
Figure 24. Question 5. In the light of the prior regionalisation of Newfrontiers churches, the release of other apostles has caused us a dilemma in terms of who we look to as apostolic to our local church.

Agreed strongly	75%	Neutral	6%	Disagreed somewhat	0%
Agreed somewhat	12.5%			Disagreed strongly	6%

87.5% of all the church leaders surveyed were clear on where their local church fits into the new structure of Newfrontiers. This is an impressive statistic and perhaps reflects the relationships that already existed between local churches and emerging apostolic ministries long before 2011 when the transition that is the subject of this study, occurred. Perhaps those who were not clear about their place in the new structure are churches which are unsure about the choice of which sphere their local church should belong to. One lead elder commented: 'I'm in, but I just don't know where I fit' (Interview 1, 2012).

Figure 25 below (question 10) indicates that all but one leader agrees strongly that their church expects to be part of only one of the new apostolic spheres. The one leader who disagreed strongly lamented the changes in Newfrontiers and expressed a strong preference for Newfrontiers to remain a single organisation, thus to remain as it was. He would have preferred to not have the release of new apostolic spheres, a sentiment that is clearly not characteristic of the majority of respondents.

With respect to a local church being part of a single apostolic sphere only, it is a deeply held belief within Newfrontiers that each local church has a primary relationship with only one apostle and his team. They might receive into their churches others who have an apostolic gift, but they will never receive them in the same way they would receive instruction, correction, encouragement and admonishment from the apostle overseeing their sphere (Interview 6, 9 and 10, 2012).
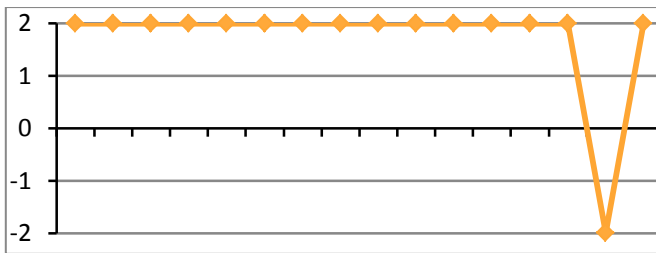
Figure 25. Question 10. Our church looks primarily to one of the new apostolic spheres.

Agreed strongly	94%	Neutral	0%	Disagreed somewhat	0%
Agreed somewhat	0%			Disagreed strongly	6%

Figure 26 below (question 18) indicates that the same leader referred to in question 10 (figure 25 above) is the lone negative response to question 18. This leader seems to have a reluctance to enter the Newfrontiers process of transformation when compared to the strong clarity amongst the other leaders as to who is to be an apostolic leader to their churches among the fifteen apostolic leaders recommended by Virgo.
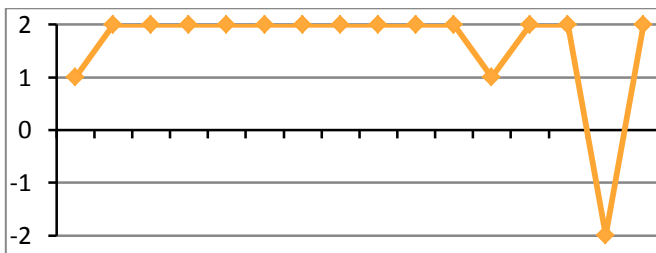
Figure 26. Question 18. We are clear as to who, amongst the apostles Terry has appointed, is apostolic to our church in this new chapter.

Agreed strongly	81%	Neutral	0%	Disagreed somewhat	0%
Agreed somewhat	12.5%			Disagreed strongly	6%

This concludes the interpretation of the answers to the questions about the emerging structure of Newfrontiers, both in terms of the overall structure of the new situation and in terms of clarity about where the leaders understand they and their churches fit into the new structure.

The next section explores the effect of the changes in Newfrontiers on mission because Newfrontiers has always seen itself as an evangelical and missiological movement (Virgo 2009a). It explains the desire for church planting in the UK and other nations. A core belief of Newfrontiers is that disciples are most effectively made of all nations by planting local churches (Devenish 2011:46-48; Virgo 1985). Part of the project in this section will be to establish whether the changes in Newfrontiers have helped or hindered its commitment to mission.

9. The Effect of the Leadership Transition on Mission in the Newfrontiers Movement

The five questions as documented below probe how church planting and mission throughout Newfrontiers have been affected by the leadership transition and structural changes of Newfrontiers. Figure 27 (question 6 below) indicates that half of the respondents 'agree somewhat' that the momentum of church planting in Newfrontiers has been unaffected by the other changes occurring in Newfrontiers. On the other hand, it is noted there is only one strong agreement, three neutrals, two that disagree somewhat and two that disagree strongly. The latter responses indicate a concern at the slowing down of church planting in Newfrontiers.

It emerged during interviews that most of the new spheres had quite a long history of working together with the leader of the new sphere under the regionalised structures of the past. A case in point is the churches in the sphere under the leadership of Mike Betts (Interview 3 and 4, 2012). These spheres have simply continued with what they were doing in terms of church planting and missionary activity, even before the structural changes were made in Newfrontiers. The interviews also indicate that there has been very little disruption to either church planting or mission in this sphere (Interview 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, 2012). One interviewee had just returned from a Newfrontiers church planting conference and felt that because of the momentum in church planting up to that point, the momentum would continue for twelve to eighteen months, but would then, in his opinion, recede because of church planting not being generated and overseen from the erstwhile Newfrontiers central team (Interview 1, 2012). One apostolic sphere leader believes that church planting has slowed down in the UK as all the energy has gone into sorting out the emergence of the new spheres. However, his hope is that in time the new spheres will provide new energy for church planting (Interview 8, 2012). He opined that 'What I do believe, and this is a faith statement, it's not something I can prove at the moment. I believe that transition is not simply reorganisation, it's giving opportunity for God's grace to enable more to be done, to come into being' (Interview 8, 2012). So perhaps the less positive responses in figure 27 could be interpreted as a result of leaders who feel that the energy being drawn by the formation of the new spheres is going to affect church planting negatively in the short term and therefore not to wholeheartedly endorse a positive statement such as 'The momentum of church planting in Newfrontiers has been unaffected' (see figure 27 below).

In an article entitled, 'Church planting – it's who we are', Jeremy Simpkins (2010:4), one of the apostolic sphere leaders from Manchester, wrote,

> God has spoken to us prophetically about fulfilling this call to start
> churches in stages: Firstly, to climb the "hill" of 400 churches and
> then to move to conquer the "mountain" of a thousand churches. This
> is not to be our final destination as we continually explore the

> Himalayas of God's purposes in the UK – only God knows what
> Everest we will scale in this generation!

It would appear that Newfrontiers' commitment to church planting remains high but may slow for a season.
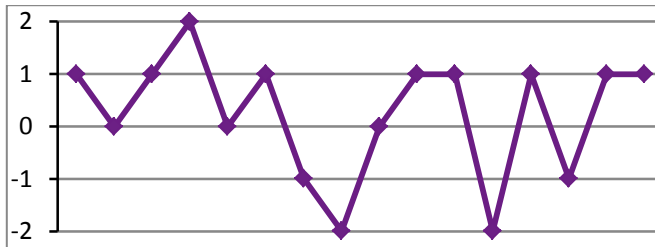
Figure 27. Question 6. The momentum of church planting in Newfrontiers has been unaffected.

| Agreed strongly | 6% | Neutral | 19% | Disagreed somewhat | 12.5% |
| Agreed somewhat | 50% | | | Disagreed strongly | 12.5% |

The responses to question 12 (figure 28 below) are interesting in that there is a 'somewhat' positive response to the statement that local churches are as strongly involved as ever in church planting through the wider Newfrontiers network.[23] Only one respondent agreed strongly. The study anticipates that the involvement of local churches in mission through the overall Newfrontiers movement will decline as the single movement divides into fifteen spheres[24].

Nevertheless, church planting does continue, hence the fifty percent 'Agree somewhat' response. Interviews cast light on why that is so. For many years local churches have been working with apostles in the single original Newfrontiers movement to plant churches. Virgo stated in his interview that this practice received particular impetus after his 'bow and arrow' vision in the early 1990s. In this vision he saw a map of England with a bow with an arrow pointing out to Europe and the world, superimposed on the south-east corner of

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[23] By 'Newfrontiers network' is meant the interconnectedness of the new apostolic spheres.

[24] See Figure 32 below.

England. He saw it being pulled back, but only as far back as London and so it did not shoot very far. Virgo believed God to be saying that Newfrontiers were to pull the bowstring right back, up the whole of the UK, so that Newfrontiers would have a greater impact on world mission. Up to that point Newfrontiers had deliberately concentrated their efforts in the south of England in order to avoid 'competing' with other apostolic movements in the north of England (Interview 7, 2012; Virgo 2001:183-188).

Thus, when churches aligned themselves with the new apostolic spheres, their alignment was often with apostles they and their local churches had worked with to plant churches in the UK and other nations over many years (Interview 7, 2012). The church planting endeavours have simply continued. Another factor in the positivity of the responses in figure 28 is that up until the leadership transition, the missionary endeavours of Newfrontiers were so diverse and multitudinous that individual local churches began to feel a disconnect between themselves and what Newfrontiers were doing in terms of mission (Interviews 3, 7, 2012). The new spheres scale the scope of missionary endeavours down to a level whereby local churches once more feel personally connected to what their apostolic sphere is doing in terms of mission (Interviews 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, 2012). As there is less to focus on in terms of mission, local churches provide more support to mission in their sphere, in terms of people, resources and finances (Interview 7, 2012).
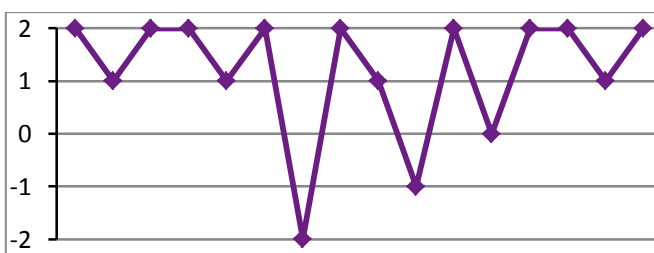
Figure 28.Question 12. Our involvement as a local church in mission through the wider Newfrontiers movement is as strong as ever.

Agreed strongly	56%	Neutral	6%	Disagreed somewhat	6%
Agreed somewhat	25%			Disagreed strongly	6%

Besides probing the consistency of responses to similar statements dispersed throughout the survey, the subtle difference between question 12 (above) and question 20 (figure 29 below) was that 'actively engaged' (question 20) as opposed to 'involved' (question 12) implied a far more direct and hands-on involvement as opposed to, for example, merely contributing financially to a central fund for mission. Furthermore, the aim with questions 12 and 20 was to try to get leaders to compare what their local churches are doing *now* in terms of involvement in and active engagement in mission through Newfrontiers as a whole, compared to what they were doing before. Thus the, 'as strong as ever' and 'as it has ever been' closing phrases to the questions.
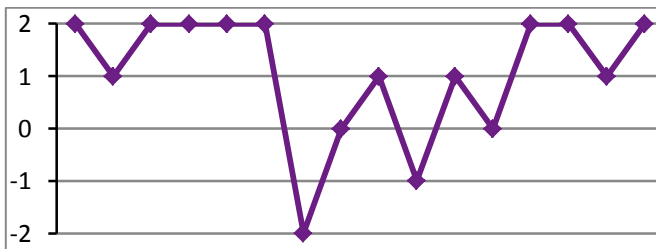
Figure 29. Question 20. Our local church is as actively engaged in mission through Newfrontiers as it has ever been.

Agreed strongly	50%	Neutral	13%	Disagreed somewhat	6%
Agreed somewhat	25%			Disagreed strongly	6%

Figure 29 (question 20) indicates that 50% of the leaders believe their churches to be as actively engaged in mission through Newfrontiers as they have ever been. A further 25% agree somewhat. The conclusion is therefore that local churches remain committed to mission through the overall movement as strongly as ever.

The subtleties between question 20 and question 12 may not have been understood by the respondents, but figure 30 (question 27 below) is more direct. The added factor in question 27 is that it addresses the question of whether the leaders surveyed perceive any slowdown of local churches involvement in mission through the overall movement. The responses are a little

less buoyant than question 12 and 20. Yet, 31% continue to agree strongly and an equal 31% 'agree somewhat'; 13% are 'neutral', 13% 'disagree somewhat' and 13% 'disagree strongly'. It indicates that less local church leaders perceive the local church's commitment to mission to be at the level prior to the transition of Newfrontiers than reflected in questions 12 and 20. Nevertheless, the overall picture is one of mission continuing strongly through the local churches.
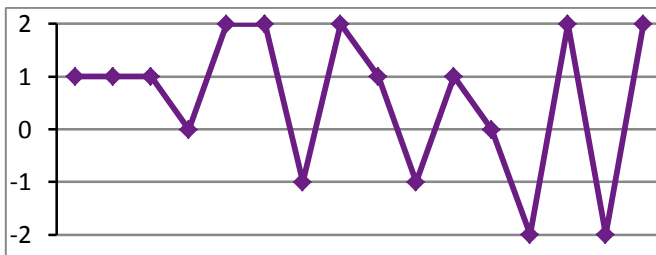
Figure 30. Question 27. Our local church is as engaged in mission through Newfrontiers now as before the changes to Newfrontiers.

Agreed strongly	31%	Neutral	13%	Disagreed somewhat	13%
Agreed somewhat	31%			Disagreed strongly	13%

Figure 31 (question 28 below) moves on to investigate the leader's expectations of church planting through their local church within the next 12 months. It was felt that 'the next 12 months' was a period of time that was short enough that only church plants that had a strong degree of probability of happening would be considered. If the period had been set for example at 5 years, then church leaders might have included far more vague possibilities of church planting in their reckoning. However, most local church leaders are well able to judge realistically whether a church will in fact be planted through their own church or not.
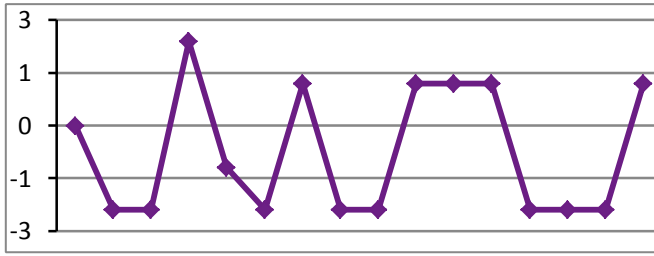
Figure 31. Question 28. A church will be planted out of our local church within the next 12 months.

Agreed strongly	6%	Neutral	6%	Disagreed somewhat	6%
Agreed somewhat	31%			Disagreed strongly	50%

Only one leader agreed strongly and five agreed somewhat. Only one was neutral. However, eight disagreed strongly and a further one disagreed somewhat. It would appear that overall, the church leaders were far less optimistic about church planting than about mission. This is a significant factor as Newfrontiers consider church planting to be a key value of the movement (Interview 5, 2012) and one of the seventeen Newfrontiers values published in the four part 'Vision and Values' 'pull-out' in the Newfrontiers magazine (Newfrontiers Magazine 2009, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c).

10. Involvement of Church and Apostolic Team Leaders: Self-Perception During the Transition Process

This final section on the sub-divisions of the survey considers the involvement of Newfrontiers church leaders in the transition process, whether the core leadership of Newfrontiers (Virgo, Devenish, Holden and Baron) were inviting and listening to comments from church leaders and other apostolic team members (Interview 7, 2012).

Figure 32 (question 2 below) seems to show that there was not a great deal of surprise amongst the leaders about who the apostolic leaders are that were to succeed Virgo. However, there still remains a degree of uncertainty regarding those who were appointed as only 31% agreed somewhat, 19% neutral and 12.5% disagreed somewhat. It must be noted that there were no 'disagree

strongly' responses. Some clarity on the uncertainty reflected here was gained from the interviews. It would appear that many of the apostolic sphere leaders recommended by Virgo were self-evident to the majority of church leaders, but some leaders were surprised at some who were recommended and some who were not (Interview 1, 2012). This would account for the uncertainty portrayed in figure 32.
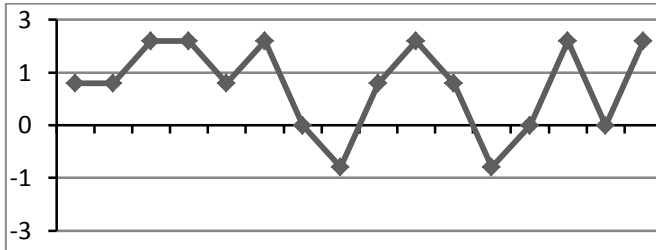
Figure 32. Question 2. The majority of the apostles appointed by Terry Virgo to succeed him were obvious to us as an eldership.

Agreed strongly	37.5%	Neutral	19%	Disagreed somewhat	12.5%
Agreed somewhat	31%			Disagreed strongly	0%

If one considers figure 33 (question 14 below), half agree to some extent and half are neutral or disagree to some extent. It would appear that some of the Newfrontiers leaders felt that the process was transparent and openly conducted whereas a fair proportion (31%) did not. The interviews lead to the conclusion that some church leaders enjoyed a closer relational connection with Virgo's core team, than others did. Other leaders did not seem to have this privilege and so were less inclined to agree that the process was transparent and openly conducted (Interview 1, 2012).
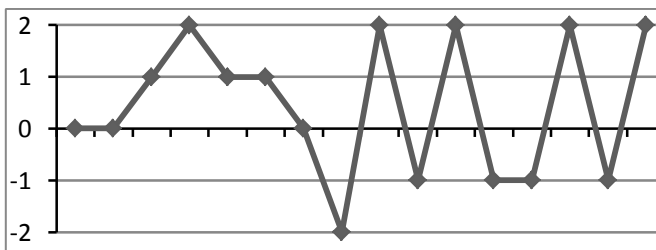
Figure 33. Question 14. This whole process has been transparent and openly conducted.

Agreed strongly	31%	Neutral	19%	Disagreed somewhat	25%
Agreed somewhat	19%			Disagreed strongly	6%

Figure 34 below (question 22) indicates that 81% of the leaders responded neutrally or with some degree of disagreement to the question. It was in this area of participation in the process of transition and a sense of ownership and input into the process that church leaders responded most negatively.
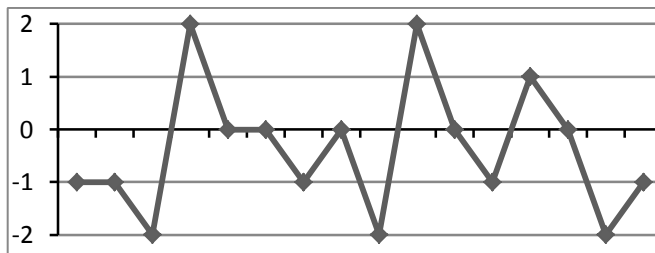
Figure 34. Question 22. We feel we have had input into the Newfrontiers transition process.

Agreed strongly	12.5%	Neutral	31%	Disagreed somewhat	31%
Agreed somewhat	6%			Disagreed strongly	19%

Figure 35 below (question 25) confirms the interpretation of the answers to the previous question. Only three of the sixteen respondents agreed with the statement. The responses indicate that the majority perceived that they did not have much of a role in identifying the emerging apostles. One interviewee went as far as to say that they felt 'totally disenfranchised' during the process (Interview 1, 2012).

The reason for these responses may be interpreted as the result of a general belief among leaders of Newfrontiers that it is the role of the founding apostle (Virgo) and his core team to identify and endorse emerging apostles (Interview 1, 3, 6, 8, 9 and 10, 2012). Furthermore, although Newfrontiers believe that it is the prerogative of local church elders to choose which apostle they wish to accept as their leader, there was some organisational pressure on local church leaders to choose one if they wished to remain part of the movement (Interview 1, 2012). However, it can still be said that local church leaders have some measure of influence on validating or invalidating any emerging apostolic

ministry (Interview 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10, 2012). If no church were to accept or acknowledge a recommended apostle, their recommendation would be regarded as invalid. It is, however, unlikely that none of the recommended apostolic sphere leaders would be acceptable to a local church. The reason for this is that the apostolic sphere leaders recommended by Virgo have emerged from within Newfrontiers over a long period of time and their ministries are tried and tested as well as known by the local churches.

For a local church to find every one of these fifteen leaders unsuitable would therefore be highly unlikely. However, some churches had to make the adjustment of choosing another leader to be apostolic to them, as the leader whom they had regarded as apostolic to their church up to the time of the apostolic leadership succession was not recommended by Virgo as an apostle for this new season (Interview 1, 2012). This is no small adjustment for a local church, but Virgo anticipated that all of the churches would eventually choose one of the recommended apostles.

Thus, by giving the local churches enough time to choose a recommended apostle so that every church would be in a new sphere, Virgo and the core team circumvented the need to solicit input from the local church leaders on the apostles to be recommended. In other words, local churches had the limited and indirect influence of not choosing a particular candidate. It also meant that they contributed little to the front-end of the transition process, namely, the selection of the apostles to be recommended. In short, they could influence the back-end of the transition process through their choice of which apostle to submit to, although, for the reasons stated above, this was viewed as very limited influence.
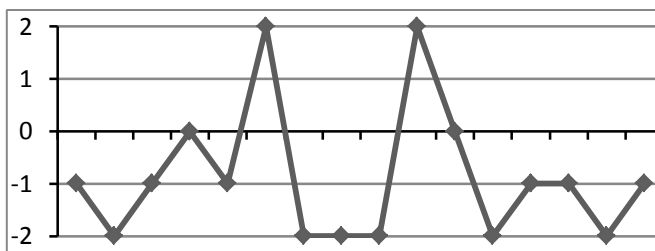
Figure 35. Question 25. As elders in Newfrontiers we feel that we have had an active participation in this process of identifying and recognising emerging apostles.

Agreed strongly	12.5%	Neutral	12.5%	Disagreed somewhat	37.5%
Agreed somewhat	0%			Disagreed strongly	37.5%

11. Summary

This chapter concludes with a list of observations that have been drawn from the interviews, responses to the questionnaires, from Newfrontiers writings and from the researcher's knowledge of the theology and culture of Newfrontiers. Added to the above are observations of the demography at Newfrontiers national leader's prayer and fasting meetings, leadership meetings and local church meetings, and the information disseminated at these meetings. The first sentence of each point is an observation which is then further explained.

(1)   The amount of time invested in the training and preparing of Ephesians 4:11 leaders over the years resulted in a ready pool of leaders with the potential to multiply the single original sphere into multiple spheres. Virgo stated that although these leaders cannot be produced by man's will or endeavours, it is still necessary to train and equip them to hone the gifting that only God can give (Interview 7, 2012).

(2)   Virgo and his team have clearly articulated the vision and values of Newfrontiers. With reference to this, Virgo stated the following in an interview:

> '...another thing Mark Driscoll said to us is that we need to be more explicit in print about what are the values of Newfrontiers. You should be more easily recognised as it were. So we addressed that as well. I put on my website[25] these values and put

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[25] Virgo's website can be found at www.terryvirgo.org.

them in a conversational style with my son in five-minute videos so they weren't just a statement on paper. So we underlined our values and we thought, these are values that we hold together, so as we get ready to release these teams there is a kind of restatement of "this is what we believe". And we felt what is it that will keep us united? We felt there were 3 ingredients mainly. One we felt, was our friendship with one another. Secondly, the values that we hold together. Which we could happily say, "These are honestly the truths that we hold." There were prophecies which spoke about global impact which we felt that no one team could fulfil alone (Interview 7, 2012).

(3) The high regard for the spiritual gift of prophecy in the Newfrontiers movement. This is to be expected in a movement that believes in the validity of the ministry and office of the prophet along with all the other Ephesians 4:11 ministries today. Under the heading of 'The story so far', the following words appeared in the NFI Magazine (2000:10):

Many major moves in New Frontiers have been prompted by prophetic words. It has become a practice for all the leading men of the churches to meet together for prayer and fasting three times a year. During these times God has given fresh directions. On one occasion John Groves saw a picture of elephants crashing through the jungle, flattening trees and vegetation and creating a new pathway. "There are no well-worn paths ahead; together you will make a road that others will follow. Together you will accomplish what you could never accomplish alone"'.

There are certain pivotal prophetic words that have shaped Newfrontiers, the above being one example. Others would be 'the bow and the arrow' prophetic word referred to in the discussion of question 12 and the 'Armada' prophetic word referred to in chapter 4, section 1.5 below.

(4) The earnest and sacrificial commitment of the members of Newfrontiers to carry out what the apostolic team believe to be communication from God or according to the Scriptures.

(5) The use of print, online media and conferences to communicate the vision and values and to keep the movement abreast of the changes.

(6) The limited autonomy of the local churches under eldership teams. Newfrontiers is organised in such a way that it would be very difficult for a church to remain part of Newfrontiers were they to disagree strongly with the apostolic team. Also, the apostolic team expect churches to choose one of the recommended apostles. A further observation is that despite this churches continue to demonstrate a sacrificial and relational commitment to their chosen apostle and his team.

(7) The energy and enterprise that the multiplication of apostolic spheres has generated in those spheres and the churches within them. The local churches had lost some of their zeal for church planting and mission due to the largeness of Newfrontiers, but had a regained sense of personal involvement in church planting and mission due to the smaller scale of the new apostolic spheres.

(8) Clear steps were taken by Virgo and the apostolic team to bring about the transition from a single apostolic network to multiple apostolic spheres. Some examples would be the closing of the long standing Newfrontiers administrative centre in Brighton and Virgo's move away from Brighton - a clear signal of the end of an era; the communication from Virgo and his team to the local churches that they expected the local churches to shift their financial support from the central fund to their new apostolic sphere; and the closing down of the successful and well attended 'Together on a Mission' conference in Brighton.

(9) The successful transfer of financial support by the local churches from the single central Newfrontiers fund to their new apostolic sphere.

(10) Clarity on who was recommended to lead an apostolic sphere.

(11) The high degree of unity in the overall movement.

(12) Together with the unity referred to in the previous point, a desire to embrace the new diversity of and in Newfrontiers.

(13) The importance of relationships with Ephesians 4:11 ministries, some of which have developed over several years.

(14) In the early stage of the transition, Newfrontiers appeared to be in the 'independent' phase where new teams are concentrating on developing

their own identity. The hope is that these teams will mature into an 'interdependent' phase where unity will once again be as important as diversity.

(15) Each new sphere has the freedom to develop its own vision statement and unique shape as they have not been expected to be clones of the original Newfrontiers apostolic sphere.

(16) Apostolic spheres are still fluid and developing; there are too many new APEPTs emerging across the various spheres for any local church to keep up with who the APEPTs are in the other spheres, particularly as local churches in each sphere now have less contact with the members of the other spheres.

(17) Virgo's new and future role within the movement is not clear to the majority of the church leaders.

(18) The vast majority of churches (87.5%) know where they fit into the new structure. However, there are a small number of churches that are struggling with this as they have, up to this point, looked for apostolic ministry from someone who has not been recommended as an apostle.

(19) The churches understand that they will each be part of one apostolic sphere, and not several. The churches understand that they will have a unique and primary relationship with that apostle. They will receive ministry from other apostles and even join in some of the ministry ventures that other apostles may initiate, but always secondary to the commitment to *their* apostle.

(20) It would appear that church planting has slowed somewhat as the new spheres consolidate and establish their identity.

(21) Missionary activity, by contrast, seems to have received a fillip in that the new spheres have caused local churches to once more feel personally connected to the missionary activity in their apostolic sphere is engaged in. This is a change from the impersonal bigness of missionary activity in the large network of Newfrontiers. This bigness caused many churches to feel detached from Newfrontiers' mission and so to lose interest and commit less financial and personnel support to these missions.

(22) A small number of people have made the key decisions about Newfrontiers' future, but despite this all the local churches remain committed to the future defined by this small number of leaders.[26]

The next chapter begins to analyse the observations made in chapter two. It will investigate the factors that have shaped Newfrontiers' approach to apostolic succession. The chapter will also present an analysis of the major influences on and the theology that has shaped Newfrontiers' approach to apostolic succession; what the sociological influences on Newfrontiers were; and studies done on the psychological profiles of Newfrontiers leaders.

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[26] Although it is not definitive, in all the research there does not appear to be one Newfrontiers church that has left the movement because of the transition from Virgo to several apostolic spheres.

Chapter Three

Analysis of the Factors Underlying Newfrontiers' Approach to Apostolic Succession

1. Introduction

This chapter analyses a number of factors that have shaped Newfrontiers' approach to apostolic succession such as its values, ideas and theology, as well as the sociological influences of a post-modern Britain and the psychology of leadership within Newfrontiers. The data to be analysed in this chapter emerges from interviews conducted with Newfrontiers leaders, magazine articles and blogs, and personal knowledge of Newfrontiers' theology, culture, demography and published documentation. The information has also been obtained from observations in Newfrontiers churches and other events, conversations with Newfrontiers leaders and with Virgo and listening to conversations between Virgo and other leaders of Newfrontiers. Blogs written by leaders of Newfrontiers and articles in the Newfrontiers magazine are deemed to be intended to disseminate information from Virgo's apostolic team to the movement as a whole. The final source of data is studies of Newfrontiers by other researchers.

The aim in this chapter is to highlight only the values, ideals and theology which pertain to Newfrontiers' transition. It begins with the ideas and values; it then focuses on to the theology that has influenced its transition and the psychological types of the leadership of Newfrontiers and, finally, the sociological influences on Newfrontiers as a whole.

2. The Transition of Newfrontiers: Influencing Values

There are a number of factors that have fundamentally influenced the transition of Newfrontiers. The factors are the following.

2.1. Shared Values

Newfrontiers has developed a clear and strong sense of the values shared by members of the movement. Virgo in particular has been instrumental in holding these values before the movement, prior to, during and after the period of transition. In the October-December 2009 edition of Newfrontiers Magazine, Virgo (2009) wrote, 'It seems a good time to try and nail what really makes us tick. Others may have their views, but it's good to hear it from the horse's mouth. Here are the seventeen values which shape Newfrontiers churches around the world'. Virgo's blog site devoted a blog to each value under the common heading of '17 Values for the Spirit-filled church' (Virgo 2013a). The seventeen values were described in a 'Vision & Values Pull-Out' in four editions of the Newfrontiers magazine during the time leading up to the transition (Newfrontiers Magazine 2009, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c). On Virgo's personal website, he posted a series of short interviews which he recorded with his son, Simon, looking at these seventeen values that Virgo says 'have helped to shape my ministry over the years' (Virgo 2013a). As an example of a local church embracing these values, Gateway Church in Wrexham, Wales, posted the following on its website: 'As part of the Newfrontiers family of churches we have in common a vision to be "A worldwide family of churches together on a mission to establish the kingdom of God by restoring the church, making disciples, training leaders and planting churches"' (Newfrontiers Vision and Values 2013). They then list the following seventeen values as they had been articulated by Virgo.[27]

Value 1: *Building churches that are evangelistically relevant*. A gospel-preaching church that is loving, righteous in its lifestyle, involved in world mission and reaching the unsaved in its community by both public and personal evangelistic activity.

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[27] These headings do not appear in this online article but the contents do. For headings, see http://www.terryvirgo.org/Groups/172956/Terry_Virgo/Resources/Media/Series/17_Values_For/ 17_Values_For.aspx) and Newfrontiers Magazine (Oct-Dec 2009 (3), 13; Jul-Sep 2010 (3), 16).

Value 2: *The final authority of Scripture.* A church where regular teaching and preaching of the Bible holds a primary role and where Scripture's authority is final.

Value 3: *The gospel of grace.* A church whose people are assured of the grace of God in their lives and are clear about the full New Covenant benefits of being in Christ.

Value 4: *Baptism into Christ and the Spirit.* A church whose people are baptised in water and in the Holy Spirit, and brought into a genuine life in the Spirit.

Value 5: *Free to worship.* A church where God's presence is prized and where God is enthusiastically worshipped with genuine freedom for men and women to worship publicly in the Holy Spirit, to use spiritual gifts and to participate in 'body ministry'.

Value 6: *Loving, meeting and sharing communities.* A church which is a loving community, meeting both publicly and from house to house, sharing and caring for each other's needs, both spiritual and material.

Value 7: *Marriage, parenting and being single.* A church where Biblical family life is highly valued, where husband and wife embrace male servant leadership and joyful female submission, where godly parenting is taught and practised and where the special value of singleness and its unique opportunities are affirmed.

Value 8: *Elders: a team with a leader.* A church led by male elders (one of whom is clearly understood to be gifted to be lead elder) who are ordained by the Holy Spirit, recognised and confirmed through apostolic ministry. These men are to be helped in fulfilling their calling through ongoing fellowship with trans-local ministries.

Value 9: *Honouring your elders.* A church where elders are honoured as servant-leaders, caring for the flock and providing appropriate spiritual disciplines where necessary.

Value 10: *Freed from complacency.* A church freed from complacency and endeavouring to grow in gospel impact, faith, prayer, generosity, action and influence.

Value 11: *Equipped for service in the church and the community.* A church whose individual members are equipped for their role of service within the

church and community, including the release and training of those called to trans-local ministry.

Value 12: *Wholeheartedly owning our vision: people on a worldwide mission.* A church which is fully involved in our shared apostolic mission to extend the kingdom of God globally through the recovery of New Testament church life, making disciples, training leaders and planting churches by all means, including wholehearted financial commitment, welcoming trans-local ministries, regularly attending corporate gatherings, promoting our publications and communicating our news.

Value 13: *Local church: God's vehicle for empowering the poor.* A church which is serving and empowering the poor within its own ranks and beyond.

Value 14: *One new man.* A church which wholeheartedly embraces the New Testament teaching of the one new man, demonstrating love and respect between the races, cultures and sexes.

Value 15: *Salt and light: kingdom culture.* A church which is proving to be both salt and light in its location, impacting the culture of the community.

Value 16: *Perfectly one - the significance of unity.* A church that is committed to excellent relationships with other Christians and churches in its community.

Value 17: *Receiving encouragement and correction from translocal ministries.*[28] A church desiring and welcoming encouragement and correction from trans-local ministries in the fulfilment of these objectives.

According to Winston and Patterson (2006:7-8), deeply held values and a vision tend to have the effect of pulling a movement together. Although many of the above values would be held by a variety of churches and denominations, their combination in these particular seventeen values is an endeavour by Virgo to describe the uniqueness of Newfrontiers. They serve as a rallying point for Newfrontiers, to carry them through the turbulence of its transition (Interview 4, 5, 9 and 10, 2012). Andrew Wilson (2012), a church leader of Newfrontiers and part of the Newfrontiers theological forum (Ring 2012) wrote as follows in a blog entitled 'Is Newfrontiers Breaking up?':

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[28] This is Newfrontiers terminology for Ephesians 4:11 ministries is APEPT's.

The official answer, of course, is "No". Newfrontiers - which, originally, was simply the name given to Terry Virgo's apostolic sphere - has always included a number of established and emerging apostolic ministries, and the only thing that is changing at the moment is that we are formally recognising and releasing them. The name will continue, the values will continue, and the relationships will continue, so to use the language of "breaking up", let alone "fragmenting" or even "ending", is inappropriate. Nobody has fallen out with anybody; we still have the same mission, the same DNA and the same shared history'.

Closely related to the passing on of the vision and values of Newfrontiers is the generally used concept of 'fathers and sons'.

2.2. Fathers and sons

The use of the 'fathers and sons' concept is embraced among members of Newfrontiers. Apostles are perceived as fathers to churches and to younger men who are thought of as 'Timothies' (Virgo 2001:298). These young men are trained and equipped by the apostle, just as the apostle Paul trained and equipped Timothy (1 Cor 4:17; Phil 2:22; 1 Tim and 2 Tim). These younger men, in turn, serve with the apostle as a son would with his father (Devenish 2011:62-80).

During an interview conducted with one of the leaders of one of the new apostolic spheres, he stated the following:

I'm positive about the way in which we [Newfrontiers] are moving because we haven't gone an institutional route or organisational route, we've gone [the] relational route and trying to capture the DNA of the father in the sons. And so, sons are carrying what the father was carrying in the first generation. We [the leaders of the apostolic spheres] feel as sons gathered together every few months, as UK apostles, we love being together, we want to strengthen each other's

arms, help each other in terms of our ministries. So, it feels good. It doesn't feel as if we've been over-organised and there's a sort of list or a denominational sort of value system we've all got to sign up to. It feels like business is carrying on as usual, in some ways, with the sons who are just carrying the father's DNA (Interview 9, 2012).

Dave Devenish is one of the most influential and longstanding leaders of Newfrontiers (Interview 7, 2012). The title of his most recent book is *Fathering leaders, motivating mission* (Devenish 2011). Virgo not only highly recommended it to members of the Newfrontiers movement, but also refers to it as 'hugely relevant to the work to which God has called us' (Newfrontiers Magazine 2011c, 35). One of the chapters in the book is entitled 'The need for fathers in ministry and mission' (p. 62). Devenish's argument is based on the fatherhood of God as revealed in the Trinity, that God's intention in creation was to extend His rule through families from generation to generation (p.64), and the fact that 'fatherhood and family are emphasised throughout the New Testament writings' (p. 66). Devenish also points to Paul's use of the metaphor of fatherhood to characterise Paul's warm relationship with the Corinthian church (1 Cor 4:15), with the Thessalonian church (1 Thess 2:11-12) and with Timothy whom Paul calls 'my son whom I love' (1 Cor 4:17; NIV). Devenish asks,

> What do spiritual fathers do? They raise up spiritual sons and daughters!' (p. 72); 'Fathers discern potential and therefore make good decisions to develop new leaders' (p. 73) and 'Apostles, in particular, are called to act in a fatherly way which brings authority, fruitfulness, example and multiplication of ministry (p. 74).

Virgo (2001:298) stated the desired outcome of Newfrontiers' 'Training Itinerant Ministries' (TIM) programme as follows 'Our longing is that they might serve, like Timothy, as beloved and faithful sons'. In his book *Restoration in the Church,* written in 1985, Virgo (1985:35) had already written, at that early stage of the Newfrontiers movement, that 'young Timothies were caught up in the world vision and were trained in the apostolic team… Soon Timothy or Titus could be sent with Paul's full blessing to do the job he himself would have done.

Thus the work was multiplied'. This sense of 'fathers' raising 'sons' who go on to serve the Lord in their own right seems to have been part of Newfrontiers' thinking from the earliest days.

An extension of this 'father-son' concept is the concept of Newfrontiers being an 'extended family'.

2.3. Newfrontiers as an extended family

Newfrontiers sees itself as a family of churches. The inside cover of the Newfrontiers Magazine states that 'Newfrontiers Magazine is published by Newfrontiers, a worldwide family of churches together on a mission to extend Christ's kingdom among the nations through the recovery of New Testament church life, making disciples, training leaders and starting churches' (Newfrontiers Magazine 2011a:2). Nigel Ring was Virgo's administrator while Virgo was leading Newfrontiers. He reinforced this sense of family in Newfrontiers (Ring 2011a:24).

Newfrontiers see themselves as a family as opposed to a denomination or a corporation with ecclesiastical positions that need to be filled. For Newfrontiers, the word 'family' expresses their deep commitment to relationship building in the movement, particularly between church leaders and APEPT ministries. Writing about the emergence of the new apostolic spheres, Andrew Wilson (2012) says,

> If a corporation turns into five companies, each with their own leader, name, board and budget, then it's fair to say that the original corporation has "broken up". If a denomination fragments along theological lines into five smaller denominations, distinguishable from each other not just by geography but also by convictions, purpose and values, then that might be called "breaking up", too. But if a family reaches the stage where the children no longer live under their parents' roof, and leave home to form families of their own, nobody calls that a "break up". Rather, it's understood as the natural outcome of growth and maturity, and the best possible way of ensuring that growth and maturity continue into the next generation.

Wilson continues and states that the proof that Newfrontiers' transition is in fact a family flourishing and not a denomination breaking up, is found in self-identification. For example, when children leave home, they continue to describe themselves as part of their family, even if they are forming families of their own later in life. In contrast, fragmented denominations and divested companies immediately abandon their old names and announce new ones so that their new identity becomes clear to others. Furthermore, Wilson contends that extended families visit each other at their respective homes which he compares with Ephesians 4:11 ministries and church leaders within one apostolic sphere visiting another's apostolic sphere. By so doing, families get to know each other's children which, in Newfrontiers, means to get to know the people and emerging leaders within each other's spheres. Furthermore, families exchange gifts at Christmas and in Newfrontiers the exchanging of gifts happens in the form of ministry, people and finances, families meet together to celebrate weddings and the Newfrontiers spheres will continue to support each other and work together on common projects, meet together albeit much less frequently than in the past, and visit other churches and get to know them.

To summarise, there is mutual encouragement, news updates, sending of people and partnering in mission, and so on. Wilson sees denominations that have split are not generally doing these things. He contends that family members also keep in touch, desire the best for each other and continue to update each other on significant things that are happening in their lives. Therefore, he believes that Newfrontiers have indeed behaved like a family during the transition. He contrasts this with companies and denominations who could become rivals, no longer feeling united the same team (Wilson 2012).

2.4. The training of future leaders

The heading indicating the eleventh value of the seventeen core values of Newfrontiers reads, 'Equipped for service in the church and the community: A church whose individual members are equipped for their role of service within the church and community, including the release and training of those called to

trans-local ministry' (Vision and Values 2010:2). As mentioned in the conclusion of sub-section 2.1, the training of future leaders has been at the centre of Newfrontiers thinking from the earliest days of the movement. Virgo (2001:298) explains:

> We are committed to the development of "apostolic teams", creating a context for gifted people to discover and develop gifts which might be fulfilled not simply within one local church but in an itinerant way, serving among the churches. Our TIM [Training Itinerant Ministries] programme is one of the most fulfilling in which I am involved, where David Holden and I regularly meet with approximately three dozen men who have increasing responsibilities in travelling among the churches, like Timothy, Titus and others did on Paul's behalf.

Virgo had also initiated what he called 'an apostolic forum', where papers would be given on "What is apostolic ministry?" and "What are the essential ingredients of apostolic ministry?" (Interview 7, 2012). The apostolic team took what they called 'the utter simplicity and power of Jesus' and Paul's approaches to this issue' (Lanferman in Vision and Values 2010:39) by investing themselves in the lives of a few potential leaders. In this way Virgo and his apostolic team had deliberately and consistently invested in people who were to become their successors. Virgo is nonetheless very clear that Ephesians 4:11 ministers are not created by him. He says,

> We can't make apostles but we can recognise it and give it the right hand of fellowship. So that's the language we have used, what we have put in print and how we have expressed ourselves (Interview 7, 2012).

Virgo is making the point that it is God alone who gives the ministry gifts to the church, but it is the responsibility of the apostle and his team to notice the gift and encourage its development. Virgo and the apostolic team have clearly done this.

2.5. 'Together on a mission'

At some point in the early 1980's,[29] John Groves, one of the Newfrontiers church leaders, saw a vision of elephants crashing through the jungle, flattening trees and vegetation and creating a new pathway. He believed that God was saying that 'There are no well-worn paths ahead; together you will make a road that others will follow. Together you will accomplish what you could never accomplish alone' (NFI Magazine 2000:4). The expression 'Together we will accomplish more' is one that is often heard from Newfrontiers leaders (Interview 7, 2012). It is a strongly held value of Newfrontiers that is surely a reason that the autonomous, elder-led local churches continue cooperating and working together with an apostolic team. They firmly believed that it would accomplish more for the kingdom of God than if they worked independently and alone. Despite being committed to the autonomy of the local churches each under their own eldership, Virgo does not believe in the independence of the local church as an isolated unit. He writes,

> We are in a team, part of an armada[30] on a mission together, as were the
> Pauline churches in the New Testament' (Virgo 2001:298).

Further evidence of this commitment to be 'together on a mission' is contained in the twelfth value of the seventeen values published during the time of transition gives. It states:

> Wholeheartedly owning our [Newfrontiers'] vision: A church which is
> fully involved in our shared apostolic mission to extend the kingdom

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[29] The date was obtained through contact with John Groves. Although he was unable to provide a specific date, he said that it occurred roughly a year before the Newfrontiers movement changed its previous name of 'Coastlands' to 'Newfrontiers International.' Nigel Ring (2011), Virgo's erstwhile administrator, wrote that this happened *circa* 1980.

[30] The concept of an 'armada' – a group of ships each with their own captain and crew but joined together in a common purpose and in loyalty to an admiral – is a concept that Newfrontiers embraced to describe the autonomy and yet common purpose of the Newfrontiers local churches (Virgo 2001:172).

of God globally through the recovery of New Testament church life, making disciples, training leaders and planting churches by all means, including wholehearted financial commitment, welcoming trans-local ministries, regularly attending corporate gatherings, promoting our publications and communicating our news (Vision and Values 2010:41).

Furthermore, 'Together on a mission' was the title of the Newfrontiers annual international leadership conference held until 2011 in Brighton. The title suggests that the local churches that were part of the Newfrontiers movement were cooperating to fulfil God's call on the movement as a whole.
David Holden, one of the new apostolic sphere leaders wrote,

> It is important that every church feels the responsibility of being together on a mission. It is not easy to feel you are making a difference in Leeds when you live in Plymouth, nor affecting an inner-city area of London when you are part of a church in Shrewsbury. But I continue to believe we must work together, pray together and even give our people away together for the sake of the wider blessing that this will bring to this land. The future holds great challenges, but great adventures too (NFI Magazine 2000:35).

The name Newfrontiers is seen as a very helpful 'branding' which plays a part in emphasising the togetherness of the movement. A number of leaders believe it should be retained for this reason (Interview 5, 6, 8, and 9, 2012). Nigel Ring (2011), for example, posted the Newfrontiers' logo (Fig. 36 below) on his blog. He writes,

> 'The result is now recognised around the world and will, as we move into the next season and become more widespread, be one of the features that help to give our 'family' identity' (ibid.).

Figure 36. The Newfrontiers logo.

Although the concept of 'being together on a mission' has been carried over into the new apostolic spheres (Interview 3, 4, and 5, 2012) to serve the purpose of uniting the individual apostolic spheres, the question is whether it will be a strong enough value to hold all the various new apostolic spheres together in a single movement. One of the church leaders interviewed was positive that this would be the case. He described the transition as 'going small so that we can become big' (Interview 1, 2012). However, it remains to be seen whether this will in fact be the outcome or whether the individual spheres will begin to forge their own togetherness on a mission that causes them to drift away from the overall movement's togetherness on a mission. It may also mean that Newfrontiers divides into smaller units (i.e., independent apostolic spheres) which in time will grow but will not form one, large, overall movement. In other words, they could become several new burgeoning movements, each in their own right. In that case the apostolic movement comprising the sum total of all the new apostolic spheres will have grown, but Newfrontiers *per se*, will have all but disappeared. Time alone will tell.

2.6. 'Restoration in the church'[31]

In their analysis of apostolic networks in the UK, Kay and Dyer (2005:3) observed that 'these new groups offered a restorationist theology, a theology that presumed the reacquisition of the life, power, operation and structure of the church of the New Testament'. Virgo writes: 'But we have never left, nor intend leaving, our fundamental passion to see Christ glorified through local churches

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[31] This is the title of Virgo's book published in 1985.

restored to New Testament norms and making disciples of all nations'. Newfrontiers emerged out of the Restoration Movement[32] within the UK (cf. Virgo 2001: Ch 8-13).

The restoration of the ministry of the apostle and the prophet were the key elements of that movement and has been the subject-matter of much other writing (Daniel 1989; Devenish 2011:94-138; Driscoll and Breshears 2008; Eaton 1995; Smyth 2004; Virgo 1985:106-117). Since the study of the restoration of the ministry of the apostle and the prophet is not part of the scope of this study, it suffices to say that the authority and status of an apostle in a movement like Newfrontiers is immense. The office of prophet is also taken very seriously as such individuals are taken to speak the mind of God into any situation in which the movement finds itself.

The transition of Newfrontiers has been very much in the hands of apostle Virgo and the other members of his apostolic team (Interview 7, 2012). The weight of respect and authority that these ministries carry within the movement would in itself carry enough authority to unite the movement during the phase leading up to and the actual transition from one apostolic sphere to multiplied apostolic spheres. Added to this is the sense that the multiplication of these apostolic spheres is the continuation of the ideal to see the church restored to its New Testament norms. Virgo (2011c:6) expresses these points in an editorial comment in the Newfrontiers Magazine as follows:

> We shall continue to work as friends together gathering regularly and
> visiting one another's locations but, as we progress, each man and
> his team will take their own initiatives in training leaders, planting
> churches, planning strategies and upholding the New Testament

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[32] The Restoration Movement emerged out of the house church movement in the UK in the 1970s and 1980s (Kay and Dyer 2005:2-3). The goal of this movement was to see the church restored to its New Testament norms, and a key part of this was the desire to see the restoration of the ministry of the apostle and the prophet. In importance, they are seen as first and second respectively for the formation and ongoing care of the church (1 Cor 12:28).

values that we collectively own in Newfrontiers and which we have recently printed in this magazine. You can also watch on my web-site (www.terryvirgo.org) a series of interviews which provide opportunity for me to explain and develop each of those values in a conversational context…By His grace we will continue to proclaim the need for churches to be restored to New Testament values and to be multiplied, and for the kingdom of God to fill the earth'.

The weight that these words carry, for every member of the Newfrontiers movement, can hardly be overemphasised. For example, Karen Khachatryan (2011d:40-41), a Newfrontiers church leader in Yerevan, Armenia, writes in the Newfrontiers Magazine about six keys for a healthy church. One of these is 'five-fold ministry/church planting' about which he has this to say:

I believe that the church in general and the local churches in particular will be healthy and strong only when New Testament apostolic ministry is restored, and as a consequence, five-fold ministry is restored. The example of Newfrontiers apostolic team, led by Terry, is one of the best examples for us'.

Another of Khachatryan's keys is the 'prophetic ministry'. He writes: 'This is a ministry for which I have a special heart. I believe that the living church of Jesus first of all must be a prophetic church. In this field David Devenish has a substantial input for us' (p. 42). The four other values he writes about are the preparation of leaders, the preaching of the gospel, youth ministry and mission (ibid). Although it is arguably the case that these four values would be shared by most evangelical churches, the two values that would not be as widely held are the commitment to apostolic and prophetic ministry respectively. Thus, when an appeal based on prophetic words is made by the founding apostle and communicated as cooperating with God in His ongoing restoration of the church to its New Testament norms, it carries great weight for the members of the movement. In short, it is the foundation of the cohesive strength of the Newfrontiers movement.

Another Newfrontiers leader is Matt Hosier. He writes as follows in the Newfrontiers Vision and Values booklet:

> The primary responsibility of an eldership team is the care and oversight of the local church, but we are also men with a wider vision than just our small patch. We know that Jesus has called us to global mission, and we feel a deep commitment to being part of the apostolic momentum of Newfrontiers. Practically this means that elders of local churches welcome trans-local ministries into their churches and gladly submit themselves to apostolic leadership. These gifts are given to build and equip the church, and working with them we know that we are "more together than we are apart" (Vision and Values 2010:30).

By way of summary, Newfrontiers' commitment to the restoration of the church to its New Testament norms includes the restoration of the ministry and spiritual authority of the apostle and prophet. As such, it is a great motivator for the movement to remain united and to press forward into the new structure of Newfrontiers. By implication, these new structures are seen as the unfolding of the apostolic mandate to lead the church into its restored future which will be glorious. With this in mind, the focus will now be on one of the major influences on the transition of Newfrontiers, namely, the theology that underpins and influenced the transition.

3. The Theology of the Newfrontiers Movement: Reformed, Charismatic and Missional

Virgo has stated that Newfrontiers is evangelical, Reformed and charismatic. Adrian Warnock (2013), another influential Newfrontiers leader, writes the following about a video interview of Virgo (2013b) entitled 'Charismatic, Reformed and Missional': 'I pray it [the video] will be used by God to raise up a people who will love God like a charismatic, love his Word like the Reformed, and love the world like every missionary should'. Andrew Wilson (2013) writes that 'More pastors would own Lloyd-Jones' [commentary] on Romans, or

Grudem's *Systematic Theology*, than anything Terry Virgo or David Devenish have written'.[33] In order to further emphasise this unusual trait of Newfrontiers, namely, that they are strongly charismatic and strongly Reformed, Wilson points out that in the 1990s, the two biggest influences on the movement were John Wimber[34] and John Piper[35] and adds 'I doubt there are many groups of churches for whom that would be true' (ibid).

Matthew Hosier (2013:1), a Newfrontiers church leader wrote an article on the evangelical and Reformed nature of Newfrontiers, and states:

> In recent years, we have been significantly influenced by "new Calvinists" such as John Piper, Tim Keller and Driscoll. As a consequence of this, and a picking-up of the American "young, restless and Reformed" motif, an increasing number within our ranks would self-consciously refer to themselves as Reformed. "Reformed and Charismatic" is now the banner under which many would choose to take their stand.

He goes on to say, 'In the sense that the term [Reformed] indicates the following – conservative evangelical, big view of God, small view of man, and theologically rooted to the five *solas* it is a helpful term' (ibid, p. 6).[36] The words suggest a sense of the deep commitment to Reformed theology within Newfrontiers. Reformed theology emphasises the sovereignty of God who rules all things to His own glory and for the display of His own perfections (Packer 2004:18). In a video interview, Virgo (2013b) relates what went through his thoughts when his sister gave him AW Pink's book *The Sovereignty of God*: 'I

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[33] Both Lloyd-Jones and Grudem are Reformed theologians and the latter serves on the leadership board of a Vineyard church.

[34] He was charismatic and the founding leader of the Vineyard movement.

[35] He is a Reformed theologian and devotee of Jonathan Edwards.

[36] 'Sola Scriptura' (Scripture alone), 'Solus Christus' (Christ alone), 'Sola Gratia' (grace alone), 'Sola Fide' (faith alone), and 'Soli Deo Gloria' (the glory of God alone) (Hosier 2011:20, fn 14).

thought, "Oh my word, God is in charge completely." It just convinced me that God is sovereign in every way and it laid in me the foundations of my Reformed faith. I built on that, reading M Lloyd-Jones, John Stott, JI Packer, DA Carson, [and] J Piper. And I thought to myself, hey, there it is, clear'. The sense that God is sovereign in every way is part of the warp and woof of Newfrontiers thinking.

When the Reformed perspective on the sovereignty of God is coupled with the charismatic theology of Newfrontiers, it becomes easy to understand the great reverence and weightiness that leaders of Newfrontiers accord to what they believe to be the will of God expressed in prophetic utterances. Indeed Packer (2004:18), who has had a great influence on Virgo and Newfrontiers, wrote that 'godliness means responding to God's revelation in trust and obedience, faith and worship, prayer and praise, submission and service'. Although Packer is referring to the revelation of the Bible, it is easy to see how his Reformed sentiment could be transferred to what Newfrontiers leaders understand to be God's word through the prophetic, albeit that Newfrontiers would never put this on the same level as the Bible and will always subject any prophetic word to the test of the Scriptures.[37]

During an interview with Virgo, he stated that there were three ingredients that would keep Newfrontiers together:

> One we felt, was our friendship with one another. Secondly, the values that we hold together. Which we could happily say, "These are honestly the truths that we hold." And thirdly, there were prophecies which spoke about global impact which we felt that no one team could fulfil alone. But that if we continued it relationally, albeit in separate teams, we could still see the fulfilment of the prophetic. So the prophetic pulled us into the future as it were' (Interview 7, 2012).

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[37] See Value 2: *The final authority of Scripture* above.

In March 2011, in Tacoma, Washington, Virgo was a keynote speaker at a conference organised by 'Acts 29'.[38] The conference was entitled 'Reformed, Charismatic and Missional'. Virgo (2013b) wrote the following about the conference:

> Some would argue that "Reformed" and "Charismatic" could never live together, but I am reminded of an event in the life of the Apostle Paul when, confronted with the challenge of Corinth, a hostile city, he was encouraged by God not to be afraid, but to go on speaking. It's fascinating to see the combination of Reformed, Missional and Charismatic in this encounter.[39]

That God could say in advance that He had people in a city that Paul had barely started evangelising, Virgo sees is an encouragement to those 'who embrace the wonderful Reformed doctrine that salvation is of the Lord…knowing that God himself foreknows whom He will call and those who are ordained to eternal life' (ibid). Yet the fact that Jesus encourages Paul to continue to evangelise so that God's elect will be awakened by the gospel and will respond is, as Virgo states, a mandate to the church to be missional and evangelical.

Furthermore, Virgo (2011b) points out that Paul learnt that God had many people in the city of Corinth, which the Lord made known to him through a vision (Acts 18:9). For Virgo there is a charismatic dynamic manifested in this passage. Virgo writes, 'We are in the promised age of the Spirit and the Holy Spirit was manifestly involved in the mission, directing, encouraging, restraining, comforting, fortifying', concluding on the following note: 'How the 21st century church needs to rediscover its roots in the sovereignty of God [Reformed], its

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[38] Acts 29 is a church planting network that emerged out of Mark Driscoll's church, Mars Hill in Seattle, Washington. Acts 29 is Reformed, open to the charismata and missional (see http://www.acts29network.org/about/distinctives/).

[39] The passage that Virgo is referring to is Acts 18:9-10.

call to be on a mission [evangelical] and the promise of the Holy Spirit's power [charismatic] enabling them to fulfil the task (ibid).

The embracing of Reformed and charismatic theology has imparted a divine endorsement and gravitas to the transition of Newfrontiers. The fact of the matter is that Newfrontiers is a movement that has been founded and shaped by prophetic words (Virgo 2001:127, 143, 144, 161, 172, 188, 192, 222, 224, 225, 246, 250 and 271). Virgo regards these prophecies as significant and seminal for Newfrontiers. The number of references documented from Virgo's book *No Well-Worn Paths* indicate how the development of Newfrontiers in the past and into the future is seen to be a sovereign act of God and guided by God through prophecy. It is the tone with which the transition has been communicated to the movement. For example, Virgo (2011a:7) writes in the Newfrontiers Magazine:

> The time has come to redefine Newfrontiers. Through 2011 Newfrontiers will begin to take on a new identity. It will be the name given to multiplied apostolic spheres who plan to work together interdependently, owning the same values, retaining the same Newfrontiers title and aspiring to fulfil the prophetic promises given to us. Since these promises have global ramifications it is impossible for any one of these new teams to accomplish them alone but, as God said to us in the early days, we can accomplish more together than apart.

In another Newfrontiers Magazine, Phil Wilthew, a Newfrontiers church leader from Bedford in England, wrote an article entitled 'Creating Prophetic Cultures'. The subtext on the contents page states: 'Phil Wilthew explains that the prophetic equips us to fight the good fight of faith, and leaders must battle to maintain a high regard for and openness to the prophetic' (Newfrontiers Magazine 2011b:1). In the article, Wilthew (2011b:17) states that 'It is vital that we create an expectation that every prayer setting, every group meeting, even every conversation is an opportunity to tune into what the Lord might be saying – "Speak Lord, your servants are listening!".

Virgo's book *No Well-Worn Paths* contains many instances where Virgo relates God's guidance to himself and to the Newfrontiers movement through visions and prophetic words (Virgo 2001:127, 143, 144, 161, 172, 188, 192, 222, 224, 225, 246, 250 and 271). It follows then that what is discerned as 'a word from the Lord' by the Newfrontiers apostolic team would be extremely likely to be embraced and followed by the movement as a whole, in a bond of unity.

As indicated earlier, the Reformed theology of Newfrontiers with its emphasis on the sovereignty of God lends further gravitas within the movement to the transition. The reasoning would appear to be that if God is sovereign and Virgo and the apostolic team believe that this transition is God's will then this transition must be the will of the sovereign God and should, therefore, not be resisted. As a syllogism, its weakness is that the apostolic team's discernment that something is God's will does not necessarily make it God's will. However, the point is that this is how the Newfrontiers movement communicates their understanding of this junction in their history – the multiplying of the original apostolic sphere under Virgo into several apostolic spheres. It is also a major factor underlying the prolonged unity in and of the movement.

The concern, however, is that leaders and church members could be hesitant to speak out about their misgivings about the transition. The culture of honouring the apostolic and the prophetic has the potential of creating an unhealthy culture in which any person expressing concerns about the transition could feel or made to feel that they are resisting God. The fact that a high proportion of the leaders surveyed felt they had little to do with the selecting of the apostolic sphere leaders or the transition process (see figures 34 and 35) could be an indication of passivity in these leaders in the light of the Newfrontiers' doctrines of the sovereignty of God and the charismata. These are points to which we will return in chapter eight of the study.

The aim in the next section is to describe and discuss the psychological types of the leaders of Newfrontiers.

4. The Psychological Types of Newfrontiers Leadership

There have been psychological profiling studies conducted on Newfrontiers leaders (Francis, Robbins and Ryland 2012) and on leaders of the apostolic networks in the United Kingdom, including Newfrontiers leaders (Kay and Dyer 2005). The relevance of these results will become apparent through the discussion that follows. Lead elders and apostles in Newfrontiers are exclusively male. This is a major factor in their approach to decision making and so it will be investigated first.

4.1. Male leadership

By the mid-1980s, the churches that emerged from the Restoration Movement began to cluster themselves around various powerful ministers that were deemed apostles. These apostles, who had minimal infrastructural links to churches, transformed groups of congregations into apostolic networks, and local congregations governed by elders were subdivided into home groups (Kay and Dyer 2005:3). Currently in Newfronteirs, one of the local elders leads the eldership team (Virgo 1985:89). He is variously referred to as the presiding elder, visionary elder or lead elder, a terminology that was frequently used in Newfrontiers over the years. This elder is also acknowledged as 'first among equals' (Vision and Values 2010:27). Personal observation led to the conclusion that the local elders submit to the apostle because they take his counsel with utmost seriousness. However, it does not imply that they will always follow his counsel, for they regard the eldership team to be the highest authority in the local church; they discern whether the apostle's counsel is correct for their local church. By contrast, the apostle always functions within the context of an apostolic team, although, as with the lead elder, as first among equals.

Kay and Dyer (2005:3) observe that the authority of apostles as well as the authority of other ministry gifts stands in stark contrast to the more constitutional mind-set that permeates many Pentecostal denominations and the typically more ineffective and liturgical ministerial role in non-Pentecostal churches. It is important to remember that all these roles are masculine in Newfrontiers. That

is because Restorationism stressed the role of the male gender as head of the family and the church (Vision and Values 2010:23). As a result, 'male preoccupations with football and sport became perfectly acceptable in the ethos of the new churches' (Kay and Dyer 2005:3). In some strands of Restorationism, most notably Newfrontiers, ministries led by women were very limited. Newfrontiers continues to regard eldership and Ephesians 4:11 APEPT ministries as the preserve of men (Virgo 2001:301-303).[40] Kay and Dyer write that 'the apostolic networks began to offer attractive certainties and confident direction' (2005:3). Thus, the apostolic networks began to offer male leadership along with clear, conservative and charismatic doctrine and confident direction. In other words, apostolic networks made leadership positions attractive to those who prefer a male dominated style of church leadership.

Kay (2008:35) writes that when restorationist churches began to emerge in Britain, they reached the conclusion that new 'charismatic' churches should be founded and overseen by apostles and that the churches should be free of the legalistic constitutional and denominational machinery that was to be found in Pentecostal churches. The net result was clear, simplified and proactive leadership in a robust movement. As an example, Kay and Dyer (2005:4) observe that when the 'Toronto blessing'[41] of the 1990s began to occur in Britain with its unusual spiritual phenomena, the movements with an apostolic form of government 'were able to make decisions quickly about accompanying developments on the Christian scene in Britain'.

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[40] Value 8 of the Vision and Values statements reads, 'A church led by male elders (one of whom is clearly understood to be gifted to be lead elder) who are ordained by the Holy Spirit, recognized and confirmed through apostolic ministry. These men are to be helped in fulfilling their calling through ongoing fellowship with trans-local ministries (Vision and Values 2010:2, 27). Also see article by Emily Woods (2009a:14) in Newfrontiers Magazine entitled 'Why I'd never want to be an elder'.

[41] This refers to events that transpired in John Arnott's church in Toronto, Canada, where unusual phenomena like laughing, rolling, shouting, twitching and roaring were associated with the Holy Spirit coming upon people.

In the exploration of the personality profiles in tightly structured and closely supervised organisations, Newfrontiers leaders scored far higher on the thinking and judging parameters than the results from the survey of UK females (see section 4.3 below). Francis et al. (2009:11) wrote,

> Leadership with a preference for judging is likely to develop tightly structured and closely supervised organisations. Congregations within the Newfrontiers network of churches are likely to be given firm leadership. Such leadership may, however, appear inflexible and unappreciative of members who, for whatever reason, wish to step out of line.

This kind of clear, strong leadership, unfettered by the constitutional checks and balances attached to denominational leaders, is a key factor in the transition of the Newfrontiers movement. For decades Newfrontiers have been accustomed to submitting to the teaching and direction of the apostle. This has made it possible to transition a whole movement with a remarkable degree of unity and ongoing cohesiveness. Whether this is the unity of the Spirit or whether it is more a combination of a strong authority and willing compliance culture, will be explored in the conclusion to this study.

The next subsection focuses attention on the psychological profiles of Newfrontiers leaders and further illuminates the leadership culture within Newfrontiers. It will be seen that the gender specific orientation within Newfrontiers' leadership is reflected in the psychological profiling of the elders and lead elders within Newfrontiers. The results of Francis et al.'s psychological profiling of Newfrontiers leaders has a bearing on how Newfrontiers leaders might be expected to react to change initiated by their apostle.

4.2. Psychological profiles of Newfrontiers leaders

Psychological type theory has been used to examine areas of church life across a range of Christian denominations, such as praying (Duncan 1993), preaching (Francis and Village 2008), evangelism (Butler 1999) and different ways of

exercising leadership and ministry (Oswald and Kroeger 1988). The psychological type theory has its roots in the insights of Carl Jung into major patterns in human psychological functioning (Jung 1971). There are critics of psychological type theory about whether it artificially 'pigeon-holes' people by oversimplifying the characteristics of each of the functions. There are also critics who question whether psychological type theory is a reliable indicator of whether a person will be a good leader. For the purposes of this study the research that has been conducted on Newfrontiers will be considered as a perspective on how their all male leadership would likely affect transition.

A brief introduction to psychological type theory will be useful. In the first place, the theory draws a number of distinctions, the most important of which are the following:

(1)   two *orientations* (extraversion and introversion, represented by the letters E/I),
(2)   two *perceiving functions* (sensing and intuition: S/N),
(3)   two *judging functions* (thinking and feeling: T/F), and
(4)   two *attitudes toward the outer world* (judging and perceiving: J/P).

The two *orientations* are concerned with where a person draws energy from; the theory postulates that energy can be gathered either from the outside world or from the inner world. *Extraverts* (E) are orientated toward the outside world and are energised the events and people around them. They also enjoy communicating and thrive in stimulating and exciting environments; they tend to prefer to act in a situation rather than to reflect on it; they may vocalise a problem or an idea rather than thinking it through privately, and they may be bored and frustrated by silence and solitude. They further tend to focus their attention on what is happening outside them and may be influenced by the opinions of other people. Finally, they are usually approachable individuals, easy to get to know, and tend to have many friends.

Introverts (I) on the other hand are orientated toward their inner world; they are energised by their inner ideas and concepts; they may feel drained by events and people around them; they prefer to reflect on a situation rather than to act in

it; they enjoy solitude, silence, and contemplation as they tend to focus their attention on what is happening in their inner life; they may appear reserved and detached as they are difficult to get to know, and they may prefer to have a small circle of intimate friends rather than many acquaintances.

The *perceiving* functions are concerned with the way in which people receive and reflect on information. This can be done through use of the senses or through use of intuition. *Sensing types* (S) focus on the realities of a situation as perceived by the senses. They tend to focus on specific details rather than the overall picture, are concerned with the actual, the real, and the practical, and they tend to be down-to-earth and matter-of-fact. They may also feel that particular details are more significant than general patterns. As they are fond of the traditional and conventional, they therefore tend to be conservative and prefer what is known and well-established.

Intuitive types (N) on the other hand, focus on the possibilities of a situation, perceiving meanings and relationships. They may feel that perception by the senses is not as valuable as information gained from the unconscious mind, and indirect associations and concepts impact their perceptions. They also tend to focus on the overall picture rather than specific facts and data; they follow their inspirations enthusiastically but not always realistically, and therefore appear to be 'up in the air' and be seen as idealistic dreamers. Finally, they tend to aspire to bring innovative change to established conventions.

The *judging functions* pertain to the way in which people make decisions and judgements through use of objective impersonal logic or subjective interpersonal values. *Thinking types* (T) make judgements based on objective, impersonal logic. They value integrity and justice, are known for their truthfulness and for their desire for fairness, and prefer to conform to principles rather than cultivating harmony. They are often good at making difficult decisions as they are able to analyse problems in order to reach an unbiased and reasonable solution. They are frequently referred to as *tough-minded* and may consider it to be more important to be honest and correct than to be tactful when working with others.

Feeling types (F) make judgements based on subjective, personal values. They value compassion and mercy, are known for their tactfulness and for their desire for peace, are more concerned to promote harmony than to adhere to abstract principles, and may be thought of as 'people-persons' as they are able to take other people's values and feelings into account in decision-making and problem-solving, and by so doing, ensure they reach a solution that satisfies everyone. They are often thought of as warm-hearted and may find it difficult to criticise others, even when it is necessary. Therefore, find it easy to empathise with other people and tend to trust and encouraging others.

The *attitudes towards the outside world* are concerned with the way in which people respond to the world around them, either by imposing structure and order on that world or remaining open and adaptable to the world around them. *Judging types* (J) have a planned, orderly approach to life. They enjoy routine and established patterns, prefer to follow schedules in order to reach an established goal and may make use of lists, timetables, or diaries. They tend to be punctual, organised, and tidy and may find it difficult to deal with unexpected disruptions of their plans. They are inclined to be resistant to change and to established methods and prefer to make decisions quickly and to stick to conclusions once they are made.

Perceiving types (P) on the other hand have a flexible and open-ended approach to life. They enjoy change and spontaneity, prefer to leave projects open in order to adapt and improve them later, may find plans and schedules restrictive and tend to be easy going about issues such as punctuality, deadlines, and tidiness. Therefore, last minute pressure proves a necessary motivation in order to complete projects. They are often good at dealing with the unexpected, may welcome change and variety as routine bores them, and may often be seen to be impulsive and unplanned.

The components of Jung's model of psychological type theory have been adapted into self-evaluation instruments, for example, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers and McCaulley 1985), the Keirsey Temperament Sorters

(Keirsey and Bates 1978), and the Francis Psychological Type Scales (Francis 2005). These instruments enable predictions generated from psychological type theory to be tested empirically. Data gathered in this way is beginning to make useful and important contributions within the related fields of the psychology of religion, pastoral sciences and Christian ministry (Francis 2009; Ross 2011).

Francis (2005) considers the Jungian model of psychological type to have identified in these four binary constructs (that is, the two orientations, the two perceiving processes, the two judging processes and the two attitudes toward the outer world) individual differences of the most fundamental nature that reflect the difference and diversity within the divine image of the creator God. Francis (2005) also reflects on Genesis 1:27 to demonstrate the divine intention of difference in creation. He argues that the divine image is reflected not only in the difference between male and female and in ethnic differences, but also in psychological type differences (Kay et al. 2011). Thus, in short, Francis sees psychological type differences as a part of God's creative intentions and believes that this validates exploring how such God-given differences may contribute to building the Church and shaping church leadership.

Francis et al. (2012) describe how the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, the Keirsey Temperament Sorter and the Francis Psychological Type Scales referred to in the previous paragraph have generated data on the psychological type profile of men and women engaged in various forms of Christian ministry. Individual studies have focused on Presbyterian Church of Scotland ministers (Irvine 1989), Anglican clergymen serving in the Church in Wales (Francis, Payne and Jones 2001; Francis and Payne 2002), male and female Bible College students (Francis, Penson and Jones 2001), evangelical church leaders (Francis and Robbins 2002; Craig, Francis and Robbins 2004), male missionary personnel (Craig, Horsfall and Francis 2005), evangelical lay church leaders (Francis et al. 2005), Roman Catholic priests (Craig, Duncan and Francis 2006), youth ministers (Francis et al. 2007), Anglican clergymen and clergywomen serving in the Church of England (Francis et al. 2007), evangelical Anglican seminarians (Francis, Craig and Butler 2007), Assemblies of God theological college students (Kay and Francis 2008; Kay, Francis and Craig 2008), lead elders

serving within the Newfrontiers network of churches (Francis, Gubb and Robbins 2009), Church of England hospital chaplains (Francis et al. 2009), Methodist Circuit ministers (Burton, Francis and Robbins 2010), and male and female Free Church ministers in England (Francis et al. 2011). Overall these studies demonstrate that there are some psychological type characteristics that seem shared across men and women engaged in various forms of Christian ministry. At the same time, there are some significant differences between the traditional denominations and the apostolic network churches (Francis et al. 2012:222).

Francis, Gubb and Robbins (2009) and Francis, Robbins and Ryland (2012) have extended their psychological type research to the Newfrontiers network of churches. They noted that the distinctive emphases of this network of churches may be reflected in a significantly different group of people in Newfrontiers leadership. Francis et al. (2012) ascribe the following distinctive emphases to the Newfrontiers network:

(1) It is a network of churches which was part of the New Churches that emerged in the 1960s as a new generation of Christians experienced the tangible presence and empowering of the Holy Spirit.

(2) The New Churches found themselves rejected or stifled by the historic denominational churches (see also Virgo 2001:130-131; Walker 1988:43ff).

(3) The effect of this experience of the Spirit provoked both a passion for worship and a new desire to obey God's word.

(4) Finding themselves setting up churches from scratch, these frontier-mentality believers turned to the Book of Acts for inspiration about church structure. From the pages of Acts and the Pauline epistles various guiding values were deduced: the supremacy of anointing over appointing, the principle of government by a group of elders set aside by God and not by election, the value of friendship, the liberating truth of God's grace and the essential place of apostolic and prophetic ministry in both the planting and care of local churches.

(5) Within this New Church phenomena, the Newfrontiers family of churches emerged as an identifiable grouping in the 1970s. Statistics reported by

Brierley (2001) indicates that Newfrontiers was, by then, one of the most numerically successful New Church streams in the UK. By 2010, the Newfrontiers family had grown to over 850 churches in more than sixty nations.

(6) Newfrontiers is a church-planting missional movement that arose from within the non-conformist heritage.

Distinctive features of Newfrontiers include the following themes:

(a) Emphasis is placed on both intellectual engagement with Scripture and an experiential encounter with the Spirit of God (cf. Virgo 1996:40-41).

(b) A high value is placed on ecclesiology because the church is seen as God's new society—an agent and a foretaste of the coming kingdom of God (cf. Virgo 2003:33ff).

(c) A clear vision. The Newfrontiers mission statement reads:

Newfrontiers is a worldwide family of churches together on a mission, with over 850 churches in over 60 nations, on every continent. With a passionate commitment to build the church according to New Testament principles, we believe that the most effective form of evangelism is worked out from strong local churches. These are local churches where each member participates, the gifts of the Spirit are outworked, there is joy in caring one for the other, there is a desire to make a difference in society and an urgency to reach those in need. We aim to achieve this by; restoring the church; making disciples; training leaders; starting churches; reaching the nations (Newfrontiers 2011).

(d) The Newfrontiers churches deliberately and self-consciously aim to see all comers captivated with this vision.[42]

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[42] Virgo (2003:145) wrote: 'The very ethos of such congregations should be such that even the newest convert is made aware that they have been born again and added into a global movement, bent on world mission, not simply an introverted group preoccupied with personal needs'.

(e) The importance attached to the church in the plan of God means that Newfrontiers leaders also display suspicion and antipathy towards para-church organisations (cf. Virgo 2001:304f; Virgo 1985: 14).

(f) Newfrontiers leaders describe themselves as orthodox in theological belief, but non-traditional in practice (cf. Virgo 1985:17-18, 58ff). Much is made of new wineskins for the new wine of Gods Spirit.

(g) Newfrontiers rejects the label 'priest' because of the Reformation's insistence on the priesthood of all believers. The label 'minister' is also rejected because all believers are ministers. Newfrontiers asserts the ministry of all and the leadership of some. The labels adopted, therefore, are taken directly from the New Testament—elder, apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, etc. (Walker 1988:168ff).

To investigate whether these emphases correlated with a significantly different type of leader within Newfrontiers, Francis, Gubb, and Robbins (2009) undertook an initial study to explore the psychological profile of lead elders serving within the Newfrontiers network of churches. Their study was based on the responses of 134 lead elders to a survey that included the Francis Psychological Type Scales (68% response rate). In their analysis of the findings generated by the survey, they profiled the strengths of the lead elders alongside what was already known from previous research about the profile of the Church of England clergymen as reported by Francis et al. (2007).

In terms of the four binary constructs from which psychological type theory is formed, the Newfrontiers lead elders were more likely than the Church of England clergymen to prefer extraversion (52% compared with 43%), sensing (52% compared with 38%), thinking (54% compared with 47%), and judging (78% compared with 68%). In terms of the pairing of profile constructs, the Newfrontiers lead elders were more likely than the Church of England clergymen to prefer the SJ temperament (47% compared with 31%).

Taken together these preferences suggest that a somewhat different understanding of leadership is being modelled by lead elders within the Newfrontiers network of churches compared with the understanding of

leadership being modelled by the Church of England clergymen. Among Newfrontiers lead elders, the higher preference for extraversion suggests a greater emphasis on the social aspects of leadership, the higher preference for sensing suggests a greater emphasis on the practical aspects of leadership, the higher preference for thinking suggests a greater emphasis on the strategic aspect of leadership, and the higher preference for judging suggests a greater emphasis on the organisational aspects of leadership. However, the lower preference for introversion suggests less opportunity for reflective leadership, the lower preference for intuition suggests less opportunity for inspirational leadership, the lower preference for feeling suggests less opportunity for pastoral sensitivity in leadership, and the lower preference for perceiving suggests less opportunity for flexibility and spontaneity in leadership. The higher proportions of preferences for the SJ temperament suggest that congregations within the Newfrontiers network of churches are likely to be 'more tightly and more toughly managed than Church of England congregations' (Francis, Robbins and Myers 2012:220-223).

The psychological profiling of Newfrontiers leaders conducted by Francis, Robbins and Ryland (2012) was based on the data provided by 154 leaders who completed the Francis Psychological Type Scales questionnaire. Among these leaders there are preferences for extraversion (52%), sensing (71%), thinking (60%), and judging (86%). It would seem helpful to view the findings of Francis et al. (2012) and Kay et al. (2011) in table form for ease of comparison (see figure 37 below). Kay et al. (2011) incorporate a comparison of UK apostolic network leader's psychological type profiles with a psychological type survey of Anglican clergy in England (Francis, Payne and Jones 2001) and with Kendall's psychological type profile of the male population and female population of the UK (Kay et al. 2011:309). Francis, Gubb and Robins (2009) added further research into the form of the psychological type of Newfrontiers lead elders. It is also incorporated in the table below. As can be seen, only the higher score in each of the four binary constructs is indicated, which makes the comparison easier.

	Four binary personality profile constructs							
	E	I	S	N	T	F	J	P
Anglican clergy in England		57%		62%		54%	68%	
UK males		53%	73%		65%		55%	
UK females	57%		79%			70%	62%	
Apostolic network leaders	70 %		51%			52%	73%	
Newfrontiers leaders	52%		71%		60%		86%	
Newfrontiers lead elders	52%		52%		54%		78%	

Figure 37. Comparison of Psychological Type profiling for Anglican leaders, UK general adult population, apostolic network leaders, Newfrontiers leaders and Newfrontiers lead elders.

With regard to Newfrontiers, Francis et al. (2012) conclude: 'The combined STJ[43] preference accounts for 40% of the leaders, indicating a church that is well equipped with practical, organisational management rather than with inspirational pastoral care' (Francis et al. 2012:1).

4.3. Conclusion

All male leaders in Newfrontiers exemplify an STJ preference, particularly the T profile (figure 37 above). Coupled with a psychological profile of leaders who are practical, organised and management orientated, Newfrontiers leaders will

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[43] STJ stands for Sensor, Thinker, Judge in the Francis Psychological Type Scales.

tend to be firm, strong and clear in their leadership. These are leaders likely to be looked up to and respected. The T factor would lead one to expect a leadership in Newfrontiers that would reflect theologically and deeply on their transition. Testimony to this is the fact that Newfrontiers have put a strong emphasis on theological training and on sound theology. It also means that when the apostolic team emerge from deliberations over subject-matter, their decisions or suggestions will be received with great respect and taken very seriously by the members of the Newfrontiers churches.

The strong, male, gifted ministry profile stems from the Restorationist Movement as noted earlier. This has been the Newfrontiers profile for decades and is unlikely to be challenged from within or changed, as long as the Newfrontiers movement continues to adhere to the values and theology of the Restorationist Movement. It is hardly surprising then that a movement that was approaching an obvious crisis point – Virgo turned seventy-four years of age in February 2010 and would soon need to retire – would approach this in a thoughtful, spiritual, pragmatic, organised way and manage it with no little skill.

The integrated psychological profile of Newfrontiers leaders and their ecclesiastical history would predispose them to have a very high regard for the decisions of the apostolic team. It is reflected in the high level of unity in the churches of Newfrontiers in the face of what is quite radical change – the transference of their allegiance and commitment from Virgo and one movement, to an emerging apostolic leader and *his* movement. This again raises the question of whether this is the result of a strong, authority and compliance culture. A hint of this can be inferred from the following comment from Kay (2012:227):

> At the level of the network, the restricted number of intuitives within the wider leadership may restrict the pool from which a new generation of lead elders could be drawn to service the nurture and development of new congregations. While STJ may be essential for keeping established congregations on track, they may be less well

suited for shaping new visions and for inspiring new congregations in complex and changing environments.

Some of the comments on an authority/compliance culture will be reflected on in the chapter eight of this study.

5. A Sociological Analysis of Newfrontiers

The sociological phenomenon of apostolic networks is not easily classified within the existing sociological theories of religion. In his book, *Apostolic Networks in Britain*, Kay (2007:292) opens the conclusion to the chapter entitled 'Apostolic Networks: Sociology' by saying 'There is no obvious fit between apostolic networks and the big categories of sociological analysis'. In order to try and evaluate the sociology of Newfrontiers one needs to consider the various sociological classifications that have been put forward for religious movements.

Early in the history of the sociology of religion, German Protestant theologian and scholar Ernst Troeltsch (1865-1923) made a distinction between churches and sects. Troeltsch described a sect as being a small group, usually made up of the poor who renounce worldliness in search of direct personal religion. The sect values radical individualism and the idea of love; it attains a very strong subjective and inward unity instead of a merely external membership of an institution; and it maintains the radicalism of the Christian ideal and its hostility to the world and it makes a fundamental demand for personal service from its members. The church on the other hand, even though it continues to reflect the gospel and the spirit of Jesus, is hierarchical in structure and has a developed sacramental system (Gill 1997:66-68).

Weber (1864-1920), a contemporary of Troeltsch, also distinguished between church and sect. Weber (1930) saw religion retreating before the rationalism of western civilisation and at the same time to provide the values that drove the development of civilisation forward. For example, according to Weber, capitalism arose as a direct result of the Reformers regard for all work as a

vocation and their lifting the ban on usury. Weber believed that sects arose to defend the faith and essential religious truths against the tide of secularisation. The church, on the other hand, with its broad accessibility to the state, found secularisation impossible to resist; the church ceased to be the generator of values and instead became a benign performer of religious rites and other ceremonial functions (Weber 1930:144ff).

Secularisation became the central question of the sociology of religion in the period after 1945 (Kay 2007:275) and the church in most European countries began to decline in the 1930s. The church in Britain began to be the butt of ridicule and a source of comedy in satirical television. Church attendance, candidates for ordination, religious marriages, religious funerals and religious education in schools were all in decline. Nonetheless and quite surprisingly, faith in God continued at unexpectedly high levels (Kay 1997:28-41). Sociologists could not agree on how and why secularisation was affecting the church in Western Europe and in the USA. Both were first world contexts and yet there was no comparable weakening of the church in the USA. Some sociologists posited that this was because the United States had no established, monopolistic churches like the Anglican Church in England or the Catholic Church in France and Belgium, or the Lutheran Church in the Scandinavian countries. These 'state' churches which make very few demands on their members are far more susceptible to secularisation. The United States is far more an 'open market' when it comes to churches. Apostolic networks may be considered to be a sect or a fundamentalist stronghold which will crumble in time. Yet this depends on one's definition of religion.

If religion is considered in its outward, institutionally controlled form with its processes for defining doctrine, patterns of worship, rituals and rites, then there may be a case for believing that its continued existence will depend on a state's attitude to it. For the state has the power to be a major influence upon the churches within its borders. If, however, one defines religion as the human search for the divine in the context of humanity's existential anxiety, fear of death and the contingency of our existence, then there will always be religion (Kay 2007:277). In works on rational choice theory such as Young (1997) and

Hedström and Stern (2019), sociologists depict religion as rooted in what they deem to be unalterable aspects of human existence. It also thus contradicts the predictions of secularisation as secularisation will never eradicate basic human needs.

Weber also tracked the development of religious movements. Sects would typically start out with a charismatic leader (usually male) who received revelatory teaching and personal inspiration. The leader's authority derived from their God-given spiritual gifts and ability, not natural endowments or through election to an established position. When the leader died, the group went through a change (Weber 1930:144ff). Eventually, charismatic leadership would give way to bureaucratic leadership which is often entirely un-charismatic (Edwards 1997:52). Within a century or less, if it survived, the sect was no longer viewed as a vibrant radical force for reform. Ritual replaces miracles and in the face of growing wealth and influence, and the radical teachings of the founder are turned upside down. The sect's claim to unique truth and moral rigour thus dissipates and it became a church (Weber 1930:144ff).

One can see the warning for Newfrontiers in the way Weber understood a sect's trajectory. It raises the following question: Will Newfrontiers follow this typical trend and within a century be a bureaucratised institution, a 'sect' that has lost its charismatic reforming impulse within the universal church? Chapters eight and nine will return to the question.

Subsequent refinements were added in the sociology of religion. For example, the concept of the denomination was introduced as a midway between the sect and the church (Yinger quoted in Kay 2007:279). The denomination is like a church in many respects except that it accepts the legitimacy of other denominations and churches. Kay (2007: 280) writes that in this scheme of church, denomination and sect there is a convergence towards the middle. Sects tend to become less exclusive in their beliefs and more accommodating to the world and so become denominations. Churches come to recognise their own relative position with respect to other churches and so too become more like denominations. The question is whether apostolic networks will start like

sects and eventually drift towards becoming denominations within two or three generations. The question will receive attention in chapters eight and nine of this study.

Thompson (1996) brings a fresh angle to the sociology of religion by contending against any attempt to classify sects, denominations or churches without reference to their theology.[44] According to him, there are sects that are quite different from Christian denominations and churches and will never become denominations, for example, the Jehovah's Witnesses or the Christadelphians. Thompson also divides sects into categories of belief in the Trinity or not and further divides churches and denominations into 'exclusive' or 'inclusive' groups.

There is, however, still a difficulty in fitting Newfrontiers into this expanded classification, for Newfrontiers is like a church in that it focuses on the person of Christ rather than a particular ideology. At the same time, it is not exclusive in many of its attitudes. For example, Newfrontiers works under the umbrella of the Evangelical Alliance and Virgo is now a speaker at the University and Colleges Christian Fellowship, a movement previously wary of apostolic networks and charismatic theology. [45] However, Newfrontiers have set themselves against bureaucracy and institutionalism, which is unlike a typical church.

Newfrontiers churches have a formalised entry procedure for new local church members, and it is one of Wilson's denominational criteria. Yet Newfrontiers does not have many of the hallmarks of a denomination, for instance, a hierarchy, centralised headquarters, obligatory financial commitment to the central organisation, formalised joining for local church congregations, ownership of property, constitutional systems, doctrinal uniformity, and so on. Newfrontiers has none of these. It could be argued that Virgo and his team were the *de facto* centralised headquarters of Newfrontiers. However, in their defence

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[44] In desiring to be able to characterise Christian and non-Christian sects, Wilson (1963:4, 9-63) endeavoured to classify sects not by their doctrine, but by their 'response to the world'.

[45] Anecdotal information conveyed in conversation with Virgo.

it must be said that there is a difference between dependence on an apostolic gift ministry as the central leadership point for a greater team and a denominational headquarters with all its procedures, structures, administration and systems. Based on the Random House Dictionary (2014), 'bureaucracy' is defined as follows:

> [G]overnment by many bureaus, administrators, and petty officials; the body of officials and administrators, especially of a government or government department; excessive multiplication of and concentration of power in, administrative bureaus or administrators; administration characterized by excessive red tape and routine.

In a word, that definition is not characteristic of Newfrontiers under the leadership of Virgo and the new Newfrontiers with its expansion into seventeen apostolic spheres. Therefore, it could not be criticised of being a bureaucracy or of having a *de facto* headquarters.

In light of the difficulty of classifying apostolic movements in these categories, Kay (2007:292) believes it is above all the structural features of apostolic networks that express the essence of their being. As described above, Weber's original sociological theory distinguished between charismatic authority and bureaucratic authority. Bureaucracy is always there behind the charismatic leader to facilitate his leadership of the movement, but once that leader dies or retires, the bureaucracy tries to maintain the religious organisation without the charismatic leader's impetus. The result is that the bureaucracy becomes an end in itself and only a lifeless shell remains of the original movement (Weber 1930:144ff).

Every movement will eventually need a successor to the founding, charismatic leader; someone who has the gifts and calling to ensure the survival of the movement and who ensures that bureaucracy does not overtake the movement. Newfrontiers have been determined to do that, to avoid becoming a bureaucracy at all costs (Kay 2007:288). As shown so far, Newfrontiers have invested a great amount of time and effort into discerning, recruiting, training

and releasing Ephesians 4:11 leaders; the leaders of the new apostolic spheres are well known in the movement having been understudies to Virgo for many years; and as such, acknowledged by local church leaders as being Christ-given apostles whom they believe will lead the movement into a vital, organic future rather than an increasingly bureaucratic future. Thus, at the centre of an apostolic movement's structure is a leader with the *charism* of an apostle. It would seem, then, that once this ceases to be true, an apostolic movement's days as a vital, organic, flat structured and decentralised movement are numbered.

Kay goes on to point out that there is a general consonance between social and religious organisations. Religious organisations will reflect the prevailing types of organisation within their cultural milieu. Thus, in the historical era of absolute kings by divine right, there was a pope with unassailable religious authority (Kay 2007:288-289). In contrast, Newfrontiers emerged at the very beginnings of the post-modern era and young men in Britain were no longer required to do national service in the armed forces. Furthermore, the 1960s heralded the liberalisation of laws and the relaxation of social and moral norms; the old were treated with less respect, styles of dress were relaxed, comprehensive schools were introduced,[46] class distinctions diminished, families began to break up and social mobility increased, and networks were formed as travel and communication soared in an era of relative prosperity. 'Apostolic networks came into being at a point when social organisation itself was undergoing change', says Kay (2007:288). Dwight Zscheile (2010:247-255) echoes Kay's thoughts in a paper on 'Social networking and church systems'. He wrote,

> A rapidly expanding array of media (cable channels, websites, blogs, and so on) allows twenty-first-century users to create culture in multiple new ways. We can upload our own opinions to blogs, our home-shot videos to YouTube, and even our reporting about world events to CNN. At the heart of this shift are networks. Whereas once

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[46] These are schools which accept all levels of academic ability as opposed to British grammar schools which demand a higher level of academic performance.

people were primarily consumers of mass-media culture, increasingly they are collaborative co-producers. Networks are rapidly becoming the basic organizational paradigm of twenty-first-century Western culture. If the Internet is the central cultural metaphor, the network is the underlying architecture for how we relate and structure our lives together (ibid, p. 247).

The last part of the 20th century and the beginning of this century have seen 'network' become a pervasive metaphor and part of a world culture. Castells (2000:176) writes, 'the main shift can be characterised as the shift from vertical bureaucracies to horizontal corporation'. Old, large, and vertically structured business corporations have gone through a crisis and rigidly hierarchical businesses morphed into various organisations and business models based on the network structure.

The power of the network idea of societal or organisational structure is that it is an open structure able to expand without limits. It is organic, able to multiply and develop and yet remain cohesive as long as the constituent parts continue to hold to the vision and values of the founders. This is the point that Brafman and Beckstrom (2006:20ff) make in *The Starfish and the Spider*: decentralised systems have no clear leader, or, if one does emerge, they have little direct power over others. Instead leaders are influential through leading by example. Furthermore decentralised systems have no hierarchy and no headquarters. People follow them because they are inspired by them, acknowledge their *charism* and follow them voluntarily and not because they have to.

Apostolic networks point back to the structure of the New Testament church, where the church grew and spread on the basis of the extended-family networks of the *oikos* (household) of the day (Acts 10:7, 24, 27; Breen and Absalom 2010:34-36). Stark (1996:20-22, 55-57) has made much of this fact in his sociological theory of the remarkable growth of Christianity in the first three centuries of the church. An *oikos* was far bigger than the modern nuclear family and included servants, business associates, friends and relatives. Castells (2000:502) writes that

A network-based social structure is a highly dynamic, open system, susceptible to innovating without threatening its balance. Networks are appropriate instruments … for work, workers and firms based on flexibility and adaptability; for a culture of endless deconstruction and reconstruction; for a polity geared towards instant processing of new values and public moods; and for social organisation.

The last two chapters of this thesis will return to examine Newfrontiers in the light of Castell's statement.

Networks operate through the connection of nodes which connect in clusters. 'Clustering' is defined by the number of connections between the nodes divided by the total number of possible connections. For example, in high clustering almost every node is connected to all the people he or she could be connected to; in low clustering there are some richly connected people and some isolated people. What mathematical modelling shows is that a 'small world' phenomenon occurs when there is high clustering and path lengths between the nodes are on average low, making it possible to discover common friendships (Watts and Strogatz 1998:440-442).

In this study, the idea of clustering is applied to Newfrontiers church leaders. There are, however, three levels of clustering for Newfrontiers leaders: church leaders clustering within their own local church, church leaders clustering across local churches within apostolic spheres, and church leaders clustering across apostolic spheres, across the whole Newfrontiers network. For example, the elders of a local church in Reading would be a high cluster group on the local church level, meeting locally, frequently and regularly. They would also meet less often but still regularly with the elders of the other local churches that make up the churches of their particular apostolic sphere, thereby being a high cluster group on the apostolic sphere level. However, when it comes to the overall movement of Newfrontiers, all the apostolic spheres taken together, there is a definite drop-off in the clustering *between* the spheres. It is more like the 'caveman world' where people in one cave are highly connected but do not

know people in adjoining caves. However, as Watts and Strogatz (1998) point out, if a person in one cave knows people in other caves and the distance between them is not long but randomised, they will experience the 'small world' phenomenon. So for example, if one of these church elders in Reading had a strong connection with an elder in a church in Edinburgh which was part of another apostolic sphere, and another of the Reading elders had a strong connection with two elders in a church in London which was part of yet a third apostolic sphere, then there is a sense in which the Reading elders feel connected to the Edinburgh church and the London church. Conversely, the elders in Edinburgh and London have a sense of connection with the Reading church. Should these leaders come together at a gathering of leaders across the various apostolic spheres, they would quickly develop a stronger sense of unity and connectedness even though most of their time and energy is spent in the cluster of their local church and particular apostolic sphere. If the power of connectedness through social media like Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Zoom, WhatsApp and Skype are added into that picture of reality, then even widely spread networks can have a high degree of connectedness. Thus, to come back to the question of structure defining apostolic movements, Kay (2007:292) writes: 'Sociologically and theologically what is distinctive about the networks is *their concentration upon the ministry of the apostle* (emphasis added). If there is anything that the networks are epistemologically exclusive about, it is this.'

The sociology of apostolic networks suggests that one of the more profitable ways to look at apostolic networks is in the area of their structures since it expresses the essence of their being. It could be said that the network structure springs from a theology of ministry gifts, of fellowship and of New Testament ecclesiology. In other words, the structure is the vehicle through which apostolic ministry is expressed, and the apostolic team, with its balance of gifts, mobility, changing membership, focus on relationship and training, is a distillation of the entire theological ethos (Kay 2007:292).

Kay (2007) considers 'structure' to be the defining reality of apostolic networks. It is certainly true that every gathering of people with a shared purpose and shared beliefs may have a structure. The danger is that 'structure' will be

construed in terms of flow charts, organograms and hierarchy of authority. The structure of Newfrontiers is rather a reflection of their strong belief in the ministry and role of an apostle. It is also a reflection of the belief that apostolic teams comprised of the other Ephesians 4:11 ministries gathered around an apostle, are the rallying points of the movement. Put differently, the movement is essentially held together by the high clustering of the leaders within Newfrontiers because of the high value placed on genuine relationship between them. So, although structure is Newfrontiers' defining reality, it is not the bureaucratic and hierarchical structure of a denomination.

Nelson (1999) edited a book entitled *Leading*, *managing, ministering: Challenging questions for church and society*. In it, Brierly and Wraight (1999:85-106), the Executive Director and Assistant Director respectively of 'Christian Research' based in the UK, contributed a chapter with the title of 'Christian leadership in a postmodern society'. They included a table summarising the challenges facing church leaders in this post-modern era and outline seven characteristics for successful leadership. The right-hand column of figure 38 below reflects characteristics of post-modern culture. The left-hand column shows ways that leadership can respond to these characteristics.

Seven characteristics		
	…for successful leadership today	…of post-modernism
1		Personal choice is king
2	Identified values; applied worldview	Changing values
3	Wise decisions	Spirituality without Christianity
4	Understood communication	Language valued for impact more than meaning; the book giving way to the screen
5	Good relationships	Loss of confidence in institutions
6	Clarity of vision	The future is irrelevant
7	High energy	

Figure 38. Brierly and Wraight's seven characteristics of post-modern leadership.

Newfrontiers fares well with regard to the characteristics in the above list considering that postmodernism is the cultural milieu within which Newfrontiers exists. In some ways Newfrontiers is counter-cultural and in other ways remarkably suited to a post-modern culture. For example, in a culture where personal choice is paramount, Newfrontiers seeks a high-level commitment from its members, yet it is on a totally voluntary basis (Characteristic 1). Newfrontiers have clearly identified their values and have disseminated these by video, blog and magazine (Characteristics 2 and 4). The way that Newfrontiers have gone about apostolic succession speaks of wisdom, maturity and stability (Characteristic 3). Where there has been a loss of confidence in institutions, Newfrontiers have deliberately resisted becoming an institution and instead have based their model of church connectedness on actual and genuine relationships rather than constitutions or organisational structure. In other words, it has opted for an organic, relational, network structure rather than a

hierarchical or organisational structure. (Characteristic 5). Brierly and Wraight (1999) suggest that the future seems irrelevant to post-moderns and that church leaders can respond to it with clarity of vision. It is therefore significant that Virgo (2003) has written a book with the title of 'Does the future have a church?'. In that publication he uses Ephesians to claim that the church will always be with us and is heading towards being a glorious church. This kind of vision and faith towards the future is counter-cultural yet appealing. Furthermore, great lengths have been taken to clarity Newfrontiers' worldview and vision so that members of Newfrontiers are drawn to voluntarily identify themselves with its vision (Characteristic 6). There are of high levels of energy displayed by leaders in Newfrontiers and indeed by the movement as a whole, displayed in church planting, missionary endeavours and the excitement of new apostolic spheres led by emergent apostles (Characteristic 7). Put another way, members follow apostles because they are inspired by them, recognise their *charism* and because they have freedom of choice in who they follow, unlike denominational hierarchies.

6. Summary and Concluding Remarks

The aim of this chapter has been to analyse the factors underlying Newfrontiers' approach to apostolic succession. This was done by considering four areas: (1) the values that influenced the transition, (2) the theology of Newfrontiers, (3) studies done on the personality profiles of Newfrontiers leaders, and (4) the sociological environment in which Newfrontiers exists.

In terms of the values that influenced the transition, it was noted that Newfrontiers have fostered a strong commitment to shared values as an extended family. They have also intentionally invested in leadership training with the ethos of fathers training sons in the exclusively male preserve of the ministry of apostles and elders. Newfrontiers' vision of restoring the church to its New Testament glory has been seen to be a powerful motivation, and the people of Newfrontiers see themselves pioneering the way for the universal church. There is a touch of exclusivity to this vision. Indeed, the whole movement sees itself as together on its mission to restore the church and to

reach the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. All the above are powerful emotive reasons for a movement to hold together in close relationship on an all-important mission.

The theology of Newfrontiers was seen to be Reformed and thus emphasising the glory of God and His sovereign reign over and through Newfrontiers. Newfrontiers' theology is also charismatic, which includes embracing the gift ministries of Eph 4:11, particularly those of the apostle and prophet. Thus, the authority of the apostles of Newfrontiers was elevated to a level where questioning their authority would seem to be rebelling against God Himself. Newfrontiers' theology is also missional. The whole movement is imbued with a desire to impact the world with the gospel of Christ. Newfrontiers see this happening through the cooperative efforts of the local churches, through the direction and cohesiveness that their apostles bring. Again, these can be seen to be powerful influences in maintaining the unity of Newfrontiers.

Studies conducted to identify the personality profiles of Newfrontiers leaders revealed that the majority of their leaders are practical, organised and management orientated, that they are leaders who tend to be firm, strong and consistent in their leadership style. Added to this is the fact that apostolic ministry, the role of eldership, and headship of the family are regarded as exclusively male. The implication deduced from this is that these are leaders likely to be looked up to and respected, and their decisions unlikely to be questioned or challenged. Once again, this portrays a movement that is likely to remain united with their leaders and follow their leaders' decisions.

It was noted above that Newfrontiers does not fit into the larger categories of sociological analysis. By Weber's classification it is a 'sect' under a charismatic leader. The anomaly with regards to Newfrontiers is that they are not becoming an ecclesiastical bureaucracy, due to the fact that the movement is now multiplying charismatic leaders to lead fresh 'sects'.

It has been seen that the non-hierarchical, gift-based, network structure of modern apostolic networks is their defining sociological feature. In fact,

Newfrontiers has emerged at the same time that networks have become the basic organisational paradigm of twenty-first-century, Western culture. With apostles at the centre of high cluster groups, Newfrontiers have embraced this decentralised network structure based on the recognition of gift ministries rather than promotion through the ranks of a hierarchical institution. Indeed, Newfrontiers sees this decentralised network structure, based on gift recognition, as an important part of pursuing a New Testament church model. Newfrontiers have multiplied the original movement into what has become seventeen apostolic spheres ('sects') which endeavour to remain connected by means of a relational network, through a common vision and shared theological and ecclesiological values. The sociology of the Newfrontiers movement is also orientated towards the movement adhering to a radical ecclesiastical model, with the concurrent danger of being elitist and exclusive. Perhaps this is common to all 'sects'. The themes of radical, exclusive and elitist all have a centrifugal force on a movement for its members to remain loyal and committed.

The next chapter will endeavour to develop biblical norms for apostolic succession by considering the apostleship of Paul and what lessons can be learnt from his preparation of Timothy and Titus to succeed him in his apostolic ministry. The apostolic succession of Newfrontiers can then be compared with the biblical paradigm for apostolic succession that emerges from the study of the New Testament, particularly the Pastoral Epistles, namely, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.

Chapter Four

The Biblical Examination of Paul's Preparation of Timothy and Titus

1. Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on the scriptural record of the relationship between Paul, Timothy and Titus because Paul's relationship with Timothy and Titus is assumed to be the clearest example of an apostle preparing his successors to continue his ministry. Mounce (2000:lvii) writes that Timothy was not a pastor, leader or bishop of the Ephesian church, but an itinerant apostolic delegate doing what he had often done for Paul. Mounce says much the same about Titus: he was not a Cretan pastor, overseer or bishop, but a delegate, like Timothy, who stood outside the formal church structure (p. lx). According to Mounce, in the epistles addressed to Timothy and Titus, an ageing Paul expects himself to be executed soon (p. 577). Thus, as an apostle, Paul entrusted to them the work he himself was called to accomplish.[47] According to FF Bruce, Paul belonged to 'that select company who leave their mark on their time, who mould their contemporaries, and exert an influence which stretches far into the future' (Whittington et al. 2005:1).

For the purpose of this study, Paul's instructions to and treatment of Timothy and Titus will be taken as Paul's general content and method that he employed to mentor other men and women who worked closely with him. It is an assumption that can be inferred from what Paul consistently declared about his instruction and example in all the churches: 'That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church' (1 Cor 4:17); 'What you have learned

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[47] Mounce (2000:xlviii-lxviii) argues cogently for the writing of 1 Timothy and Titus between Paul's first imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28) and his re-imprisonment and execution in Rome, and that 2 Timothy was written after Paul's re-imprisonment in Rome while awaiting his execution of which he was certain (2 Tim 4:6).

and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you' (Phil 4:9); 'Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus' (2 Tim 1:13); and 'You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings… But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it' (2 Tim 3:10-11, 14). In 2 Corinthians 12:18, Paul describes how Titus emulated him: 'I urged Titus to go, and sent the brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not act in the same spirit? Did we not take the same steps?'.

These texts show what Paul wished to achieve, namely, to identify successors who in his lifetime would represent him as though he were in fact present with them and who would continue to his work long after his death. According to Whittington et al. (2005:760), Paul resembles Moses, about whom they say the following: 'Moses was a leader who taught his people to do without him by learning how to lead themselves… this represents the highest level of leadership.

There are at least thirty-five men and women named in the New Testament who worked closely with Paul: Andronichus (Rom 16:23), Apphia (Philem 2), Aquila (Acts 18:18), Archippus (Philem 2), Aristarchus (Acts 19:29), Barnabas (Acts 13:2-3), Carpus (2 Tim 4:13), Demas (Col 4:14), Epaphras (Col 1:7), Epaphroditus (Phil 2:25), Erastus (Acts 19:22), Euodia (Rom 16:2), Gaius (Acts 20:4), Jason (Acts 17:5-7), Jesus, called Justus (Col 4:11), Junia (Rom 16:23), Lucius (Rom 16:21), Luke (2 Tim 4:11), Mark (2 Tim 4:11), Lydia (Acts 16:14, 40), Onesimus (Philem 10), Onesiphorus (2 Tim 1:16-18), Philemon (Philem 1), Phoebe (Rom 16:1), Priscilla (Acts 18:18), Secundus (Acts 20:4), Silas (Acts 15:40), Sopater (Acts 20:4), Syntyche (Rom 16:2), Tertius (Rom 16:22), Timothy (Acts 20:4), Titus (2 Cor 8:23), Trophimus (Acts 20:4), Tychicus (Acts 20:4), and Urbanus (Rom 16:9). This illustrates how widely Paul cast his training, mentoring and influence. As Paul instructed Timothy, 'what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who

will be able to teach others also' (2 Tim 2:1-2). This list of names also demonstrates that Paul put what he said to Timothy, into practise himself. Whittington et al. (2005:752-753) coined the term 'legacy leadership' to describe Paul's manner and ways of training leaders. The way they depict legacy leadership diagrammatically can be seen in figure 39 below (p. 753).

Leader
'Worthy of imitation'

↓

Followers
Become 'imitators' of leaders and an 'example for others to follow.'
Followers themselves become Legacy Leaders who are worthy of imitation

↓

Followers
Become 'imitators' of leaders and an 'example for others to follow.'
Followers themselves become Legacy Leaders who are worthy of imitation

↓

∞ Infinity
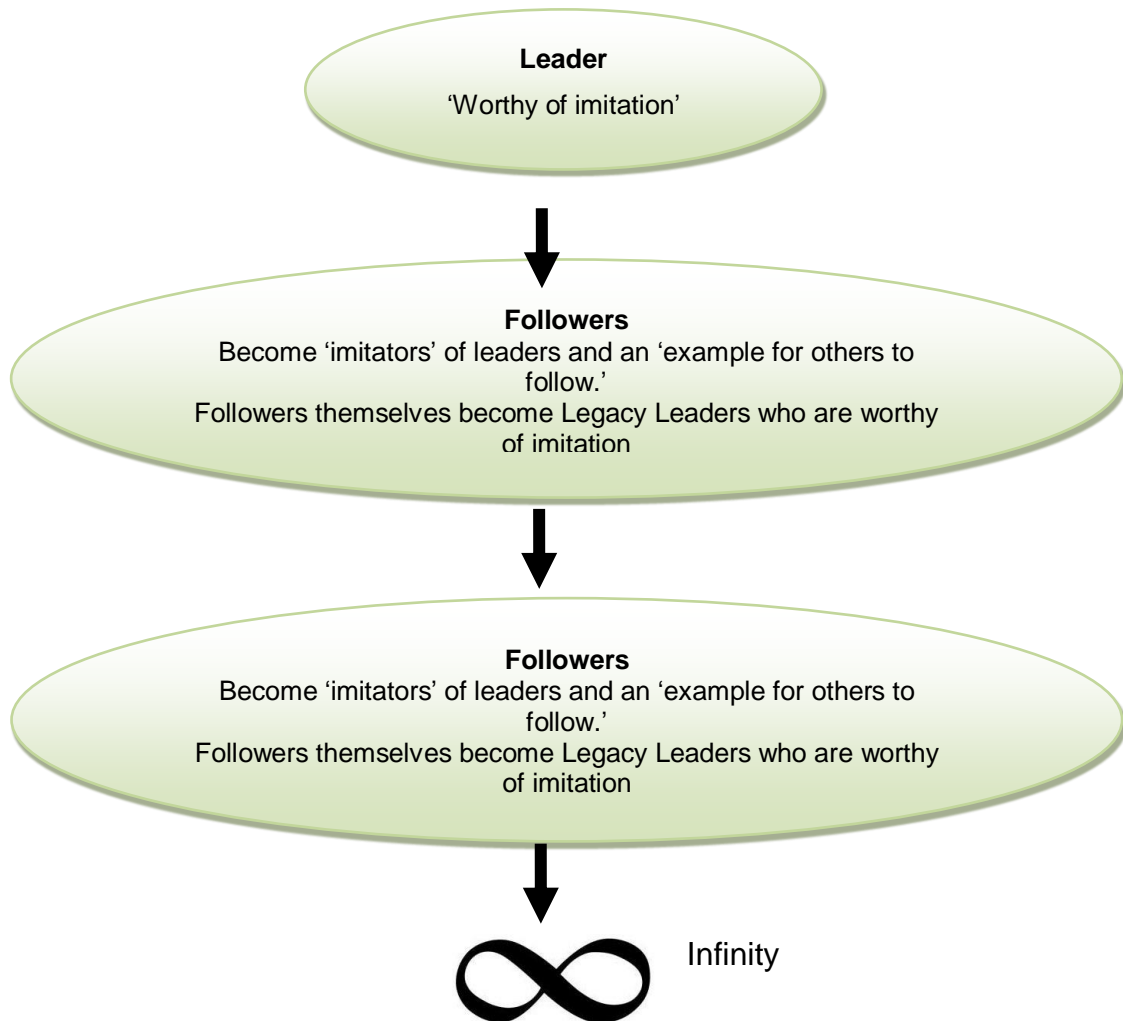
Figure 39. Whittington et al.'s 'legacy leadership' model.

Whittington et al. (2005:762) describe ten qualities of a legacy leader based on their exegesis of 1 Thessalonians, and group these qualities under three headings: motives, methods and measures (figure 40 below). They are reproduced here simply to give a sense of other people's perceptions of Paul's exceptional qualities as an apostle.

Categories:	Motives	Methods	Measures
Qualities:	Pure motive	Worthy of imitation	Changed lives
	Authentic/sincere	Boldness amid opposition	
	Follower-centred, not self-centred	Influence without exerting authority	
	Affectionate/emotional	Vulnerable/transparent	
		Active, not passive	

Figure 40. Whittington et al.'s qualities of legacy leaders by category.

The table in figure 40 provides a sense of the nature of Paul's apostleship, the qualities being largely self-explanatory. However, it is worth the effort to first examine the qualities in Paul's life and ministry before examining those qualities that Paul looked for in those he mentored and expected to succeed him. It can be taken for granted that every apostolic succession involves at least two parties: the retiring apostle and the succeeding apostle or apostles. The rest of this chapter will pay attention to what can be learned about what Pauline succession involves from the perspective of both the apostle and his successor, in the succession process.

Paul's qualities will be considered primarily through the testimony of the Pastoral Epistles (henceforth 'PEs'), but other writings of Paul and those of other New Testament authors will also be considered where they add to the understanding of the succession process between Paul and Titus and Timothy. It must be said; Paul may not have considered all the people in the list referred to above as possible apostolic successors. However, the verses quoted indicate something important: if the principles in Paul's correspondence with Timothy and Titus are taken to represent Paul's general teaching about apostolic succession, then they are sufficiently important for any modern apostle to consider in the preparation of successors.

The study will first analyse the PEs to identify Paul's qualities in Paul and those he looked for in his protégés. In the conclusion to this chapter, these qualities will be drawn together to discern lessons and principles for apostolic succession in modern apostolic movements.

2. Paul's Life and Example

Hollinger (2013:164), the founder of 'Leadership Learning Initiatives', writes that 'Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus provide particularly revealing attributes regarding the selection and development processes used by the early church for establishing and perpetuating competent, values-based leadership'. By 'values-based leadership', Hollinger means leadership that is based on the absolute values of a Christian worldview. According to Hollinger (2018:10), that worldview is developed 'through the transfer of knowledge about God and humankind through biblical understanding.' This implies that it is possible to study Paul's selection and development of leaders in the PEs and deduce absolute values for a Christian worldview that are enduring, even to the transition of apostolic ministry today.

Through examining the PEs, the following three overarching categories of Paul's apostleship will be evaluated: his devotion and spirituality, his character and his leadership. These categories focus respectively on his relationship with God, his inner life and his relationship to others. These are considered as essential aspects in any church leader's life.

2.1.   Paul's devotion and spirituality

In all but four of his epistles Paul referred to himself as an 'apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ' or uses words to that effect (Mounce 2000:5). He also calls himself a servant of Jesus Christ (Gal 1:10) and a prisoner for Jesus Christ (Eph 3:1). Towner (1994:40), commenting on Paul's reference to his apostleship, describes it as 'by the command of God and the choice of the risen Christ'. This tells us that Paul did not conceive of the charismatic gift of apostleship as something that he owned and could do with as he pleased. He was always 'an apostle of Christ Jesus' (1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Eph 1:1; Col 1:1; 1 Tim 1:1; 2 Tim 1:1; Tit 1:1), representing Christ wherever Christ would have him go and whenever Christ would have him go. It will be useful examine this a little more deeply.

2.1.1.   Devotion to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

It becomes evident through a reading of Paul's letters that he had an inviolable sense of duty towards Christ. Barclay (1961:19) translates Paul's words in 1 Timothy 1:1 as follows: 'Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, by the royal command of God, our Saviour, and of Jesus Christ, our Hope'. Barclay bases his translation on the Greek word επιταγη ('command'; ESV) which, according to him, Hellenistic Greeks used 'for the injunctions and obligations which some inviolable law lays on a man; for the royal command that comes from a king; and above all for the instructions that come to a man either directly or by some oracle from God' (ibid). Towner (1994:53) writes,

> [T]he right to participate in ministry is established solely by Christ…The false teachers mentioned above [in 1 Tim 1:3-11] regardless of the promise they might have shown at first, had proved themselves unfaithful. Paul's ministry was sustained by and originated in Christ. Those who would share Paul's goals and vision for life and ministry must also share his complete dependence on Christ.

Not only did Paul consider himself an absolute servant to Christ, he also proclaimed that his choosing and appointment to be an apostle is the result of the love, grace and faithfulness of God and Christ (1 Tim 1:14): 'by the will of God according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus' (2 Tim 1:1). His devotion to God was not only because of God's choosing him, but also because of the quality of life he received in Christ. For Mounce (2000:464), ζωης ('life') 'denotes not so much existence as it does quality of life, life at its fullest, both on earth and in heaven'.

It is clear from reading Paul's letters that he was not afraid to suffer as a common criminal; he knew whom he had trusted and was convinced that Christ was 'able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me' (2 Tim 1:12). He also writes that the Lord had rescued him from all his persecutions and sufferings (2 Tim 3:11). Paul had at one point been deserted by all his

companions during his second imprisonment in Rome, but he let his readers know that 'the Lord stood by me and strengthened me… So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen' (2 Tim 4:17-18). Paul exhibits a faithful, passionate and intimate devotion to God. He considered himself to have been personally appointed to his ministry by an equally faithful, passionate and intimate God (Tit 1:1-3).

Commenting on 2 Timothy 4:6, Towner (1994:206) writes that 'Paul describes his whole life of service and devotion, culminating in his death, as a sacrificial "pouring out" to the Lord (Num 28:7), an expression of worship (compare Rom 12:1) that is acceptable to the Lord'. Paul's writings leave the impression of an apostle who not only subjected himself completely to the lordship of God and Jesus Christ, but also enjoyed an intimate relationship with God and Christ along with a strong sense of their love, God's fatherhood, their faithfulness, protection, sovereignty, provision and ultimate salvation (1 Tim 1:1, 2, 11, 17; 2:3-6; 3:15; 4:3-4, 10; 5:4; 6:13, 17; Tit 1:1-3; 2:10, 11; 2 Tim 2:19). It is reasonable to conclude that Paul's devotion to Christ as an apostle, the confidence derived from his calling and his fellowship with Christ through the Holy Spirit, must have left a deep spiritual impression on Timothy and Titus (see Phil 4:9).

Another one of Paul's key characteristics, in addition to his faith and trust in Christ, is prayer.

2.1.2. Paul: The apostle of prayer

It is evident from Paul's letters that he viewed prayer as a fundamental part of his life and desired the same for all Christians. Perhaps he was following the example of the Jerusalem apostles when they declared: 'but we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word' (Acts 6:4). He informed Timothy that he prays for him 'night and day' (2 Tim 1:3). Commenting on this verse, Platt, Akin and Merida (2013:139) suggest that Paul is referring here to regular times of prayer, an inference they draw from Paul's use of 'prayers' in

the plural. They, therefore, state that Paul's other references to his 'prayers' (Rom 1:10; Eph 1:16; 1 Thess 1:2) suggest that he set aside designated times for prayer, in the same way that Jesus did (ibid).

Paul also exhorted Timothy to make prayer a fundamental part of the life of the church in Ephesus. As he writes: 'First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior' (1 Tim 2:1-3). Knight (1992:113) suggests that πρωτον in this verse should probably be understood in a sequential sense, but with the qualification that what is placed first in sequence may be so placed because it is also considered first in importance. Knight considers this to be strengthened by the qualification of πρωτον by the inclusive genitive plural παντων (the only occurrence of this combination in the NT and the LXX) so that what is 'first' is 'first of all', the most important of the matters about which he will exhort his readers in the body of the letter. 'In this particular situation and perhaps in any situation this is the first item of concern' (ibid).

Paul also writes, 'I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarrelling' (1 Tim 2:8); and he writes about the giving of thanks for food at meal times (1 Tim 4:4). In his other letters he encourages believers to rejoice, to pray without ceasing and to give thanks in all circumstances (1 Thess 5:16-18), not to be anxious about anything but instead to pray about everything (Phil 4:6-7). He also encourages the Roman church to be 'constant in prayer' (Rom 12:12), the Ephesian church to pray in the Spirit at all times with all kinds of prayers and requests (Eph 6:18), and the Colossian church to 'continue steadfastly in prayer' (Col 4:2). It is documented that he appointed elders in churches with prayer and fasting (Acts 14:23); that he prayed and worshipped after he had been beaten and imprisoned in Philippi (Acts 16:25); made communal prayer part of his farewell to the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:36) and at Tyre (Acts 21:5); and as praying in the temple in Jerusalem (Acts 22:17).

These are but some of Paul's references to prayer and the testimony of others about his life of prayer. It is evident that he would expect any successor to be a person of prayer. Closely related to the place of prayer in Paul's life are the gifts of the Holy Spirit as both are inextricable parts of his spirituality.

2.1.3. Gifts of the Spirit

Paul exercised the gift of healing (Acts 19:12; 28:8), raised Eutychus from the dead (Acts 20:9-10), spoke in tongues and prophesied (1 Cor 14:18-19), performed miracles, signs and wonders (Acts 19:11;[48] Rom 15:19; 2 Cor 12:12), had visions of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 18:9), was caught up into the heavens (2 Cor 12:2)[49], heard the voice of the risen Christ (Acts 9:4-5, 18:9) and cast demons out of people (Acts 16:18; 19:12). Clearly, he was a man accustomed to spiritual experiences and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, Paul's teachings on the gifts of the Spirit occupy the largest part of what any other New Testament author wrote on the topic (Rom 12; 1 Cor 12; Eph 4). John Rodman Williams (1990:323) states that 'The primary New Testament delineation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10', thus in Paul's letters and theology.

The next sub-section of the study turns to the examination of Paul's character.

2.2. Paul's character

An analysis of Paul's character as it is revealed in the PEs and the rest of his letters shows that he was a loving, fatherly man (2 Tim 2:2) with a high regard for family (1 Tim 3:1-5); that he had a sincere faith, a pure heart and a clear conscience (1 Tim 1:5); and was humble (1 Tim 1:15), and generous (1 Tim 5:17-18). In his commentary on 1 Timothy 3:1, where Paul outlines the qualities for an overseer in the church, Towner (1994:82) writes, 'the focal point is the

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[48] Paul's miracles are here referred to as 'extraordinary miracles'.

[49] Verse 7 clarifies that Paul is referring to himself in verse 2.

candidate's reputation among believers and unbelievers, which is to be computed on the basis of proven moral character and maturity'. Character is paramount to Paul and he leads by example. An examination of some of Paul's specific character traits is next presented.

2.2.1. Paul's fatherliness

In his first personal letter addressed to Timothy, Paul, in a fatherly manner refers to him as his 'true child in the faith' (1 Tim 1:2). A few verses later, he calls him 'my child' (1 Tim1:18-19). In this same passage, Paul encouraged him as a father, to wage warfare with the prophecies previously made about him, whilst holding onto faith and a good conscience. In so doing, he demonstrated his belief in Timothy's character and calling. In 2 Timothy 1:2 and 4, Paul calls Timothy 'my beloved child' and goes on to say 'I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy'. Mounce (2000:464) asserts that 1 Timothy 1:2 emphasises Paul's apostolic authority and the transference of it to Timothy, whereas in 2 Timothy 1:2 'the dominant note is Paul's friendship with Timothy'. Paul spoke highly of Timothy to the church at Philippi by saying that 'I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel' (Phil 2:20-22). Likewise, Paul refers to Titus as 'my true child in a common faith' (Tit 1:4).

It can be seen in all these references that Paul did not have a merely functional relationship with Timothy and Titus but one that suggests the intimacy and warmth typical of a healthy father-son relationship. The expressions 'a son with his father' and 'my true child' as used by Paul reflect a high degree of respect, submission, emulation and affection from Timothy and Titus toward Paul (Platt et al. 2013:9) as well as a high degree of concern, coaching, trust, belief in and genuine affection of Paul toward them.

The implication for modern apostolic movements is that the successors to an apostle should have an intimate relationship with the apostle as well as being respectful and submissive. The successors should also emulate the apostle's

teaching and behaviour. The apostle, for their part, should feel a sense of familial investment in successors, treating them as beloved children, coaching them, being an example to them, encouraging them, being proud of them and showing them genuine affection (Devenish 2011: ch 4).

Paul's list of qualities of elders and deacons in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 are anchored in their conduct in the context of a family, in their marriage and dealing with their children (1 Tim 3:2, 4-5, 12; 5:1-10, 14-16; cf. Eph 5:22–6:1). In the PEs, Paul does not see church leadership as beginning in or rooted in personal charisma, gifting or an individual's capability. Of all the qualities required of an elder, only one has to do with the ability to teach the word of God (1 Tim 3:2). All the others relate to family or character (Calvin 1998:57; Johnson 2008; Kretzmann 2008:379; Mounce 2000:177; Platt et al. 2013:57; Towner 1994:88). It is, therefore, hardly surprising the relationship of succession is characterised by the nature of family, and as an affectionate one, characteristic of a father and son relationship (Platt et al. 2013:138).

The next sub-section will focus on Paul's motivations which further develop an understanding of his character.

2.2.2.   Paul's motives: A pure heart, good conscience and sincere faith

When Paul wrote to Timothy to put a stop to the false teaching in Ephesus, he stated that 'The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith' (1 Tim 1:5). In his second letter to Timothy he stated that he served God 'with a clear conscience' (2 Tim 1:3).

It is quite evident that Paul's apostleship was not motivated by money (1 Cor 9:1-18; 2 Cor 2:17), pride (1 Cor 15:9; 2 Cor 12:11; Eph 3:7-8; 1 Tim 1:13-16), or strife (Phil 1:15-18). Such motivations would not last in the face of the inevitable suffering of a genuine apostle (1 Cor 4:9-13). These are qualities that make Paul worthy of being followed and safe to follow. Furthermore, his sense of having a good conscience implies that as far as he was aware, he was not hiding any sin or living in any compromise of the revealed will of God according

to the Scriptures. Again, this makes him a man worthy of emulation and safe to follow.

By way of summary, Paul's example and his mentoring of Timothy and Titus indicate that qualities of character are important factors in any evaluation of someone who claims to be an apostle and of someone who is considered a potential successor to an apostle. One of these qualities is humility.

2.2.3. Paul's humility

Toward the end of his life, when Paul wrote to Timothy, one might expect him to have reflected on his progress in the Lord and yet he seems to have reflected on his fallibility as a human being. He writes,

> The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life (1 Tim 1:15-16).

It is remarkable that Paul is referring to his fallibility and weaknesses in the present tense, from which we may infer that self-knowledge is a good quality in a leader; it makes them more trustworthy to follow (Williams 2012:1; Stadler 2008:33). The quoted passage indicates that Paul was aware that he lived day by day as an apostle by the daily grace of God alone. In his role as an apostle he asks the rhetorical question 'Who is sufficient for these things?' (2 Cor 2:16) and replies as follows: 'Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life' (2 Cor 3:4-6). Paul's humility is also evident in the next passages in his letters to the Corinthian church:

Last of all, as to one untimely born, he [Christ] appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me (1 Cor 15:8-10).

But he [God] said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me (2 Cor 12:9).

But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us (2 Cor 4:7).

By way of summary, it is quite evident that Paul did not regard his apostleship as something that was intrinsic to his abilities, personality or character, but something that he had received by the grace and sovereign choosing of God alone (Gal 1:15-16), which may be another indication of his humility and contentment in the Lord.

2.2.4.   Paul's contentment

One of the most outstanding qualities of Paul as an apostle and his teaching is his emphasis on godliness (Platt et al. 2013:190; 2 Cor 7:1; 1 Thess 4:7; 2 Tim 3:10). He wrote to Timothy to 'train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come' (1 Tim 4:7-8). Paul uses the word 'godliness' eleven times in the PEs, from the Greek *θεοσεβια* (once) and *ευσεβια* (ten times), demonstrating thereby the value he placed on godliness for himself and for the church. These words do not appear anywhere else in the New Testament, which means that it is a special quality of character that Paul

wanted his successors to be in no doubt about. In the words of Mounce (2000:226), 'ευσεβια, "godliness," is one of the main terms in the PEs for the Christian faith, emphasising the behaviour appropriate to the believer'.

As part of a godly life, Paul advocated a commitment to a life of contentment through simplicity. 'Contentment' is a Pauline word (2 Cor 9:8; Phil 4:11) and by it he meant a detachment from things or possessions (Towner 1994:137). According to Fee (1999:185), he took the Stoic concept of αυταρκεια - contentment based on self-sufficiency - and transformed it to 'Christ sufficiency'. In other words, Christian contentment does not come from Stoic indifference to suffering or lack, but through an absolute trust in and dependence on Christ.

Paul's freedom from materialistic greed is evident from what he writes in the PEs, as noted above. It is also evident in his contrast with false teachers. Whereas false apostles exploited the status of an apostle for personal gain (Tit 1:11; cf. 2 Cor 2:17), Paul chose to visit churches at his own expense (2 Cor 11:7-11; Acts 20:33-35).

Paul coached Timothy to embrace contentment through simplicity. He encouraged Timothy to be satisfied with having food and clothing and to avoid the trap of wanting to be rich which Paul defined as 'the root of all evils' (1 Tim 6:6-10). Financial prosperity or lack thereof seems to be of less value to Paul (Phil 4:11-13). All that mattered to him was the proclamation of the gospel and his daily concern for the churches (Phil 1:15-18; 2 Cor 11:28). Money could be abundant and money could be scarce to the point of poverty, but to Paul, neither state indicates success or lack thereof in one's work for the Lord. Platt et al.'s (2013:116) comment is Paul was in essence saying, 'there is Someone who is better than money'.

Paul's freedom from 'the love of money' (1 Tim 6:9-10) is manifest in his generosity, which is another one of his character qualities. His express desire is to see the elders of churches remunerated well: 'Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The labourer deserves his wages"' (1 Tim 5:17-18).

Mounce (2000:309) believes that Paul refers to respect and payment in the above verse. The generous remuneration of elders was of no benefit to Paul himself; he was simply expressing his wish for the generous care of church elders. Furthermore, his willingness to work with his hands to provide for his own needs rather than to be a burden to the Corinthian church (1 Cor 4:12; 2 Cor 11:7-9; 1 Thess 2:9; Mounce 2000:306) is also evidence of Paul's generosity (Acts 20:33-35).

Having looked at Paul's character, we now turn to Paul's leadership which is inextricably connected to the foundation of his character.

2.3. Paul's leadership

Paul was in no doubt of his calling and what he had been called by the Lord Jesus to be: an apostle. His clarity about his calling and commissioning by Christ explain his spiritual authority. Knight (1992:58) has the following to say about that:

> For Paul that he was, παυλοσ αποστολοσ κριστου ιησου, meant that he was: (a) directly appointed by Jesus Christ and empowered and authorized by him (Gal. 1:1, 11-17; 2 Cor. 12:12; 1 Thess. 2:6), (b) an eyewitness of the resurrected Christ (1 Cor. 15:3-9; cf. Acts 1:22; 1 Cor. 9:1), (c) a foundation stone of the church along with the prophets as a bearer of the gospel and of God's revelation (Rom. 1:1; Eph. 2:20 and 3:4, 5; 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11), and thus (d) first in leadership and authority in the church along with the other apostles (1 Cor. 12:28; 2 Cor. 11:5; 12:11; Eph. 4:11; 1 Thess. 2:6; cf. Acts 15, especially vv. 23-29 and 16:4).

From the certainty he had about his calling, Paul became committed to training leaders for their calling and gifting and then commissioning them to fulfil their ministries, even when that meant that they might replace him in future. Howard-Browne (2008:12-14) points out that a leader might train successors but never release them due to feeling threatened by their ability. Or, a leader might

release leaders with very little training due to impatience. To train and release is the mark of a leader confident in his own spiritual authority, who feels no threat to his calling by the calling and gifts of others (ibid). Leaders who are 'fathers' (see Section 2.2.1. above) and not executive managers will not merely pass on information to their protégés, but besides information will mentor them in close relationship, and celebrate when they go on to develop their own ministries (ibid; also Devenish 2011:67-77).

Paul's leadership qualities were further evident in his determination to maintain sound doctrine which he wanted his successors to foster and teach in the church; his passion for the gospel and his willingness to suffer for it. Furthermore, he encouraged those who followed him to remain steadfast; he was conscious of being an example to them; he provided them with clear counsel about one's own conduct in the church; and he showed an interest in sound relationships which explains his deep love for the church (i.e., people).

The following sub-sections comprise an examination of these leadership traits of Paul.

2.3.1. Paul's clarity of calling and his ministry gift

The following verses capture Paul's confidence in his calling and appointment to be an apostle: 'Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope' (1 Tim 1:1); 'I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service' (1 Tim 1:12); 'For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth' (1 Tim 2:7); 'I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, which is why I suffer as I do' (2 Tim 1:11); and Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth...through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior' (Tit 1:1, 3).

It can be reasonably inferred that Paul's confidence in his divine calling and gift afforded him with a sense of spiritual authority.

2.3.2. Paul's spiritual authority

Mounce (2000:5) writes that 'An apostle is someone sent as an official representative, bearing the authority of the one who sent the apostle. Whatever other nuances may be present in this term, the dominant note in this context is one of authority'. As can be seen from the words in italics in the statements that follow, Paul clearly understood himself to carry spiritual authority as an apostle and that he accepted and expected that his authority extend to the all churches Timothy and Titus were to visit: Paul *urges* Timothy to remain in Ephesus to *charge* certain persons not to teach different doctrine (1 Tim 1:3); he *hands over* Hymenaeus and Alexander to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme (1 Tim 1:20); he *does not permit* a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather he says *she is to remain quiet.* (1 Tim 2:12); he bluntly instructs Timothy to *command* and *teach* sound doctrine (1 Tim 4:11); and he gives definite instructions about widows and how he would *have them behave* (1 Tim 5:13-14). In an oath-like way he *charges* Timothy 'In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels' (1 Tim 5:21) to *keep the rules* that he gave to Timothy; and he *instructs* Timothy to *remind* the people of the things that Paul had written to Timothy, and to *charge them before God* to cease quarrelling about words (2 Tim 2:14).

In 2 Timothy 4:1-2, Paul again *charges* Timothy in an oath-like way 'in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: *preach the word*; *be ready* in season and out of season; *reprove, rebuke, and exhort*, with complete patience and teaching' (italics mine), and gave Timothy a direct instruction to *do his best* to come to him in Rome *soon* and *before the winter*, to *get* Mark and *bring him with him* because Mark was very *useful to Paul* in his ministry; and Timothy is also instructed to *bring* Paul's cloak, books and parchments (2 Tim 4:9-13, 21). Paul's authority is evident in his instruction to Titus as well. He wrote, 'This is why *I left you in Crete*, so that you might put what remained into order, and

appoint elders in every town *as I directed you*' (Tit 1:5; italics added); he told Titus '*I want you to insist on these things*' (Tit 3:8; italics added), and provided Titus with no uncertain directions on how to deal with those who stir up division: 'after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him' (Tit 3:10). Paul also had the authority to '*send* Artemas or Tychicus' to Titus in Crete and instructed him to '*do your best to come to me* at Nicopolis, *for I have decided* to spend the winter there. *Do your best* to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; *see that they lack nothing*' (Tit 3:12-13; italics added). All of the foregoing quotations make it very clear that Paul understood his authority to come from the Lord and to be vested in him as an apostle to the church (2 Cor 10:8; 13:10).

As an aside, in our democratic, western culture, apostles may be hesitant to exercise authority in the way that Paul did out of fear of being branded dictators. While this is a salutary caution, Paul's example indicates that an apostle does have spiritual authority to give instructions to and charges his protégés and churches who acknowledged his apostolic leadership. The courage to embrace authority from the Lord in a humble, selfless and godly way could therefore be seen to serve as a litmus test of apostles and their successors.

2.3.3. Paul's commitment to training leaders and his commissioning of them to fulfil their calling and gifting

Paul writes to Timothy, 'what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also' (2 Tim 2:2). His transfer of apostolic ministry to others is what is regarded as apostolic succession in this thesis, and not as it is viewed in the formal institutionalised sense of apostolic succession in the Roman Catholic Church (Mounce 2000:504). The instruction to Timothy in the text quoted above suggests Paul's deep trust in Timothy. Timothy had travelled with Paul from the early days of Acts 16:1-3 and heard his teachings repeatedly; and he watched Paul's conduct and observed how Paul dealt with people. In Paul's words, 'You…have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings…continue in what you have

learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it' (2 Tim 3:10-11, 14). Paul seems to express his confidence that Timothy would represent him faithfully and accurately because of the apprenticeship he had served at Paul's side (1 Cor 4:17). Furthermore, Paul not only trained Timothy and Titus (Tit 1:5), but also entrusted them with responsibility and commissioned them to fulfil their apostolic ministry in their own right.

Paul endorsed Timothy's spiritual call and encouraged him to follow in his footsteps (1 Tim 1:18-19; 2 Tim 2:2). For Mounce (2000:506) the words 'faithful men who will be able to teach others also' (2 Tim 2:2) probably refer to elders who are able to apply to others their ability and giftedness to teach. However, it surely includes the idea of Timothy imitating the relational mentoring Paul had given him to prepare him as an apostolic leader. Mounce (2000:lviii) claims that 'Timothy was not a pastor, or elder, or bishop of the Ephesian church. He was an itinerant apostolic delegate…sent into a difficult situation where true teaching and loyalty to Paul were needed.' He also writes that Timothy and Titus stood outside the church structures referred to in 1 Timothy 3 and 5 and had no title (ibid, pp. lviii-lix). This may have been because they were Paul's protégés. But to have no title and yet to clearly exercise apostolic authority through apostolic delegation must be part of the making of an emerging apostle. One would assume then that 2 Timothy 2:2 would include Timothy seeking to do the same with emerging apostles as Paul had done with him.

The fact that Paul entrusted to Timothy's care the health of the church at Ephesus serves as evidence of Paul's confidence in Timothy and Paul's willingness to commission Timothy to fulfil his calling and ministry. For example, Paul delegated to him the difficult task of charging certain people not to teach false doctrine any longer (1 Tim 1:3); he helped Timothy to fulfil that responsibility by providing him with guidelines about who he should appoint as elders and deacons (1 Tim 3), and how to treat elders (1 Tim 5:19-20). He declared to Timothy that he, Paul, may be delayed in coming to Ephesus, but since Timothy had now received these instructions from Paul, he knew 'how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth' (1 Tim 4:6-12). The oath-like charges in 1

Timothy 5:21 and 6:13-14 must have further added to Timothy's sense of the responsibility that Paul placed on his shoulders.

Paul told Timothy to 'command and teach these things'; to not allow anyone to 'look down you because of your youth' (1 Tim 4:11-12), 'Teach and urge these things' (1 Tim 6:2), and to Titus Paul wrote, 'Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you' (Tit 2:15). These texts suggest that Paul trusted these young leaders and charged them to get on with their responsibilities.

Paul refers to his working with Timothy in the opening greetings of six of his epistles (2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Philemon); he made mention that he sent Timothy on assignments (1 Cor 4:17; 16:10; Phil 2:19); and no less than six times in a single letter commends Titus to the Corinthian church (2 Cor 2:13; 7:6,13,14; 8:6,16). We can therefore reasonably infer that Paul was not only endorsing and commending his protégés but was also entrusting them with authority to fulfil their weighty responsibilities. Thus Whittington et al.'s (2005:760) comment on 'Paul's legacy of creating leaders who are capable of leading without him continues to this day'.

One of the key aspects of Paul's leadership was his determination to inculcate sound doctrine in his protégés and preserve such doctrine in the churches, the purpose of which was to combat false teachings in the name of Christ (1 Tim 1:3-11). The study now moves to examine this characteristic of Paul's leadership.

2.3.4.   Paul and clear counsel

Paul's instructions to Timothy and Titus on who to challenge (1 Tim 1:3; Tit 1:10-11; 3:10) is an example of clear counsel. Further evidence of clear counsel is his instructions on the qualities that are to characterise elders (1 Tim 3:1-7; Tit 1:5-9) and deacons (1 Tim 3:8-13; 1 Tim 5:22); generosity to elders (1 Tim 5:17-18) and how to deal with accusations against them (1 Tim 5:19-21), the

treatment of widows (1 Tim 5:3-16), how older men and women and younger men and women in the church should conduct themselves (Tit 2:2-8) and how to relate to them (1 Tim 5:1-2).

In order to keep Timothy and Titus on course and steadfast in their calling, Paul provided them with clear counsel. It suggests that counsel from a leader is most helpful to the successor to know his authority and the fact that he indeed has authority. Providing clear counsel was one of Paul's outstanding leadership characteristics.

Something that Paul was certainly clear on was sound doctrine. He understood that sound doctrine produced sound Christians and that there was an inextricable link between doctrine and behaviour (2 Tim 3:1-17). The next section examines Paul's sound doctrine.

2.4.   Paul and sound doctrine

Paul urged Timothy to remain in Ephesus that he might 'command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer' (1 Tim 1:4). The word ἑτεροδιδασκαλειν translated here as 'teach false doctrines' literally means 'to teach another teaching' (Mounce 2000:19). In classical Greek, ἑτερος meant 'another of a different kind' whereas αλλος meant 'another of the same kind' (ibid, p. 19). The Scriptures reveal that Paul's opponents in Ephesus were teaching not merely another slightly different version of Paul's teaching; they were teaching something that was fundamentally and essentially different and was therefore heresy. In the only other occurrence of ἑτεροδιδασκαλειν, 'Paul virtually defines the term by the negation that follows it: "different doctrine (ἑτεροδιδασκαλει)... does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness" (1 Timothy 6:3; NASB)' (Knight 1992:72). Paul was adamant about preventing that from happening or stopping it once it began.

Paul referred to false doctrine as 'meaningless talk' (1 Tim 1:6) and to those who propounded it as people who 'do not know what they are talking about or

what they so confidently affirm' (1 Tim 1:7). He continues to say that sound doctrine 'conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me' (1:11) and

> If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions (1 Tim 6:3-4)

It would appear that Paul's primary concerns with sound doctrine were essentially twofold: firstly, a deep grasp of the truth of salvation, not by observing the law but by grace and by faith in Christ alone (Mounce 2000:lxix-19; Tit 1:4, 10; 3:4-9; 1 Tim 1:7-17; 2:1-7; 2 Tim 1:8-10) - what Paul refers to as 'the glorious gospel' (1 Tim 1:11). Secondly, the unshakeable connection between doctrine and sanctification: 'teaching that accords with godliness' (1 Tim 6:3) as opposed to the asceticism or licentiousness of proto-gnostic or Hellenistic thought (Mounce 2000:lxxiv-lxxx).

Timothy was also told that 'If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed' (1 Tim 4:6), as well as reminded that deacons 'must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience' (1 Tim 3:9; NIV)

It can be concluded that sound doctrine is fundamental to the spiritual health of the church, that apostolic ministry is a bulwark against the drift from the teaching of the Scriptures that constantly assails the church. In a word, Paul regarded the teachings of the Scriptures as authoritative and critical to sound doctrine.

2.4.1.   Paul and the authority of Scripture

Paul was emphatic about the ultimacy of the Scriptures. He reminded Timothy about his acquaintance from childhood 'with the sacred writings, which are able

to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work' (2 Tim 3:15-17). The Greek *θεοπνευστος* literally means 'breathed-out by God' (Platt et al. 2013:199). Such was Paul's conviction of the Scriptures' authority. He says that 'whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope' (Rom 15:4).

His high regard for the authority of the Scriptures is evidenced in repeated phrases such as 'in accordance with the Scriptures' (1 Cor 15:3, 4), 'what does the Scripture say?' (Gal 4:30) and 'the Scripture says' (Rom 9:17; 10:11; 11:2). The fact that Paul regarded the Scriptures to be the highest authority on the matters which it speaks led him to admonish Timothy to 'devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching' (1 Tim 4:13) and to 'do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth' (2 Tim 2:15).

Besides the authority of the Scriptures, another aspect of what Paul considered as sound doctrine was the divinity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Although the Godhead had not yet been referred to as the 'Trinity' in Paul's day[50], the term 'trinitarian' will be used as the heading for the next section as it is considered to be the most concise expression of the truth about God Paul held.

2.4.2.   Paul's concept of God and his trinitarian thought

Wesley Hill (2012) has written an article on 'St. Paul, theologian of the Trinity'. In the article he quotes Francis Watson, a leading New Testament researcher in Britain, who claims that trinitarian theology 'appears to be deeply rooted in the Pauline texts' (ibid, p. 1). Hill also quotes the following from C. Kavin Rowe, associate professor of New Testament at Duke Divinity School: 'To read

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[50] The term 'Trinity' was only coined in the early part of the third century (Walker 1970:68).

Scripture and more specifically Paul within a Trinitarian framework of theological understanding is to move within the deep theological pattern of thinking that Scripture itself requires', and concludes, 'There is a *pressure*, in other words, exerted by the Pauline texts, pushing the reader toward the later Nicene trinitarian formulations' (ibid).

Timothy and Titus would have been in no doubt about the divinity that Paul ascribed to God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and to the Holy Spirit. For instance, Paul wrote to Timothy and greeted him with 'Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord' (1 Tim 1:2). To Titus, Paul says that he had been entrusted with preaching by 'God our Savior' and immediately goes on to greet Titus with the words 'Grace and peace from God the Father and *Christ Jesus our Savior*' (Tit 1:3-4; italics added). He wrote of the Spirit communicating with God's people through Scripture (1 Tim 4:1) and he charged Timothy to guard the good deposit entrusted to him 'By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us' (2 Tim 1:14).

Paul's words in the third chapter of his letter to Titus are probably the clearest expression of his trinitarian understanding of God in the PEs: 'But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior' (Tit 3:4-6).

An in-depth study of Paul and the Trinity is beyond the scope of this study. However, it is safe to assume that Paul, in the interests of sound doctrine, impressed on his protégés an equal regard for the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It seems that his embracing of the concept of the Trinity had the effect of producing leaders who are secure in the Father's goodness (1 Cor 1:3-4), who were determined to advance the kingdom of the Son (2 Cor 10:13-17), and who trusted in the guidance, grace, power and fellowship of the Holy Spirit (Rom 5:5; 8:1-27; 15:13, 19; 1 Cor 2:4, 10; 3:16; 12:7; 2 Cor 13:14). Understanding the concept of God as a trinity of Persons also seems to have created a foundation for a theology in terms of which Christianity is understood as fundamentally

relational, communal and not individualistic. In the words of Keller (2008:214-215):

> The life of the Trinity is characterised not by self-centredness but by mutually self-giving love. When we delight and serve someone else, we enter into a dynamic orbit around him or her, we centre on the interests and desires of the other. That creates a dance, particularly if there are three persons, each of whom moves around the other two, so it is the Bible tells us. Each of the divine persons centres upon the others. None demands that the others revolve around him.

The understanding of the Trinity and what Paul deemed to be sound theology, seem to lead to a deep grasp of God's grace through the Lord Jesus Christ.

2.4.3.   Paul's comprehension of the grace of God through Jesus Christ

In Calvin's (1998:17) introduction to 1 Timothy 1, he wrote that 'Paul admits to his own unworthiness and says in glowing words how God has turned him into the man he is through the work of God's grace in him'. It is evident in Paul's instruction to Timothy 'to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus' (2 Tim 2:1). There are few theological subjects that Paul was more passionate about than maintaining a correct comprehension of the grace of God through Jesus Christ. For example, he says believers are saved by grace (1 Tim 1:12-17; Tit 2:11; 3:3-7), stand by grace (Rom 5:5), enabled by grace to fulfil the call of God (2 Tim 1:9; 1 Cor 15:10) and to abound in every good work by grace (2 Cor 9:8). They also have different gifts according to the grace given to them (Rom 12:6) and are enabled to say 'no' to ungodliness by grace (Tit 2:12).

Not only is there this positive focus on the grace of God in the PEs, but Paul became quite disturbed when he perceived that the grace of God was about to be replaced with legalism or taken for granted, issuing in licentiousness. As an example of his response to those who believed that saving grace comes through keeping the law of Moses, consider the following texts from Galatians: 'I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the

grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel-- which is really no gospel at all' (Gal 1:6-7); 'The other Jews joined him [the apostle, Peter] in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray' (2:13); 'I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!' (2:21). Paul referred to following the rituals of the law as 'those weak and miserable principles' (4:9).

In fact, Paul becomes so incensed with the legalistic, circumcision party that he enquires why they do not go all the way and emasculate themselves (Gal 5:12). It seems we can expect that a true apostle will manifest huge emotional discomfort when the truth about the grace of God is threatened by legalism, licentiousness, and the like. Paul teaches that legalism does nothing to restrain the sinful nature, something that he had personally experienced (Rom 7:13-24; Col 2;20-23). Paul believed that it was only the grace of God that would enable a human being to fulfil the righteous requirements of the law (Tit 2:12; Rom 8:4).

Paul perceived another danger to a sound theology of grace: licentiousness. He writes that believers are not to use their freedom in Christ 'to indulge the sinful nature' (Gal 5:13) as some of them were obviously doing. To those that may have completely misunderstood his rejection of living under the law as advocating licentiousness, Paul's response is emphatic: 'By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?' (Romans 6:2).

This emphatic repudiation of licentiousness was something that Paul pressed on Timothy and Titus: 'So flee youthful passions' 'and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart' (2 Tim 2:22). Timothy was instructed that any teaching that did not 'accord with godliness' was to be ignored (1 Tim 6:3-4); he was encouraged to 'train yourself for godliness' (1 Timothy 4:7), and not to allow anyone to 'despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity' (1 Tim 4:12). In 1 Timothy 1:8-11, Paul declares that those who are 'lawless and disobedient...ungodly and sinners...unholy and profane...who strike their fathers and mothers...murderers...sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, [and] perjurers' are behaving in ways that are

'contrary to sound doctrine, in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted'. Paul also admonished women to dress modestly, in respectable apparel and to exercise self-control (1 Tim 2:8-10). Paul was crystal clear that grace led to holiness, to a fulfilling of the law, rather than to lax licentiousness.

The correct comprehension of grace referred to in this sub-section, leads quite naturally into a subject that Paul had quite a few things to say about, namely, the link between belief and behaviour (godliness).

2.4.4.   Paul on sanctification: Belief and godliness

To Paul it was anathema to claim sound doctrine yet indulge in ungodly behaviour (1 Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 2:16-19; 3:1-9; 4:3-4; Tit 3:10). He described it as something that brought shame on the church (1 Cor 5:1). He believed that sound teaching would be accompanied by godliness, whereas false teaching would be accompanied by 'envy, dissension, slander and evil suspicions' (1 Tim 6:3-4). In his second letter to Timothy Paul emphasises the connection between being a believer and sanctification. Believers are to 'depart from iniquity' and to 'cleanse themselves from what is dishonourable' (2 Tim 2:19-21).

Paul writes in the same vein to Titus. He is to teach sound doctrine which is to be accompanied by soberness, dignity, self-control, reverent behaviour and purity amongst the saints. As a teacher Titus himself was to be a model of good works, integrity, dignity and sound teaching so that no-one would be able to say anything evil against Christians (Tit 2:1-10).

It has already been noted in the previous section that Paul challenged legalism and licentiousness as departures from the gospel of grace. From this section it can be seen that Paul's doctrine of grace included a doctrine of sanctification, purity and holiness as things to be pursued by those who received the grace of God.

A final aspect of Paul's sound doctrine was his expectation of the eschaton, a lively expectation of the return of Jesus that was never far from his thinking.

2.4.5.   Paul's Eschatology

Paul's expectation of the return of Jesus characterises his writings with a sense of urgency (2 Tim 4:1-4). He also regards 'that Day' as a great motivation to obedience and holy living (2 Tim 1:12). He expected Jesus to return as the 'righteous judge' to reward those who love Jesus and obey Him (2 Tim 4:8). Paul wrote to Titus that the grace of God enabled Christians to live upright, self-controlled and godly lives as they eagerly awaited the return of Christ (Tit 2:11-13). Paul warned both Titus and Timothy that in 'the last days' leading up to 'that Day', there would be an increase in ungodliness and corrupt behaviour (1 Tim 4:1; 2 Tim 3:1-9; Titus 2:11-13). Paul admonished Titus and Timothy that a vital part of their role was to teach in such a way as to reprove, rebuke and exhort the saints to godly living as they awaited the return of Christ (2 Tim 4:1-4).

In summary, Paul wrote to Timothy and Titus on the themes of a 'Day' when the kingdom of God will come in its fullness and with it rewards and judgement, that faithful servants of God will find mercy on that day, that the reason we live self-controlled and godly lives by the grace of God is because we await the return of our Lord Jesus Christ; that the church lived in the 'last days', characterised by difficulty, ungodliness, hedonism, materialism and greed; that people would not endure sound teaching but gather to themselves teachers to suit their passions; and that Jesus Christ would judge the living and the dead at His appearing and the full establishment of His kingdom. In a word, because Paul was convinced that the church lived in the end times, he wanted Timothy and Titus to share and carry something about the 'gravitas' and urgency of this truth.

This concludes the section on what Paul considered as comprising sound doctrine. His passion to guard the guard the truth entrusted to him and to his protégés (2 Tim 1:12; 1 Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 1:14) was a vital part of Paul's apostolic leadership. Aligned to the 'gravitas' and the urgency of a day of judgement, was Paul's passion for the gospel.

2.5.   Paul's passion for the gospel of Christ

Paul writes that 'our Savior Christ Jesus' had 'abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel' (2 Tim 1:10). His wonder at the power of the gospel message shines through in this passage. He also considered it as the 'gospel of the glory of the blessed God' (1 Tim 1:11). Paul was so passionate about the gospel that he expressed a desire to proclaim it in places where the gospel had not been proclaimed before (Rom 15:20; 2 Cor 10:16). 'Frontier missions', Fraser (1986:10) writes, is the 'the continuation of the mission of the Apostle who was abnormally born [Paul].' Paul considered the task of 'first evangelism' - preaching the gospel where Christ is not named in Christian worship an important part of his mandate as an apostle (ibid, p. 7).

In 1 Timothy 2:1-4 Paul urged Timothy to pray for kings and all men because God desires all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth, from which can be inferred that Paul believed that through prayer, God would help in this cause. Paul concludes this passage on prayer by summarising the gospel: 'For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time' (1 Tim 2:5-6). Knight (1992:121) writes that this passage is the self-evident basis for Paul's injunction to pray for all people is the gospel.

In his second letter to Timothy he reminds Timothy of the importance of the gospel by saying:

> Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory' (2 Tim 2:8-10).

Mounce (2000:512) considers verse 8 to be the summary of Paul's gospel for which Timothy and he had been called to suffer. Paul also reminds Timothy that God gave them a spirit of power, love and a sound mind, and not one of fear (2 Tim1:7), and adds, 'Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our

Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God' (2 Tim 1:8). Paul is passionate for the gospel and its proclamation even though it he was aware that his passion could lead to imprisonment and ultimately death. He seems to expect the same attitude in his protégés.

Paul opens his letter to Titus with a declaration that manifests this same passion for the gospel. Paul declares that his apostleship is 'for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth…in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior' (Tit 1:1-3). Later in the letter Paul writes:

> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works (Tit 2:11-14).

He then commands Titus, 'Declare these things' (2:15). Paul clearly hoped that the wonder of the gospel and his passion for its proclamation would be something his protégés would learn from him and make their own. In light of the above, it seems reasonable to say that if he had detected in them anything less than complete devotion to the gospel or its proclamation, even in the face of suffering or possible death, he would not have wished for them to succeed him as an apostle.

By proclaiming the gospel, Timothy and Titus encountered opposition (2 Tim 4:14-15; Tit 3:10) and an attitude of dismissal (Tit 2:15; 1 Tim 4:12). For that reason Paul made an effort to encourage them and let them know that he believed in them.

2.6.   Paul's encouragement of Timothy and Titus

Paul conveyed to Timothy, with utmost clarity, that a sacred trust had been committed to Timothy in accordance with prophecies previously made to 'make warfare' with these prophecies (1 Tim 1:18-19). Making spiritual warfare with those who oppose the gospel carries the sense of taking a stand on his calling and not to back down in the face of opposition and dismissal because he was young (1 Tim 4:12). Paul goes on to encourage Timothy to set an example for the believers in every way, to perform the public reading of the Scriptures, to exhort, to teach, not to neglect the gift that had been imparted to him when the council of elders laid their hands on him, and to immerse himself in these things. By so doing, he would show evident progress to all in the church (1 Tim 4:13-16). Furthermore, Paul reminded Timothy that he remembered his sincere faith and exhorted him to 'fan into flame the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands' and that God has given them a spirit 'not of fear but of power and love and self-control' (2 Tim1:5-7). All of this would have conveyed to Timothy that Paul believed in him, that God was the one who called Timothy, equipped him with his gift and that Paul and God wanted him to fulfil both his calling and ministry.

The fact that Paul referred to Titus as 'my true child in a common faith' (Tit 1:4) must have buoyed Titus' hope in a difficult situation. Paul's confidence that Titus could in fact show himself 'in all respects to be a model of good works' (Tit 2:7) must have also spurred him on. Paul telling Titus to 'let no one disregard you' (Tit 2:15) would have spoken volumes to Titus about the confidence Paul had in him. Paul's request for Titus to do his best to come to Paul in Nicopolis where Paul was wintering (Tit 3:12) would also have made Titus feel needed and important. All these factors, taken together, would have made Timothy and Titus feel encouraged, trusted in and wanted.

Paul's spoke highly of Timothy and Titus to churches (1 Cor 4:17; 16:10; 2 Cor 7:6; 8:16; 12:18; Gal 2:3; Phil 1:1; 2:19; 1 Thess 3:2; 2 Tim 4:10; Philem 1). It is likely that they would have come to hear of these commendations. Paul was not sparing in his affirmation of these two young men and it does not take a great

deal of imagination to envisage the encouragement this would have brought to them in trying times. However, he not only had a high regard for these two men, he also had a high regard for the church of Jesus Christ.

2.7.   Paul's high regard for the church

Paul writes to Timothy and calls the church 'the church of the living God', 'the household of God' and 'a pillar and buttress of the truth' (1 Tim 3:15). Here Paul uses structural terms to describe the church στυλοσ και εδραιωμα. στυλοσ means ('pillar' or 'column') and is used in the LXX of the two prominent pillars at the entrance of Solomon's temple (Knight 1992:181). Εδραιωμα, a NT hapax found only in Christian writings and occurring here and used with στυλοσ, is a building term. Its exact meaning is not entirely clear, but translations have included 'foundation' (BAGD; Phillips; NIV) or 'ground' (KJV; RV), or, alternatively 'mainstay' (BAGD), 'support' (NASB), 'buttress' (ESV) or 'bulwark' (RSV; NEB) (181). Knight (1992:181) writes, 'Hanson (Studies, 5ff.), following a clue provided by Spicq, thinks that OT (and NT) parallels point in the direction of "foundation" rather than "prop" or "stay"'. Thus Paul wrote that the church is the pillar and foundation of the αληθεια (truth). Truth is used here of '"the content of Christianity as the absolute truth" (BAGD)' (ibid). It would, therefore, be hard to overestimate the extent of Paul's high regard for the church.

Paul further described the church as being made up of 'those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours' (1 Cor 1:2). It is particularly in his writing to the church at Ephesus where Timothy was based, that Paul's high estimation of the church shines through. He writes that God put all things under Christ's feet 'and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all' (Eph 1:22-23). Through the church 'the manifold wisdom of God' is 'made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places', which, Paul writes 'was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Eph 3:10-11). It was also Paul's prayer that God be glorified 'in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen' (Eph 3:21).

Paul's high regard for the church can be traced to his view of the church as Christ's metaphorical body, with Christ as its head (Eph 5:23). With hints of the 'one flesh' implications of marriage (1 Cor 6:15-17), Paul uses the analogy of a husband and wife for the relationship between Christ and the church. He challenged husbands to love their wives as much as 'Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish' (Eph 5:25-27) and says that Christ cherishes the church (Eph 5:29). Paul had such a high regard for the church that he writes to the Colossians of his glad willingness to suffer for the sake of the health of Christ's body, the church (Col 1:24). And to the Corinthians Paul writes about 'the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches' (2 Cor 11:28).

High regard for the church as characteristic of Paul seems to indicate that apostles will show readiness to suffer in their calling to break new ground for the gospel and to preserve and protect the church. This is nothing short of an apostle being required to have a supernatural quality of love for the bride of Christ if they are going to carry out their responsibility with little gratitude and much opposition and suffering (1 Cor 4:9-13; 2 Cor 11:23-29.

A further characteristic of Paul's leadership was his willingness to suffer for the sake of the gospel and his wish for Timothy and Titus to follow his example.

2.8.   Paul's willingness to suffer for the gospel of Christ

Paul encouraged Timothy to not be ashamed of the gospel, nor of Paul as a prisoner, but rather to join Paul 'in suffering for the gospel by the power of God' (2 Tim 1:8). Paul stated that it was specifically due to being a preacher, apostle and teacher of the gospel that he suffered as he did (1 Tim 1:10-12). Paul was, however, not ashamed of being treated like a common criminal because of the gospel (2 Tim 2:8-9) for, he says, 'I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me'

(2 Tim 1:10-12). This eschatological confidence in the face of suffering was something that he wanted to pass on to Timothy; and so encouraged Timothy to 'Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus' (2 Tim 2:3).

Toward the end of his second letter to Timothy, Paul writes that 'I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come' (2 Tim 4:6). Yet this is no defeatist statement for he goes on to say, 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing' (2 Tim 4:7-8).

Paul's courage and confidence in the face of suffering and his immanent death must have left a deep impression on his protégés. His hope seems to be that they would they would follow his example.

2.9.   Paul as an example to imitate

Paul's call for believers to imitate him is a recurring theme in his writings. In 1 Corinthians 4:16, he 'urges' the Corinthians 'be imitators of me'. In the same letter, he tells them to 'be imitators of me, as I am of Christ' (1 Cor 11:1). In his letter to the Philippians he writes, 'join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us' (Phil 3:17). For Paul, the verb περιπατεο (walk) in this verse is a favourite expression which he uses thirty-two times in his writings to refer to the conduct of one's whole life (Strong's Concordance 2014:G4043). Again, Paul writes, 'The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace will be with you' (Phil 4:9). And in his second letter to the Thessalonians, he says that his desire was 'to give you in ourselves an example to imitate' (2 Thess 3:9). Paul seems confident that his life was worthy of imitation.

If it was Paul's wish or purpose set an example of godly conduct among believers and his protégés, then it makes sense that Paul spent so much time

with them whenever he could (Acts 16:3ff; Tit 1:5). The indications of the PEs and the rest of Paul's letters are that he had a close and personal relationship with Timothy and Titus (Phil 2:22; 2 Tim 1:2-4; Tit 1:4; 3:12-15), which suggests that Paul was a very relational leader.

2.10.   Paul as relational leader

Paul compared his relationship with Timothy and Titus to a father and son relationship (Phil 2:22; Tit 1:4). His words 'I hope to come to you soon' (1 Tim 3:14) seem to express Paul's closeness to Timothy and his concern for Timothy's wellbeing, as do the words: 'No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments' (1 Tim 5:23).

Paul requested Timothy to greet a number of people at Ephesus who were precious to him, and passed on greetings to Timothy from believers in other geographical areas of Paul's ministry. He writes, for example, 'Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus… Eubulus sends greetings to you, as do Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers' (2 Tim 4:19-21). Paul's greetings to Titus reflects a similar style (Tit 3:12-15; cf. Rom 16; 1 Cor 16:19-24; 2 Cor 13:11-14; Eph 6:21-24; Phil 4:21-22; Col 4:7-18; Philem 23-25). Mounce (2000:599) comments that 'Paul usually ends his letters by greeting friends'. Paul obviously had a great capacity for personal relationships with many people. None of these greetings sound impersonal or perfunctory, and they all carry a sense of personal acquaintance and caring for each person (1 Thess 2:7-8, 11-12).

One does not gain a sense from Paul's writings that he sees people merely as stepping stones to any ambition he may have had, and there is no sense of using people to further any personal agenda. He simply invites them to devote themselves to Christ and Christ's agenda, which was also his. Paul's genuine relational heart for people means that Paul is not merely a 'pulpit educator' but an apostle who invited leaders into a relational experience that is immersed in his teaching, daily life and conduct. In their book 'Building a discipleship culture', Breen and Cockram (2011:23) opine that optimal learning occurs when three forms of learning are present: lecturing, apprenticeship and immersion.

'Lecturing' implies the passing on of information (2 Tim 2:2); 'apprenticeship' implies learning by imitating a more experienced practitioner (2 Thess 3:7, 9); and 'immersion' implies being exposed in an experiential way to what has been taught (ibid, p. 27; 2 Tim 3:10-14). All three of these facets of learning are also reflected in Paul's statement to the church at Corinth: 'That is why I sent you Timothy, *my beloved and faithful child in the Lord* [apprentice], *to remind you of my ways in Christ* [immersion], *as I teach them* [lecture] everywhere in every church' (1 Cor 4:17; italics and inserts added).

Breen and Cockram (2011:27) add that 'the key to immersion is having access to the culture that you are hoping will shape you' and that 'the hard reality is that immersion works only when people are actually fluent in something' (p. 29). What they mean by this is that a disciple needs access to a person or people who are 'fluent' in doing what they teach. They provide the example of a person learning to speak a language: not only do they need to learn the principles and vocabulary of the language (lecture), but they also need access to people who are fluent in the language (immersion) and to speak with those people in order to learn correctly (apprenticeship) (pp. 29-30). Paul's personal relationship with Timothy and Titus ensured that they had the opportunity to hear him teach, serve alongside him (apprenticeship), and live what it meant to be an apostle to churches (immersion). Thus, they were well prepared for their future roles after the passing away of Paul.

So far, this chapter focused on Paul's side of the succession equation. The chapter now turns to focus on the other side of the succession equation, namely, the qualities that Paul desired and extolled in those who would succeed him.

3. Paul and His Successors: Criteria for Selection

An examination of Paul's injunctions to Timothy and Titus in the PEs indicates how careful he would have been in his selection of them as successors to his apostolic ministry. Little is said of the actual process that resulted in Timothy and Titus' selection. However, it is recorded that

> Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek (Acts 16:1-3).

Platt et al. (2013:164) conclude from this passage that Paul would have engaged in 'careful observation', 'relationship development' and helping them to 'discern their calling, cultivate godly character, and increase their level of competency'. In terms of careful observation, the fact that Timothy was well spoken off by the brothers in two towns would indicate that he was an exemplary disciple. Furthermore, his willingness to undergo adult circumcision in order to present no stumbling block to the Jews[51] as he accompanied Paul, says much about his willingness to suffer and his earnestness to serve Christ, the gospel and Paul in his apostolic ministry. It also shows Timothy's perceptiveness of the wider implications of his calling; that he was thinking of more than a region, his local church and his personal life. In fact, he was thinking of the church in other cultures and regions, which seems to be a characteristic quality of an apostle. Larkin et al. (1995:232) describe this as being 'spiritually fruitful, morally faithful and culturally flexible'.

The fact that Timothy was the child of a Jewish-Gentile marriage was a circumstantial fact that added to his suitability to accompany Paul into churches where they would be likely to encounter Jews and Gentiles. These circumstantial factors would not have escaped Paul's attention. It is actually little surprise that 'Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him' (Acts 16:3).

The sub-sections that follow comprise a representation of some of the other key qualities of successors that may be gleaned from the PEs and other New

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[51] Paul's *modus operandi* at that point in time was to first visit the synagogue in any location (Larkin and Osborne 1995:232).

Testament passages. One of the most important of these qualities was the centrality of the lordship of Christ in their lives.

3.1. Successors and the centrality of the lordship of Christ

It is to the church at Philippi that Paul refers to himself and Timothy as 'servants of Christ Jesus' (Phil 1:1). Paul goes on to express his desire to send Timothy to the church because, he says, 'I have no one like him…For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know Timothy's proven worth' (Phil 2:20-22). Paul was convinced that Timothy truly saw himself as a servant of Christ Jesus and that he sought the interests of Jesus Christ above his own.

Paul charges Timothy 'in the presence of God…and of Christ Jesus' to keep the commandment 'until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ…he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords' (1 Tim 6:13-15). Mounce (2000:358) believes that there is a parallelism between Timothy's confession in 1 Timothy 6:12 to 'Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses', and Jesus' confession referred to in verse 13: '…Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession'. Mounce also believes that Paul was using creedal language which reflects back on Timothy's public commitment to Christ at his baptism and possibly at his commission to Christian service (p. 358). Paul obviously believed that 1 Timothy 6:13-15 would be the weightiest of words for Timothy to receive and it indicates Timothy's ultimate regard for the lordship of Jesus Christ in his life.

3.2. Successors and the centrality of the gospel of Christ

Platt et al. (2013:13) write that 'Paul's first instruction to the young pastor Timothy was essentially this: Guard the gospel!' Mounce (2000:lxxvii-lxxx) writes that Paul's concern in the PEs was to encourage Timothy to protect the gospel as 'right belief' and 'right behaviour'. A strong indicator of Timothy's willingness to suffer for the sake of the protection and progress of the gospel

was his willingness to be circumcised as an adult, which may explain why Paul writes that Timothy sought the interests of Christ Jesus above his own (Phil 2:20-21) and why he says, 'as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel' (Phil 2:22). 'The gospel is central to Paul and Timothy's ministry (1 Timothy 4:13-16; 2 Timothy 1:8-14; 3:10-4:2)', writes Mounce (2000:lxxvi).

Paul writes to Timothy in Ephesus that 'God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control' (2 Tim 1:7), and that Timothy should 'not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began' (2 Tim 1:8-9). Paul's encouragement here is couched in several references to 'us' by which he meant himself and Timothy.[52]

In 2 Timothy 1:8-9 he reminds Timothy of their mutual commitment to the gospel. Paul states that even the ability to suffer for the gospel is 'by the power of God' (2 Tim 1:8). 'For we would collapse immediately if God did not sustain us', wrote Calvin (1998:122). It is to this understanding of grace as a quality of a successor that Paul sought in his protégés that we next turn to.

3.3. Successors and their understanding of grace

The reading of all Paul's letters indicates his consistent message was one of salvation and justification by grace alone and not by works; that salvation was purely an act of God's mercy and included the regeneration and renewal of the believer by the Holy Spirit; and by grace, believers become joint heirs with Christ in His inheritance and are assured of eternal life (Tit 3:2-7). This is the message Paul wanted Titus and Timothy to proclaim and to live by. According

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[52] See also NASB and NIV. The RSV, NEV, ESV and TEV leave it more open about who the 'your' in 'take your share of suffering' refers to. Regardless, Paul is here calling on Timothy to share in his suffering for the gospel, irrespective of whether the 'us' refers to only Paul and Timothy or to all believers.

to Mounce (2000:lxxvi), 'At the heart of the PE is the gospel of Jesus Christ: God has acted in grace and mercy through the death of Christ with an offer of forgiveness, to which people must respond in faith, turning from evil, receiving empowerment through God's Spirit, and looking forward to eternal life'. No doubt Timothy and Titus, as Paul's protégés, would have had a deep understanding and appreciation of grace. Paul writes that Timothy would remind the church at Corinth of his ways in Christ as he taught them in every church (1 Cor 4:17). One of the major factors in Paul's ways in Christ and what he taught in all the churches was the doctrine of the grace of God (1 Tim 1:12-17). Writing about 1 Timothy 1:12-17 and Paul's reminder to Timothy of Paul's own salvation experience, Stibbs (1970:1169) calls the passage a 'typical, parenthetical doxology to Christ and to God for his [Paul's] own amazing experience of divine mercy, and for his own appointment by Christ to the stewardship of that gospel'. If Timothy or Titus were to have had anything other than a deep understanding and appreciation of the grace of God, it is doubtful that Paul would have let them work alongside him, given his strong reaction to those who did not understand, appreciate or live the doctrine of grace (Rom 2:17-29; Gal 1:6-9; 2:11-14; 3:10; 5:12; Col 2).

Paul opens and closes his letters to Timothy and Titus with the blessing of grace (1 Tim 1:1; 6:2; 2 Tim 1:2; 4:22; Tit 1:4; 3:15). The impression is that of a sense of mutual appreciation of the grace of God between the apostle and his successors. The appreciation is often linked to a sense of having been given a sacred trust through grace to protect and carry out the spread of the gospel (1 Tim 1:18) and to maintain the purity of the gospel and sound doctrine.

3.4. Successors and their sacred trust

Paul made it clear that just as he, Paul, had received a sacred trust, so had Timothy. Paul writes that he had 'been entrusted' with 'the gospel of the glory of the blessed God' (1 Tim 1:11) and implores Timothy to 'guard the deposit entrusted to you' (1 Tim 6:20). This seems to be a special terminology used by Paul to reflect something of a formal procedure current at the time in Greek, Roman and Jewish societies: 'a sacred trust' (1 Cor 9:17; Amplified Bible and

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Phillips New Testament Bible) meaning the passing of a commodity from one party to another party by entrusting it to the authorised agent (Towner 1994:149). The contrast with false teaching suggests that the 'commodity' referred to is the gospel which was under attack by false teachers (p. 149). Furthermore, Paul's language regarding 'the deposit entrusted to you' emphasises Timothy's continuity with the mission Christ entrusted to the pre-ascension apostles and to Paul and now to Timothy (1 Cor 15:1-3; 2 Tim 2:2).

In Paul's second letter to Timothy he states that it is in fact God who 'is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me' (2 Tim 1:12). In verse 14 he proceeds to admonish Timothy to 'guard the good deposit entrusted' to him but that he must do so 'by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us'. In verse 13, which is sandwiched between Paul's sacred trust (v. 12) and Timothy's sacred trust (v. 14), Paul urges Timothy to 'follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus'. This then is the essence of the sacred trust: the pattern of the sound words conveyed in the faith and love that are in Christ. In different words, sound doctrine and the accurate teaching of the gospel in faith and love (Platt et al. 2013:154).

The same pattern of Paul's teaching applies to Titus. Paul speaks of his own sacred trust and then the trust that has been given to Titus. Paul writes that he, Paul, is

> a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior (Tit 1:1-3)

In verse 5 he provides the reason why the same trust applies to Titus: 'This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you' (Tit 1:5).

By way of summary, Timothy and Titus must have carried a sobering sense that a great, sacred trust had been passed over to them. Their calling to apostleship was not a career advance, but a sacred trust that would involve suffering and conflict (2 Tim 1:8, 2:3,9; 4:5). For Gordon Fee (1999:113), they were willing to endure suffering and conflict because they carried a deep concern for the welfare of the church, as will be seen in the next sub-section.

3.5. Successors' concern for the welfare of the church

Paul could write to the Philippians of Timothy, as follows: 'I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ' (Phil 2:19-21). Timothy and Titus' passion for the welfare of the church compelled them to visit churches at Paul's behest, even in dangerous and difficult circumstances (Acts 17:14; 19:22; Tit 1:10-11; 2:15). Paul refers to Titus in 2 Corinthians 8:16-17 and says, 'But thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same earnest care I have for you. For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest he is going to you of his own accord'.

In Philippians 2:19-21, Paul mentions a group of people as 'they' whom he contrasts with Timothy. Fee (1999:117) believes the 'they' in verse 21 does not refer to co-workers of Paul, but to

> some other people who came to mind as Paul was dictating. These people are condemned precisely because they lack the two essential qualities noted of Timothy in verse Philippians 2:20: (1) like-mindedness with Paul, which expresses itself in (2) *genuine* concern for others and thus exemplifies the character of the gospel that was presented in Philippians 2:3-4. Probably, then, this aside looks in two directions at once. What prompts it are people like those already mentioned in Philippians 1:15 and Philippians 1:17, who preach Christ but "not purely/sincerely," and who therefore are not truly doing so for Christ's sake. But as Philippians 2:20 has already hinted, Timothy is being set forth as yet another model of one who "thinks

like Christ" and is therefore being singled out for the benefit of some in Philippi who are otherwise-minded (Philippians 2:3-4). That it is intended in part for Philippi seems verified by Paul's language, which is the clue to much. Such people, he says, "seek" (NIV *look out for*) their own *interests;* Paul has already appealed to the Philippians to do nothing out of self-interest but rather in humility to regard the needs of others as having precedence over their own (Philippians 2:3-4).

As can be seen above, Timothy and Titus were not doing what they were doing as emerging apostles out of their own interests, but because of a deep concern for the welfare of the churches.

3.6. The willingness of successors to be mentored

1 and 2 Timothy and Titus may be seen as essentially letters from Paul to two young men whom Paul was mentoring to follow in his footsteps. The following verses are a sample of the mentoring statements with which 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus are replete:

This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience (1 Tim 1:18-19); Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers (1 Tim 4:12-16); For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our

Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God (2 Tim 1:6-8).

Platt et al. (2013:72) write that 'these verses are filled with personal instructions to Timothy'.

Paul's mentoring relationship with Timothy and Titus is a very close one. He refers to both of them as his true children in the faith (1 Tim 1:2; Tit 1:4; cf. 1 Cor 4:17). Paul informs the Corinthians that Timothy's task amongst them is 'to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church' (1 Co 4:17), which suggests that Paul was very confident that Timothy will accurately impart his teaching to others as if it he did it himself. This is strong evidence that Timothy was willing to be and had been extensively mentored by Paul. In a certain sense he became 'another' Paul, not in personality but in terms of vision, doctrine and practice. Paul writes to Timothy in Ephesus, 'If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, *being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed*' (1 Tim 4:6; italics added). Not only was Paul's mentoring about the words of the faith and good doctrine, but also about his way of life. Later, Paul writes:

> You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life ['my way of life' (NIV); 'manner of life' (KJV); 'how I live' (NLT)], my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it' (2 Tim 3:10-11, 14).

Platt et al. (2013:140) write that 'Paul coached Timothy on how he should respond to people appropriately (2 Timothy 2:16, 23-26; 3:5), study the Word diligently (2:15), preach the Word faithfully (3:16-4:2), and do the work of an evangelist constantly (4:5)'. Towner (1994:142) refers to Paul as a 'skilful coach'

which seems obvious from the fact that Paul had trained Timothy well in life and doctrine (1 Tim 4:16) and Timothy's willingness to receive Paul's mentoring and learn from it.

Perhaps the deepest metaphor to describe Paul's mentoring relationship with his successors is the one of the father and son relationship.

3.7. The father – son relationship: Paul and his successors

It has been repeatedly noted that Paul referred to both Timothy and Titus as his true children in the faith. Paul explicitly states that Timothy served with him 'as a son with a father' (Phil 2:22). Breen (2014:55-58) points out that the word 'disciple' disappears from the New Testament after Acts 21. He suggests that the reason for this is that the gospel had crossed from a Jewish cultural context into a gentile one where the gentiles of Asia Minor and further west would not have related to the concept of a disciple or Rabbi. From that point on Paul uses the metaphor of a father and son or mother and child (1 Cor 4:14-17, 1 Thess 2:7-8; 11-12), which is a metaphor they would have understood better (p. 58). [53] In the Gentile world of the time, a child would be mentored at home by a pedagogue until the age of adulthood. They would then begin to take their place in the family business and learn the family business—sons from fathers and daughters from mothers. In this way they would, over many years, acquire their skills. This understanding of the relationship between mentor and successor makes Paul's references to Timothy and Titus as his true children in the faith or as sons serving with a father all the more richer and meaningful in the sense of mentoring – discipleship.

Part of what Paul would have wished to pass on to these young men was his own spirituality.

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[53] Cf. the analogy Paul uses in Galatians 3:23-26: 'Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian (παιδαγωγός) until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian (παιδαγωγός), for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith'.

3.8. The successor's spirituality

This sub-section considers two areas of spirituality that Paul wished to pass on to his two successors: prayer and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

3.8.1. Prayer

As noted before, Paul modelled a lifestyle characterised by prayer (Rom 1:10; 8:26; 1 Cor 14:14-15; Eph 1:16; Phil 1:4; Col 1:3; 1 Thess 1:2; 3:10; 2 Tim 1:3) and it would be fair to assume that these young men had been exposed to his prayer habits. He clearly desired that others follow suit (Rom 12:12; 15:30; 1 Cor 7:5; 14:13; 2 Cor 1:11; Eph 6:18; Phil 4:6; Col 4:2-3, 12; 1 Thess 5:17, 25; Philem 1).

In the PEs, he admonished Timothy:

> First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 2:1-4).

He also stated, 'I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarrelling' (1 Tim 2:8) and that a true widow, left all alone, 'has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day' (1 Tim 5:5).

Again, it would appear that Paul would have looked for this commitment to prayer in those he chose to succeed him, particularly, because Paul wished his protégés to be examples of how saints should live (1 Tim 4:12-16; Tit 2:7-8). Prayer was clearly something he desired in the life of all believers.

The other aspect of spirituality that emerges from the PEs is the emphasis he placed on the gifts of the Spirit.

3.8.2. Successors and the gifts of the Holy Spirit

It would appear that Timothy was familiar with the idea of Holy Spirit inspired prophecy. Paul mentions two occasions where prophetic utterances were made over Timothy (1 Tim 1:18; 4:14). Paul and Timothy appear to take these utterances with the utmost seriousness. Furthermore, Paul encourages Timothy to not neglect 'the gift' that he had received through prophecy when the council of elders had laid their hands on him (1 Tim 4:14). Strauss (1995:204-205) believes that three things happened in the event described here: (1) Timothy received a unique commission through a series of Spirit-given, prophetic utterances: (2) Paul placed his hands on Timothy in order to transfer a gift, a charisma or special endowment, for service; and (3) the elders laid hands on Timothy as a public commissioning in agreement with what had been prophesied over Timothy and imparted to Timothy by the laying of Paul's hands on him. Paul also wrote to Timothy: 'For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands' (2 Tim 1:6) Thus, Timothy was also familiar with the practice of the laying on of hands on a believer for the purposes of spiritual ministry. On these occasions, the laying on of hands included prophecy and the impartation of a gift from God, which would have led Timothy to believe that his gift was from God and the basis of his ministry (Platt et al. 2013:141). The Greek verb αναζωπθρειν, 'fan into flame', is a present infinitive that emphasises continuous action (Knight 1994:370). Thus, by urging Timothy to keep on stirring up the gift of God in him he also wanted Timothy to understand that he was to make full use of it (Platt et al. 2013:142).

Besides this, Paul's teaching on spiritual gifts to the Corinthian church (1 Cor 12-14), to the Ephesian church at which Timothy was based (Eph 4:7-16) and to the church in Rome (Rom 12:3-8) would have been completely familiar to Timothy. [54] It would be inconceivable that Timothy, or for that matter Titus, who

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[54] According to Schreiner (2008:2151), Barrett (1962:3), Osborne (2004:14), Davidson and Martin (1970:1012-1013), Romans was written from Corinth during Paul's third visit to Corinth (Acts 20:1-4). Timothy was with Paul at the time (Acts 20:4).

went in Paul's name to the Corinthian church (2 Cor 8:16-17), would not be examples of believers who earnestly desired the gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially prophecy (1 Cor 14:1ff.). The fact that Paul immediately questioned the believers in Acts 19:1-7 as to whether they had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the fact that they spoke in tongues and prophesied when the Holy Spirit came on them, further reinforces that assumption. It may be added that Paul seemed to regard 'operating' in the gifts of the Spirit as something that every believer could and should do (1 Cor 12:6,7; 14:26), therefore, that he certainly expected Timothy and Titus to have done so.

3.9. Successors and godliness

According to Towner (1994:65), 'Godliness is Paul's term in the Pastorals for "genuine Christianity"'. That godliness in the lives of his protégés was of paramount importance to Paul can be seen from his admonishments to Timothy which includes phrases such as 'wage the good warfare holding faith and a good conscience' (1 Tim:18-19), 'men should pray, lifting holy hands' (1 Tim 2:8), 'women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control' (1 Tim 2:9), 'train yourself for godliness' (1 Tim 4:7), 'Keep a close watch on yourself' (1 Tim 4:16), 'encourage…younger women as sisters, in all purity' (1 Tim 5:2), 'As for those who persist in sin rebuke them in the presence of all' (1 Tim 5:20), 'Do not…take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure' (1 Tim 5:22), 'But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness' (1 Tim 6:11), 'keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Tim 6:14), and 'flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart' (2 Tim 2:22).

Paul's expectation was clearly one of godliness and moral purity. Paul also provides a description of attributes Paul would not want in his successors:

> lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient
> to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable,

slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people (2 Tim 3:2-5).

(Platt et al. 2013:4) claim that Paul believed that it was the false teachers in Ephesus who used 'godliness' as a means to material gain.

Writing to Titus, Paul was equally explicit about the call to holiness and moral purity in God's people:

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works (Tit 2:11-14).

Part of the quality of moral purity was their attitude to money. Towner (1994:119) emphasises that 'that key word in the Pastorals, godliness' occurs in 1Timothy 5:4 in connection with the practice of financial care of widows.

3.10. Successors and money

Paul has much to say to Timothy and Titus about attitudes towards money and the importance of financial matters in the church. Towner (1994:88) describes Paul's attitude to money as one of 'healthy detachment but …not irresponsibility'. What is striking about his attitude is that he neither advocates poverty nor avariciousness. He wrote to Timothy of 'God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy' (1 Tim 6:17) and yet, at the same time warns of the dangers that accompany the 'desire to be rich' (1 Tim 6:9). He also states that 'the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil and that it is through this craving

that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs' (1 Tim 6:10).

With regard to God's generous nature, Paul encourages the generous remuneration of elders, especially those who do the work of preaching and teaching (1 Tim 5:17-18).[55] Yet he gives stringent guidelines for which of the widows were to be financially supported by the church (1 Tim 5:3-16). All of which implies that Paul was not advocating profligate generosity in the church but the careful and yet generous use of finances.

Paul appears to advocate a kind of middle ground that balances on the word 'content'. Of himself, he says to the Philippians, 'Not that I am speaking of being in need, *for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.* I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me' (Phil 4:11-13; italics added). To Timothy he writes, '*Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment*, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, *with these we will be content*' (1 Tim 6:6-8; italics added).

Paul sees money as a side issue to his core concern for the proclamation of the gospel and health of the church. Whether there was much money, or little, was not all that important and certainly not a sign of success or lack thereof (Phil 4:12). Leaders of the church were to live free from the allure of money, and they were to demonstrate the quality of being content with what they have. Contentedness appears to have enabled Paul to live in abundance yet without money having any hold on him, and he could be in need and poverty without him being concerned or depressed about it. Finances came and went under

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[55] Mounce's (2001:309-310) scholarly treatment of this passage concludes with the claim that 'double honour' implies respect and generous remuneration, although more probably in the form of an honorarium than a stipend.

God's sovereign hand whilst he simply pursued his calling to make Christ known and to prepare the bride for the bridegroom (2 Cor 11:2).

Concerning the dangers of money, Paul writes that in 'the last days', which he considered believers to live in, ungodly people would be 'lovers of money' (2 Tim 3:1-2).[56] Paul regarded those who saw godliness as a means to monetary gain as of 'depraved in mind and deprived of the truth' (1 Tim 6:5; Tit 1:11). It explains why he warned elders not to be 'lovers of money' (1 Tim 3:3) or 'greedy for gain' (Tit 1:7). Deacons were not to be 'greedy for dishonest gain' (1 Tim 3:8) and women were not to dress 'with gold or pearls or costly attire' (1 Tim 2:9). While Timothy was to 'flee' the love of money and the desire to get rich (1 Tim 6:5-11), the rich were not to be haughty or 'set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God' (1 Tim 6:17).

In terms of the positive use of money, Paul writes that the rich were to 'do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share' (1 Tim 6:18). He writes that they would thereby be 'storing up treasures for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life' (1 Tim 6:19). And the children and grandchildren of widows were to show their godliness by taking care of their widowed mother or grandmother out of their own finances (1 Tim 5:4).

To summarise, Paul desired his protégés to have an attitude of detachment from money, and desired that they live 'content'. Titus had obviously demonstrated something of contentedness and detachment from money in that he was a member of the team that was sent to Corinth to administer the financial gift that had been raised for the church in Jerusalem (2 Cor 8:16-24). In this text Paul seems to express his confidence that the financial gift to them would be handled with honour and without shame.

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[56] Mounce (2000:542) claims that 'the Ephesian situation is clearly on his [Paul's] mind'. See also Knight (1992:428) and Towner (1994:190). Thus, this would have been the context Timothy was living in.

Another crucial character quality Paul weighed in a successor alongside the attitude towards money, was freedom from unlawful sexual desires and relations.

3.11. Successors and unlawful sexual desires and relations

When Paul writes to Timothy to 'set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity' (1 Tim 4:12), he uses the word αγνεια ('porniea'). Although it generally means 'purity', it also includes the more specific meaning of 'chastity' (Knight 1992:206).[57] It is evident from Paul's letters that he teaches several things about lawful and unlawful sexual relations and desires. For example, lawful sexual relations are to be enjoyed only in the context of a heterosexual marriage and nowhere else (1 Cor 5:11; 6:13-20; 7:1-5, 9; 10:6; 2 Cor 12:21; Gal 5:19, 21; Eph 5:3-5; 1 Thess 4:3-7). Richards (1985:555) writes that 'Sexual expression outside of marriage – both adultery and premarital sex – is forbidden…we can say without doubt that sexual intercourse with any living being prior to or outside of [heterosexual] marriage is forbidden by Scripture'.[58] Williams (1996:250-251) comment on Paul's teaching about sexual matters in Romans 1:23-31 and writes that Paul considers idolatry to be closely accompanied by sexual immorality and homosexuality: 'An unnatural relation with God' leads to 'an unnatural relation among men'.

Paul also emphasises that the law is not for the 'just' but for those who are 'sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine' (1 Tim 1:10). He reminds Timothy that in the last days people would be 'unholy…without self-control…reckless…lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God' (2 Tim 3:2-4) and that 'among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions' (2 Tim 3:6). Women should dress 'with modesty and self-control' (1 Tim 2:9) and Timothy

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[57] Liddell and Scott (1978:6) give the meaning of αγνεια as 'purity, chastity'.

[58] Richards (1985:555-556) is convinced that homosexuality is forbidden in the Old Testament and in the New Testament.

was to 'flee youthful passions' as one who calls on the Lord 'with a pure heart' (2 Tim 2:2). To Titus, Paul writes that young men and women were to be self-controlled and pure (Tit 2:4-6), and believers were 'to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age' (Tit 2:12).

As examples to the believers, Paul specified, to Timothy and Titus, that elders and deacons in the church were to be above reproach and the husband of one wife (1 Tim 3:2, 12; Tit 1:6). Timothy, despite his youthfulness was admonished to 'set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity' (1 Tim 4:12) and to 'pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, [and] gentleness' (1 Tim 6:11). Even with regards to the younger widows Paul refused to allow their names to appear on the widows list, his reasoning being that 'when their passions draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry' (1 Tim 5:11). Paul expected Timothy to treat younger women as sisters, not as objects of sexual attention, but with absolute purity (1 Tim 5:2). 'To heighten this concern he adds the word "all", πάση, rendered with άγνεια, "absolute purity", by the NIV', writes Knight (1992:215).

Although Paul expected sexual abstinence and sexual purity from his successors until they chose to marry, he acknowledged that not everyone had his gift of abstinence (1 Cor 7:7).

A further quality Paul weighed in his successors is their attitude towards authority in the church.

3.12. Successors and authority

Paul provides many indications on how leaders of the church should wield their authority. For example, elders were not to be violent but gentle, not quarrelsome or recent converts so that they would not become puffed up with conceit because of the authority vested in them (1 Tim 3:3-5); and deacons were to not be double-tongued [or devious in speech; ESV], and deaconesses were not to be slanderers (1 Tim 3:8, 11).

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Paul writes that Timothy is to confront false teachers with 'love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith' (1 Tim 1:5). He portrays himself as 'the worst of sinners', someone who has been saved and appointed to His service by the mercy of God alone, as an example of Jesus' perfect patience with the hard-hearted (1 Tim 1:12-16), by which Paul suggests that Jesus' patience with unbelievers is to be emulated. Timothy is to 'put things before the brothers' (1 Tim 4:6), which suggests he do so with humble authority and not high-handedness.

Timothy's authority was to come from his own example in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity (1 Tim 4:12). He was to practice these things and immerse himself in them so that all the believers could see his progress (1 Tim 4:15). We may say that it is authority derived from a life lived and not positional authority alone. In other words, it is authority earned by an exemplary life (1 Tim 4:16).

Timothy was not to rebuke older men but treat them with respect as he would a father; he was to treat older women as mothers, and the younger men as brothers and the young women as sisters in absolute purity (1 Tim 5:1-2). He was also not to 'be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness' (2 Tim 2:24-25). Every correction of believers was to be 'with complete patience and teaching' (2 Tim 4:2). Titus was to 'teach', 'urge' and show himself 'a model' in every respect (Tit 2:1, 6, 7). The injunction, however, stands alongside another aspect of the exercise of their authority: they were not to allow people to disregard them or look down on them (1 Tim 4:12; Tit 2:15). They were to rebuke those who persist in sin, in front of all (1 Tim 5:20), 'charge' (1 Tim 1:3; 6:17; 2 Tim 2:14), 'correct' (2 Tim 2:25), 'reprove and rebuke' (2 Tim 4:2), 'exhort and rebuke with all authority' (Tit 2:15), and yet always with the humility and gentleness.

The foregoing overview of what authority entails is a portrayal of a leadership style that is opposed to egocentrism and wholly committed to help prepare the church for Christ (2 Cor 11:2). To that end authority was to be exercised where there were false teachings, ungodly behaviour, sectarianism, abuse of authority,

materialism or sexual immorality. It is an authority exercised on behalf of Christ, even though it might make them unpopular, yet never exercised as lording over people (Mark 10:42-45; 2 Cor 1:24).

Another aspect of the exercise of authority that Paul sought in his successors was the careful guarding of Paul's teaching. He writes to the church in Corinth that it was the very reason he was sending Timothy to them, 'to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church' (1 Cor 4:17). In short, Paul did not wish his protégés to twist or misrepresent his teachings, as is clear from the following verses: 'As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine' (1 Tim 1:3); and 'This charge [the charge in v. 3 above] I entrust to you, Timothy, my child' (1 Tim 1:18)

In pondering the meaning of these verses, Calvin (1998:30) wrote that 'His [Paul's] main aim was to give Timothy authority, to give him instructions, literally "charge".' Thus, Timothy's authority was a derived authority, an authority derived from Paul's endorsement of his trustworthiness, which means that Timothy only had authority in the church in so far as he remained faithful to Paul's teaching.

The following list of verses illustrate the forcefulness of Paul's injunctions to Timothy and Titus to exercise their authority in a way laid down by Paul: 1 Timothy 2:1, 8-9, 12; 3:2, 8, 11, 14-15; 4:16; 5:9, 14, 17, 21; 6:2-4, 13-14, 20; 2 Timothy 1:13; 2:2, 14-15; 3:10; 4:1-2; and Titus 1:5; 2:1, 15; 3:1. Besides Paul's expectation of Timothy and Titus to follow his teachings, Paul also expected them to obey his instructions. For example, he writes to Timothy to do his 'best to come to me soon' (2 Tim 4:9), and 'When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments' (2 Tim 4:13). In terms of the timing of Timothy's return to Paul, Paul writes, 'Do your best to come before winter' (2 Tim 4:21). In a similar vein, Paul instructs Titus in a similar way as Timothy: 'When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Do your best to speed Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; see that they

lack nothing' (Tit 3:12-13). The picture we get is that of an apostle who expected his protégés to not only teach what he taught, but also to be compliant with his instructions because those instructions form an integral part of strategic apostolic oversight of and equipping of the saints (2 Cor 11:2; Eph 4:12).

The next point pertains to teaching in the same way as Paul did, for Paul encouraged his successors to study 'the word of truth' (2 Tim 2:15).

3.13. Paul encouraged his successors to study

Paul admonishes Timothy to 'Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth' (2 Tim 2:15). Towner (1994:182) concedes that certainty about what Paul meant by the word ορθοτομεω ('rightly handling' in the ESV, and 'rightly dividing' in the KJV) is not possible. Nevertheless, he believes that 'the broad idea of accurate interpretation and appropriate use of Scripture is at least clear' (p. 182).

Paul reminds Timothy of,

> how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred
> writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith
> in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for
> teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,
> that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good
> work (2 Tim 3:15-17).

The Greek *ιερα γραμματα* ('sacred writings') is not used elsewhere in the New Testament, and Paul probably used it here because of Timothy's Jewish background, as Greek-speaking Jews used the phrase to designate the Old Testament (Knight 1992:443).[59] As can be seen from these texts, Paul expected

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[59] Mounce (2001:564) considers the expression 'sacred writings' to mean the Old Testament and the gospel message.

Timothy to be well acquainted with the Old Testament as the basis for teaching, reproof, correction, training, competency and equipping the believers in Christ. This familiarity with the Scriptures would ensure that he would rightly handle the word of truth and not find himself in a situation where he would be ashamed for teaching or affirming something that was incorrect. Strauch (1995:235) says, 'This is the heart of Paul's concern.' There is, therefore, no reason to think that this would not have been Paul's expectation of all of his protégés. It quite evident in what Paul's writes to Titus about the qualities of an elder: 'He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it' (Tit 1:9). Not only were they to teach God's word accurately, but also be prepared to suffer for it.

3.14. Successors and suffering

Suffering is a major theme of the PEs (Platt et al. 2013:148). The fact that Paul wrote to Timothy from prison (2 Tim 1:8) points to the suffering that is part of apostolic ministry. Towner (1994:161,163) gives 2 Timothy 1:8 the title: 'call to suffering', and verses 9 to 10: 'the gospel that requires suffering'. Mounce (2000:480) believes that it is possible that the term συνκακοπαθειν ('share in suffering') was coined by Paul because it is used in the New Testament only in 2 Timothy 1:8 and 2:3. When compared with the simpler κακοπαθειν ('to suffer') that Paul uses of his own suffering for the gospel in 2 Timothy 2:9, it may be concluded that Paul is calling his protégés to suffer along *with* him in the service of the gospel.

Paul explains to Timothy that his appointment as a teacher, preacher and apostle of the gospel is the cause of his suffering (2 Tim 1:11-12). Later in 2 Timothy, Paul reiterates that his preaching of the gospel is the cause of his suffering and the reason he is bound with chains like a criminal (2 Tim 2:8-9). Yet, he tells Timothy that he is willing to 'endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain salvation (2 Tim 2:10) and that he is 'already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure [that is,

death] has come' (2 Tim 4:6). These words must have had a powerful impact on Timothy and other protégés of Paul. Paul writes further,

> You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted' (2 Tim 3:10-12).

In light of his own suffering and his understanding of the suffering inherent in an apostolic ministry, Paul adjures, 'Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God' (Tim 1:8). Paul also encourages Timothy to 'Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus' (2 Tim 2:3). Towner (1994:174) considers the three images of the farmer, athlete and soldier in 2 Timothy 2:3-7 to reinforce the main command to persevere in suffering. Finally, Paul admonishes Timothy to 'always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry' (2 Tim 4:5).

Paul's letter to Titus reflects Paul's desire that Titus rebuke and correct people in Crete (Tit 1:11, 13; 2:15) and his warning that Titus would encounter opposition (Tit 1:10, 16; 2:15; 3:10-11). In other words, it was an assignment that would entail emotional and possibly even physical suffering. It is reasonable to conclude that a willingness to endure emotional and physical suffering was simply part of being an apostle for Paul.

Although Paul had high expectations of Timothy and Titus, he also took the time to endorse and encourage them.

3.15. Paul's endorsement of successors

Writing to the church in Rome, Paul refers to Timothy as his 'fellow worker' (Rom 16:21) and wanted the Corinthian church to imitate him [Paul] because he

is a father to them, not a pedagogue. He put his reason as follows: 'That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church' (1 Cor 4:17). Paul endorsed Timothy to the church at Philippi by saying, 'I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare…But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel.' (Phil 2:19-20, 22). To the Thessalonians Paul confides, 'when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith' (1 Thess 3:1-2; ESV).

Paul refers to Titus as 'my true son in our common faith' (Tit 1:4), and writes about Titus, 'But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus' (2 Cor 7:6). With reference to the offering to be raised by the Corinthians, Paul writes, 'Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace' (2 Cor 8:6) and 'thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same earnest care I have for you. For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest he is going to you of his own accord' (2 Cor 8:16-17). We conclude that Paul was giving his strongest endorsement to these two men in order that they may be received with the respect and cooperation which they deserved.

Now that this study has considered both sides of the succession equation in the PEs, namely, of the 'retiring' apostle and succeeding apostles, the rest of this chapter will endeavour to draw together what can be learned from Paul's teaching to Timothy and Titus and indicates how it may be relevant to contemporary apostolic succession.

4. Conclusion: Lessons from Paul's Teaching About Apostolic Succession and its Relevance to Contemporary Apostles

The foregoing study of the PEs identified a number of characteristics of a biblical apostle and his successors or protégés. The aim is now to extrapolate

these points and indicate their relevance to contemporary apostles and their successors. The heading of each of the points below must be seen as an attempt to capture the essence of each of the characteristics of an apostle and their successors.

4.1. The willingness to mentor a wide group of protégés

An apostle should demonstrate a legacy mind-set of leadership, an awareness of the call of God to reproduce their relationship with God, character and leadership skills in those who will succeed them. Platt et al. (2013:234) write, 'Leadership is influence…Today, as always, there is a tremendous need for good, godly leadership in the church.' It presupposes a lack of egotistical self-centredness, and as we have seen in the introduction to this chapter, Paul worked with at least thirty-five people. Kay (2007:250) writes that the advantage of travelling together on missionary journeys was that members of Paul's team 'could learn firsthand and on-the-job from the apostle'. It seems to imply that apostles should be willing to mentor a fairly wide group of potential apostles so that the multiplication of apostolic ministry will be as successful as possible.

4.2. The apostolic calling of sacrificial devotion to God

Any person who is acknowledged an apostle or emerging apostle by others must first and foremost be one by the command of God our Father and Christ. Such a person must also display an unwavering servanthood and duty to Christ and His church. It will be seen in the kind of decisions they make, for example, whether over time they consistently choose to be obedience to Christ even when it may imply discomfort and sacrifice, or whether they choose the path of least resistance and maximum personal comfort. It places a huge responsibility on the shoulders of those from whom spiritual discernment is expected, namely, for existing apostles and church leaders to discern God's apostolic calling of and gift in a successor

4.3. Faith and absolute trust in God

An apostle's sense of trust in God or level of faith in God for everyday needs in very trying circumstances will be a most revealing aspect of his character. The same applies to a possible successor. It seems relevant whether apostles are able to maintain equanimity in God and warm and personal relationships with protégés even when everything seems to go wrong with their plans, and whether trust in God is one of their consistent traits.

4.4. Fatherly, intimate and personal relationships with protégés

If leadership in the church should be based on the healthy relationships characteristic of families and moral character, then the father-son relationship should be aimed for in an apostle-successor relationship. In this regard, Platt et al. (2013:140) ask, 'Do you have a Paul in your life? Do you have a Timothy in your life? Who is your spiritual son or your spiritual father?'. These questions seem most relevant in light of the proliferation and popularity of contemporary apostolic movements (Vukich 2000:1). While there may be many genuine apostles, the concern is that the title of 'apostle' is simply being attached to anyone who appears to be a successful church leader. The questions that ought to be asked, however, are: Do they desire and encourage the idea of successors? Is there evidence of loving 'father-son' relationships with their potential successors? Does the apostle encourage, mentor and commission his successors?[60] Do they live openly with their successors so that purity, sincerity and a good conscience are evident to all others close enough to the apostle to witness it?

Paul Maconochie, a Church of England Ephesians 4:11 teacher, calls that 'doing life on life'. [61] Mike Breen, an apostle and founder of the 3DM

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[60] An apostle may encourage and mentor potential successors but then refuse to commission them to fulfill their calling by maintaining dominant and controlling leadership over them.

[61] From notes taken during a teaching session attended on 20 March 2012 at St. Thomas, Philadelphia in Sheffield, UK. This phrase is used commonly in their circles.

Movement,[62] writes that 'you need to give these four to ten people much higher access to your life than other people get…You will need to simplify your life so that you have space for people to be invited into your life and home' (Breen and Cochran 2011:46). Three relevant questions are: Does the apostle evidence this kind of 'life on life' openness and transparency (2 Tim 3:10)? Does the apostle show freedom from materialism (1 Tim 6:6-8)? And, is the living a missional lifestyle himself (1 Cor 9:19-23)?

4.5. Motivated by love, a pure heart, a good conscience and steadfast faith

Paul's pure motives as an apostle allowed him to minister to others on the basis of 'referent power' (Taucean et al. 2016:70), even though he could have used the reward, coercive, or legitimate power available to him because of his position (Raven 2012:1-8). Referent power is also 'a key aspect in transformational leadership theory…to encourage followers toward vision accomplishment' (Whittington et al. 2005:757).

In terms of purity of heart and a good conscience, Richard Krejcer (2016:1) has surveyed church leaders and found that of the sample surveyed, 30% had either been in an ongoing affair or a one-time sexual encounter with a parishioner. Rick Warren (2002), the well-known pastor of the Saddleback Baptist mega-church in California, has written that more than 50 percent of pastors say they have visited pornographic sites on the Internet in the last year, and 30 percent admitted to doing it in the last month. This small sample of statistics in the area of sexual conduct emphasises the vital importance of the example of the apostle's and their successor's lifestyles. Paul encourages Timothy to set the believers 'an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity' (1 Tim 4:12).

It must be asked, in light of Paul's teaching, whether a so-called apostles and the potential successors are motivated by a love for the church rather than

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[62] A movement founded on the desire to teach church leaders how to disciple their followers and to be engaged in mission.

finance and position, whether they have a pure heart and a good conscience, whether they are abusing their position, and whether they show a steadfast faith in all situations or are 'fair weather' Christians always expecting comfort, adequate remuneration and long term financial security.

4.6. Humility

Paul's sense of humility is evident in that he claims no entitlement to be an apostle and is one by the grace of God alone. This makes him a leader who does not need to defend his calling. Leaders such as Paul know they are what they are by God's choice and grace alone; no person can take that from them and they do not need to fight to defend their apostleship.[63] They are, therefore, happy to mentor successors without being threatened when their protégés go on to fulfil the call of God on their lives. The lesson for succession is whether the apostle and the successor exhibit such qualities of humility and security.

4.7. Godliness, contentment and simplicity

Modern apostolic movements must beware of treating the church as if it is a business organisation and the apostle as the CEO of the business, and as such, entitled to a commensurate salary. This could also complicate the question of a successor's motives to be an apostle. Part of the challenge of a genuine apostle is the willingness to 'go', to be willing to embrace lack and discomfort for the sake of the gospel.

4.8. Clarity of calling and ministry

An apostle should have a clear sense of calling by the Lord Jesus Christ to be an apostle. This clarity of calling and the authority that flows from it give the apostles a humble confidence with regards to their gift and ministry. An apostle's clear calling to that ministry should be backed up by an explanation of

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[63] When Paul does do this in his second letter to the Corinthians he says he is doing it 'as a fool' (2 Cor 11:17) and confesses that 'I am out of my mind to talk like this' (2 Cor 11:23; NIV).

exactly how the Lord called him to that ministry. One would also expect that there would be others in the church who would corroborate this calling and gifting, just as the saints in Damascus, Tarsus and Antioch would have corroborated Paul's calling, gifting and ministry.

4.9. Spiritual authority

From the PEs it became evident that an apostle has the spiritual authority to issue instructions and charges to protégés, including the churches they have established. The courage to embrace this authority in a humble, selfless and godly way is a litmus test of apostolic gifting for apostles and their successors. Platt et al. (2013:271) put it as follows: 'Are there exceptions to this wide sweeping call to obedience? Yes, there are four: when it is unbiblical, illegal, unethical, or immoral. Outside of these, our goal is to submit to him [the apostle] and serve him, all the while seeing the true Master, the Lord Jesus, who stands behind him'.

Authority is regarded with suspicion in our democratic, Western, egalitarian culture. But if authority is exercised and couched in the qualities enumerated in this chapter then it is a selfless and ego-free authority which is safe and good for the church. Cannistraci's (1998:144) commentary on Matthew 20:20-28 reads: 'Certainly apostles are called to exercise authority, but Christ has made it clear that this authority was to be earned humbly, motivated properly and rewarded sovereignly.'
If any of the qualities mentioned in this chapter are not exemplified in the life of an apostle, then it would seem wise not to remain under the influence of that apostle (ibid, pp. 129-141).

4.10. A commitment to training of leaders for their call and gifting

It is expected that a true apostle would be more than willing to train protégés and commission them to fulfil their own callings and ministries without in any way being threatened by it. Such an apostle will also rejoice in the progress and growth of the ministry of a protégé. By contrast, a person who seeks

apostleship out of selfish ambition will be threatened by people who might prove to be more clearly an apostle than himself. Paul's letters indicate that a true apostle trains successors with diligence and with commendation of their character qualities when required, with endorsement of their calling and with much rejoicing in their progress.

4.11. Sound doctrine

Paul's primary concerns about sound doctrine were essentially twofold: (1) comprehension of the truth of salvation by grace and by faith alone - 'the glorious gospel' (1 Tim 1:11), and (2) the unshakeable connection between doctrine and sanctification that 'accords with godliness' (1 Tim 6:3). A contemporary apostle or his successors should have the ability to detect the earliest signs of legalism or licentiousness within the church. They should be able to teach and preach in a way that brings a continual wonder at the grace of God. At the same time, the emphasis on the grace of God must never be perceived as an excuse for sin. The ability to keep the church being infected by legalism and licentiousness seems to be the unique gift of the apostle, more than any other ministry.[64] A test of an apostle is whether they are free from worldliness, greed, immorality and the abuse of his authority.

4.12. Acknowledging the authority of the Scriptures

In the light of Paul's writing on the authority of the Scriptures in the PEs, a contemporary apostle should have a very high regard for Scripture, the divine inspiration of both the Old Testament and the New Testament, and the Bible's direct relevance to training and equipping leaders in the church. In describing the apostolic reformation that has taken place in recent decades, Daniel (2001:199-200) writes that 'there has been a restoration of the people of God being radically Word-based. There was a period (and some churches are still like this) where the church had begun to adopt a pragmatic approach which said, "If it works, use it", even if it was not Biblical. This is changing and we are

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[64] Virgo unpacks this concept at length in his book *God's lavish grace.* 2004.

learning to reference and correctly apply the Word of God'. In other words, the Scriptures ought to be the primary, central and constant reference point for the preaching and teaching of any apostle or apostolic successor.

4.13. The Trinitarian doctrine of God

The effect of embracing orthodox doctrine on the Trinity is that it produces leaders who are secure in the Father's greatness and goodness, determined to advance the kingdom of the Son, and accept spiritual guidance, grace, power from and fellowship with the Holy Spirit. This Trinitarian balance to theology, faith and conduct would appear to be a fundamental quality in apostolic ministry. Sanders (2010:19) write that 'When emphatic evangelicalism degenerates into reductionist evangelicalism, it is always because it has lost touch with the all-encompassing truth of its Trinitarian theology'.

Embracing the doctrine of the Trinity should also create a foundation for theology, faith and conduct based on an understanding of Christianity as fundamentally relational, essentially communal and not self-centredly individualistic (Sanders 2010:7-96; Keller 2008:213-226). In short, apostles who guard Trinitarian doctrine will themselves be fundamentally relational, selfless, continually looking for opportunities to build and enhance the community of believers.

4.14. Comprehension of God's grace through Jesus Christ

Paul's letters imply that a fundamental task of apostolic ministry was to keep the church living in the goodness of the grace of God through Jesus Christ. Such a comprehension of God's grace has no place for legalism on the one hand and licentiousness on the other. The difference of emphasis is that grace comes through Christ and all ministries are totally dependent on that grace alone. Piper (1995:27) writes that 'faith is not only a trusting in the past grace of God, but also a trusting in the future grace of God, secured by the past grace of Christ's death and resurrection'.

As has been seen in Paul, comprehension of the grace of God through Christ engenders in the believer humility and generosity of spirit. Therefore, an apostle or an apostolic successor would need to demonstrate a profound appreciation of that grace. Commensurate with this would be gracious humility and a generosity of spirit to affirm and encourage emerging apostles. With the realisation that they are what they are by the grace of God, comes a security and freedom to train and commission protégés to fulfil their own callings. Piper (1995:43) expresses the point as follows: 'Faith in future grace...is the source of radical, risk-taking, kingdom-seeking obedience'.

4.15. Sanctification, belief and godliness

Paul's doctrine of grace included a doctrine of sanctification. He expected purity and holiness to be natural characteristics of those who claimed to have received the grace of God, especially apostles and their successors. This would include freedom from drunkenness (Eph 5:18), moral purity when dealing with the opposite sex (1 Tim 5:2), integrity in handling finances (2 Cor 8:20-21), humility (1 Cor 15:9), never lording it over others (2 Cor 1:24), speaking the truth in love (Eph 4:15), refraining from flattering or lying to others (1 Thess 2:5), no coarse joking (Eph 5:4), patience and long-suffering (2 Tim 3:10), no aggression or quarrelsomeness, but rather gentleness (1 Tim 3:3) and ultimately, being above reproach (1 Tim 3:1).

4.16. Living with an eschatological expectation

Paul sets the example of someone living with the expectation that a 'Day' will come when the kingdom of God will come in its fullness and with it, rewards and judgement. In that day the faithful servants of God will find mercy, which is one reason why believers live self-controlled and godly lives. Another reason is because the church is now living in the 'last days', a time characterised by difficulty, ungodliness, hedonism, materialism and greed, and of people who will not endure sound teaching but gather to themselves teachers to suit their passions. Apostles and the church should carry something of the gravitas and urgency of this truth. Living with an eschatological overture to life lends urgency

and earnestness to everyday life and decisions. By keeping this eschatological expectation and mindset alive, apostles create a culture in the church where everything is done in the light of eternity.

4.17. A passion for the gospel

Paul's passion for the gospel should be a characteristic of contemporary apostles and their successors, for it is the wonder of salvation by grace and continuing in God's grace that is at the heart of the gospel. A passion for the gospel will also mean that apostles and their successors should be active in proclaiming the gospel whenever and wherever they can. Fraser (1986:8) puts the point thus:

> This is what Paul's Apostolate is about: living within the dynamic of salvation history's promises that "all peoples" (vs.11 [of Rom 15]) are to praise the Lord. That is why he claims that his "job description" is given in Isaiah 52:15 (cf. Romans 15:21): "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand"'.

4.18. Inspiring confidence and encouragement

Apostles should emotionally invest in their protégés through spurring them on to endure, encouraging them to fulfil their ministry and expressing their affection for and trust in them. It could be a reality if they spend a significant amount of time with their protégés, sharing their lives with them.

4.19. A high regard for the church

Apostles and their successors should have a deep love for the church, local and universal, which will manifest in a willingness to suffer or endure difficulty for the sake of the churches they are connected to. Their attitude would be that they exist for the benefit of the churches rather than the churches existing to make their apostolic ministry appear successful. The church is central and eternal; apostolic ministry revolves around serving the church.

4.20. Clear counsel

Apostles should have the courage and humble confidence to express their desired outcomes clearly to their successors. As has been mentioned, democratic, Western culture is wary of authority. By contrast, Paul exercised strong leadership to the extent of commanding Timothy and Titus to do certain things; he expresses authority towards the churches that he considered himself to be a father to; yet, this authority was not a personal 'lording it over' others but the authority that came with the office of an apostle. In short, Paul was willing to address issues of wrong doctrine, sinful behaviour and abusive leadership in the strongest of terms. This must, therefore, remain part of the calling of contemporary apostles.

4.21. Willingness to suffer for the gospel

It has been noted earlier that Paul considered suffering for the gospel to be part of the ministry of an apostle and preacher of the gospel. Imprisonment, persecution, physical suffering, opposition and even death are thus what an apostle's calling imply.

4.22. Exemplars

Whittington et al. (2005:759) write, 'By being worthy of imitation, Paul created a legacy that continues to provide an example of leadership that creates other leaders who themselves are worthy of imitation'. Mentoring successors is a sobering challenge not only to apostles, but to all Christian senior leaders in any organisation. Writing of Jesus, Platt et al. (2013:183) says that 'His teaching explained His life; His life exemplified His teaching' and is also true of Paul (p. 184). It cannot be different for contemporary apostles and their successors.

4.23. Relational focus

A characteristic of Paul's relationship with Timothy and Titus was that it was intimate, personal and paternal. In commenting on 2 Timothy 1:15-18, Platt et

al. (2013:156) remark that besides Paul being a scholar and preacher, he was a relational person and that this passage shows that he valued godly friendships greatly. They point to the fact that Paul mentions thirty-three people by name in his greetings in the final chapter of Romans. This indicates Paul's relational focus of his ministry. Davidson and Martin (1970:1045) point out that one third of the names in Romans 16 are those of women. They go on to say that Paul was a pioneer in the recognition of the role of women in Christian service (p. 1045).

It would appear then that a contemporary apostle should be a highly relational person in the sense of investing time and energy to establish intimate, personal and paternal relationships with those they are mentoring. They are not to take on the persona of a CEO at the top of an organisational pyramid with very limited access to all but a few.

This section has examined the general qualities that should exist in an apostle or their successors. The final section of this chapter looks specifically at qualities that a contemporary apostolic successor should possess. These are drawn from the examination of Paul, Timothy and Titus in sections 1 – 3 above.

5. Summary and Concluding Remarks

The purpose in this chapter has been to analyse the qualities of Paul's life and practice as an apostle and the qualities Paul looked for and endorsed in Timothy and Titus as his successors. These qualities were then extrapolated onto contemporary apostles and their successors.

Paul's life and example were thoroughly studied and a number of key qualities were identified. These are qualities that should, to this day, be present in any apostle. The study then moved on to study the qualities in Paul's successors, namely Timothy and Titus. The qualities identified in these two young men should likewise be present in contemporary apostolic successors. It provides a biblical benchmark for the evaluation of apostles and the process of appointing successors to apostles.

The results show that apostolic succession is an extremely serious and important business. The PEs portray the apostle Paul in close relationship with his protégés. The succession of his apostolic role, to them, is the handing on of a sacred trust. The taking on of this apostolic role is a 'charge' made before the Trinity. There seems to be no other role described in the New Testament with such solemnity, weightiness and such an immense sense of responsibility.

The next chapter will explore a further biblical perspective on apostles and apostolic succession, in the form of Peppler's 'Christocentric principle' based on the study of the gospel of Matthew. The importance of this perspective is that it evaluates apostles and apostolic succession in the light of Christ's character and teachings. It is considered to be the most important perspective of all.

Chapter Five

Peppler's Christocentric Principle and its Relevance to Apostolic Succession in the Church

1. Introduction

C. Peppler is a South African theologian, pastor and author of *Truth is the Word: Restoring a Lost Focus*, a book in which he aimed to refocus the attention of the church on the centrality of the Lord Jesus Christ (Peppler 2013). He aligns himself 'with those who regard the life, teaching and person of the Lord Jesus Christ as the locus of doctrinal formulation and proclamation' (p. 117). Peppler's contention is that Jesus' character, values, principles and priorities, what He said and did as revealed in the Bible, should be the ultimate lens through which scripture should be interpreted. In a paper entitled 'The Christocentric principle: A Jesus-centred hermeneutic', he argues that 'because Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God and the fullness of the Deity in bodily form, all scripture should be interpreted primarily from the perspective of what he taught, modelled, or revealed to us concerning the nature and character of God. I have called this the "Christocentric principle"' (Peppler 2012:134). He repeats his claim in the following words:

> My contention is that all scripture and all theological systems should be viewed through the lens of God's character and nature as revealed in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. The Christocentric principle is not yet another hermeneutical system, but something that should test, inform, and influence all such systems (ibid).

Peppler qualifies his definition of the Christocentric principle and its application, with the word 'primarily' (ibid). He also accepts that hermeneutics must begin with a grammatical-historical approach to determine the author's intended meaning of the biblical text. However, once this has been determined from context, linguistics, and so on, Peppler believes that the interpreter still needs to understand the text from within a larger frame of reference. Peppler's conviction

is that the Christocentric principle provides this larger frame of reference, and argues that the Christocentric principle is a more reliable and consistent frame of reference than any dogmatic theological system. For example, when commenting on John 14:8-12, Peppler (2012:125) says, 'This must mean that we should regard what Jesus said and did as genuine and an authoritative revelation of the nature, principles, values, and priorities of the triune Godhead'.

The aim of this chapter is to apply Peppler's Christocentric principle to the succession of the founding apostle by a succeeding apostle or apostles of a contemporary apostolic movement. It will take the following claim of Hollinger (2013:158) as its point of departure: 'Christ initiated the process of succession planning for the Christian church by selecting and developing the apostles, who later selected and developed others. This process, critical to the early church, is vital to all sustainable organizations'. Barth wrote in *Church Dogmatics* that 'theology must begin with Jesus Christ, and not with general principles, however better, or, at any rate, more relevant and illuminating they may appear to be: as though He was a continuation of the knowledge and Word of God, and not its root and origin, not indeed the very Word of God itself' (1957:II/2:4). Thus, to fulfil the aim of this chapter, we will stipulate the relevancy of Christ's character, values, principles and priorities to apostolic succession, which will explain why Jesus as the word of God made flesh forms the very cornerstone of apostolic succession.

According to Peppler (2013:1363, 3551), 'the first exegetical question should be "What did Jesus say and do?" The second question should be "What does the Old Testament reveal concerning why Jesus said and did what he did?" The third question should be "How does the balance of the New Testament help me to understand and apply what he said and did?") Diagrammatically, Peppler depicts the model as follows:
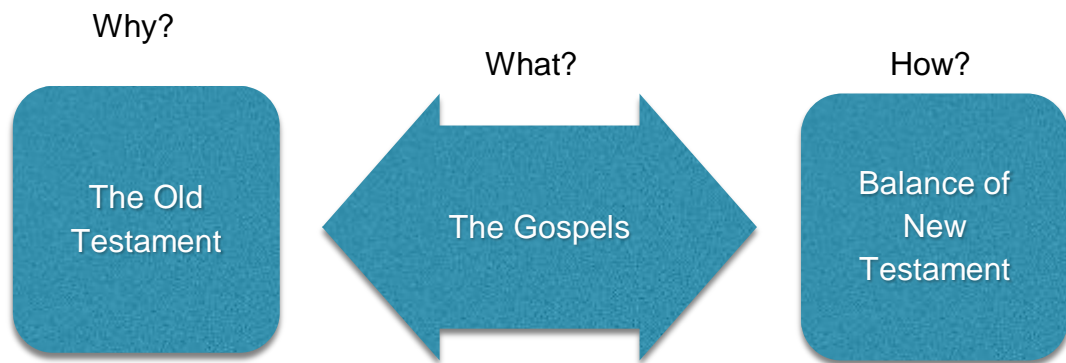
Figure 41. Peppler's model of the Christocentric principle

In order to apply the Christocentric principle to apostolic succession, passages in the Gospel of Matthew that relate to succession will be explored in accordance with Peppler's model, and the insights applied to apostolic succession. Matthew's Gospel has been chosen because of the limited scope of this study.

2. The Gospel of Matthew (What?), the Old Testament (Why?), the Balance of the New Testament (How?) and the Christocentric Principle

2.1. Matthew 3:11

Matthew writes that John the Baptist said, 'I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.' It seems that John, based on his prophetic glimpse of the nature of Jesus' ministry, saw that followers of Christ will sometime in the future be baptised in the Holy Spirit by Jesus. Jesus' entire ministry could therefore be construed as one of multiplication of Himself into others, for Jesus' transforming work is that He put the same Holy Spirit that was in Him, in them (Platt et al. 2013:54). The Christocentric principle is being an example and multiplying followers who in turn model that example and multiply followers *ad infinitum*.

With reference to Jesus' baptism in water and the Holy Spirit (Mk 1:8-12), Towner (1994:81) says, 'the Spirit-baptizer himself becomes the model of the Spirit-empowered life'. Jesus modeled what He wanted the apostles to become

and empowered them to become it. In fact, on reading the Gospel of Matthew with this thought in mind, the whole gospel record strikes one as being about Jesus modelling for others what a lifestyle under God looks like and then empowering them to live it. In short, multiplying Himself.

In the Old Testament, Jeremiah tells us that God's law would be written on the hearts of His people as part of a new covenant (Jer 31:33). Ezekiel likewise speaks about God giving His people a 'new heart' and a 'new spirit' (Ezek 36:26), while Joel speaks of a day when God would pour out His Spirit on all flesh (Joel 2:28-29). These prophets prophesied about a time when God's people would be fully equipped to live a godly lifestyle. Thus, the Old Testament points to the 'why' of the Christocentric principle of the multiplication of followers, namely, the multiplication from a few to a great number of people who know God and are filled with His Spirit and live lives pleasing to God.

This is applied in the rest of the New Testament in that Paul displays the same willingness to see the multiplication of believers equipped with the fullness of the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:1ff). Again, the desire to equip is seen in Priscilla and Aquila, disciples of Paul, who sought to further empower the ministry of Apollos (Acts 18:26).

The Christocentric principle is that Jesus sought to multiply himself into others as a matter of urgency. He also sought to empower them with everything they needed to fulfil their calling. For example, when Jesus took his disciples through the process of feeding the five thousand, he got them to distribute the bread and fish to the crowd (Matt 14:19-21). Jesus thereby enabled them to participate in the miracle and to observe what He said and did in the process, that they might have faith for the miraculous in their ministries in future.

2.2. Matthew 4:19

In Matthew 4:19, it is written, 'And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men"'. It could be argued that Jesus had succession in mind from the moment He called the twelve apostles to follow Him. However, it was not as

if Jesus appointed the twelve 'out of the blue'. For example, Jesus had already met Peter and Andrew at the time of His baptism (John 1:35-40). At that time, He also gave Peter his new name. This suggests a fairly developed relationship with these disciples before He called them (Eaton 2006:97). There is a principle here of observation and of revelation, according to Dudley Daniel (2001:229). In terms of observation, Jesus appears, certainly in the case of Andrew, Simon, James and John, to have observed them before calling them to follow him. About the calling of the apostles recorded in Mark 3:13, it says that He 'called to him those *whom he desired*, and they came to him' (italics added). That must have occurred sometime into Jesus' public ministry, which implies that He had had time to observe these men and decide whom He desired to be with Him. There is also divine revelation in Jesus' calling of the twelve. Luke mentions Jesus praying for the whole night before calling the apostles (Luke 6:12)[65] and Jesus had a revelation about Peter before calling him (John1:42).

Jesus invites them to 'follow' Him and to simply be with Him at all times. It appears that He was following the pattern of Jewish rabbis of the time (Matt 26:25; Mark 9:5, 11:21; John 1:28, 39, 4:31; Köstenberger 1998:99), who had their disciples with them at all times in order to absorb the rabbi's teaching and way of life, that they might extend that particular teaching tradition into the next generation. 'Let your house be a meeting place for the rabbis, and cover yourself with the dust of their feet, and drink in their words thirstily' (Perkei Avos, quoted in Fredrikson 2017:72), are the words that Jews of the first century would have been familiar with, according to Spangler and Tverberg (2009:14).

Jesus' rebuke of Peter 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man' (Matt 16:23) indicates that Jesus never hesitated to challenge his disciples about His mission and/or the truth of His teachings.

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[65] Ellis (1981:110) writes, 'More than the other Evangelists, Luke stresses the importance of prayer in the Lord's ministry. The Baptism, the choosing of the twelve...all are preceded by Christ in prayer'.

The Christocentric principle is that Christ had succession in mind from the outset of His ministry. He invested much prayer and observation into who should succeed Him and invested His entire life in the process. Jesus had the expectation that those whom He called to be His successors would immerse themselves in the process of observing and imitating His life and teachings.

In terms of the 'why' of the Old Testament, Jesus' appointing of the twelve apostles parallels the twelve tribes of Israel in the Old Testament. Jesus was, through Himself, reconstituting the Israel of God to be a people of faith, both Jew and gentile (Elwell 1984:71). No longer was birth the determining factor for belonging to the Israel of God, but only personal faith in the saving acts of our Lord. It can thus be concluded that following Jesus in the sense of being in a personal relationship with Him is critical to being the people of God.

The Christocentric principle of the urgent and judicious appointment of successors is seen in the rest of the New Testament in Paul's appointment of Timothy and Titus to continue the work that Paul had begun, and to guard the deposit of apostolic ministry given to them. A further example is the apostle Barnabas' discernment of the value of Mark and his investment in Mark (Acts 16:39; Col 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11).[66]

The general Christocentric principle is this: The urgent and judicious appointing of apostles to succeed the founding apostle of a contemporary apostolic movement. The result is the constant reconstituting of spiritual vitality of an apostolic movement to be a people of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and obedience to Him. It seems important in the light of the tendency of organisations to become bureaucratic once the influence of the charismatic founder is no longer present (Kay 2007:278-279). Every apostolic movement needs the constant reconstitution of the movement by charismatic leaders; in this instance, the apostolic successors within a contemporary apostolic network.

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[66] Barnabas was obviously effective in mentoring and empowering Mark to the point that Paul, who once rejected Mark, later worked with him and esteemed him highly.

2.3. Matthew 28:5-7

Although a discussion of the question of female apostles is beyond the scope of this study, it is useful to reflect on it to some extent if the study is to make a thorough application of the Christocentric principle. To that end, Matthew 28:5-7 is taken as a starting point:

> But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you".

The passage indicates that Jesus entrusted his first resurrection appearance to women and subsequently charged them to tell the good news of His resurrection to the disciples. It is highly significant in that 'Jesus' Jewish contemporaries held little esteem for the testimony of women. This reflects the broader Mediterranean culture's limited trust of women's testimony, a mistrust enshrined in Roman law' (Towner 1994:394). Towner goes on to say that 'Jesus commissions them as his seluhim (sg., saliah)—agents or apostled [sic] ones—to bring news of his resurrection to his own disciples' (ibid).

Jesus clearly included women in His wider discipleship group (Mark 15:40-41). Scott (1992:41) notes that Mary sat at Jesus' feet and claims that it 'was a technical term for being a disciple (Luke 8:1-3; 10:39)' and would have been extremely unusual in Jesus' time. Cunningham and Hamilton (2000:119) write that 'It has been noted that the most striking thing about the role of women in Jesus' life and teaching is the simple fact that women were there. It was nothing short of revolutionary'. Furthermore, the courage of women to be present at the crucifixion and to tend to Jesus' body was not only notable (Matt 27:55-56; Towner 1994:391), but also speaks of a divine valuing of women. The Christocentric principle being Jesus' radical inclusion of and use of women in ministry.

From the Old Testament through to the New Testament, Webb (2001:31) makes a convincing case for what he calls 'a redemptive-movement hermeneutic' in his book *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals*. It entails interpreting the Scriptures in the light of the glimpses of a progressive revelation that runs from the Old Testament through to the New Testament. The redemptive thread formed the biblical basis for the eventual liberation of slaves and the acceptance of women in leadership.[67] He also believes that a redemptive hermeneutic applied to the Scriptures led to a 'complimentary egalitarianism' with regard to men and women in ministry (ibid, p. 241). From that he concludes that no role in ministry is barred to women.

In the rest of the New Testament the Christocentric principle of the radical inclusion and use of women in ministry is seen in the role of women in gift-based ministries of enormous importance. Phoebe (Rom 16:1) is described as *diakonos* (a servant), the Greek word meaning deacon, or minister (Liddell and Scott 1978:189). She is described as having been 'a great help to many people' including Paul (Rom 16:2). The Greek word for 'a great help', *prostatēs*, is the word for a political sponsor, protector and patron, according to Liddell and Scott (1978:698). It suggests that she possessed some social position, wealth and independence from others. It seems that she must have had a very prominent role in the church. Priscilla and Aquila (Rom 16:3; Acts 18) exercised a joint ministry, and much have been made about Priscilla who is named first (Rom 16:3). It may be due either to her having been converted first and having led Aquila to Christ or to her having played a more prominent role in the life and work of the church than Aquila. Trombley (1985:194) quotes Chrysostom on the reason for Priscilla's name preceding Aquila's in Paul's writing: 'He did not do so without reason: the wife must have had, I think, greater piety than her husband. This is not simple conjecture; its confirmation is evident in the Acts'. Ten of the people named in the list of Romans 16 are women. They include Junia whose name, according to some scholars, almost certainly is a female name. All the

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[67] Webb's point is that this is not the case with regard to the acceptance of homosexuality.

patristic authors take Junia to be feminine (Scott 1992:43). Andronicus and Junia are also described by Paul as 'my relatives who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles and were in Christ before me' (Rom 16:7). Since she was clearly not one of the twelve apostles, it can be reasonably inferred that she must have been a post-ascension apostle. However, be that as it may, it is clear from the foregoing description that women fulfilled important ministries in Paul's apostolic team.

The application of the Christocentric principle of a high regard for women in ministry is that it behoves leaders of any contemporary apostolic movement to consider the role of women within its network of churches. Newfrontiers' strongly complementarian theology, which bars women from the office of apostle and elder, fails to reflect the redemptive-movement hermeneutic of the Scriptures and Jesus' revolutionary high regard for women.

2.4. Matthew 5 - 7

The teaching of the Sermon on the Mount was addressed to His disciples (Matthew 5:1) and comprises clear instruction on what it was Jesus meant when He instructed His disciples to 'follow me'. It has been referred to as 'the manifesto of the kingdom' (Green 2000:88). Jesus went up on the mountain to declare the 'law' of the kingdom, just as Moses went up mount Sinai to get the law from God for Israel. In the words of Green (2000:89), 'We have a new law for a new people given on a new mountain by a new Moses. That is the context of the Sermon'. The Christocentric principle is the clear instruction of followers in word and example, in order to develop the people of God.

In the rest of the New Testament we see the same transfer of teaching and life that took place through Jesus, in Paul to Timothy and Titus. It is evident in the following words: 'You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings' (2 Tim 3:10-11), and 'Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you' (2

Tim 1:13-14). It can be said that the whole of the letter to Titus is about Paul's teaching and a way of life.

The application of the Christocentric principle of clear instruction through word and example is an important pattern for contemporary apostles to set in place for those who they view as potential successors. Such instruction through word and example requires time together and the sharing of life together. It cannot be done through imparting information alone.

2.5. Matthew 9:37-38

In Matthew 9:37-38 it is written, 'Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."' This verse is described as 'another reason for the apostolic commissioning' (Hill 1981:182). In other words, the enormity of the task requires the commissioning of the apostles. It can be taken that in that passage Jesus is referring to the multiplication of the labourers for the harvest, and that His intent is that the apostles do not remain a small group consisting of twelve people trying to reach the lost. In short, more labourers are required to complete the task He began of making disciples. Thus, the apostles are to pray for the multiplication of themselves into others. The Christocentric principle lies in the appointing and commissioning of successors to spread the work of God.

In the Old Testament, the word 'harvest' was used as a symbol of the final judgement (Joel 3:13; Isa 17:11). Jesus follows this tradition when in Matthew 13:39, He says, 'The harvest is the end of the age'. In the Old Testament, the account of Moses appointing leaders to assist him in his task of leading Israel (Exod 18) echoes in Matthew 9:37-38. Towner (1994:197) points out that in Jesus' time Jewish teachers were well aware that they could handle only a few students at a time. For the task at hand, Jesus and His apostles needed to make disciples who could make disciples. Thus the Christocentric principle of appointing and commissioning successors was fulfilling the Old Testament hope

of the commissioning of enough godly leaders to lead the people of God to a good outcome on the Day of judgement.

With regard to the rest of the New Testament, it has already been mentioned earlier in this study that the New Testament indicates at least thirty-five names of men and women who worked alongside Paul. Paul commissioned and worked with, for example, Silas (Acts 17:14-15), Timothy (1 Tim 1:3), Titus (Tit 1:5), Luke, Aristarchus, Epaphras, Mark and Demas (Philem 24).

The Christocentric principle in Matthew 9:37-38 is that apostles should be praying for and continually looking for ways to multiply themselves into as many leaders as possible. In different words, contemporary apostles should be perpetually on the lookout for potential protégés who might be emerging apostles of the church (Eph 4:7-11). Although this study focused on the apostolic ministry only, it certainly holds true for all the Ephesians 4:11 ministries.

2.6. Matthew 10:1-4

Matthew 10:1-4 records the following words of Jesus:

> And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

The quoted passage reflects a progression in Jesus' relationship with His apostles. From simply accompanying Him and assisting Him, they are now commissioned with delegated authority from Jesus. The Greek word translated 'authority' in this passage is ἐξουσία (exousia), from ἔξεστιν ('exestin' in the

sense of ability). The Enhanced Strong's Dictionary (2011:G1849) defines ἐξουσία as follows:

> privilege, i.e. (subjectively) force, capacity, competency, freedom, or (objectively) mastery (concretely, magistrate, superhuman, potentate, token of control), delegated influence: — authority, jurisdiction, liberty, power, right, strength.
> I. power of choice, liberty of doing as one pleases
> A. leave or permission
> II. physical and mental power
> A. the ability or strength with which one is endued, which he either possesses or exercises
> III. the power of authority (influence) and of right (privilege)
> IV. the power of rule or government (the power of him whose will and commands must be submitted to by others and obeyed) (g.1849).

As can be seen, 'exousia' denotes the extension of an authority-giver's authority to those to whom it is given. In the context of the quoted passage, it means that Jesus was teaching His apostles what the extension of His ministry after His departure would consist in. Michael Eaton (2006:95) points out that 'training colleagues came very early in Jesus' ministry agenda'. He goes on to say that 'Jesus expects this work to grow and he knows he will need colleagues soon. He began appointing them very speedily, right from the beginning' (ibid). Jesus says this plainly in John 14:12: 'Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father'.

Elwell (1984:137) comments as follows on the apostle's authority: 'In the NT the authority of the Father and especially of Jesus Christ is expressed in a unique way through the apostles, who are by definition the direct and personal ambassadors of Jesus Christ...speaking and acting with his authority'. In Matthew 10:5-15, Jesus gives His apostles very clear guidelines as to what they are to do when they go 'in His name' (Luke 10:17). The Christocentric principle

deduced out of Matthew 10:1-4 is that it is vital for a leader to delegate authority to his protégé if they are to grow into their calling and ministry.

In the Old Testament we see the 'why' of this principle, namely, to multiply key leaders through the impartation of authority to their successors. The impartation of authority to and anointing of Elisha by Elijah is depicted in 2 Kings 2:3 by Elijah's mantle falling on Elisha. In Numbers 11:17, God speaks to Moses, saying 'And I will come down and talk with you there. And I will take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them, and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you may not bear it yourself alone'. It happened, and the seventy elders prophesied when the Spirit came on them (Num 11:25). When Joshua was disturbed by this, Moses is recorded as saying, 'Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put his Spirit on them!' (Num 11:29). Moses is later instructed by the Lord to invest Joshua 'with some of your authority' (Num 27:20). It, therefore, seems reasonable to infer that the Old Testament foreshadows the impartation of the authority of a key leader in the church to other leaders in order to accomplish their ministry and calling of God.

The above principle is applied in the rest of the New Testament by Paul doing exactly the same thing with Timothy: he lays hands on Timothy and imparts 'a gift of God' to him (2 Tim 1:6). Paul also writes that Timothy had been given a gift, by prophesy, when the council of the elders laid hands on him (1 Tim 4:14); he reminds Timothy to not neglect the gift (1 Tim 4:14) and also to 'fan it into flame' (2 Tim 1:6). He also encouraged Titus and Timothy to appoint elders in the churches (1 Tim 3:1-2, 5:22; Tit 1:5).

The application of this Christocentric principle is that apostles are to delegate their authority to their protégés and to encourage them in the use of their gifts. However, the delegation of authority implies it is a conferred authority, for when Jesus departed from His apostles in Matthew 28:18-20, He declared that all authority has been given to Him. Their authority was therefore a derived authority.

To summarise, Paul reminds Timothy to maintain what was transmitted to him and others (1 Tim 1:3; 2 Tim 1:13; 2:14). In fact, the whole of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus consist of instructions from an apostle to apostolic successors who derive their authority from submitting to the one who conferred that authority upon them.

2.7. Matthew 10:16

In Matthew 10:16, Jesus says, 'Behold, I am sending (αποστελλω) you out'. The word 'apostle' means and refers to someone who has been send by another. The above text refers to the apostles who were sent to represent their Sender, namely, Jesus, and it seems to be implicit in their apostolic gift. The Christocentric principle is that leaders are to send representatives and representatives are to represent their sender faithfully.

The reason for this Christocentric principle is reflected in the Old Testament in the Hebrew word *mal'ak* (Strong's Enhanced Dictionary 2011: H4397). *Mal'ak* can designate a messenger or ambassador in human affairs who speaks and acts in the place of the one who has sent him. For example, the messengers returned to Jacob with word about Esau (Gen 32:6); Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom (Num 20:14); Joshua sent messengers into Achan's tent to verify that he had sinned against God (Josh 7:22), and Elisha sent a messenger to tell Naaman to wash in the Jordan (2 Ki 5:10) (Mounce 2013: 'Messenger'). Another aspect of *mal'ak* is revealed when God sends out selected individuals to be his messengers, such as the prophet Haggai (Hag 1:13) and a priest (Mal 2:7). In Malachi 3:1, the messenger promised by the Lord who will prepare the way of the Lord ultimately refers to John the Baptist as the forerunner of the Messiah (Mounce 2013: 'Messenger'). The apostles of Christ were the ultimate fulfilment of the *mal'ak* role; messengers and representatives sent to deliver the message of the King and to represent Him. The advance of the Kingdom of God depends on the sending of faithful messengers. This is applied in the rest of the New Testament. For example, Paul sends Timothy to the Corinthian church to represent him (1 Cor 4:17), and

later sent Titus and another brother to the Corinthians (2 Cor 12:18); and he sent Tychicus to the Colossian church (Col 4:7-8).

The derived Christocentric principle from Matthew 10:26 is straightforward: Emerging apostles are commissioned in virtue of the sending apostle's authority or name. The sent ones are expected to represent the sending apostle as though he were speaking through them. In the early stages of the relationship between apostle and successor, there seems to be a very strong sense of delegated and conferred authority which remains a reality only as long as the sent stays within the boundaries set by the sending apostle. As time goes by and experience accumulates, the sent one receives more and more autonomy, not in terms of doctrine and certainly not in terms of independence, but in terms of leadership. Sent ones, by implication should maintain interdependence with the founding apostle and other emerging apostles. This is what is modelled by Jesus and his apostles and Paul and his successors.

2.8. Matthew 10:24-25

In Matthew 10:24 Jesus says to His disciples: 'A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master.' Besides the warning of thinking too highly of oneself and the follow-up warning in verse 26 about fear of suffering, verse 24 contains the astounding thought that the disciple could be like his teacher, and it is Jesus speaking of Himself and His apostles! It appears that Jesus wants His disciples to not only do what He did but even greater things. For He says in John 14:12-14: In John's gospel Jesus says, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it'. The Christocentric principle derived from Matthew 10:24-25 is that Jesus was willing for His disciples to be like Him and even surpass Him in the things He had done.

In the Old Testament, we find the reason for this Christocentric principle in King David, who is a type of Christ, desiring his successors to follow in his footsteps and to exceed him in doing what it right and good (2 Sam 7:18-29). It can also be seen in David's prayer for Solomon (1 Chron 29:19) and instructions to Solomon (1 Kin 2:1-4). Predecessors yearning for successors to exceed them is further heard in the well-wishes of Benaiah, Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet at the news of Solomon's anointing to be king. They pronounce the following blessing: 'As the LORD has been with my lord the king, even so may he be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David' (1 Kin 1:37, 47).

In the rest of the New Testament, the Christocentric principle of a leader being willing for the protégés to be like them and even exceed them in ministry is evident in Paul's encouragements of Timothy and Titus in his letters to them, namely, to pursue their callings and ministries with single-minded devotion (1 Tim 1:18; 4:6-16; 6:11-14; 2 Tim 1:6-7, 9, 13-14; 2:1-7, 15, 22; 3:14-15; 4:1-2; Tit 1:5; 2:1, 7-8, 15).

The contemporary application of the Christocentric principle that derives from Matthew 10:24-25 can be stated as follows: there should be no hesitation in any contemporary apostles that their protégés could and should be their equals or even exceed them in terms of effectiveness in ministry.

2.9. Matthew 16:13-19

In Matthew 16:16-19, it says:

> Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
> And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For
> flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in
> heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my
> church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you
> the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth

shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

The passage reveals that Jesus commended Peter's faith and the truth he uttered. Furthermore, in the gospels and in Acts, we find Peter, James and John uniquely involved in key events (Matt 17:1; Mark 5:37, 13:3; 14:33; Acts 12:2-3; 15:1-29). Nowhere do we find a false sense of egalitarianism amongst the apostles; it is rather that those who were closer to Jesus appear to have carried more responsibility than the others. John refers to himself as the disciple that Jesus loved and seems to have had the closest relationship with Jesus out of all the disciples (John 21:20). Jesus seems to have had a closest friend, then a group of three, then a group of twelve, then the seventy and then the crowds. His level of relational engagement would have decreased the greater the numbers around Him.

The reason for this Christocentric principle, from the Old Testament, is that just as Peter, James and John were Jesus' closest personal disciples, they mirror David's three mighty men in 2 Samuel 23:8-9 (Wright 1996:300). Furthermore, Josheb-Basshebeth is designated 'chief of the three' (2 Sam 23:8) which is suggestive of the Apostle John (John 13:23). As we have seen above, Elijah had Elisha, Daniel had his three friends (Dan 1:6) and Moses had Joshua (Ex 33:11).

The rest of the New Testament exhibits this Christocentric principle in the warm terms Paul used in reference to Timothy, indicating that Timothy must have been one of his closest disciples. Others amongst Paul's companions seem to have enjoyed a close relationship with him, including Titus (Tit 1:4), Tychicus (Col 4:7), Luke (Col 4:14), Silas (1 Thess 1:1), and Mark (2 Tim 4:11).

The Christocentric principle that derives from Matthew 16:13-19 and is relevant to contemporary apostolic succession is simply that it is entirely appropriate for an apostle to have a small group of confidantes amongst a wider group of protégés and to have one of them that is closer than others.

2.10. Matthew 16:24-25

Matthew records, 'Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."' The Christocentric principle is that Jesus expected His apostles to subordinate every aspect of their lives to being one of His followers, whether that included suffering or not. It is not, in other words, a part-time 'job'; it is an all-consuming commitment to be an apostle. The apostles were the forerunners of the New Testament church (Matt 28:18-20), and they were therefore to demonstrate what 'normal' Christianity entailed, central to which was obedience to Christ (Luke 6:46) no matter what the cost.

The reason for the Christocentric principle of complete commitment, running from the Old Testament and into the New Testament, was that it was God's desire for Israel to be completely committed to Him regardless of their circumstances (Exod 19:5), although never completely attained by them. That is so because their zeal for doing what God demands was undermined by the weakness of the sinful nature (Num 14:22; Rom 8:1-4).

The above Christocentric principle is seen in the rest of the New Testament: Paul writes to the church in Rome that the righteousness requirements of the law could be fully met by believers who live according to the Spirit (Rom 8:1-4). It began with a complete surrender to the Lord Jesus (Gal 2:20; 6:14; Phil 2:12-13). It thus seems that Paul, like Jesus, considered an apostle to be an example of a believer endeavouring to live in complete obedience to God (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 4:9; 1 Tim 4:12; 2 Tim 3:10).

The Christocentric principle from Matthew 16:24-25 that is of relevance to contemporary apostles is that apostles should be searching for successors who live an exemplary Christian lifestyle, especially those who do so in the face of suffering. Although it could be seen as a sign of an apostolic anointing on that person, it is not necessarily so, for Stephen (Acts 7:1-60), who suffered for his teaching to the point of death, was a deacon and not an apostle.

2.11. Matthew 20:17-19

Matthew 20:17-19 records,

> And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day".

The Christocentric principle here is that Jesus provided His apostles with information that no-one else was privy to, so that they might better understand the unfolding of God's purposes and their unique role in God's salvation of mankind. Furthermore, Jesus provided John with more information than all the others (John 13:23-24), perhaps slightly less to Peter and James, but still more than to the rest of Jesus' twelve apostles (Luke 9:28, 36), and more to the twelve than to the seventy-two (Mark 3:13-19), and more to the seventy-two than to the crowds (Luke 10:1-16).

The Old Testament provides us a number of examples where God made special information known to select individuals. He spoke to Moses face to face, as with a friend (Exod 33:11); he communicated individually with the prophets and gave them messages to communicate to others (1 Sam 3:11ff; 2 Sam 12:1-7; Isa 1:2; Ezek 3:4-11). We also have the example of David communicating private and useful things to Solomon to prepare him for the kingship (1 Kin 2:1ff). And Elijah passed on privy information to Elisha (1 Kin 19:16, 21; 2 Kin 2:1, 3, 9-11). Thus the reason evidenced in the Old Testament for this Christocentric principle, is that the progress of the Kingdom of God requires some individuals to know more of God's purposes than others.

The above Christocentric principle is seen in the rest of the New Testament as follows: 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus are essentially 'insider information' (2 Tim 4:9-18) and guidelines on how to discharge the ministry of an apostle.

The Christocentric principle from Matthew 20:17-19 relevant to the contemporary succession of an apostle is this: It is helpful for emerging apostles if an experienced apostle communicates 'insider' information to them that others may not be privy to. It seems that it would help the emerging apostles to comprehend the bigger picture of what his or her ministry involves and to learn from the experienced apostle's words and deeds, shared vulnerably and honestly. It should be noted that similar to Jesus, an apostle may have 'one' closest confidante, 'three' close protégés, a wider team of 'twelve', a group of 'seventy' and 'a crowd' of followers. The closer to the apostle, the more information they would be privy to from the apostle.

2.12. Matthew 20:20-28

Matthew 20: 20-28 records the following words:

> Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able." He said to them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many'.

The quoted passage is crucially important, for in it Jesus sets the tone of apostolic leadership, and uses the words 'servant' and 'slave' to describe the role of the apostles towards one another. He also mentioned that His apostles will also drink 'the cup of suffering' He was about to drink. Furthermore, they are appointed in their roles by God the Father alone. Therefore, 'lording it over' and exercising inappropriate authority over each other is forbidden. Their authority has been given to minister in the name of Jesus, which excludes an attitude of being one of the 'great ones'. Barclay (2001:271) calls it 'the Christian revolution' and 'the complete reversal of the world's standards'.

Besides the call to embrace suffering as part of the apostle's call, already mentioned in sub-section 2.11. above, the Christocentric principle derived from this passage is that Jesus, as a servant Himself, considers apostles to be servants of the church, appointed by the Father. They are not the product of human ambition or effort and are therefore to submit to and serve one another.

There are many examples of the sovereign, divine selection of individuals in the Old Testament to fulfil God's purposes through a specific role, such as Abraham (Gen 12:1-3), Moses (Exod 2; 3), Samuel (1 Sam 1:1-20; 3), David (1 Sam 16:11-13), Solomon (2 Sam 12:24-25; 1 Kin 1:17), Jeremiah (Jer 1:12), and Elisha (1 Kin 19:16). It suggests that it is God who takes the initiative and it is God who selects and sends and is to be obeyed. The Old Testament 'why' to this Christocentric principle is that God has worked throughout salvation history through His chosen servants, whom He expects to be humble and obedient.

This Christocentric principle of humble, submissive servanthood is applied in the rest of the New Testament as follows: Paul is a clear example of someone who has been sovereignly selected and commissioned by God to fulfil the role of an apostle of Jesus Christ (Gal 1:16; Eph 1:1; 1 Tim 1:1ff). He believed that Christ had sovereignly revealed the truth of the gospel of Christ to him (Gal 1:11-12), and that God chose him from the womb (Gal 1:15). Paul believed the same about Timothy: a gift had been divinely imparted to him (2 Tim 1:6); he had been given a prophetic mandate from God (1 Tim 1:18); he was to be confident in the exercise of his ministry in the light of the gift imparted to him (1

Tim 4:11-16); he was to guard what God had entrusted to his care (1 Tim 6:20); he was saved and called to be a herald of the gospel (2 Tim 1:8-14); and was solemnly charged with certain commands as Paul's successor (2 Tim 4:1-5). The latter could be considered the human element in the process of being appointed as a successor by a proven and acknowledged apostle.

The Christocentric principle that is derived from Matthew 20:20-28 relevant to contemporary apostolic succession is this: Apostles are divinely selected and commissioned, and they are not 'products' of human effort. Although apostles are divinely appointed, their divine gifting needs to be recognised and endorsed by the church and by a proven apostolic team. This Christocentric principle prevents anyone simply announcing themselves to be an apostle out of fleshly ambition. The final acknowledgement and endorsement must come from a proven and acknowledged apostle under whose authority the emerging apostle has been coached.

2.13. Matthew 26:33-35

In Matthew 26:33-35, the apostle writes: 'Peter answered him, "Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away." Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!" And all the disciples said the same.'

It seems that Jesus wanted His disciples to understand that an apostle needs to become acquainted with his weaknesses and fallibility. The same is true for anyone who is to succeed an apostle. We see the outworking of this in Peter's denial of Jesus and his subsequent brokenness (Matt 26:69-75) and the disciples' abandoning of Jesus in His most trying moments (Matt26:56). It seems to imply that they needed to come to a place of brokenness and disillusionment with themselves in order to be in the right state of mind and attitude to receive the empowering of the Holy Spirit. Thus the Christocentric principle that emerges here is that Christ alone has no weaknesses. Every

human follower of Christ must come to know and acknowledge their weaknesses, and so depend on God's strength and not their own.

The above is applied in the rest of the New Testament. Brokenness can be seen in Paul in Romans 7:7-8:11, where he expresses his disillusionment with his own lack of strength, his inability to do the right thing, and acknowledging that it is only through empowerment from the Holy Spirit that the believer can live above the weakening effects of the sinful nature.

The lesson of the Christocentric principle is that contemporary apostles must ensure that they themselves and the emerging apostles are free from a self-reliant attitude. The reason is an apostle faces unique responsibilities and intense pressures, whether through persecutions, abandonments, resistance and/or character 'assassination' (1 Cor 4:9-13; 2 Cor 6:4-10; 11:24-29). Instead of relying on their own strength, they must learn to rely on God alone (Rom 6:6; 2 Cor 1:8-9; Gal 2:20; 5:24; 6:14). In Peter, considerable strength of character can be detected; he alone dared to walk on water (Matt 14:28-29); he alone was willing to rebuke Jesus, even if out of ignorance (Matt 16:22); he initially refuses Jesus' washing of his feet (John13:8); he drew a sword and attacked those coming to arrest Jesus (John 18:10); and he followed Jesus right into the High priest's courtyard (Matt 26:58). Peter needed to be brought to the point of brokenness and disillusionment with his own strength in order that God's strength could flow through him. Jesus ensured that this happened to Peter through Peter's denial of Jesus (Luke 22:33-34, 54-62) and yet Jesus also ensured that Peter would come through it to become the apostle he was intended to be (Luke 22:31). The implication is that contemporary apostles must allow their protégés to be 'broken' and softened by life's vicissitudes yet walk closely enough alongside them to help them through their 'dark night of the soul', as St. John of the Cross put it in his book of the same title (St. John of the Cross 2013).

2.14. Matthew 28:18-20

In Matthew 28:18-20, the apostle writes as follows:

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> And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

It must be noted that Jesus did not say 'All authority in heaven and earth has been given to *you*.' Thus, if an apostle has any authority, then it is authority that derives from and is delegated by Jesus. This is the Christocentric principle, namely, that only authority delegated by Jesus Christ is valid authority.

The Old Testament seems to suggest that it was always God's intent to be the King of Israel. According to Deuteronomy 33:1-5, God became Israel's King after He rescued them from Egypt and subsequently made a covenant with them on Mount Sinai (Lev 20:26; 25:23; cf. Elwell 1984:606). It was the sinfulness and hard-heartedness of Israel that was the reason they desired to have a human king rather than God as their Sovereign (1 Sam 8:1-9; 10:17-19). Jesus, as the Messiah, the anointed King, and God-man fulfilled God's theocratic ideal for Israel, including the church (Ps 2:9; 45:6; 110:1-2; Isa 9:6-7).

This Christocentric principle that only those under Christ's authority carry valid authority, is applied in the rest of the New Testament as follows: Jesus is acknowledged as the absolute King. In 1 Timothy 1:17, God is referred to as 'the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God' and in 1 Timothy 6:15 Jesus is referred to as 'the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords'. Thus, obedience to God and to Christ amount to the same thing (Acts 5:29, 32; 7:39; ; Rom 1:1-6; 2 Cor 10:5; Heb 5:9; 1 Pet 1:2; 1 John 5:2). On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached that God made Jesus both 'Lord and Christ' (Acts 2:38). It is also evident that Jesus had authority and power over wind, the sea (Matt 8:27), and unclean spirits (Mark 1:27).

The Christocentric principle in Matthew 28:18-20 that is relevant to contemporary apostolic succession is that obedience to Christ is an apostolic absolute. An apostle has no autonomous authority but only delegated authority. Although it is not easy to discern whether a person is being obedient to Christ or following their own agenda, it is possible that proven and acknowledged apostles can do that.

What follows next, is a summary of the apostolic principles based on Peppler's Christocentric principle.

3. Summary and Implications of the Principles of Apostolic Succession

Christ Jesus is the ideal Apostle (Heb 3:1) and following His life and teachings is the highest Christian principle. Therefore, this chapter set out to identify Christocentric principles which could be applied to apostolic succession. Using Peppler's model, Christocentric principles were identified from a number of passages in the Gospel of Matthew. Those principles, as they apply to contemporary apostolic succession, are summarised below:

(1)   Experienced, proven and acknowledged apostles should seek to multiply themselves into others as a matter of urgency and to empower protégés with everything needed to fulfil their calling.

(2)   Emerging apostles have the effect of constantly reconstituting a movement as a people of faith, obedient to Jesus Christ. It is important in the light of the tendency of subsequent generations of leaders to turn a movement in to a bureaucracy, which will inevitably occur without the constant reconstitution of the network by its emerging apostles.

(3)   Contemporary apostolic movements should consider the role of women within their network of churches and ministries. Newfrontiers' complementarian theology prevents women from the office of apostle and elder, which does not reflect the redemptive-movement hermeneutic of the Scriptures and Jesus' high regard for women.

(4)   Proven apostles should take time to observe potential protégés and pray for divine revelation with regard to their suitability to the ministry of

apostle. Once apostolic protégés have been identified, they may then be taught what an apostolic lifestyle entails.

(5) Contemporary apostles should be perpetually on the search for emerging apostles.

(6) Apostles should delegate authority to their protégés and encourage them to use their gifts. However, the emerging apostle's authority remains a conferred authority.

(7) Apostles commission emerging apostles in their name. The sent ones are therefore expected to represent the commissioning apostle as though he is speaking through them. Over time, and as their experience accumulates, the commissioned apostle may acquire more and more autonomy while always remaining interdependent the founding apostle and other emerging apostles.

(8) An apostle should expect that their protégés could and should be equal to them in knowledge and experience, and even go on to exceed them in terms of effectiveness in ministry.

(9) It is likely that an apostle will have a smaller group of confidantes amongst a wider group and to even have one that is closer than all the others.

(10) Apostles exist by divine appointment, and are therefore not 'man-made'. However, their divine gifting needs to be acknowledged and endorsed by other believers, especially a proven and acknowledged apostle who has coached the emerging apostle.

(11) It is vital that the proven and experienced apostle ensures that the emerging apostle is not self-centred or self-reliant, for their reliance should be on God alone.

(12) It is helpful for emerging apostles if an experienced apostle communicates 'insider' information to them that others may not be privy to. It is because such information would help emerging apostles to comprehend the bigger picture of their ministry.

(13) Obedience to Christ is an apostolic absolute. Proven and acknowledged apostles should be able to discern potential apostles and whether obedience to Christ is that person's first priority or not.

This summary of Christocentric principles that are relevant to contemporary apostolic succession concludes the chapter. In the next chapter, the insights gained from other studies on leadership succession in organisations will be explored in order to assess their relevance to apostolic succession. The insights gained in chapters four and five take priority over those of the following chapter. Nonetheless, where insights from the following chapter do not violate principles gained from the preceding two chapters, they will be deemed to be useful in the consideration of apostolic succession. The following chapter is the final chapter in this study's examination of the Newfrontiers apostolic succession. Chapter eight will then explore what could have perhaps been done differently. Chapter nine will draw the study to its conclusion.

Chapter Six

Leadership Transition in Organisations

1. Introduction

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to present a thoroughgoing study of the many insights into leadership transition in organisations in the social sciences and various business models on offer. The focus is instead on a model suggested by William Bridges (2009) in his book *Managing Transitions*. It will be used as an anchor point to reflect on other models and theories of leadership transition in the social sciences. In that book, Bridges, who is a former literature professor, discusses how he initiated a career change in 1981 with the aim of creating a business organisation that would help leaders of other organisations to deal more successfully with transition.[68] The aim of the chapter is therefore to show that the Bridges model, albeit a business model, has direct relevance for the transition of leadership from a founding apostle in an apostolic network to the next generation of succeeding apostles.

What follows next is a brief summary of the Bridges model of the process of leadership transition in an organisation.

2. Leadership Transition in an Organisation: The Bridges Model

Bridges uses his model to argue that change in organisational leadership is often circumstantial. It happens due to external factors such as a required relocation to a new site, the retirement of the founder or the rearrangement of the roles of the team. On the other hand, transition is also psychological. It is an

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[68] 'William Bridges' assistance has been utilised in several hundred organisational mergers, re-organizations, leadership changes, and cultural shifts by companies including Baxter Healthcare, Kaiser Permanente, Intel, Proctor Gamble, Hewlett Packard, the US Forest Service. Chevron, Saudi Aramco, Transamerica, Stanford University, Visa USA, AstraZeneca, Thrivent Financial, McKesson, and *USA Today*. The *Wall Street Journal* has listed him among the top ten independent executive development presenters in the United States' (Bridges 2009:168).

emotional navigation of a three-phase process that people go through as they internalise the change that came about (Bridges 2009:3). Luecke (2003:70), writes that organisations are essentially social systems, the people within which 'have identities, relationships, communities. attitudes, emotions, and differentiated powers'. He makes the point that transitions have to take all these deep complexities into account and that people factors and social systems have 'primacy' (ibid, p. 70).

Bridges' (2009:4-5) three phases consist of (1) an ending, which means the letting go of old ways and identity, (2) a neutral time, which refers to a period of an 'in-between' time through which an organisation goes when the old is ending and the new is not yet fully operational, and (3) new beginnings, which refers to the coming out of a transition and making a new beginning with a new identity, energy and sense of purpose that make the change begin to work (see figure 42 below).
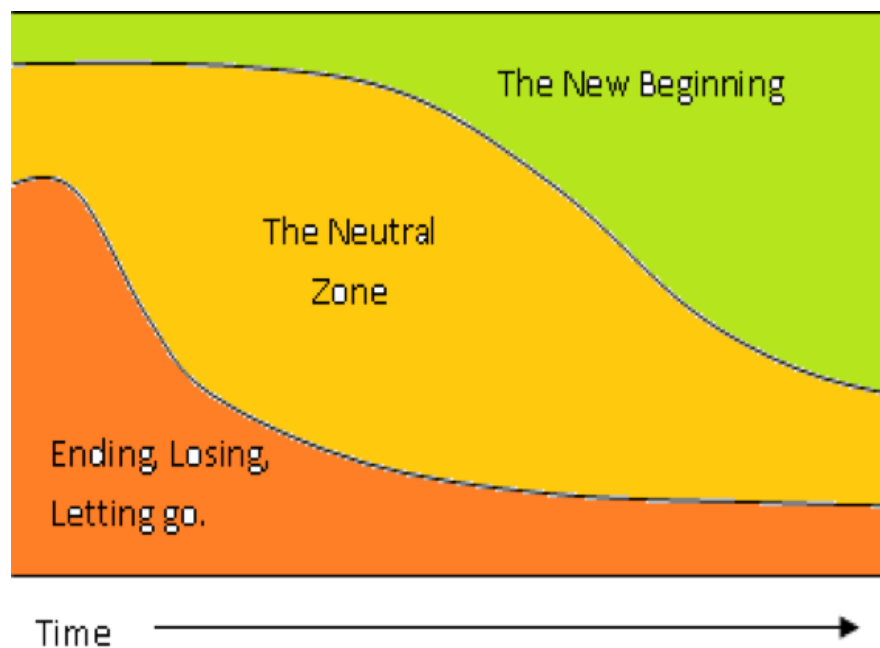

Figure 42. Bridges' three-phase model of organisational change.

Bridges (2009:5) writes that 'Transition begins with an ending and finishes with a beginning'; 'In relation to change, the leader's task is to determine (usually in collaboration with others) the outcome of the change project and to keep reminding people of what that outcome is and why it is important to achieve it.

The leader's transition task, on the other hand, is to lead people through it' (p. 158). In other words, leaders of an organisation are to assist its members to press on through the three phases of organisational transition. The following section describes these three phases and what leaders should ideally be doing in each phase.

2.1. The three phases of transition

2.1.1. First Phase: Ending, Losing and Letting Go

In the first phase of transition, the leaders need to be clear on what they are to end and the reasons why. They should identify who is losing what and what could compensate for the losses incurred. If they wish to honour the past, then the leaders need to consider how they can be clear that the way certain things were done in the past will be ending and yet also treat the leadership decisions of the past with respect. They must also work out how they can show that the end of an era actually ensures the continuity of what really matters to the organisation (Bridges 2009: 23-38).

Leaders should also be aware of the typical issues present in the neutral zone and how to help members of the organisation to recognise and navigate them.

2.1.2. Second Phase: Describing the Neutral Zone

When people find themselves in the 'in-between' period when the old comes to an end and the new is not yet fully operational, namely, the 'neutral zone', things are 'in the air', which means that no-one quite knows the answers to what is going on in the organisation. Anxiety rises, motivation falls, old resentments resurface, people lose confidence in the future of the organisation and people begin to leave the organisation. It is also easy for people going through this in-between period to become polarised as being 'for' or 'against' the change.

The neutral zone, however, is an important stage and not something to be rushed through. In this zone, old ways have to be abandoned, and structures

and relationships have to morph into something new to accommodate the change. Bridges (2009:46) points out that it is wise not to expect too much of people during this phase and to see it as a period in which people may encouraged one another and suggest creative solutions to the organisation's difficulties.

Of importance is to know what should be done in the neutral zone (Bridges 2009:44-54). The first thing to realise is that the journey from the old to the new era is not a direct journey. It must pass through the neutral zone as it is a journey from one identity to another. Old attitudes, values, ways of doing things and understandings have to 'die' before people can be ready for life in the new dispensation. The second thing is to realise that people should be permitted to express their feelings of uncertainty and discomfort as they go through profound changes. This can also be seen a time when innovation can be encouraged in the midst of confusion and uncertainty.

Because people can easily feel isolated in the neutral zone, leaders would do well to strengthen relationships within the organisation during this season. Good communication across the organisation is vital and must be two-way. Unbiased feedback should be solicited from the people on how transition is affecting them.

The end of the neutral zone and transition to the new beginning is deemed to have occurred when a heart and attitude change is expressed by the people. It would serve as a sign that they have let go of the 'old ways' and understand and embrace the new way of doing things. In short, it would be indicative of a willingness to invest emotionally in the new beginning.

2.1.3. Phase Three: The Zone of New Beginning

According to Bridges (2009:57-73), a new beginning will only occur when people in the organisation are ready to make an emotional commitment to do things the new way and see themselves as new people. However, new beginnings involve new understandings, new values, new attitudes and most of

all, new identities. Some of the features of new beginnings are as follows: (1) new beginnings are anxious times in that they require a fresh commitment. They, therefore, require people to think and do things differently. To some extent, such times are a gamble as what is done might not work; (2) new beginnings disturb neutral comfort zones; people may have come to actually enjoy the slow-down and the confusion of the neutral zone because it masked their poor performance; (3) new beginnings may stir up memories of past failures and old anxieties from the ending zone. Therefore, to begin something new makes people realise that the old is truly gone; and (4) new beginnings cannot be dictated to or forced on people. People have to first work through the first two phases of transition. Bridges (2009:59-60) expresses the point as follows: 'More beginnings abort because they were not preceded by well managed endings and neutral zones than for any other reason'.

To help people of an organisation who go through a transition to a new beginning, they must understand the purpose behind the outcomes that are being sought. A relevant question is: 'Why are the desired outcomes necessary and beneficial?'. An answer to the question may help people to understand the logic of the changes so that they can begin to be catalysts of change themselves. There are also other questions: 'What is the problem?'; 'What is the situation that requires this change?'; 'Who says so and on what evidence?'; and 'What would occur if no-one acted to solve this problem?' (Bridges 2009:60-61).

It is also helpful if the people can be provided with a description of the 'picture' of what the outcome would look like. Leaders should find creative ways to do that, such as through word-pictures, examples and comparisons with other organisations. The reason is most people need to be able to 'see' something before they can commit themselves to it. They need to know, 'What will it look like for *me*?' (Bridges 2009:64).

Furthermore, it is extremely helpful if the people of an organisation could know how and when they will receive information about what is happening and who the key role players are, including guidelines about what is expected of them. They should also be provided with information about available training for new

roles or responsibilities, as well as indications about available support and the channels through which to obtain it.

The timing of key events, for example, announcing where and when information should be made known across the organisation, is an essential part of the organisation's transition plan. The latter refers to a plan specific to the period of transition and people need a clear idea of the steps necessary to achieve the desired outcome. Finally, besides knowing what their roles are in the transition process itself, people need to understand what their role and relationship to others will be in the new scheme of things.

Having described Bridges' three phases, the study now turns to Bridges' theories on the lifecycle of an organisation. This too is an important aspect to consider with respect to where Newfrontiers find themselves on the bell-curve of the lifecycle of an organisation.

2.2. The Life-Cycle of an Organisation

Bridges (2009) goes on to describe the life cycle of an organisation. Once an organisation is launched because of a life's dream, becomes organised and 'makes it big', it will either slowly institutionalise, become insular and 'die', or it will enter renewal, beginning anew and thereby re-enter the process of dreaming, launching, organising and so on. This is depicted diagrammatically in Figure 43 below (Bridges 2009:88).
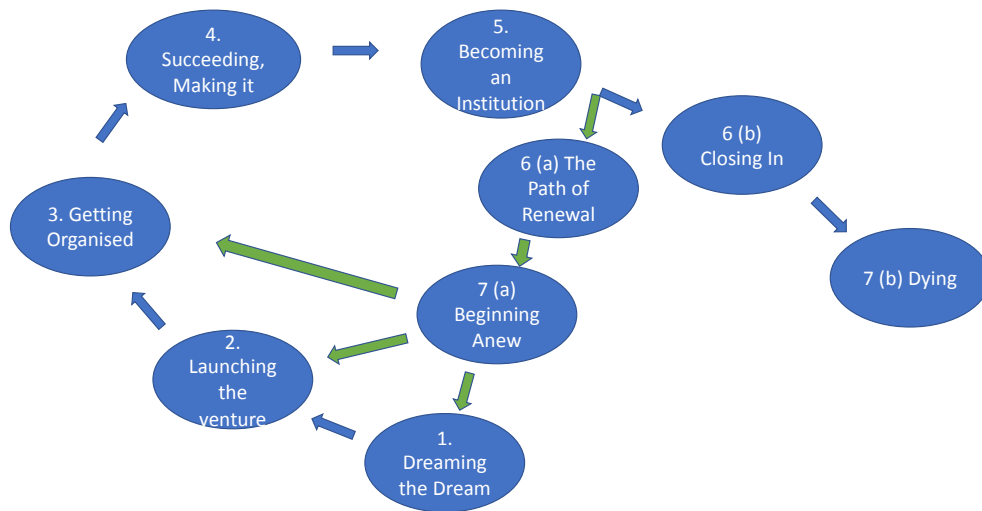
Figure 43. Bridges' diagram of the lifecycle of an organization.

The danger, however, is that the 'institutionalising' and 'becoming insular' phases of the organisation can be quite comfortable and enticing for those who are long term members of the organisation and prefer it the way it is.

Bridges also has some penetrating insights into an organisation's state of transition which he calls the 'Laws of Organisational Development' (Bridges 2009:83-86) and lists five of them. In his words:

(1) 'The people most comfortable with the activities and arrangements of one phase are those most likely to experience the next phase as a severe personal setback' (p. 83).

(2) 'The successful outcome of any phase of organisational development triggers its demise by creating challenges that it is not equipped to handle' (p. 84).

(3) 'In any significant transition, the thing that the organisation needs to let go of is the very thing that got it this far' (p. 85).

(4) 'Wherever there is a troubled, painful time in an organisation, a developmental transition is probably going on' (ibid).

(5) 'During the first half of the life-cycle - through the Making-It stage - not to make a transition when the time is right will cause a developmental "retardation" in the organization' (ibid).

3. Conclusions

The foregoing description and discussion of Bridges' insights into organisational change leads to a number of observations about the leadership transition of Newfrontiers.

3.1. Change but not Transition

In the period leading to the transition of apostolic leadership in Newfrontiers, Virgo and the apostolic team placed a lot of emphasis on the past – where the movement has come from, and on the future – where the movement is going, but not as much emphasis on the actual process of transition. Some local church leaders felt they were left out the planning of the transition of Newfrontiers. They were required to go from the old to the new era without there being a concrete plan for transition. Virgo and the apostolic team communicated the vision and the values of Newfrontiers clearly and well. It must be said that it is a very apostolic and prophetic approach, which would be in line with the predominant Newfrontiers personality profile, namely, 'sensor', 'thinker', and 'judge' discussed in chapter 3.

What seems to have been lacking is a more pastoral approach of helping the individual members to process what was happening in Newfrontiers. And as Bridges pointed out, transition affects people psychologically and emotionally. It is about the process of people morphing from one role and identity into another. He says that above all, transition is about taking on a new identity (Bridges 2009:58). Also, as noted earlier, Luecke (2003:70) writes that people within organisations 'have identities, relationships, communities, attitudes, emotions, and differentiated powers'.

Based on these factors, it is reasonable to conclude that the study of Newfrontiers' transition suggest that the emotions of church leaders and other believers have not received the attention it deserved. The conclusion can be supported by a consideration of a few examples.

3.1.1. Lack of Clarity on What was to Come to an End

It was noted that only twenty five percent of the leaders agreed strongly with the statement that 'Terry Virgo's new role is clear to me' (Question 29. Fig 23). This means that the majority of the Newfrontiers leaders were not that clear on what was to come to an end in Newfrontiers.

3.1.2. Not Enough Time was Allowed in the Neutral Zone.

Bridges (2009:39) states that 'neutral time' is the 'time between the old identity and the new [that] can stretch out for months, even years'. He provides a diagrammatic example of a square morphing to a circle to illustrate his point (Figure 44 below).
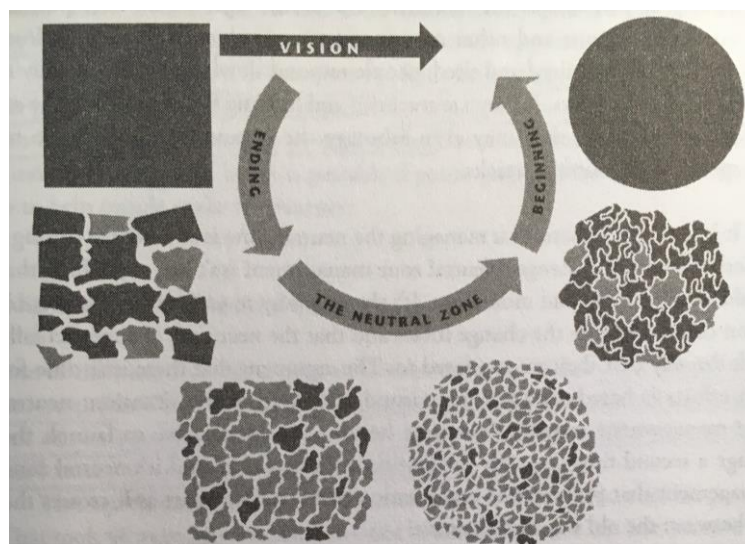

Figure 44. Transition: A square morphs to a circle (Bridges 2009:41).

The Newfrontiers transition seems to have gone from the square at the top left of the diagram to the circle at the top right of the diagram and not allowed enough time to morph through the lower four shapes. It must be remembered

that the diagram represents the emotional transition of the members of an organisation and not the structural changes. The diagram indicates that it is in the neutral zone where most of the morphing from the old identity to the new identity happens. As has been noted, it is a very complex process (Luecker 2003:70). In short, Newfrontiers does not appear to have allotted the time needed for the neutral zone, time during which people are permitted to express their feelings of uncertainty, when innovation could have been encouraged, and creative thinking and alternative solutions could have been suggested and experimented with. None of this appears to have been allowed for.

3.1.3. Lack of Personal Communication

It has been noted that, according to Bridges, people can easily feel isolated in the neutral zone. Good personal communication across an organisation helps to mitigate that. However, feedback from senior leaders in Newfrontiers implies that communication with them had not been successful or at least not effective (Figure 9. Question 32). Furthermore, although communication must be two-way and unbiased feedback from people on how the transition progressed should have been solicited, it does not appear to have been the case with Newfrontiers. Newfrontiers communication appears to have been unilateral.

3.2. Timely Change

Over the last four decades Newfrontiers has certainly 'made it big' in terms of Bridges' lifecycle of an organisation. The 'Newfrontierstogether' website states that in the decade after the turn of the century the number Newfrontiers churches multiplied to about eight hundred in over forty nations. New Covenant Ministries International is another modern apostolic movement that has gone through the transition from the founding apostle to the succeeding generation. Virgo followed this transition closely which he revealed through personal conversations with NCMI leaders. Furthermore, Newfrontiers received forewarning that transition was approaching as Virgo aged. Thus, it seems reasonable to conclude that NCMI missed the moment of renewal between

'making it big' and 'becoming insular' while Newfrontiers appear to have entered renewal with perfect timing.

At the peak of Virgo's tenure as apostle of the original Newfrontiers movement, Newfrontiers entered renewal by acknowledging and commissioning apostles to lead their own apostolic spheres. The founding apostle of NCMI chose instead to replace himself with his son, thereby remaining one single apostolic sphere and stifling the acknowledgement and commissioning of apostolic leaders. Sixteen out of twenty-eight of NCMI's most experienced Ephesians 4:11 ministries left the movement (Wienand 2012). The contrast between Newfrontiers and NCMI is nowhere more instructive than in the final paragraph of the article, 'Our history' posted on the 'Newfrontierstogether' website:

> Since making this move, the overall size of Newfrontiers in its various spheres has grown so that we are now working in many more nations and have planted a number of other churches. We do not know the exact extent because other embryonic apostolic spheres have even joined us in a number of different nations where we have helped to lay the same foundations that we felt God had given to us at the beginning of our movement and had reinforced by other emphases that had come to us on our journey together.[69]

Castells (2000:502) writes that

> A network-based social structure is a highly dynamic, open system, susceptible to innovating without threatening its balance. Networks are appropriate instruments … for work, workers and firms based on flexibility and adaptability; for a culture of endless deconstruction and reconstruction; for a polity geared towards instant processing of new values and public moods; and for social organisation.

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[69] See https://newfrontierstogether.org/about-us/our-history/ Point 13. Accessed on 6/8/2018.

Newfrontiers leaders have demonstrated the ability to innovate and to be flexible and adaptable, and to deconstruct and reconstruct for a polity geared toward their current situation. The inevitable question, however, is whether the psychological and emotional factors of the believers were sufficiently taken into account and addressed during the transition process.

4. Summary and Concluding Remarks

This chapter sought to examine Newfrontiers' transition against a contemporary model for the management of the transition of an organisation and the lifecycle of an organisation. Bridges' model for managing transition in an organisation and his model for the lifecycle of an organisation were used.

The conclusions arrived at from the comparison of Newfrontiers' transition with Bridges' model were that Newfrontiers did well at articulating the end plan, but were lacking clarity when it came to articulating a plan for the transition phase itself. For example, there was a lack of clarity from the apostolic team about what was coming to an end, a lack of personal two-way communication between the apostolic team and the churches, and insufficient time was allowed in the 'neutral zone' phase of the transition. In terms of the lifecycle of an organisation, Newfrontiers would appear to have made a timely diversion from the path of becoming an insular institution that would eventually petrify. They did this by renewing the organisation through commissioning leaders into new apostolic spheres.

Chapter Seven

The Impact of Newfrontiers' Transition on Mission, Unity and Structure

1. Introduction

Newfrontiers have navigated through a complex and challenging time of transition. It has done so with a clarion call to their theology and values. Undergirding this has been a strong network of relationships, particularly among the male leaders, fostered over many years. Andrew Wilson (2013), a Newfrontiers leader, writes, 'In Newfrontiers, you'll almost always find a high view of the local church, a commitment to qualified leadership, a desire to live out the Christian life together and not just in isolation, and a resolution to give local churches the best of our people, energies and finances'. Father-son relationships between leaders and protégés have been fostered and maintained over many years, and potential five-fold leaders have been identified and trained since 1990 (p. 40). William Rothwell, quoted in Bieschke (2006:1), author of *Effective Succession Planning*, writes that wise succession planning 'builds talent from within, strengthens the bench, reduces employee turnover rates, attracts people to whom the organization can be entrusted and increases employee retention and morale by inspiring people to make progress toward advancement goals'. This has certainly been the case in Newfrontiers. A lot of time was allowed for leaders with the apostolic gift to emerge and become clear to Virgo, his apostolic team and church leaders. It has, in turn, meant that 'safe' recommendations for apostolic leaders could be made to the movement as a whole. There were no surprises about who was 'recommended' by Virgo, and all were well-known to the churches over many years.

The aim in the rest of this chapter is to consider the impact of Newfrontiers' leadership transition on its mission, structure and unity.

2. The Impact of the Newfrontiers Transition on Mission and Church Planting

Once the apostolic leaders of spheres were named, there was an urgency detected from leaders in each sphere to form an identity and field of work. For some this was simply a continuation of what had been done in the past, for others it was a time of forming a new identity and for others a combination of the two. While Newfrontierstogether, the sum of all the new apostolic spheres, were in that phase, retardation in church planting occurred.[70] It must be noted that church planting is regarded by Newfrontiers as an integral part of their commitment to mission. The 'Broadcast Network' website[71] states, 'We want to see oodles of new churches started because we believe this is the key to reaching people, growing disciples and redeeming communities'.[72]

One Newfrontiers interviewee for this study felt that because of the momentum in church planting up to the point of the transition of Newfrontiers, the momentum would have continued for between twelve to eighteen months, but would then, in his opinion, declined because of church planting not being generated and overseen from the erstwhile Newfrontiers central team (Interview 1: 2012). Another apostolic sphere leader[73] believes that church planting has slowed down in the UK as all the energy of leaders has gone into sorting out the emergence of the new spheres. However, the hope was expressed that in time the new spheres will provide a new energy for church planting endeavours (Interview 8: 2012). Furthermore, it was said, 'What I do believe, and this is a faith statement, it's not something I can prove at the moment. I believe that transition is not simply reorganisation, it's giving opportunity for God's grace to enable more to be done, to come into being'.

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[70] See Figure 28, Question 6 and Figure32, Question 28.

[71] An online resource with a vast number of podcasts relating to church planting was established by a Newfrontiers church in Manchester.

[72] See http://www.thebroadcastnetwork.org/feature/welcome-to-broadcast/. Accessed 9/8/2018.

[73] This leader has since handed the leadership of his sphere to another, younger, emerging apostle. See https://newfrontierstogether.org/team-member/david-devenish/. Accessed 8/8/2018.

Taken together, these statements reveal that Newfrontiers was experiencing a slow-down to church planting, but in their estimation, it would be only a temporary one. This remains to be seen, but an encouraging sign is that in 2017, the Broadcast Network held a twenty-four hour 'Church and Site Planting' conference in Northampton for potential church planters in Newfrontierstogether.[74] The amount of resource material on the Broadcast Network alone serves as evidence of Newfrontierstogether's ongoing commitment to church planting.

As far as mission of the local churches is concerned, the survey questions indicated that this was continuing strongly in the Newfrontiers local churches (Ch 2). In fact, the breakdown of the large Newfrontiers movement into apostolic spheres has had the effect of making mission more tangible to local churches as the spheres have brought the mission of the sphere much closer to the local churches. It has had the effect of increasing the financial and manpower commitment of local churches to their sphere's missions.

There is a connection between structure and mission in that Newfrontiers have upheld the autonomy of the local church under the leadership of its elders. It is clearly stated that the highest authority to a local church is its own elders, not the apostle or one of his team members (Smyth 2004:27-30). In Newfrontierstogether, the role of the Ephesians 4:11 minister is to serve the local church and to enter those local churches as servants to the church rather than 'envoys from headquarters'. It must be said that tremendous stress is put on the 'shaping of elders' by apostolic ministry and the fact that elders cannot be appointed in the local churches without the involvement of the apostle (ibid, pp. 14-15, 55). Nevertheless, the fact that local churches have this sense of autonomy means they continue with their own local mission regardless of what is happening at the apostolic sphere level. Yet, their close connection with their sphere's apostle and his team means they are drawn into a wider world of

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[74] See https://newfrontierstogether.org/church-planting-conference-2017/. Accessed 9/8/2018.

mission, nationally and internationally (Devenish 2011:53). That explains why the governmental structure of Newfrontiers results in mission remaining at a high level regardless of the transition of the movement.

3. The Impact of the Newfrontiers Transition on Organisational Structure

With the change from a single apostolic network or sphere to thirteen apostolic networks or spheres, the impact on organisational structure has been immense. There is no longer one apostle leading the whole movement with the result that the movement has had to develop a mechanism to maintain the connection between the new apostolic spheres. That mechanism is the 'Newfrontiers Together Team' led by Devenish[75] who is one of the longest serving Ephesians 4:11 ministers in Newfrontiers. The role of this team is to foster and facilitate connections between the apostolic spheres and is something new to Newfrontiers. Up to the period of the transition, Newfrontiers was held together relationally by a common commitment to Virgo. Since Virgo stepped down, it remains to be seen whether the Newfrontiers Together Team will be able to foster the same level of commitment to the overall movement comprised of all the new spheres. Devenish certainly enjoys great respect within Newfrontiers, and although he is regarded as an apostle, he is not seen as taking Virgo's place. Perhaps the fact that he is clearly not the apostolic leader of the overall movement, as Virgo was, actually facilitates the unity of the overall movement in that he and the Newfrontiers Together Team pose no threat to the autonomy of the apostolic spheres.

The together-ness of the apostolic spheres is voluntary and intact at this stage, because of the on-going commitment of the apostolic sphere leaders to the 'armada' prophetic vision referred to earlier in this study.[76] At the individual sphere level, there has been little change in structure. The structure of the original Newfrontiers network has simply been repeated in each sphere: there is

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[75] See https://newfrontierstogether.org/team-member/david-devenish/. Accessed 8/8/2018.

[76] The website, https://newfrontierstogether.org, gives the impression that the spheres are indeed maintaining the unity of the overall movement.

an apostle with his Ephesians 4:11 team and a network of local churches led by eldership teams that have committed themselves to be part of that apostolic sphere, and is a structure that is totally familiar to the Newfrontiers members.

Very little will change for the individual churches in terms of how the structure functions. It is anticipated that they will move into the structure seamlessly. Where the challenge will lie structurally is whether local churches within each sphere will connect to other spheres and other Ephesians 4:11 leaders in the other spheres. What may emerge in time is Ephesians 4:11 ministries that are of such a high level and capacity that they will begin to move between the spheres, invited from one sphere to another by the second sphere's apostle or even by local churches within that sphere, and to minister in that sphere. However, it does not imply the emergence of a kind of super-apostle; it is simply the acknowledgement that it is likely that the level of gifting and capacity of some will emerge across the spheres and not limited to any one sphere.

4. The Impact of the Newfrontiers Transition on Church Unity

The unity of Newfrontierstogether is closely related to its structure. There is a lot happening in the individual spheres[77] but it is siloed within each sphere. Rather than there being a call from a sphere to other spheres to help with a certain project or mission trip, the Newfrontierstogether website seems to post only past recounts of what a sphere has recently accomplished. In other words, the website is more an information and a unity fostering forum rather than a unity generating forum. Even the upcoming events are advertised under the banner of the sphere that is managing the events. The impression is that the event is for the members of that sphere only. For example, the advert for the 'Connect 2018' conference has the 'New Ground' apostolic sphere symbol in the corner and states that 'We want to gather as many 20s and 30s *from across New Ground* to represent the full diversity of our age group' (italics added).[78] The

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[77] See https://newfrontierstogether.org/news/. Accessed on 9/8/2018.

[78] See https://newfrontierstogether.org/connect-2018-rooted/. Accessed 9/8/2018.

impression is that this conference is for the New Ground sphere and not for any other sphere.

So, while there appears to be a high level of unity in each of the apostolic spheres, there does not appear much of an emphasis on the unity of Newfrontierstogether at this point in time. The Newfrontierstogether website itself is of course intended to foster the unity of Newfrontierstogether, but the impression from the website is that the actual functioning of Newfrontierstogether is, at present, in silos, meaning each of the apostolic spheres. This may be a natural phase in the development of the movement. However, it has already been noted that Newfrontierstogether is presently in the phase where each of the spheres concentrates on forming its own identity and field of ministry. The danger is that these identities and fields will become so developed that commitment to the overall unity of Newfrontierstogether in actual cooperation on projects will become less and less of a priority. The commitment to Newfrontierstogether might then become merely a sentimental acknowledgement of the past whilst lacking any unity in reality.

The one area of Newfrontierstogether that contradicts what has been stated in the previous paragraph is what is happening in the area of church planting, because church planting is so important to Newfrontiers. The 'Christcentral' apostolic sphere have planned a church planting training conference in July 2019 and the advert includes the words 'Our keynote address will be from Jeremy Simpkins who leads the ChristCentral team and there will be seminars and workshops led by other church planters from across our wider family'.[79] By 'wider family' it is presumably meant the other apostolic spheres. So even though church planting may buck the silo trend, it nonetheless is still being advertised by ChristCentral and is to be led by the ChristCentral apostle.

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[79] See https://newfrontierstogether.org/planting-churches-advancing-the-kingdom/. Accessed 9/8/2018.

5. Concluding Remarks

In chapter 3, it has been seen that the sociologist Max Weber regarded sects as arising in society to defend the faith and its essential religious truths against the tide of secularism. Weber regarded the church, on the other hand, with its broad accessibility to the state, as unable to resist it. The result is that the church ceases to be the generator of values and instead becomes a benign performer of religious rites and other ceremonial functions. This is a clear warning for any reforming movement and Newfrontiers do see themselves as a reforming movement restoring the church to its New Testament glory.[80] The challenging question is, therefore, whether Newfrontiers will follow this typical trend and within a century find itself a as bureaucratised institution, just another monument to a charismatic reforming impulse within the universal church, and a 'sect' that has petrified into a bureaucratic organisation.

This study contends that it is possible for a reforming 'sect' like Newfrontiers to retain its vitality and original reforming impetus beyond the first apostolic leader. If the values of organic, gift-based networks, multiplication, and no dead-men's-shoes mentality but the on-going release of multiplied apostolic gifts are retained, then it may be able to avoid the usual tendency towards bureaucracy, hierarchy and a structure based on title, position and systems, rather than on recognition of the Ephesians 4:11 gifts.

It is hoped that Newfrontiers will change its position on women in leadership because it is hard to imagine that the acceptance of women in leadership would not have had a powerful and positive impact on Newfrontiers. Perhaps Newfrontiers can still be persuaded to consider women in leadership. What may happen, however, is that its unity, like the unity of the parallel apostolic network named 'Salt and Light' that has also multiplied into spheres, may come under great strain from leaders when some of the spheres accept women in leadership and others not. Salt and Light has managed to remain a united movement to this point by allowing spheres to take their own position on women

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[80] One of Virgo's (1985) earliest books is entitled *Restoration in the Church*.

in leadership. [81] This may be a something that Newfrontiers may need to emulate in time to come.

The Newfrontiers spheres appear to be in rude health if the Newfrontierstogether website is any indication of the state of the movement. Every sphere is running numerous missions, engaging in church planting activities and hosting conferences. That may be seen as a testimony of the investment that Virgo, his apostolic team and others have made over the years into Newfrontiers. But it is sincerely hoped that the leadership of Newfrontierstogether network can continue to hold the individual spheres together and that this movement will continue to multiply and have a great effect on the nations of the world. However, sooner or later, each of the apostolic spheres is going to have to face the question of women leadership as it becomes more and more of an issue in the church universal. The same can be said about homosexuality in the church. The unity of Newfrontierstogether is going to be tested and stretched as each sphere and forums initiated by the Newfrontiers Together Team endeavour to negotiate their way through these challenging issues.

The next chapter considers the actions of the Newfrontiers leadership in order to answer the following question: 'What could Newfrontiers have done differently?'. Chapter eight will evaluate Newfrontiers' transition by integrating the insights gained from the study of the succession of Paul by Timothy and Titus (Ch 4) and the Christocentric principles (Ch 5), together with the information in all the other chapters.

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[81] See http://www.saltlight.org/uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Salt-and-Light-Core-Commitments-4.6.pdf, especially the comment on 'Diversity'. The author of this thesis is a member of a Salt and Light church which is also a part of the 3DM movement which is more about a network supporting churches attempting to transition from a purely 'attractional church' to a 'missional' discipleship culture rather than a structural movement. It exists and functions alongside the existing networks or denominations that local churches are a part of.

Chapter Eight

What Could Newfrontiers Have Done Differently?

1. Introduction

The question of what the leadership of Newfrontiers could have done differently during the transition process is the focus in this chapter. The question is approached with a great deal of humility as Newfrontiers is considered to be one of the most credible modern apostolic movements (Kay and Dyer 2005:4). Virgo and his team's 'real' relational accountability (Kay 2007:347-348) has resulted in a movement that has lasted over forty years without any scandal being attached to it (Kay and Dyer 2005:4). In the light of this, John the Baptist's remark about not being worthy to untie Jesus' sandal comes to mind. Nevertheless, an attempt will be made to review the Newfrontiers transition in the light of the observations documented, analysed and interpreted in chapters two to seven. To achieve that objective, this chapter will first examine Newfrontiers' transition in the light of the analysis of the Pastoral Epistles (PEs) in chapter four and then present a critique of some of Newfrontiers' present leadership situation.

2. Comparison: Newfrontiers and the PEs

2.1. Character Qualities of Virgo

Chapter 4 outlined the ideal qualities of an apostle who is delegating his ministry to successors. The examination of Virgo as the apostle handing over leadership to emerging apostles leads to the conclusion that Virgo's character qualities are favourably matched with the ideal qualities of an apostle identified in chapter 4. For example, the interviews conducted with both Virgo and other apostolic leaders indicate that Virgo is characterised by a deep spirituality. Furthermore, he was consistently willing to mentor a large group of potential apostles, which was evidenced by the TIM training and his willingness and self-sacrificial attitude to hand over leadership of the movement. His self-sacrificial

attitude had previously been noticed when he expressed his willingness to relocate to the United States for two years in order to strengthen Newfrontiers churches there. Also, Virgo is a staunch believer in the authority of the Scriptures (Kay 2007:209). Through them he has a profound grasp of the doctrine of grace and teaches it in a way that is refreshing and encouraging and yet draws the listener to obedience, holiness and purity of heart.[82]

That Virgo has a high regard for the church is evident in several ways. For example, in *Does the future have a church?*, a book that he authored in 2003, he examined Paul's letter to the Ephesians and shows that the church is the apple of God's eye and absolutely key to God's plans for the future of the world (Virgo 2003:143-149). In chapter two to chapter five of the same book, he expounds the wonder of the gospel.

Thus Virgo appears to be an exemplary apostle. The critique that could be raised, however, is that Virgo's certainty in his Reformed and complementarian theology and the fervour of his vision to restore the church to the glory of the New Testament church may make him inflexible, less approachable and open to being questioned than he believes himself to be.

2.2. Character Qualities of Apostolic Successors

On 7 August 2018, the 'Newfrontierstogether'[83] website listed twenty-two apostolic leaders, thirteen of whom would lead apostolic spheres that have emerged since Virgo led the single sphere of Newfrontiers.[84] In chapter two, it was noted that Newfrontiers' preparation of apostolic leaders was extensive and very relationally orientated. It also relies on existing Ephesians 4:11 ministers and local church leaders that acknowledge the character and gifting of each

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[82] Virgo (2004) has devoted an entire book to this subject, which he entitled *God's Lavish Grace*.

[83] The 'Newfronteirstogether' part of the website address will from here on to refer to what Newfrontiers has become since the succession of Virgo by several apostles.

[84] See https://newfrontierstogether.org/apostolic-leaders/. Accessed on 7/8/2018.

apostolic leader. Therefore, not only is the process very slow, but no person receives the title of apostle until it is abundantly clear to the existing Ephesians 4:11 ministers and local church leaders that the person has consistently, over a period of years, exhibited the gifting and character of an apostle.

The only possible exception to this lengthy apostolic apprenticeship are apostles from other countries that have joined Newfrontiers as existing apostles with their own existing spheres and without Newfrontiers leaders having the benefit of time to confirm their gifting and character. There was, however, little risk in doing this, because these apostles have already proven themselves to other Ephesians 4:11 ministers in their own countries and sphere of local church leaders.

From the interviews conducted with Newfrontiers leaders and information from articles, blogs and books referred to in this study, it can be concluded that just as Virgo matched the ideal qualities of an apostle identified in chapter 4, so do Newfrontiers' apostolic successors match the ideal qualities of apostolic successors. Christ and His gospel are central to their lives; they have a deep grasp of grace which leads to the living of godly lives and living free from the love of money and sexual immorality. As a movement, leaders are encouraged to study theology.[85] Furthermore, the emergent apostles understand that they have been given a sacred trust and therefore must exercise their authority with the welfare of the church in mind. However, as in the case of Virgo, the question is once again raised as to whether the certainty of their Reformed and complementarian theology and the fervour of their vision to restore the church to the glory of the New Testament church do not make Newfrontiers leaders subtly arrogant in their views of other parts of the church and unwilling to receive advice from the rest of the church regarding their theology and ecclesiology.

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[85] ChristCentral Churches, part of Newfrontiers offer extensive theological courses. See https://christcentralchurches.org/training/.

3. Application of the Christocentric Principle to Newfrontiers

The application of the Christocentric principle to Newfrontiers will follow the order of the conclusions drawn in chapter five and reproduced here in order to comment on each one of them.

(1)   More experienced, proven and recognised apostles should seek to multiply themselves into others as a matter of urgency and to empower protégés with everything they need to fulfil their calling. Virgo has certainly done this. The question about acknowledging women's call to the five-fold ministry remains to be addressed.

(2)   Emerging apostles should have the effect of constantly reconstituting a movement to be a people of faith in and obedience to the Lord Jesus. This is important in the light of the tendency of movements initiated by a charismatic leader to become bureaucratised after his or her departure. It will inevitably 'creep in' without the constant reconstitution of the network by emerging apostles being the charismatic leaders who rejuvenate the movement once again.

(3)   'Newfrontierstogether' is the umbrella organisation that is tasked with maintaining connectivity between the new apostolic spheres. It remains to be seen whether the emerging apostles in the new spheres will have the courage to question any of the long held ecclesiological and theological beliefs of Newfrontiers, with particular reference to the questions of women elders and whether the five-fold gifts are open to both genders. Newfrontierstogether will no doubt seek to maintain these long held ecclesiological and theological beliefs of Newfrontiers.

(4)   Modern apostolic movements should consider the role of women within the network. A strongly complementarian theology which bars women from the office of apostle and elder does not seem to reflect the redemptive hermeneutic of the Scriptures and Jesus' revolutionary high regard for women. It therefore limits female members of Newfrontiers from making their full contribution to the church.

(5)   Proven apostles should take time to observe potential protégés and pray for divine revelation with regard to their suitability. Once they

identify apostolic protégés, they should pass on teaching and model a way of life to them by teaching and explaining to them what it means to an apostle. Once again, Virgo has certainly done this. The question remains whether a different approach to women and the distribution of five-fold gifts could have led Virgo to identify many more apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.

(6) Modern apostles should be perpetually on the search for potential protégés who might be emerging apostles. The comment under (4) applies here but specifically to the gift of apostle. Points 6 to 12 will be commented on after point 12.

(7) Apostles should delegate authority to their protégés and encourage them in the use of their gifts. The emerging apostle's authority remains a conferred authority, not an independent authority. Apostles commission emerging apostles in the commissioning apostle's name and the former are expected to represent the latter as though he is speaking through them. As time and experience accumulate, the commissioned one receives more and more autonomy, yet always remaining interdependent with the founding apostle and with the other emerging apostles.

(8) An apostle should expect that their protégés could and should be equal to them in time and even go on to exceed them in terms of effectiveness in ministry. It is likely that an apostle will have a smaller band of confidantes amongst the wider group of their protégés and even to have one that is closer than all the others.

(9) Apostles are by appointment on divine initiative and therefore not 'man-made'. However, their divine gifting needs to be recognised and endorsed by people, especially a proved and acknowledged apostle that the emerging apostle has served under.

(10) It is vital that the proven and experienced apostle ensures that the emerging apostle has come to the end of themselves at some point, in order that they might not rely on themselves, but on God alone.

(11) It is helpful for emerging apostles if an experienced apostle communicates 'insider' information to them that others may not be privy

to. This helps the emerging apostles to grasp the bigger picture and to learn from the experienced apostle's words and deeds.

(12) Obedience to Christ is an apostolic absolute. Proven and acknowledged apostles should be able to discern, while observing a potential apostle, whether that person is obedient to Christ or following his or her own agenda.

By way of summary, Virgo and his protégés compare well with every point if the evaluation. The problem is that Newfrontiers has not as yet acknowledged that women may be called to fulfil one of the five-fold gifts as well as the assumption that and these gifts are rare and exclusive in the body of Christ. If, however, women are called by God and if the gifts are distributed widely amongst all the saints, then a great gulf appears in their understanding of leadership from a biblical perspective, which will affect its strategy to acknowledge, raise and commission five-fold leaders. Thus, those who may have been overlooked in the Newfrontiers transition may be women that are five-fold gifts and men who are five-fold gifts but who do not fit the theology and ecclesiology of the Newfrontiers apostolic team.

4. The Transition of Newfrontiers

When the conclusions of chapter six are applied to the Newfrontiers transition, it becomes fair to say that more time could have been given to the transition period, between the ending of Newfrontiers as a single movement and the new network of apostolic spheres called Newfrontierstogether. Churches and church leaders could have been allowed more time in the 'neutral zone' to allow them to digest the planned changes and to provide feedback on the process. It would have created a greater sense of emotional investment in the process rather than simply having to go along with something that had been unilaterally decided on.

In terms of Bridges' life-cycle of an organisation in chapter six, it may be said that Newfrontiers circumvented the apostolic team seeing the change as a severe personal setback. They all went along with what had been perceived as

more meaningful roles in the Newfrontierstogether phase, either leading apostolic spheres of their own or being part of the 'Newfrontierstogether' team.[86] Bridges (2009:84) states, 'The successful outcome of any phase of organisational development triggers its demise by creating challenges that it is not equipped to handle'. An example pertinent to this study is the successful raising up of several apostles within Newfrontiers when Newfrontiers began as a network with one apostle. The first phase of Newfrontiers was not able to cope with several emerging apostles, and so necessary for Newfrontiers to enter a new phase: the development of several apostolic spheres to give opportunity to the emerging apostles within the movement.

Another of Bridges' (2009:85) insights is, 'In any significant transition, the thing that the organisation needs to let go of is the very thing that got it this far'. The thing that has got Newfrontiers this far has been its acknowledgement and embracing of the ministry of the apostle as well as the other gifts of Ephesians 4:11. However, it raises the following question: Could the acknowledgement of women as elders and apostles be what was needed to truly launch the movement into its next phase?

A very positive aspect of Newfrontiers in the light of Bridges' life-cycle of an organisation is that Newfrontiers transitioned at the right time from one apostle leading a single network to several apostles who each are leading a new apostolic sphere. This has definitely accelerated Newfrontiers forward to its present ecclesiology and theology.

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[86] The 'Newfrontiers Together' team 'leads and facilitates what Newfrontiers continues to do together through collaboration and interdependence between apostolic leaders' (https://newfrontierstogether.org/team-member/david-devenish/. Accessed 8/8/2018).

5. A Critique of Newfrontiers' Present Leadership Situation

5.1. Women Apostles

This study concludes that Newfrontiers compares well with the leadership criteria listed in chapter four when the character qualities of the founding apostle and the succeeding apostles of Newfrontiers are considered. The only disappointment is that women are not considered for the role of apostle in Newfrontiers doctrine of the church. The entire debate on women in leadership is beyond the scope of this study. It suffices to say that there have been very plausible biblical arguments advanced that suggest that women should be apostles and elders (Bushnell 2016; Cunningham and Hamilton 2000; Pierce and Groothius 2005; Scott 1992).

An apostle is believed by Newfrontiers to be a male-only office, which would certainly make Newfrontiers an anachronism in the 21st century, which per se is not necessarily a bad thing. The church will always be an anachronism in that it is called by Jesus not be of this world (John 17:16; cf. Jam 4:4). However, to be categorised as an anachronism because one holds adamantly to a doctrine that is rigorously debated on a Scriptural basis,[87] is something else. As has been stated before in chapter five, Newfrontiers hold to a complementarian theology of gender roles. According to believers of this theology, the role of church elder and apostle is exclusively male with the result that the leadership of Newfrontiers is male dominated. Kay (2007:254) writes that his impression of male led networks is that they 'are more task orientated, more focused on goals and expansionist plans and less inclined to classify themselves as responsive banks of resources for the whole church.' In a survey that Kay (2007:331) conducted amongst twelve apostolic networks in the UK, the statement 'Women should have exactly the same opportunities as men' was strongly supported in

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[87] Consider the Scriptural analysis done by Bushnell 2016; Cunningham and Hamilton 2000; Pierce and Groothius 2005; Scott 1992; and Webb 2001, amongst many others.

these networks bar four of them: the Jesus Fellowship, Newfrontiers, Salt and Light and Lifelink[88], who were negative with regard to this statement.

Abigail Dolan (2018:19) of Oklahoma Christian University writes that

> women are created in the image of God, just as men are (Gen 1:27). Both men and women reflect the Divine equally and fully; neither men nor women are lacking because they are not the other sex. What logically follows is that God cannot be only represented in one gender if both reflect God equally).

What Dolan has written could mean that Newfrontiers would be less nurturing, sensitive and wise than it could be if women were acknowledged as apostles and elders. It seems unlikely however, that Newfrontiers would be open to shift in its theology and ecclesiology.

5.2. Apostles and the Exclusivity of the Ephesians 4:11 Gifts

Newfrontiers hold that a select minority of believers have been given to the church as Ephesians 4:11 ministry gifts. Niewold (2008), Hirsch (2006:171; 2012:10, 14, 20, 277) and Breen and Cockram (2011:136-138) argue that the Ephesians 4:11 gifts have been given by Christ to the benefit of the whole body of Christ. In other words, that there are not an exclusive few that could fulfil these roles in the body of Christ. Hirsch and Catchim (2012:21), for example, write: 'We therefore suggest that calling and ministry are different from leadership only by matter of degree and capacity' (see also Frost and Hirsch 2003:170-172; Hirsch 2006:171-172). What Hirsch means by this is that there may be many apostles in the body of Christ, but not many will have the level of apostolic gifting and capacity to lead an apostolic network.

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[88] The apostolic networks that were surveyed by Kay (2007:299) were C.Net, Ground Level, Ichthus, Jesus Fellowship, Kensington Temple, Kingdom Faith, Lifelink, Newfrontiers, Together, Spirit Connect/Pioneer, Slat and Light and Vineyard.

The fact that Newfrontiers' understanding of Ephesians 4:11 gifts is somewhat unique and that apostleship an exclusively male occupied role are major factors in the cohesiveness of the movement. The reason is because the apostle leading a sphere is regarded as holding a unique level of authority that other leaders in that apostolic sphere submit to. The authority of team leaders is taken very seriously by the local eldership team, all of which are male. Hosier (2011), a Newfrontiers leader, sees the congregational ecclesiology of Newfrontiers as a hybrid in the sense that they acknowledge the autonomy of local congregations; and they are Presbyterian in that their churches are led by elder teams. These teams work in relationship with and are accountable to other elder teams. He says that this might confuse observers but Newfrontiers regard it as 'the obvious reading of the New Testament, freed from the strictures of institutionalism' (p. 6). Congregationalism would imply a strong sense of democracy in the church, which is certainly not the case. They are Presbyterian in their leadership approach, with the elders carrying even more authority than elders in a Presbyterian church. The effect on Newfrontiers is that they have a *de facto* hierarchical and therefore centralised structure in every apostolic sphere.

One of the six dimensions of the Geert Hofstede model is 'power distance': to what degree the members of an organisation with low power expect or accept that the power is unequally distributed (Taucean et al. 2016:68). For relative differentiation, Hofstede introduced a "power differential index" (PDI) initially for 53 studied countries. The higher the number, the more authoritarian/paternalistic the leadership style, and consequently, people are more afraid of their superiors or do not want to contradict their leaders. Lower PDI numbers mean that a participative style is used; people are not so afraid of their superiors. For example, Romania scores 90 in this study, implying there is a tendency for a more authoritarian style leadership and that people are more afraid of their superiors in this culture (ibid.). Newfrontiers would probably have a fairly high PDI, regardless of the fact that they would consider themselves a fairly 'flat' organisation with regard to authority. The high regard for apostles, their relative scarcity, and the respect with which they are treated inevitably leads to power distance between the apostolic team and the church members.

For this reason, power distance is likely to be accepted, if not embraced, by the average church member.

This study contends that not much will happen at a sphere level without the apostle's say-so and not much will happen at the local church level without the lead-elder's say-so. The question is, as godly and humble as these men may be, whether this structure will inevitably stifle the five-fold gifts in other men if their initiatives do not meet the approval of the apostle and his team. It will most certainly stifle the five-fold gifts in women as Newfrontiers do not believe God would call women to fulfil any of the Ephesians 4:11 gifts, particularly that of apostle.

No movement can simply allow any and every person to do as they please under the guise of claiming they have been called to an Ephesians 4:11 ministry. Some degree of permission and endorsement must exist in any organisation if it is to function with any degree of cohesiveness. The issue is, when an apostolic network like Newfrontiers begins with the premise that Ephesians 4:11 ministers are very far and few between, that people are intimidated to voice their belief that they have a calling to one of the five-fold ministries. By contrast, the 3DM movement holds that all believers are the recipients of one of the Ephesians 4:11 gifts (Breen and Cockram 2011:136-138). This position means that all believers are encouraged to fan into flame and exercise their five-fold gift. The accountability aspect, which is necessary lest an organisation become fragmented and chaotic, is provided through discipleship, in the form of regular meetings in small discipleship groups called 'Huddles'. Any person who wishes to exercise a five-fold ministry is therefore expected to be in a 'Huddle'.

The net result of the 3DM approach is a far greater sense of openness for anyone in the movement to pursue their gifting and encouragement to experiment together with permission to fail. The approach could lead to more five-fold gifts emerging at many different levels of leadership. The 'feel' of 3DM is permission-giving and a sense of being taken at face-value until you prove

yourself otherwise. It may also be said that it is not done naively, particularly as leadership roles carry responsibility; it is more an attitude than a policy.

It seems that the 3DM model also results in a much 'safer' and united organisation, as those who are eventually given the endorsement of the apostle and his team are those that conform to what the incumbent apostle and team are comfortable with ecclesiastically and theologically and who have shown themselves to be submissive to the apostle. The problem, however, is that it must surely retard the commissioning of five-fold ministries in these apostolic networks and an absence of some unconventional five-fold gifts that do not fit the culture of a particular apostolic team. That would be so, without even considering the question of women who may have been called to one of the five-fold gifts.

Where the 3DM model is followed, more five-fold gifts are encouraged and released, which leads to greater mission (Breen 2013:80-87). In this model, church unity is preserved by discipleship relationships where life-on-life relationships are maintained. However, there appears to be more room for different schools of ecclesiology and theology in this model.

6. Summary and Concluding Remarks

This chapter set out to answer the question, 'What could Newfrontiers have done differently?' To glean an answer to this question, Virgo and his apostolic successors were examined against the PEs and the Christocentric principle applied through the Gospel of Matthew. The transition of Newfrontiers was then considered in the light of Bridges' models for managing transition and the lifecycle of organisations. Finally, the present leadership situation in Newfrontiers was critiqued.

The conclusion is that Virgo is an exemplary apostle in terms of searching for, mentoring and commissioning emerging apostles, yet his theology and ecclesiology creates the danger of being inflexible and less approachable and open to being questioned than is ideal. There is also the question of whether

approximately half the members of Newfrontiers, the female members, have been omitted from even being considered as apostles or elders.

When Virgo's successors were considered the result was they too are exemplary but due to their inflexible theology, ecclesiology and perceiving themselves to have a ground-breaking role for the sake of the church universal, they may be subtly arrogant in their views about other parts of the church and unwilling to receive theological and ecclesiological correction from the rest of the church. The critique of the exclusion of women from the role of apostle and elder applies here too.

The transition of Newfrontiers lacked a dedicated transition plan; not enough time was allowed for the 'neutral zone', many were not sure what was coming to an end, and there was poor two-way personal communication.

With respect to Newfrontiers' current leadership situation, Newfrontiers have maintained a 'flat' (Kay 2007:250-251), organic, network structure (Castells 2000:502) that bodes well for sustaining a movemental dynamic in the movement. However, the question of women being barred from being apostles or elders was raised together with the exclusivity of the Ephesians 4:11 gifts, as it would be reasonable to conclude that both of these factors would mitigate against the full propagation of a 'flat', organic, network structure.

Thus, to answer the question 'What could Newfrontiers have done differently?', at least three points deserve mention.

Firstly, Newfrontiers could have engaged with other schools of ecclesiology and theology in humility and been willing to learn from them. For example, with respect to women in leadership, the non-exclusivity of the Ephesians 4:11 gifts, and whether it is possible, or even desirable, for the contemporary church to attempt to become the same as the New Testament church. God seems to consistently move salvation history forward since the Fall and not in an endeavour to recapture the past. Certainly there are aspects of what took place in the New Testament church that would be good to see in the church again -

the power, miracles, effectiveness and growth – but not the cultural aspects of the New Testament church.

Secondly, the question of women as apostles and elders could have been investigated anew. A great opportunity to take a step towards releasing the potential of women was missed. Perhaps, in time, some of the new apostolic spheres will revisit the question of female apostles and elders.

Finally, the apostolic team could have acquainted themselves with models for the transition of an organisation. This would have enabled them to come up with a plan specifically for the transition period. Such a plan would have allowed more time in a 'neutral zone' for all concerned and encouraged more broad, two-way communication with the whole movement. It must be borne in mind however, that every 'neutral zone' must come to an end for the organisation to move on. The critique is simply whether Newfrontiers even had a concept of a 'neutral zone' or allowed sufficient time in it.

Having answered the question of what Newfrontiers could have done differently, the study will next focus on the effects of the transition on Newfrontiers' organisational and leadership structure, unity and mission, and will offer general suggestions about apostolic succession.

Chapter Nine

Conclusion and the Significance of the Study

1. Introduction

This study was undertaken as a critical evaluation of the leadership transition of the Newfrontiers apostolic movement from the founding apostle to his successors. Very little research seems to have been done on leadership transition in contemporary apostolic movements. It was, therefore, anticipated that lessons could be learned from Newfrontiers about apostolic succession since other apostolic networks will experience apostolic transition at some point of their existence.

The study sought to demonstrate that the succession of an apostolic leader by a single apostle was detrimental to the unity of the movement, and that the multiplication of a single apostolic sphere into multiple apostolic spheres through the commissioning of several emerging apostles provides the renewing impetus that prevents an apostolic movement from becoming an institutionalised bureaucracy.

The study also questioned whether a rigid Reformed, charismatic and complementarian theology and ecclesiology best serves the Newfrontiers apostolic movement, and whether it leads to theological and ecclesiological isolation and a concomitant subtle arrogance in standpoint and a reluctance to learn from other parts of the church.

The aim in the rest of this chapter is as follows. First, it will provide an overview of the research and will then offer some suggestions about apostolic succession.

2. Review of the Research

The research project was formulated in the light of the great importance of the successful transitions in apostolic leadership of contemporary apostolic movements. These movements are a vital reforming impulse to the universal church and hold out the hope of avoiding the bureaucratisation of reforming movements.

The objectives of the project were fourfold: (1) to compare Newfrontiers' apostolic transition with biblical teaching on apostolic succession in light of the Pastoral Epistles and Peppler's Christocentric principle applied to the Gospel of Matthew; (2) to evaluate whether the execution of the transition conformed to principles of best practice; (3) to establish and assess the impact of the leadership transition of Newfrontiers on its mission, unity and structure; and (4) to establish whether Newfrontiers could have done their transition differently and more effectively. The method chosen to execute the task is that of Vyhmeister which consist of the following structural elements: (a) *observation.* This was carried out through quantitative research and data obtained through questionnaires, interviews and information from Newfrontiers' website, magazine, and so on; (b) *analysis.* The factors underlying the approach of Newfrontiers to apostolic succession such as their theology, ecclesiology, psychological profiles of their leaders and the sociological influences were analysed; (c) *interpretation.* The study researched the PEs and applied Peppler's Christocentric principle to the gospel of Matthew to determine what biblical principles could be used to evaluate Newfrontiers' transition. In addition to these principles, Newfrontiers' transition was evaluated against the Bridges model for managing transition and the lifecycle of an organisation; and (d) *action.* The insights gained from the interpretation were applied to Newfrontiers' apostolic succession and observations made regarding what might have been done differently.

3. Suggestions for Apostolic Succession

The principles to be applied to apostolic succession that can be deduced from the research project are as follows. First, with regards to its theology and ecclesiology, Newfrontiers should have been more open to engage the wider church in the leadership transitioning process. It would seem logical to conclude that no single part of the church 'knows it all', and we therefore need the views of others in order to come to a more complete understanding of theology and ecclesiology. Second, Newfrontiers should have revisited the question of female apostles and elders in order to avoid failing to benefit from their callings and ministry gifts. Finally, Newfrontiers should have done more work on a plan for the transition itself; the transitioning process could have been better clarified for the movement as a whole; a slightly slower pace of change could have been followed, and better personal two-way communication between the leaders of Newfrontiers and its members could have been implemented.

4. Conclusion

Newfrontiers is one of the most highly regarded apostolic movements among a number of contemporary apostolic movements in the world. What has been observed, analysed, interpreted and applied to Newfrontiers could be of benefit to all contemporary apostolic movements. The research has focused on Newfrontiers in particular, and the aim was to understand contemporary apostolic succession and to show how all contemporary apostolic movements might transition from the leadership of one apostle to multiple emerging apostles in a way that maintains their unity, mission and 'flat' organic structure.

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