THE IMPACT OF WORLDVIEW ON THE PROCESS OF ADMINISTRATION: A STUDY OF SHONA AND NDEBELE CHRISTIANS IN ZIMBABWE

by

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Summary

THE IMPACT OF WORLDVIEW ON THE PROCESS OF ADMINISTRATION: A STUDY OF SHONA AND NDEBELE CHRISTIANS IN ZIMBABWE

As a Euro-African I wish to explore the validity of the idea that worldview factors are fundamental in determining the praxis of administration. From observation and experience, problems with the practice of administration appear to be generic, rather than primarily personal. (It was noted, however, that personality and temperament also play a role.) The enquiry focuses on Shona and Ndebele Christians in Zimbabwe. As the field of study is Practical Theology and to give a theological foundation for and, perhaps, at least a partial solution to some of the perceived problems, a nascent theological approach to administration is presented, together with proposed training courses in administration and leadership for Bible colleges.

Because the notion of administration is somewhat abstract, a fivefold framework was used comprising Planning, Organising, Leading and Controlling, all performed within Time. Questions on the connections, values, perceptions, expectations and use of these components by Shona and Ndebele Christians were discussed in light of their worldviews.

Although the intended research approach was social construction, the need for the framework undercut this approach somewhat. I also came from a moderately soft postfoundationalist viewpoint, using narrative practical theology. Six Christian leaders as co-researchers – three Shona and three Ndebele; three Pentecostal and three non-Pentecostal – shared their multicultural insights through personal anecdotes and narrative interaction.

Chapter One, in two parts, begins with a personal anecdote and other illustrations highlighting some of the difficulties experienced with administration and its processes in a multicultural African context. The research question – whether worldview shapes the praxis of administration – together with sub-problems, is then outlined. The second section explains the research methodology.

Chapter Two defines worldview and administration from both the natural and Christian perspectives, to clarify their nature and praxis. Some underlying problems are introduced.

Chapter Three explores what constitutes administration in Christian ministry. Here, values and tasks are itemised to reveal the actual content of administration (at least from a local church pastor's perspective) and some assumptions behind it.

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Chapter Four presents individual conversations with the six co-researchers. These personal responses begin to highlight the connection of worldview to administrative praxis and some initial issues arising there from.

Chapter Five reflects group dialogues, which allow for cross-cultural and cross-theological views. Gender is introduced as a woman para-church ministry leader replaces a pastor. This provides further fusion of views.

From there, Chapter Six examines the Shona, Ndebele and Christian worldviews in more depth. Two case studies are explored narratively, to identify how worldview factors impact the praxis of administration in specific settings.

Chapter Seven discusses the group's understanding of the Biblical perspective of administration. A tentative theological approach to administration is offered.

And lastly, Chapter Eight summarises the findings, identifies the issues and presents some solutions. The focus for the latter is on possible administration courses for Bible colleges. Although not directly social constructionist, the team affirmed this approach. The intention here is to enhance this training and thus improve administration in Christian ministry for the wider benefit of the Church community.

Key Terms

Administration: The art and science of planning, organising, leading and controlling people and tasks so that the primary objective is accomplished efficiently and effectively. Often nebulous, it encompasses a wide range of tasks which may vary in detail depending on the context and requirements of the work. It is often used synonymously with management and has a strong overlap with leadership.

In Christian ministry, it is identified as one of the spiritual gifts. But, since it is also a natural talent involving skills and capabilities, it can be learned and improved upon; different people thus have varying levels of competence. It is not axiomatic that one with a natural talent automatically has the spiritual gift.

Narrative: A research methodology where the primary data is gleaned from the narratives and discourses of an individual or a community. It listens respectfully to those voices; the participants thus become co-researchers, since their input provides both the content and rationale for the actions being investigated. Although the content is important, the process is predominant.

Ndebele: This Bantu-speaking people group is an off-shoot of the Zulus and is thus found in both South Africa and south-western Zimbabwe. They arrived after internecine war in the 1820s and, on their trek northwards across the Limpopo River, absorbed or inculturated many smaller groups in their hegemony.

Postfoundationalism: A philosophical approach to understanding meaning and reality. It is a counter-reaction to foundationalism (there is only one truth) and non-foundationalism (there is no truth, since one person's interpretation [from their context] is just as valid as the next; hence, it is highly relative.) Postfoundationalism is therefore a middle-of-the-road attempt to provide opportunity for dialogue which the extremes of the other two approaches necessarily exclude. It is clearly aligned to the philosophical notion of postmodernism, a relativity-based reaction to the extreme unitariness of modernism (esp. as espoused by the Western worldview of scientific rationalism [things are only 'rational' if they can be 'proved' by science.])

Practical Theology: A multi-faceted cross-disciplinary social science field focussing on the interpretation and application of theological principles in daily living. It interacts with a variety of other social science disciplines to provide a rationale and 'understanding' for behaviour and attitude within a Christian context. While a sub-field of Theology, it nevertheless interacts with all the other sub-fields and serves as the hub for application.

Praxis: The customary practice or exercise of a skill, art or science.

Shona: A general term for the Bantu-speaking people group dominating south-central Africa. Associated primarily with modern day Zimbabwe, Shona speakers are also found in western Mozambique and southern Zambia. It is the predominant people group in Zimbabwe and, with its dialects, constitutes about 80% of the population of Zimbabwe. A pastoral group, the Shona forebears arrived in the area during the Third Century.

Social Constructionism: A philosophical base that shapes meaning and reality. It is premised on the idea that such meaning and reality is formed by a community that constructs phenomena such as institutions, rules and other social entities that allow the community to define meaning and reality and, thus, to live in harmony. This view of reality is shaped by the context(s) of the community and, therefore, will vary from group to group. The group's social constructs are thus tied to worldview. Social constructionism is also utilised as a research tool that focuses on listening respectfully to what the other has to say to establish and understand the rationale for their sense of meaning and reality. It also involves communal problem solving, as the research is an attempt to help the community highlight issues and find contextually relevant answers.

Worldview: The way one sees reality, interprets the world; the rationale (often unrecognised and unexpressed) for attitude and behaviour. It is a unifying view of life that distinguishes one group from another. It includes culture, tradition, habit, language, logic, assumptions and expectations.

Christian Worldview: The reality as understood, interpreted, articulated and practised by Christians. It is shaped not by human entity but by one's understanding of Scripture and interaction with God. It is not limited by human worldview, people groups, geography, race, gender, language or culture. Rather, it is universal, being adapted and interpreted within human cultures. Indeed, it is also a call to reshape those elements of human culture and worldview impacted negatively by the Fall and the human propensity to sin. As such, it is counter-cultural.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION: Identifying the Problem

1   The Thesis

1.1 *The Problem Illustrated:*

On a cool but sunny winter's morning in late May 2005, I pulled up my car on the verge of a major road leading south-east out of Bulawayo. I was at the tail end of a fuel queue at a small, single-pump garage. At 8:05, I was 17th in line. Fuel was expected "some time" the lady in front of me said casually without any hint of exactness. Hopefully, two colleagues and I returned at 11:15. Still no petrol. By now, word had spread in the fuel-starved city, and the queue had grown to about 70 vehicles. Ominously, several Kombi vans, colloquially known as ETs (Emergency Taxis, a supposedly temporary transport arrangement now well established after 25 years), were parked in various spots on the other side of the road. At 1:45 p.m., the petrol bowser arrived; the sight of it was a joy to behold! After several hours in the now warm sun, tired and hungry motorists were visibly encouraged. But, it was another hour before it had disgorged its load.

Then we waited yet another 90 long, agonising minutes. People were gathered around the pumps on the forecourt, obviously listening to and watching something. Arguing … shouting … hub-bub. More noise, more turmoil. But no attempt to serve customers. Tales of corruption. The delivery was supposed to be 10 000 litres, but surprisingly, only 3 000 had been put into the tanks. Where had the bulk of it gone? The Central Investigation Department (CID police) and officials of the Petroleum Marketer's Association of Zimbabwe (PMAZ) were called. There was talk of someone being arrested. The CID and PMAZ left and returned some time later. In the meantime, the queue had grown to more than 100 cars stretching back along the highway for nearly a kilometre. All sorts of vehicles had mysteriously materialised on the forecourt, completely oblivious to the vehicles already there. The manageress came down the line handing out numbered tickets and writing the numbers on the windscreens. That was supposedly to bring some semblance of order.

But, as the pouring started, at 4:15 p.m., some 1½ hours after the bowser had left, the ET drivers began their tricks of pushing in. In some places, the queue was two or even three vehicles broad; some parked at odd angles, so that road traffic was hindered. The first three vehicles were served, and then came a delay: some of the manageress's "VIPs" were being served ahead of those of us who had queued all day. But then, slowly, we started inching toward the pumps again. Suddenly, two cars ahead of me, a young ET driver, barely out of

his teens, appeared from nowhere and pushed in, supposedly behind and at the behest of his friend in another ET in front of him. This was followed seconds later by another. The tired crowd was angry; voices were raised and stones picked up. An elderly man in the car behind them tried in vain to force his way past the two ETs. The youngster was hauled out of his van and pushed around, but he stood his ground and wouldn't be deterred. He was determined to keep "his" place. A second group tried again, and a big, burly man pulled him out and a fist-fight started. A crowd quickly gathered to watch the spectacle. The underdog was giving as good as he got, to the glee of the onlookers. A cut lip and some bruises later, the bigger, older man gave up. The ETs joined ranks and parked helter-skelter preventing cars from moving forward in the proper queue. There were now two parallel lines for about 30 meters from the pump.

At 6:00 p.m., service stopped with the manageress stating that she was closing down for the night. After 10 hours in the queue, I was 10 metres from the pump with three numbered vehicles still in front of me in what used to be the original line that now stretched back for 1½ kilometres. The forecourt was awash with vehicles parked willy-nilly around the pump, grid locked. There was nothing left to do but stay the night. You dare not risk leaving to go home. Some people did leave, however, and as the ET drivers moved and organised themselves for the night, some order returned to the original queue of cars.

At 6:00 a.m. the next morning – a public holiday – with several of us having slept in our cars, the ET drivers began organising themselves in a separate queue on the other side of the forecourt. Every few minutes, another one would arrive and park behind his colleagues. The line of cars, meanwhile, had bunched up to take the places of those who had left. It was back down to about 65 vehicles. At 6:30, the manageress was seen wandering around observing the situation. We expected her to open up and start serving again. But no, there seemed to be no thought for the weary, inconvenienced, frustrated customers. The fact that customers were still waiting did not seem important at all. As 8:00 a.m. came and went, there was no sign of any movement. There was no attempt to clear the backlog and make any progress. At 8:40, a man who had tried to direct operations the day before started again. Arguing vociferously, he was adamant that the main queue of cars should be served first, but the ET drivers were having none of that. At one point, the car queue was renumbered and I became number five. But there were at least 12 other vehicles surrounding the pump. The ET drivers argued back and forth refusing to budge. Stalemate again. Eventually, the manageress called the Riot Police to come and restore order. The vehicles around the pump were so congested that, even if those at the pump itself were served, they were unable to move away for other vehicles to take their places.

At 10:45, an hour and a quarter after the Riot Police were called – and with none of them in sight – another man decided he had had enough. He was fed up that, on a public holiday, he was stuck in a petrol queue, unable to visit his family. So, he started organising the situation. There was some talk that he was either related to the manageress or had an interest in the garage. At least he seemed to have more authority than the first man. It was clear from the lack of argument from the ET drivers that his plan included them in the serving**:** he proposed that the cars and ETs be served alternately. Having obviously devised and communicated the plan, he pleaded for people to go back to their cars to begin the process of getting untangled and served. In the meantime, more VIP vehicles had arrived, including three hearses. Even though I was now numbered five in the car queue, it took another hour before I was served with at least ten vehicles ahead of me being attended to. People waited patiently, albeit with some frustration. Eventually, I drove away at 11:03, virtually 27 hours after first joining the queue and after a little more than three hours of actual service.

1.2 *The Problem Described*:

Sadly, this is not the first time this has happened in Zimbabwe and has not been uncommon during this current period of fuel shortages. Indeed, this scenario is repeated on a daily basis. Personally, I find it amazing, first, that despite the number of times they have done it, people seem unable to organise themselves and of having the common courtesy of accepting order. Second, I find it surprising that, after three years of such on-off fuel shortages, workable systems have not been devised to stem the chaos. Unfortunately, corruption is part of the equation and, where an ET driver is prepared to pay a bribe and a pump attendant accepts it, it is extremely difficult for logic, common sense and courtesy to come into play. However rational, civilised and courteous most people want to be, corruption makes a minority selfish, inconsiderate and rude. Normal values no longer apply. And the situation is not made any easier by the example set by political and civic leaders who arrogantly abuse their positions and refuse accountability. Indeed, the Police themselves set the tone by jumping the queue and demanding they be served – even in their private vehicles for personal use – ahead of scores of other motorists.

At one garage at Beitbridge, despite a large forecourt and driveway, the manager stands at the head of the queue, some 30 metres from the pumps, with a sjambok. It is quite clear he will not tolerate any nonsense! One car is allowed forward at a time. Not surprisingly, customers queue calmly, patiently and courteously. A sjambok does not equate to organising or efficient administration, but it communicates order very dramatically. Regrettably, we cannot administer everything we do in the same way.

Interestingly, it is not outsiders alone who express astonishment at these goings-on; how pliant – even foolish – Zimbabweans are to allow this to occur repeatedly. Zimbabweans themselves express discomfit, disgust, annoyance and anger. Almost invariably, as people strike up a conversation, they begin with a now ubiquitous declaration of how terrible the situation is, how improper, unjust and unnecessary it all is. Of course, the shortage of fuel is but one piece of the politico-economic equation that has plagued Zimbabwe for years and has been particularly acute in the last six. While it is related to the overall governance malaise, spread like a terminal cancer during the last 25 years of Independence, one clear element is the mismanagement. This is symptomatic of maladministration.

For instance, long queues meander outside a Government office block. People have been waiting since 3:00 a.m. for a chance to be picked as one the 180 lucky ones who will be served that day to begin the 10-month process of acquiring a passport. Meetings are called to discuss problems, but key participants do not arrive on time, thus keeping everyone else waiting and delaying other business. Stocks of stationery run out and are only reordered after the last item has been taken – with consequent delays for others. Motorists in a small town are forced to drive 80 kms to another, larger, town to pay their speeding tickets because no-one at the police station has bothered to order a new book of receipts. A customer at a bank asks the lady at the Enquiries Desk for simple instructions on how to do something and the response is a shrug of the shoulders, without any attempt to help at all. The manager of an engineering company twice berates his employees for slackness, unprofessionalism and indiscipline, but nothing changes. A major border post is inundated with travellers over the weekend, yet half the teller windows are unmanned and the remaining ones have queues of 30 or more people each. More delays are experienced outside with vehicle checks: More than 200 large trucks, stretching for seven kilometres, block the approach road to the Customs post. Yet, little is done to change the system.

In 2004, no less than 10 indigenous banks were put into curatorship. The Reserve Bank Governor, Dr Gideon Gono, in a two-page explanatory Note dated 2nd April, 2004 published in all local newspapers (see, for example, the supplement to *Zimbabwe Independent*), outlined the reasons.   It is significant, I believe, that in each case, the underlying issues were administrative. The lack of policies and procedures – or the ignoring of such – were the key reasons for the failures, even where this involved corruption. And so we could go on.

The same is true in the Church. Meetings are arranged months in advance, and then postponed at the last minute on spurious grounds. No thought is given to other plans or arrangements already made during the rescheduled time. Or, someone is asked to do some

work in preparation for a meeting, but then fails to do what was asked and a decision cannot be made. Church services start at a given time, but people still regularly come in up to 30 minutes late – thus missing key announcements and a good section of the worship. Pastors make appointments, and then fail to keep them. Sunday School teachers and Bible study leaders consistently fail to prepare adequately for their ministry commitments. Church events fail or are only partially successful because little thought is given to key elements of preparation, planning and priorities.

In the broader context, personal experience and observation show that Africa is in political, economic and social crisis. Despite the billions of dollars in aid – both in cash and in kind – together with copious offers of expertise, the problems facing the Continent seem as intractable as ever. The question must be asked: Why? More to the point, the Christian Church, as a major part of this social fabric, is not immune to this apparent malady. Yet, with a supposedly different ethic and worldview, many of the same problems are manifest. So, again, the question must be asked: Why?

These illustrations reveal a fundamental problem: If people realise that this is not how things are supposed to be, why do they tolerate it on the one hand and, on the other, why do they not devise better ways of doing things? For the past six years in particular, Zimbabweans have been complaining about the problems of daily life; the levels of hardship and suffering have increased while standards of living and the quality of life have decreased. Professionalism and workmanship have noticeably declined, so that service delivery is often less than satisfactory. Indeed, when one does receive professional, ethical and workmanlike service, there is undue surprise and gratitude. Despite the political connotation, almost everyone is willing to admit that the "good old days" were better. Yet, very little, if anything, is done to change things. The pervasiveness of this problem raises the question of inherent causes beyond education, training and urban exposure.

In considering this issue, it seems to me that there is at least one common denominator: the specific aspect of administration keeps coming to the fore. Poor planning, poor organisation, poor leadership and poor control seem to lie at the heart of this misgovernance. That is not to say that the human sin elements of greed, corruption, arrogance and selfishness are not also part of the main problem. But these characteristics are not confined to the Shona or Ndebele peoples alone, nor do they necessarily *cause* administrative praxis. The issue I wish to focus on is what shapes such praxis in the first place? And, for the Christian, the concomitant question is what theology of administration – however poorly considered it may be – governs this praxis?

I do not believe this situation is the result of incompetence and incapacity, since disorganisation is not restricted to particular cultural groups. Nor do I think it is purely the absence of education, since there are many in Africa who have received the best education and training available in the world. That said, however, it seems that administrative quality is higher with better education and training, even to the point, on occasion, of negating normal cultural practice. Nor, it seems to me, is this primarily a matter of personality or temperament either, since it is all-too-pervasive and is not limited to individual cases.

1.2.1 *Some Sub-problems*

In looking at this main problem, there are also several sub-problems. For instance, we need to explore definitions, expectations and assumptions about administration in general. While my frustration as a Euro-African might be explained partially in terms of a cross-cultural context, that does not explain the similar frustrations of Africans themselves when "the system" fails to work properly. Thus, what – in any cultural context – is "proper", "good", "right", "effectiveness" and "efficiency"? How are these understood and defined by Shona and Ndebele peoples in particular? What are their expectations of these concepts? When these expectations are not met, what is the appropriate response? How are corrections made?

Second, there are worldview issues such as creativity, innovation, self-image or identity, leadership, relationships and community, the spirit world and time among others to consider. For instance, what influence does the rural-urban divide have on one's worldview and thus approach to administration? The rural worldview is agrarian based, while the urban is industrial. Hence, to what extent are the "typical" approaches to the five administrative factors mentioned above shaped by an agrarian background, culture and ethos as opposed to an industrial one? Is there any significance in the fact that Africa, generally, has missed out on the Industrial Revolution – with its emphasis on creativity, precision and order among other values – and seems to have skipped a 'generation' to the technological revolution? How can worldview elements be tapped to take advantage of this new context? Are there worldview issues that militate against improvement for its own sake? How does the fear of being different – and, therefore, 'outside', perhaps even rejected by, the community – inhibit creativity, inventiveness and entrepreneurship? Or are the modern equivalents of these skills merely a matter of education?

This, in turn, leads to a third category of sub-problems relating to Africa's colonial history. This is not just about the political background but also the educational and social context brought about by that colonialism. So, to what extent has the colonial philosophy inhibited creativity? How has it impacted self-image and identity? Is there a correlation, for instance, between

dependency and innovation? Has the European, imported colonial, educational approach distorted – or imposed its own – definition of efficiency and effectiveness upon the African mind? If countries like Germany and Japan, virtually destroyed by the end of World War II, can rise phoenix-like from the ashes in 40 years, why not Africa after the same period of Independence from colonialism? Indeed, to what extent is colonialism to blame for Africa's lack of development? Is administrative praxis the result of 'external' educational, political, or social phenomena? Or, as I suspect, does it have its roots in one's worldview – that is, the way one views reality?

A fourth set of sub-problems relates to the Church. If the Gospel is primarily about bringing newness and change, and if the Christian or Biblical worldview is properly understood and accepted, what role does the Church have in correcting some of these maladies? Why, after more than 150 years of the Church's presence, in the case of Zimbabwe, has there been so little apparent positive influence in this regard? Indeed, if the Church is likewise afflicted with the same problems, what has gone wrong and what needs to be corrected? To what extent is this the result of an inadequate development of an appropriately contextual theology of administration? If Pastors, for example, see no Biblical mandate for sound administration, if their theology of administration is unclear and unarticulated, how can we expect them to communicate it clearly? Indeed, can we complain at all if, in the absence of clear expectations, there is no cogent implementation of ideas and so poor quality or, even, failure is more the norm than desired?

A fifth sub-problem relates to the consequent discoveries of applicational difficulties and what solutions and/or adjustments can be made particularly by and in the context of the Church. A related issue is the implementation of these. However, the main focus of the thesis is on identification rather than solution and so these latter elements will be mentioned rather than discussed in detail.

Thus, in seeking an answer to the question of why, this thesis will attempt to assess the link between worldview aspects and the practice of administration (including management) to ascertain what and how aspects of the former impinge on the latter. To the extent that problems can be identified, some suggestions for change (particularly in the Church context) will be made.

1.3 *The Problem in Context*

There are several presuppositions, however. The first is that every culture and worldview has an administrative process; otherwise, the group could not exist and function in ways that are considered appropriate. Second, that since some of the perceived problems are not caused

by rudeness or, even, ignorance, but stem from a clash of cultures in that administrative actions (or, in some cases, inaction) are the result of aspects of worldview that unwittingly militate against a modern system (that is, urban and technological) that requires different ideas of efficiency and effectiveness. Third, that even those terms are coloured by worldview and may be defined differently, depending on the contextual demands created by the developments of urbanisation and technological change. Hence, there is greater administrative stimulus in an urban setting than in a rural one. Time, for instance, is not so important for the latter; nor does organisation have to be as precise. Fourth, that all worldviews have both positive and negative elements and that, in a cross-cultural setting such as exists in much of Zimbabwe, a cross-fertilisation of approaches can be beneficial.

Since I will be examining this issue through my own Caucasian worldview perspective, the assessment of the Shona and Ndebele worldviews of administration will be so coloured. Likewise, suggestions to minimise the identified problems and to maximise the strengths are likely to be affected by my own worldview. I will need to constantly check the influence of my worldview with my co-researchers to reduce undue distortion. Yet, the intertwining of perceptions should enrich and buttress the positive elements of the worldviews at the points of coalescence, leading to an improved, and contextually relevant administrative praxis. Moreover, this may also result in a more clearly articulated theology of administration.

These questions will be examined, first, in general terms, and then in the context of the Church. In doing so, I will examine some of the theological aspects underpinning the key components of administration. Later, I will endeavour to assess the validity of my findings against these theological principles. Ultimately, it is hoped that answers to these and other questions will allow for the development of a pedagogical strategy that Bible schools, seminaries and theological colleges can adopt to better inculcate an improved administrative culture within their students and, eventually, in the Church, as part of a clearer, more comprehensive Christian worldview.

2. Research Approach, Positioning, Process and Errors

2.1 Research Approach

My research approach was intended to be founded upon a social constructionist model and a postfoundationalist view, using participatory action narrative from a qualitative perspective, within the field of practical theology. These terms, obviously, need some explanation.

2.1.1 Social Construction

First, I had intended my research approach to be social constructionist. By this is meant that reality – or meaning – is constructed socially; that is, the community decides what is 'real' or 'true' (and this community's 'reality' or 'truth' may well be different from the next community: each has their own definition.) This reality or truth is expressed through language and stories, from which metaphors, images or descriptions are narrated as expressions of perceived reality. It is the lived experience(s) of the community and their subsequent interpretation that shape the understanding of what is real and meaningful, and how.

Explaining this, Ganzevoort (2006: Online) says, "It is one of the core suppositions of social constructionism that discourse determines our understanding of the world, so that content and communication cannot be separated." What is real, then, comes from the people expressing themselves in ways that they understand are 'real'.

But what, after all, is a 'social construction'?

> A social construction, social construct or social concept is an institutionalized entity or artefact in a social system "invented" or "constructed" by participants in a particular culture or society that exists because people agree to behave as if it exists, or agree to follow certain conventional rules, or behave as if such agreement or rules existed. (*Wikipedia* 2007 a: Internet.)

So, what is a 'social construct'? This is an idea, a notion, a system, or an object, abstract or otherwise, that a community agrees is 'real'. The notion, for instance, that girls are supposed to become housewives or teachers and boys policemen and managers; a system of government, a recognisable ideology – such as Marxism or democracy – or the opinion that rugby can only be played 'properly' if the rules are followed.

Hence,

> Within social constructionist thought, a social construction is an idea which may appear to be natural and obvious to those who accept it, but in reality is an invention or artefact of a particular culture or society. The implication is that social constructs are in some sense human choices rather than laws resulting from divine will or nature. (*Wikipedia* 2007 b: Internet.)

Social constructionism is a product of Hegel's dialectic at the turn of the last Century and was popularised by Berger and Luckman in their ground-breaking 1966 work, *The Social Construction of Reality.* This led, in turn, to the subsequent development and strengthening of social and cultural studies. The Postmodern movement – a relativity based response to the Modernist philosophies of the Enlightenment – is also part of this revised view.

Therefore, again,

> Within the social constructionist strand of postmodernism, the concept of socially constructed reality stresses the on-going mass-building of worldviews by individuals in dialectical interaction with society at any time. The numerous

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realities so formed comprise, according to this view, the imagined worlds of human social existence and activity, gradually crystallised by habit into institutions propped up by language conventions, given on-going legitimacy by mythology, religion and philosophy, maintained by therapies and socialisation, and subjectively internalised by upbringing and education to become part of the identity of social citizens. (*Wikipedia.* 2007 b: Internet).

Meaning, truth and reality are all defined by the context. Where my context is similar to yours, we will have similar understandings of meaning, truth and reality – and, thus, are more likely to agree. But where they vary or, even, conflict, we may well have very different views of meaning, truth and reality and we will disagree accordingly. Hence, everything becomes relative to varying degrees.

As such, my paradigm of viewing administration in terms of Planning, Organising, Leading and Controlling, all within the parameters of Time, could be said to be a social construct. Yet, my (Caucasian) way of understanding administration, as well as putting these concepts together in this way, and the Shona or Ndebele way(s) of seeing administration may be completely different. And, even if my Shona and Ndebele co-researchers agree in broad terms, the emphasis I place on each, and to what degree, may also differ from them. Thus, my sense of "reality", normality and "logic" may well differ from the Shona and Ndebele views. This, of course, has major implications for this research.

Since reality is shaped by the community and communicated in its language forms, the researcher here must be prepared to listen. How does the community define reality; what metaphors are used to describe what is "normal" and "logical"? Thus, from a research point of view, to avoid undue influence or interference, it is necessary to come to the process with a "not knowing" mentality. That is, I must approach my investigation task as if I know nothing about the subject. It is my co-researchers who must inform me; after all, I am the one with the questions and they have the answers.

Such a lack of understanding gives me as researcher the opportunity to learn. As Feito (2007: Online) points out, students in a class setting often admit to such and thus open themselves to hear new meanings. If I come with an "I'm the expert and know all this about the topic, so all you need to do is confirm my presuppositions," then I am inhibiting not just the research process but my ability to really learn the other person's sense of reality. Equally, as my co-researchers also acknowledge their lack of understanding – for example, the Shona understanding of the Ndebele and vice versa – they are open to listening and learning as well. Thus, Feito (2007: Online) suggests, there are two broad approaches: "a top-down theoretical exploration and a bottom up, data-driven research programme." Clearly, the social constructionist approach is meant to be bottom-up.

At the same time, however, I must obviously have done some prior exploration into the topic in order, first, to identify a viable research topic on the issue and, second, to be able to ask intelligent and meaningful questions. So, in our conversations, the degree to which I convey my "knowledge" of my subject should be hardly noticeable to allow my co-researchers the freedom to express themselves and their sense of reality as fully as they can. There is, therefore, a constant tension between what I do know and whether or not that filters into the dialogue and shapes the responses in inappropriate ways. Hence, questions cannot be presented with 'facts' preceding the question itself; rather the questions should be as general and open as possible to allow the respondent to answer without undue influence.   While the researcher should ask the foundational questions in ways that deliberately avoid subconscious manipulation, secondary questions that reflect some knowledge and insight of the co-researcher's context may be asked for clarification and to stimulate more detail.

Unfortunately, I was not able to follow through on a thorough application of the social constructionist approach because, first, before beginning the formal investigation, I had no idea myself, from within my own worldview, how, in principle, that impacts anything, let alone the nebulous notion of administration. Nor was I clear in my own mind what actually concretely constitutes administration. And, second, I was already aware (from general discussion) that the vagueness of the concepts equally prevented my co-researchers from readily and clearly articulating by themselves their worldviews or a 'philosophy' of administration or, even, to identify with the latter what tasks actually constitute administration. I felt that, in order to ask any meaningful questions or to have any worthwhile discussions and identify possible problem areas, I needed to find out how my own worldview 'works' with something like this and also what administration actually entails. Without working out such a framework for myself, I could not see how it would be possible to ask pertinent questions or to interact in ways that would help my co-researchers appreciate the point of my research. Hence, it was virtually impossible to come to them from a complete "not knowing" position and thus to fully avoid imposing any of my own concepts into the discourse. It was difficult for me to conceive how simply asking my co-researchers to explain, especially, their views of administration without any background to what it entails would elicit any helpful response.

Before even starting the formal enquiry, it was obvious from previous conversations with other Shona and Ndebele speakers that, while they naturally understood their cultures well enough, they found it difficult to articulate the more abstract concepts of their worldview in any worthwhile detail, let alone how it impacts the practice of administration. Similarly, the concept of administration itself, being also somewhat nebulous, is difficult for many people to define and detail with any meaningful clarity. Hence, in both cases, I knew my co-researchers would

have minimal input and success if I merely asked them what their worldviews are and what administration is. Frankly, I had no confidence that our conversations would go very far at all without some form of a framework to serve as a prompt.

Precisely because I knew my co-researchers would struggle to identify either those components of their worldview that impinge on administration, or to describe administration accurately, I felt compelled to provide a grid or framework of the latter to prompt our dialogues. This framework was based on broad definitions of administration (see Section 1.1.1 in Chapter Two) and included four key components of Planning, Organising, Leading and Controlling. All these, in turn, have been considered in the context of Time. Furthermore, since the basis of and rationale for my investigation in the first place was a series of problems which naturally fall into this framework, my aim was much more focused on behaviour and attitude than simply asking them general questions about the two concepts. Nevertheless, I took care to encourage them to express themselves as they wanted with each of these five factors. I was aware of the need to maintain integrity in allowing their voices to be heard.

For the social constructionist approach, a key element is the questioning. As noted earlier, the (main) researcher should interact with the co-researchers from a "not knowing" position so as to eliminate or minimise external influence. How the questions are framed and presented is thus an important dimension here. When I began the investigation, I had established lengthy sets of very specific questions, collated in conjunction with the five segments of the framework. After working through the process, I recognise now that this is not a typical constructionist approach. As I began the individual interviews, I quickly became aware that, while the questions addressed several legitimate issues for the interviewees, they were nevertheless mine and not theirs. I was also aware at the same time that several other questions were not legitimate for the interviewees. I became aware of this through the preliminary interviews I had prior to those with my later co-research group. Although I was aware at that early stage of the need for open questions, especially for definitions, the early interviews brought to light the need to be even more open. Thus, as I proceeded with both the individual and group discussions, I became less concerned with the specifics of my questions and tended to ask more generalised questions instead. Later still, and partly motivated by the time factor in our dialogues, I coalesced many of the original questions in the framework factors so that the interviews, particularly with the group, focused on between five and 12 questions only. This allowed the responses to be more wide-ranging, gave greater flexibility for the respondents to ponder and, in turn, to present their answers in ways that allowed them to more naturally reflect their own construction.

That said, I also recognise with hindsight that, although many of my initial questions are valid for me, that is mainly so because of my own reality; it does not follow that the same questions have either the same validity or importance for others. At the same time, my co-researchers frequently affirmed that many of the questions touched on problems and issues that were definitely of concern to them as well. Moreover, they also indicated that the variety of questions brought to their attention the significance of administration in general and the need to address specific problems more directly in particular. From that perspective, then, the questions proved helpful for them.

Now, I realise that, by approaching the exercise with a framework or grid as a prompt for our conversations, I was negating to an extent the intention of the social constructionist approach. This methodology assumes the co-researcher is invited to express their own understanding of reality using their own metaphors and narratives from their social context. Thus, to come to them with an outsider's (in this case, my Caucasian) viewpoint is to limit their ability to express reality as they see it. This point is accepted and was the source of constant concern during the whole process. I found that Rubin and Rubin (1995: 20) expressed the difficulty well: "In asking about culture, interviewers are often asking fish to describe the water in which they swim. They cannot see it, and even if they could, they cannot describe it because they have nothing to compare it to." Hence, my framework was used as a tool in an attempt to give the "fish" something to compare.

In view of all this, I would humbly suggest that, despite the limitations of my scheme, the social constructionist approach has not been ditched or derailed completely. This is so, I feel, because the grid or prompt I was forced to provide was offered as one paradigm, which my co-researchers could have chosen to reject in favour of another with which they felt more comfortable and was more appropriate for their social context. In presenting the framework, I was careful not to assume that it was automatically acceptable to them. Rather, I sought confirmation of its acceptance at each individual interview, during the successive group dialogues and again at frequent intervals during our various discussions. I also took care to ask for definitions and elaborations (especially where this impinged on culture and worldview) of each of the key concepts in the framework, both in the individual conversations and the group dialogues. Thus, I did not assume that the grid was "right" without checking. Perhaps, then, it may be more useful to label my approach as partial or limited social constructionism.

Three things emerged from this "optional intervention": (1) They individually and collectively declared – without, interestingly, any disagreement or objection at all – that it was acceptable; (2) There was no attempt, either individually or collectively, in any of the dialogues to suggest

any alternative(s), and (3) In their responses, they did not clearly allude to any other approach. This, I believe was because, although it was an external import, the framework was flexible enough to accommodate their ideas and expectations of their reality of administration. That there was repeatedly no objection, especially as we got deeper into the investigation, demonstrates, I believe, that the grid served its purpose as a prompt and allowed the co-researchers to meaningfully express – from their point of view – the dynamics and worldview as they impinge on the administrative process.

Therefore, I would proffer that, while the social constructionist approach assumes the reality of the co-researchers is entirely their own, without 'outside interference', it could be argued that the theory itself allows for this since realities may not be constructed from one social context alone. This becomes particularly apparent when it is realised that my co-researchers have been exposed to several social contexts since they live and minister in a multi-cross-cultural context. This is reflected, for example, in the multiple Shona-Ndebele-Caucasian-rural-urban-Pentecostal-Non-Pentecostal-young-old-male-female social context in which they are operating and in which the conversations took place. Each of these dynamics has intervened to influence and socially construct their respective realities.

On this basis, then, I would submit that my approach has been a refined or limited social constructionist one since, while I was not able to begin the investigation process as originally intended and had to offer an external prompt, my co-researchers still had the freedom and flexibility to explain their realities comfortably within the framework presented. I would also go so far as to suggest that our dialogues and subsequent findings actually reflect a Shona and Ndebele Christian epistemology and social reality. This is seen in the fact that the problems I identified in my questioning were stimulated by the cultural context in which we find ourselves and were either addressed in our conversations in ways that reflected cultural proclivity or were admitted as cultural difficulties. Moreover, my co-researchers did not simply answer my questions as mere responses. Rather, they had opportunity and were encouraged to discuss, reflect and inter-relate, not just with me but with each other as well – which, in turn, allowed them to express their realities in ways they felt were appropriate for them.

That said, however, it should be noted that the language used throughout our conversations, both individual and collective, was English. This is because my command of neither Shona nor Ndebele is good enough to have had such in-depth discussions. While, in a truly constructionist approach, this may well be viewed as a barrier to full expression, the barriers raised by translation would have been insurmountable (see section 1.1.4 Preparation in Chapter Four). Fortunately, all the co-researchers have received their secondary and tertiary

education in, and are fluent speakers of, English, albeit as a second language. Thus, translations were not generally necessary and on the very odd occasion when a participant had difficulty, the others helped with explanation and elucidation. I would like to think the problems connected with this were resolved satisfactorily, although it must be admitted that some limitations must have remained.

2.1.2 Postfoundationalism

Alongside this, meaning and reality are also shaped by one's understanding of and approach to authority sources. In this regard, I have attempted the research from a partly postfoundationlist viewpoint. That is a reaction to the modernist or foundationalist mind-set that began transitioning in the 1960s (see above on Social Constructionism). Postmodernism, as an alternative to Modernism, was a response to the modernist notion characterised by foundationalism. This posits that truth is fixed and universal, that there is Ultimate Truth and that everyone must accept that as reality. There is only one way. It is difficult for the foundationalist to dialogue with others because "I am right" (and, by implication, you are wrong). The obvious difficulties and extremes with this then led to an equally extreme opposite approach known as non-foundationalism. This reaction claimed that "real truth" cannot be known and that no-one has the Truth. Everything, then, is relative. Interdisciplinary dialogue is difficult here too because the relativity means there is no basis for agreement. The counter-reaction to this relativism was the subsequent development of postfoundationlism. Here, the context and stories of the community interpret truth and reality (hence social construction). Van Huysteen (1998) thus suggests this 'third way' allows for dialogue (between disciplines) because there is respect for the other's point of view. Nevertheless, one community's view may well be different from another's and, while they may talk to each other respectfully, there is still an element of relativity. Essentially, these three terms or viewpoints relate to the way one sees and accepts authority.

Speaking to the theological implications of this, Kowalski (2006: Online) comments:

> Evangelicalism has in many ways been a countercultural movement rejecting, for example, modernism's strict empiricism that disallows miracles or revelation. Only classic, theological liberals have accommodated modernism in all of its views. Postmodern epistemology has serious practical consequences as it leaves no foundation for objective beliefs – a position called "postfoundationalism." In spite of the ingenious efforts of skilled, postfoundationalist theologians to construct a theology that "has universal implications," all postfoundational thought eventually succumbs to some form of scepticism or relativism. Thus, within postmodern thought no truth or morality can be "normative." That is, no person or "scripture" can authoritatively tell postmoderns what is true or right for them. "Truth" and "morals" are found in the context of a specific community and they vary from one community to another.

I do not agree with the foundationalist (or modern) notion that there is only one explanation or view of truth (usually established as far as the Western worldview is concerned, from reason and science) and that I am the only one who is right. There are always different viewpoints, depending on where one is standing and how the situation is interpreted. At the same time, I certainly cannot accept the non-foundationalist perspective that there is no truth. Life in community cannot be lived with any sense of mutually agreed moral anchors where relativity rules. That leads inexorably to "everyone doing what is right in their own eyes" and, eventually, to anarchy (such was the case for Israel, for example, during the time of the Judges; c.f. Jud. 21:25). Having said that foundationalism is problematic, however, it is crucial to note that there must be a final arbiter, repository or explainer of Truth; otherwise, in the end, there is nothing.

It is not that the <u>substance</u> of truth cannot be known or is relative. Rather, it is the <u>interpretation</u> of that 'truth' that may differ. Thus, two people may look at a car from opposite sides. One insists it is black, the other that it is white. In reality, it is both: one half is black, the other white. The observers, then, are both right and wrong at the same time. Extreme foundationalists would have a problem in declaring what is true; non-foundationalists would have a problem because nothing is true. Postfoundationalists leaning to the latter would argue that, pluralistically, it is all right for both to be correct. Postfoundationalists leaning to the former would say while both <u>can</u> be right, in fact neither are, technically. The various interpretations of truth do not alter the facts: the car is both black and white.

The question arises then: How far do you deconstruct the foundationalist and de-deconstruct (reconstruct) the non-foundationalist? Pontius Pilate asked the all-important question: "What is truth?" (Jn. 18:38). Jesus, as the Son of God and Co-Creator, had already given the answer earlier: "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man comes to the Father except through Me." (Jn. 14:6) Indeed, it is sobering to discover just how many times He says, "I tell you the truth …" The question and the reply are a critical issue for postmodernists. To dismiss it on the basis of non-foundationalism or extreme postfoundationalism is to miss a major point of Jesus' earthly ministry. The non-foundationalist might do so by saying, 'That's only one (Jesus') point of view – and not necessarily the right one either.' Fine, but that still begs the question, What if He *is* right? The extreme postfoundationalist may try to dismiss it too by arguing that, while acceptable, we must at least consider possible alternatives. In the end, it boils down to our final authority: either we accept Jesus and what He says because of who He is, or we do not. If the latter, we will end up calling Him either a liar or a lunatic. Are we aware of the consequences of that?

At the same time, postmodernism or postfoundationalism has an element of relativism in it which I find uncomfortable with too. Most importantly, as a Christian, I am persuaded to believe that God, as Creator, is the Source of Truth and, indeed, is the Ultimate Truth. To argue otherwise is to end up eventually denying the God we claim to worship. My theological approach, therefore, is predicated on God – not fallen man's faulty understanding – as the Final Authority. In other words, ultimate Truth must be readily recognisable, even if it is expressed in different language, while knowledge is often relative, depending on the interpretation derived from the context and its background.

Kowalski (2006: Online), writing of some of the dangers evident from an extreme postfoundationalist perspective seen, for example, in some elements of the Emerging Church Movement, expresses some of my concern at this point:

> It is not an oversimplification to say that postmodernism is hostile to the objective and exclusive claims of biblical Christianity. While Christians must be sensitive to the culture they find themselves in, and while we must contextualize our methods to reach those in that culture, we must never alter the Gospel itself to fit the prevalent worldview of any given culture. Postmodernised Christianity is a seriously compromised "Christianity."

To put it differently, Erickson (1998: 19) speaks of "hard" (or extreme) and "soft" modernism, and of "hard" and "soft" postmodernism. "Hard" postmodernism rejects any idea of objectivity and rationalism. All theories are simply worked out to justify and empower those who hold them. The required shift in thinking is labelled deconstruction; hence postmodernists have been deconstructed and, in turn, seek to deconstruct others.

Thus, I perceive myself to be postfoundationalist with a moderate dose of foundationalism. Certainly, I do not see the three 'camps' as necessarily mutually exclusive, except in the extremes; postfoundationalism fits between, and overlaps somewhat with, the other two.

2.1.3 Participatory Action

The definition of meaning and reality, determined as it is by the community in context, has implications for research methodology. Coming out of the social constructionist approach to identifying meaning, participatory action research refers to the involvement of the community or their representatives taking part directly as equal collaborators in the research – hence they are co-researchers. As Müller (2003: 7) explains, participatory action takes those being researched a step further and, by involving them directly in the process, seeks to avoid the abuse of the traditional "researcher-as-expert" asking questions of the "researched-as-object". Rather than a passive, "Tell me what you know" approach, there is an intentional interaction between the two parties to collaboratively bring about social change relating to the problem(s)

under discussion. The co-researchers express the problem(s) in their own context(s) and styles and discuss the answers in relevant ways that are real to them rather than what may suit the researcher.

In this case, then, I am exploring the worldviews of the Shona and Ndebele peoples and, rather than getting my answers from third parties, I am relating with them directly with and to their contexts. Moreover, I am exploring administration in a Christian ministry context, and since all my co-researchers are involved in this element of ministry, they can speak directly to it out of personal experience. The issues raised were real, identifiable and demonstrably problematic for them and it was clear throughout that their direct involvement in the enquiry was of immediate benefit. They affirmed this several times.

2.1.4 Narrative

Fourth, my approach will be narrative. In other words, the research data is primarily the stories of my co-researchers that explain, justify and give contextual meaning to their reality. Through dialogue, we will explore each other's understandings of our worldviews and administration. From this, will come explanation and justification (perhaps?) for behaviour and attitude. This research process fits naturally with the social constructionist, participatory action approach and the need to ascertain the socially constructed insights of the people groups with whom I am working. It assumes that my primary source material will be the stories, conversations and self-interpretations of representatives of those communities I am researching. As Müller and Schoeman (2004: 8) note: "It entails a different 'look at' the truth, with the emphasis on the truthful process rather than the truth as such." In the narrative approach, the stories are not merely data which is then analysed; rather the stories constitute the foundational element of the research as expressed reality that is heard. Thus, again, both the (main) researcher and the researched act as co-participatory researchers as they share their stories with each other. Because this interaction is obviously delicate, Müller and Schoeman (2004:11) suggest it be labelled as 'involvement' rather than 'intervention', where the latter might imply abuse.

One may ask about using written source materials instead. Although there is a growing literature base on African and Christian worldviews to which I could refer, my specific interest – the interplay between worldview and administrative praxis – is not a topic typically considered in such literature. Also, while much has been written on administration from a Western perspective, there is very little literature from a black African point of view. Even less, is there literature on church administration in particular in this context and less still – if any – on Shona or Ndebele church administration. And, since I am investigating possible links

between behaviour and attitude, this means, therefore, that my primary sources must be Shona and Ndebele Christians in ministry and that the primary data must be their interactions through dialogue and narrative.

In the course of interviewing them, I had two choices: Either, I could ask my own (Caucasian/Western-based) questions and then analyse their responses; that would give me some related information, but would not guarantee that I get the kind of information I require. Or – which is what I need – I could establish their actual attitudes and behaviour emanating from their worldviews that relate to administration and how, if at all, these are shaped by those worldviews. Hence, my aim would be better achieved, I believe, by allowing them to give their responses in the form of their personal stories or narratives. It is as they reflect and narrate these that their explanations, assumptions, expectations and overall understanding of both their worldviews and their philosophy of administration will be expressed most clearly. What constitutes meaning and reality for them – rather than me – will be articulated in ways that are contextually embedded and relevant. All the same, this will be done in conjunction with written and experiential information about their worldviews and some elements of administrative practice. Issues pertaining to the secular Shona and Ndebele worldviews *vis-à-vis* administration will then have to be extrapolated from this data to construct a recognisable philosophy of administration. Telling these stories will empower the co-researchers because the narratives allow meaning to be expressed and, hence, understanding of the problem(s) in their situations, together with an opportunity to consider and reflect on possible solutions appropriate to their contexts.

Since my field of enquiry pertains to Practical Theology (see section 2.2 below), this raises the question of how narrative research, as a component of establishing meaning, links to theology. This introduces narrative theology, which says McLaughlin (2007: Online),

> is a fairly broad term, encompassing a variety of specific approaches to theology, interpretation and application. Most generally, it is that approach to theology that finds meaning in story. Sometimes, this is coupled with a rejection of meaning derived from propositional truths (e.g., systematic theology). At other times, it is associated with the idea that we are not primarily to learn ethics from Scripture, but rather to learn to relate to God, and to play our part in the great meta-narrative of salvation. Other combinations are also common.

But he implies that Narrative Theology is typically viewed "narrowly" – that is, in terms of relating to the narratives in Scripture:

> In general, the idea that we learn theology from narrative portions of Scripture is not only sound but biblical (Luke 24:27). The Bible's stories are there to teach us truth; we are supposed to learn from those truths, and to apply these lessons to

our lives (e.g., Mark 2:23-28). We are supposed to interpret and apply these stories according to the original intentions of the authors of Scripture — this is why the stories have been preserved for us (Rom. 15:4).

Used rightly, narrative theology provides the building blocks for Systematics and for Biblical theology. We might say that systematic theology tends to default to drawing theology from more propositional literature (e.g., the New Testament letters). On the other hand, Old Testament biblical theology tends to depend primarily on narrative for its theological building blocks.

When we recognize truth in narratives, we call our recognitions "theology." When we formulate our recognitions into logical relationships, we are doing "systematic theology." When we formulate our recognitions along historical lines, we are doing "biblical theology." When we apply these recognitions to our lives, we are sometimes said to be doing "practical theology," or even simply "theology."

I would proffer that, indeed, Practical Theology is the recognitions of our lives and that, more than referring only to the Biblical narratives, Narrative Theology is also expressed – and even developed – as people articulate their own stories in relation to their walk of faith and their understanding of God as they interact with God's revealed Word. This is not to say, I should hasten to add, that people's experiences carry the same or greater weight than the authority of Scripture (contrary to those churches and groups – particularly cults – where experience and tradition are typically given greater authority). Narrative Theology, as I understand it in this sense, occurs as people theologise through their stories. (See further below, section 2.)

My primary sources or co-researchers were Christians in ministry. While exploring worldview and administration in that context, the aim was to articulate a theological approach to administration. However, the same difficulties faced in the general discussions about worldview and administration as explained above (section 2.1.1) were also seen in the process of theologising. As outlined in Chapter Seven, I had hoped that the group would arrive at what could be considered in theological terms as a generally recognisable theological statement about administration and its praxis in Christian ministry. Although I obviously had little clear idea of the specifics or how the process would turn out eventually, the end result was nothing near what I expected. Thus, while the conclusion was semi-socially constructed (albeit within the research framework we have worked through all along), I have to admit that my methodology for this exercise was not a social constructionist approach as originally intended. Instead, I ended up leading the group in a deliberately arranged theologising exercise. This was because I had an inkling from our earlier "theological discussions" in the individual interviews that none in the group really had a clear idea of how one's theology should shape the administrative process or, more particularly for this exercise, how to establish and articulate a theological approach to the field.

Disappointingly, this was true just as much of those with theological training as those without. This left me in the same dilemma I had with worldview and administration as concepts. How could I ensure the group would at least begin the process in a way that would allow us to arrive at an identifiable and acceptable exegetical and hermeneutical conclusion? Again, I was forced to propose a theologising process as a guide. In this case, the approach was particular rather than general; detailed rather than flexible. This, of course, immediately cuts across the social constructionist approach. At this point, naturally, I was very conscious of imposing. Furthermore, heightening this sense of imposition was that the suggested process for the exercise, albeit only one option among many, was the only one I offered. This was because, in endeavouring to encourage the group to devise their own contextually relevant approach, I wanted to minimise as much as possible my own direct involvement in the task. Unfortunately, perhaps, the absence of another option made it that much easier for the group to accept 'my' model, and so that was the one they used. Nevertheless, it certainly was not given or intended as a panacea to the task of theologising. Regrettably, my fears about the group's inability to theologise from sound exegetical and hermeneutical foundations were realised. This is detailed in Chapter Seven. It thus remains moot as to whether a socially constructed approach to theologising for this particular group in this context would have succeeded here or not. It would be good if those who follow can do better with a different approach and reach a more appropriate conclusion.

2.1.5 Qualitative

Then, in terms of research methodology, I chose the qualitative approach rather than the quantitative. This fits well with the philosophical and epistemological systems of postmodernism and social construction since much depends on context. Primarily, my methodology is qualitative since I am dealing with behaviour and attitude. I am concerned here not with a certain quantity of data that, for example, may provide the basis for analysing social trends. Rather, I am dealing with data representative of group thinking and action. Specifically, I will examine the typical attitude and consequent behaviour of the Shona and Ndebele groups. More particularly still, I will consider such issues for Christians and within the context of Christian ministry. Still more narrowly in this context, I will explore issues relating to attitude and behaviour relating to the tasks associated with administration.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2004: 147), qualitative researchers "focus on phenomena that occur in natural settings – that is, in the 'real world'. And they study these phenomena in all their complexity." So, qualitative researchers,

> recognise that the issue [they are exploring] has many dimensions and layers
> and so they try to portray the issue in its multifaceted form. … (They believe) an
> objective approach to studying human events – interpersonal relationships, social
> structures, creative processes and so on – is neither desirable nor possible. …
> Furthermore, many qualitative researchers believe that there is not necessarily a
> single or ultimate Truth to be discovered. Instead, there may be multiple
> perspectives held by different individuals, with each of those perspectives having
> equal validity or truth.

Hence, my (religio-sociological) field of Practical Theology, together with the area of study – the twin abstracts of worldview and administration within specified people groups and in a particular working context – is better suited to a qualitative approach than a quantitative one.

In addition, within this procedure, Leedy and Ormrod (2004: 149-157) itemise five different characteristics of qualitative research: Case Studies, Ethnography, Phenomenological Study, Grounded Theory Study and Content Analysis. Of these, I believe three best fit my research aim. These are: Case Studies, Phenomenological Study and Content Analysis.

On the first, say Leedy and Ormrod (2004: 157), the purpose is to understand one person or a small group in depth and the focus is one or a few within their natural setting. The methods of data collection include observation, interviews, appropriate written documents and/or audio-visual materials while the methods of data analysis include the categorisation and interpretation of data in terms of common themes and the synthesis of the overall portrait of the case(s). I believe a case study approach is one appropriate way that best fits my needs here for two reasons. In the first instance, I will gather my primary data from interviews and the related narratives (see next section) of my co-researchers. In essence, their narratives will describe their case studies or examples or 'stories-in-setting'. I anticipate common themes being identified as we explore the respective components in their worldviews and administration. I will use their stories to learn about and elicit their understanding of their worldviews and their perspectives on administration. Second, in Chapter Six, I will use two case studies from particular members of the group as the basis for in-depth discussion to illustrate the relationship between their worldviews and their administrative praxis. Since these case studies will come from the group's own context and not from me, they will be more helpful in identifying for discussion the administrative issues involved in each. The group will be able to evaluate and comment on issues faced by their peers.

The second dimension of qualitative research I will use is phenomenological study. This, again according to Leedy and Ormrod (2004: 157), involves seeking to understand the experience(s) from the participant's point of view. Its focus is a particular phenomenon, typical experience, lived or perceived by human beings. The data is collected through in-depth,

unstructured interviews and purposeful sampling of between five to 25 individuals. The data analysis involves a search for "meaning units" that reflect various aspects of the experience(s) and the integration of the meaning units into 'typical' experience(s). In my case, the phenomena being studied are worldview and administration in a Christian ministry context (thus, with some theological input as well). However, while the data collection is primarily from interviews, these will be structured rather than loose, although there will be an effort to be as open as possible. The need for structure was evident from the beginning (see below under "Social constructionist").

The third dimension of qualitative research in this investigation is content analysis. Leedy and Ormrod (2004: 157) say this involves identifying the specific characteristics of a body of material and that the focus is any verbal, visual or behavioural form of communication. The data collection is from the identification and possible sampling of the specific material and the coding of the material in terms of predetermined and precisely defined characteristics. The data analysis involves the tabulation of the frequency of the characteristics and descriptive or informal statistical analysis as needed to answer the research question. In my case, the fairly abstract nature of administration in the sense of determining what tasks actually constitute it demanded that I establish from my co-researchers just what in their ministry contexts comprises administration. Thus, in Chapter Three, I began the dialogues by providing a comprehensive list of attitudinal-cum-philosophical factors relating to one's mental approach to administration. The co-researchers were asked to rate the importance of these factors. The analysis of these choices then gave me confirmation of the attitudes, prejudices and biases toward administration that I was already aware of in informal prior discussions. There were some surprises in this, which we later followed up in our conversations. This data was followed by a table of administrative tasks covering a typical local church pastor's responsibilities. I asked each person to identify which tasks they had completed in the previous 72 hours. This proved particularly useful for the group because, first, it allowed them to identify specific tasks within their ministry context and, second, it highlighted a range of tasks which many of them had not considered administrative; in doing so, it allowed them to grasp more clearly the extent of administration in their ministries.

All of this was done through two primary means: observation and interviews. I have personally observed Shona and Ndebele speakers in administrative positions – both formal and informal – for a number of years now and it is from these observations that nearly all of my research questions have come. In addition to my own observations, the narrative approach to this research also allowed the rest of the team to reflect on their observations,

both of themselves and others. The stories shared in the conversations and the subsequent interactions reveal the value of this.

Moreover, because of the abstract nature of the subject material, it was essential to gather primary data from interviews, since behaviour and attitude are closely linked and cannot be evaluated apart from personal explanation. As a qualitative research technique, Rubin and Rubin (1995: 1) comment:

> Qualitative interviewing is a way of finding out what others feel and think about their worlds. Through qualitative interviews you can understand experiences and reconstruct events in which you did not participate. Through what you hear and learn, you can extend your intellectual and emotional reach across time, class, race, sex and geographical divisions.

They then speak of a "family of qualitative interviews" (1995: 5), explaining the unstructured format, where the researcher has few specific questions in mind, or the semi-structured (or focussed) format, in which the researcher guides the discussion by asking specific questions. Often there is a mixture of the two. Regardless of this mixture, they stress, qualitative interviewers do not impose a set of fixed answer categories such as 'yes'/'no' or 'agree'/'disagree'. This would not allow the researcher to find out what the interviewee actually thinks. Hence, in my case, I used a mixture, although the majority of the questions were very structured, especially at the beginning, but less so at the end. I was very careful, however, to use open questions, particularly where definitions and explanations were called for as it was essential to hear the Shona and Ndebele Christian realities. My aim in the interviews was not merely to obtain basic information (the 'what') but also to listen for underlying assumptions, expectations, perceptions, emotions and attitudes (the 'why'.) Therefore, it was necessary for me to seek answers in ways that allowed the participants to tell me what I needed to hear. Hence, "the actor's perspective [will be] the empirical point of departure. [There will be] a focus upon the real-life experience of people" (Brynard and Hanekom, 1997: 29). This leads to the next component of my research approach.

2.2 Research Positioning

Having discussed the epistemological and methodological premises of my study, it is necessary to explain my position or point of departure arising from that base. This involves three related aspects.

2.2.1 Practical Theology

First, there is my position in Practical Theology. This is shaped by my philosophy of this field. By philosophy here, I mean an underlying set of assumptions and expectations. From these, I

come to understand that general theology (that is, Systematic and Biblical, among others) is our articulation about our understanding of God; it shapes the way we respond to Him and to others. Within that context, then, it is possible to speak of a theological basis for our behaviour and, hence, a theology of that behaviour. If we may speak of "Black" or "Feminist" theology, or, even, a theology of Church or Mission (that is, formally, Ecclesiology or Missiology) then by extension, we may also speak of a theological foundation of administration, leadership, or any other dimension of practical endeavour. This theological approach to a subject gives the Christian a God-directed basis and a Biblical-based rationale for functioning the way they do.

Thus, in this sense, I see Practical Theology as much more than an academic discipline for research; theology is not to be *studied* primarily, but *done.* Nor is Practical Theology merely a field of ministry restricted to preaching, pastoral care and counselling. Indeed, in my view, Practical Theology is simply but substantively, the practical outworking of all that we do as Christians; it is expression of behaviour shaped by our understanding of God and His Word and what He wants us to do. It is a God-based rationale. As such, it is more than mere research about behaviour from a "Christian" perspective. While it may be contextually defined, it is more than "God-stories" (that is, how God is intervening in people's lives). Practical Theology takes into account God's overall intentions and purposes – as revealed in Scripture – and seeks to provide a framework, a moral and theologically based foundation for attitudes and behaviour that, ultimately, brings Him the glory He deserves. Not only that, but Practical Theology is interdisciplinary: it interacts with Biblical Studies, History, Languages as well as Systematic Theology and Ethics. Indeed, for the Christian, every human endeavour and field of study, from Accounting to Zoology, should be theologically focussed and directed. Regrettably, that this is not the case, at least in much of the professional realm, shows that the 'queen of the sciences' has been reduced to a Cinderella.

This interconnectedness is illustrated very well, for example, by Prof. John Swinton (2007: [homepage]) of the School of Practical Theology at Aberdeen University as he seeks to combine practical theology and moral theology:

> The ground for this focus [at the School] is an understanding of faith as a lived entity. We seek to think through faith not as 'belief' but as lived. Thus, the primary reference of our theologising is the life lived in all its contemporary forms. This *contrasts* with the biblical studies' focus on texts, systematics' focus on doctrines and church history's focus on the history of the Christian faith, but *relies* on these forms of enquiry in understanding what it means for faith to be lived."

Hence, Practical Theology should be understood as a multi-disciplinary, multi-dimensional field cutting across all human endeavours by providing a theological basis or rationale for human behaviour and attitude.

From a research perspective, Ganzevoort (2007: Online) adds: "It [practical theology] is not something added to empirical investigation [as if the client/patient is 'over there' being researched as an object], but is focused in the middle of the research [that is, as part and parcel of the research.]" For me, then, Practical Theology is "applied" theology: it shows how ordinary people should, can and do meaningfully relate to God in their contexts. In short, it demonstrates how our relationship with God is or can be lived out. As such, then, it should not be merely a peripheral enterprise, a despised urchin. Rather, it should be understood rightly as the fulcrum, the hub, supported by and linked to other disciplines to show how everything else relates to God and His desired outworking of human history and His divine long-term goals for eternity.

Thus, in this regard, research in Practical Theology links very well with, and can be shaped very effectively through, the social constructionist, postfoundationalist, participatory action narrative approaches. Although, from a Biblical Christian perspective, God is Ultimate Truth, each Christian must 'interpret' God and His Word through their own context and understanding. While this raises the spectre of relativity, the Scriptures provide an immediate framework from which such interpretation may come – provided, of course, the normal rules of Biblical hermeneutics are followed.

2.2.2 Postfoundationalist Practical Theology

Related to this is the notion of postfoundationalist practical theology. By this is meant practical theology as examined and practised within the framework of the postmodern or postfoundationlist view. This follows naturally from the social constructionist approach outlined above and has been popularised by van Huysteen (1998); Müller (2003; Müller & Schoeman 2004) and Ganzevoort (1998, 1999). Indeed, says the latter,

> Critical practical theology, feminist and otherwise liberationist practical theology, narrative studies and the like are methodologically close to social constructionist approaches. In that sense, social constructionism is not a new paradigm but the reflection of age-long debates. (Ganzevoort 2007: Online)

As noted previously, practical theology is interdisciplinary and multi-faceted and thus 'dialogues' in various ways, directions and depths. So, comments Ganzevoort (2007: Online):

> But it is not simply a matter of different discourses about something – in these discourses practical theology itself takes on different meanings. The locus of conversation defines in part the shape and tasks of the discipline. In each locus

of conversation, correspondence to and difference from the other party define the identity of practical theology. In relation to the church, practical theology may stress its academic nature in its efforts to serve the community of faith. In relation to the academic realm it may focus on empirical and strategic efforts, communicating with social sciences on the one hand and other theological disciplines on the other. Obviously then, each practical theologian will develop his or her own definition of practical theology within the specific configuration of relations of the person.

Hence, in my view, practical theology is not to be restricted to academe, with research for the sake of it or, even, research <u>about</u> practical theology. For me, research <u>in</u> practical theology is about application in the field, empowerment, rationale, direction, ethic and motive. By researching administration from a Christian ministry point of view, with specific focus on the Shona and Ndebele, my aim, therefore, is to identify a contextually embedded, Biblically based rationale, ethic and motive for the praxis of administration. I believe this is a legitimate effort at theologising practically since it is the administrative practitioners themselves who will seek to articulate it in ways that are 'theologically real' to them.

2.2.3 Evangelical

However, my research position is influenced not only by my epistemological and philosophical assumptions, but also by my theological position and that of my co-researchers in that we are all Evangelicals. As such, I am more comfortable with "soft postmodernism" (see Erickson 1998:19) because it rejects the extremes of "hard modernism" and is less extreme itself. (It should be noted that I did not deliberately explore my co-researchers' understanding of social construction, postmodernism or postfoundtionalism, so I cannot speak definitively for their positions.)

In explaining the various Evangelical responses to postmodernism, Erickson (1998: 152) points out that a number of the contentions of the deconstructionists conflict with Evangelicalism as generally understood. In summing up Evangelicalism's responses to postmodernism (1998:151-157), he uses a question discussed at a conference: 'Can deconstructed [that is, postmodernised] horses even be led to water?' From an apologetics point of view, he says the question actually involves several elements: the horse, the means of leading (the haler and rope) and the water. He then outlines four possible answers. Each one depends on which elements are/should be deconstructed. The first response says that the water must also be deconstructed to suit the horse. Although he does not use the term, this seems to fit with foundationalism, since the horse is right and everything must be aligned to that. The second answer is, 'Yes, [deconstructed horses can be led to water], but we must use deconstructed rope.' In other words, the water may or may not need deconstruction to be

appealing to deconstructed horses (i.e. that the message needs to be altered). It maintains, however, that it is necessary to alter the form of leading, that is the method and the means. It is more the form or style of presentation, rather than the content, that needs to be changed. This would mean, for example, that instead of a propositional presentation [here, read foundationlist], what would be done is to make a narrative approach. Generally speaking, this approach would hold to the objectivity of truth and the relativity of knowledge, but would acknowledge that all answers are to some extent historically and socially conditioned. Again, without using the term, he seems to be describing the postfoundational, narrative position. The third response – that the horse is not really deconstructed after all – leads to the conclusion that neither the water nor the method of leading need to be changed; the same methods used in the past can still be used with postmodern horses. The fourth answer is, 'Yes, but we must first de-deconstruct the horse.' This approach says that the horse is deconstructed, but it is not possible to live on such a basis. One option – the pessimistic view – holds that the deconstructed horse must be written off, the aim being to prevent any more horses from being deconstructed. The optimistic view says deconstructed horses can be reached, but they first must be de-deconstructed. This is done so that they discover it is not possible to live on this basis. Like Erickson, I believe a mixture of the second and fourth responses is the most appropriate.

The 'horse' – in this case, the Shona and Ndebele postmodernised Christian – has been deconstructed; but how do we help it to drink the life-giving 'gospel'? The message or the means must be deconstructed and, at the same time, we must go to the horse rather than attempting to drag the horse to the water. A halter that fits snugly, together with 'logical' persuasion, will best help the horse to feel the need to taste the water. In the context of administration in Christian ministry, a theologically shaped approach to will help those responsible to better see how God expects them to do it.

To sum up, my research approach and positioning could be categorised, perhaps, as being (for this investigation) limited social constructionist, "(moderately) soft" postfoundationlist, participative action narrative from a qualitative perspective, within the domain of Evangelical practical theology.

2.3 *Research Process*

While I will look at worldviews and administration from a praxis point of view in the context of Christian ministry, I will explore practical theological issues in the process. But, I do not want to simply ask practical theology questions about worldview and administration. What I believe is necessary is to be able to establish what, if any, theological understanding under-girds

current administrative praxis and then attempt to articulate a theological basis or framework from which administration should be correctly practised in Christian ministry. (My suspicion at this stage is that there is very little clear theological foundation underpinning administrative praxis within the Church at large; if this is so, it would help to explain the gap between administrative praxis and theology as evidenced in the work ethic and administration factors – planning, organising, leading and controlling, together with time management – as demonstrated in the opening narratives.)   Hence, one goal, having identified what factors – if any – link worldview and administration for Shona and Ndebele Christians, is to begin to develop a Biblical rationale and practical theological outworking for administration.

In addition to this, other goals are:

(1) To attempt to assess the extent to which the person's worldview governs and/or has significantly changed their praxis of administration; and

(2) To seek to establish a recognisable philosophy of administration (in line with both human and Christian worldviews, bearing in mind that much modern administration has been influenced directly and indirectly by a Western philosophy or approach, together with its underlying presuppositions emanating from that worldview).

To facilitate my prior understanding of the background, I have also referred to authors who have written on the African worldview and administration in general (both secular and Christian). The information from these supplemental co-researchers allowed me to begin asking relevant questions pertaining to the Shona, Ndebele and Christian worldviews and their possible relationship to administration. Secondary sources included foundational input from books, journals, newspaper articles and Internet items. I expected this would give me the basis of the three worldviews and administrative elements I needed to research, as well as form the basis of the material from which the necessary questions will be formed to elicit either confirmation or contradiction of possible suppositions.

In addition to the personal interviews, I have also used other real-life stories such as those gathered from newspaper and magazine articles, personal conversations and others that reflect the issues with which I have grappled. Although these are secondary sources, I have used that information to verify and explore further the insights of the interviewees. This has enabled me to get a fuller understanding of the dynamics involved.

I realised that the narratives alone would not provide all the needed information. So I sought to supplement these with content analysis (Chapter Three) to test both attitude and behaviour prior to the individual and focus group interviews. The empirical data here complemented the

narratives and main interviews, giving me deeper insight into the attitudes, perceptions and expectations about the person's approach to administration. This then provided a launch pad to raise particular questions of my primary co-researchers that led to a more specific exploration of the worldview dimensions.

The content analysis is in three parts (see Appendix 2, Chapter Three). The first section asks the respondent to grade their perception of importance of a range of factors impinging on how administration is done. It seeks to reflect attitude and behaviour. It should be possible to link these with worldview assumptions, expectations and, even, misconceptions about administration, to suggest some likely responses to various administrative tasks.

The second part of the content analysis attempts to establish with some objectivity what actually constitutes administration for these particular Christian workers. This is important because, while much has been written about administration in general, there is very little of substance as to what it actually entails. It is a multifaceted, woolly area of work that is difficult to define with precision because it includes a wide variety of tasks, many of which do not seem to be directly related to one another. So, there is need to identify actual tasks that constitute administration. That will help in clarifying not only what is done as administration but also in assessing how much time is spent on it, who with, when, where and why.

I included a range of selected tasks based on my own knowledge and experience of the kinds of work required. Initially, I had intended involving three groups – local pastors, para-church or denominational administrators and trainers – since the administrative requirements are somewhat different for each. However, for various reasons outlined later (see Chapter Four, sections 1.1.3 and 1.1.5), I ended up limiting this to pastors and related ministries.

The third element was a set of follow-up questions relating to preferences. In one sense, these are an attempt to marry the attitude questions with the tasks. In another, they are a further attempt to establish how the work is done and why it is done that way, together with personal preferences.

All of these details should provide some insight into the person's underlying philosophy of administration. In the process, therefore, I will have a somewhat objective basis (from my target group's point of view) for exploring, linking and confirming worldview issues raised in the qualitative discussions later.

Having noted some elements of the administrative praxis within a selected representation of Christian ministry settings, I will use that information as it relates to the worldview and administrative factors identified elsewhere to seek to demonstrate the co-relation between

worldview belief and practice. At the same time, having identified administrative problems or weaknesses, I will explore possible links between these and the respective worldview elements and, if feasible, will then suggest some reasons for them.

To minimise the research field, I have deliberately limited myself to an examination of Shona and Ndebele worldviews in Zimbabwe as the two main people groups in one particular country. Further, I limited my investigations to the practitioners of administration in two primary groups, both within the context of Church or Christian ministry: the main group was pastors while a second was those involved in management training. My original intention was to seek a balance between the two, but I was not able to arrange more than one person involved in training from a Christian ministry context. I had also intended involving secular trainers in the first phase of interviews but, again, this did not materialise. The reasons for this are explained in Chapter Three.

In my initial planning, I had selected specific types of churches, on the assumption that polity or governance systems impinge on the decision-making process. I had assumed that administrative structures, shaped by polity, would determine at least in part how administration is carried out. However, my preliminary interviews (before selecting the main group of co-researchers) revealed that polity has hardly any bearing on individual praxis. Whether one is operating within a Presbyterian or Congregational system seems to make little difference to the ways in which individuals personally carry out administrative tasks, make decisions, relate to people, organise, control or steward their time and resources. The denominational structure and its effect on praxis is much less significant than the person's own attitudes, presuppositions, temperament and, even, social milieu.

At the same time, however, polity does seem to play a part in how or why certain, specific decisions are made and the way they are made. For example, church politics or a bureaucratic system or both may impact a decision to appoint a particular person to a specific post. Alternatively, church politics or bureaucracy may determine whether an individual chooses to make a decision a certain way, or not at all. Hence, while polity does impinge on the administrative process to a limited extent, it does not seem to affect the worldview factors that appear to be much more influential in general administration. Therefore, I will not pursue my investigation along polity lines as originally intended. Rather, I will focus on individuals, irrespective of denominational affiliation.

2.4 *Research Difficulties*

In this investigation, there are at least four areas for possible research difficulties (Brynard and Hanekom, 1997: 41-42). These relate to:

(1) Sampling. This is a potential problem about research validity based on the selection of data. As stated earlier, this is a qualitative enquiry about behaviour and attitude, not a quantitative one about numbers. Therefore, I will limit my analysis to a small group of selected pastors and Christian ministry leaders. I believe this group will suffice to provide the information I need since, by its nature, worldview is a set of assumptions and beliefs commonly held among and which identify a particular people-group; the task here is to explore and confirm the worldview, not to test the extent of its acceptance.

With that, I began my conversational investigation on the assumption that my research group should include a mixture of both rural and urban ministry leaders. This was because I was expecting a fundamental difference in viewpoint. To that end, my first individual interview was with a rural pastor. However, I immediately faced two related problems: On the one hand, there was the very obvious and significant factor that, not being able to speak Ndebele fluently, I needed to have the discussion translated. In the process, I became aware of the need for my respondent to be sufficiently familiar with key concepts of administration such that he was adequately able to think and then to articulate his answers. Unfortunately, for several questions, I did not come away with confidence that he had done so. Related to that, on the other hand, was the fact that both my questions and the answers had to be translated. I was thus unable to check whether nuances and specific emphases were communicated correctly (even though I had confidence in my translator understanding them.)

A second problem with rural interviewees was logistical. There are obvious difficulties in contacting rural folk and arranging mutually acceptable appointments. On top of that, such arrangements must also include the translator and his schedule. To co-ordinate this would have been problematic for a variety of reasons (one, for instance, being the availability of fuel) and very time consuming. I therefore decided not to go that route, but instead to choose some pastors who have rural connections in their ministries. (See Chapter Three for profiles of my co-researchers.) In addition, I also realised that, even where my co-researchers are urban based, they would still have at least an awareness of rural thinking. My research group later confirmed these two points.

(2) The problems of imprecise or technical vocabulary. As stated earlier, many are unclear as to what actually constitutes administration. I should be able to minimise this by using alternative words or phrases and likely examples familiar to my co-researchers to help them understand the terminology or concepts. Issues of worldview should not be problematic since these can be verbalised in ways that are easily identifiable rather than with technical jargon.

(3) Respondent bias. As part of their worldview (see Chapter Six), the people-groups I am working with sometimes tend to proffer answers they feel are what are wanted rather than their actual views. This can be minimised to some extent by probing deeper and by cross-reference to other sources for confirmation and clarification. The interview technique will also militate against this problem as I will not be concerned primarily with short, information-related answers but, rather, meaning-and-explanation-related answers. This should allow me to go beyond the superficial, quick-answer response. The group dialogues are also likely to minimise this because of the interaction between themselves rather than with me directly.

(4) Analyst and Researcher bias. As stated elsewhere, my own assumptions, expectations and insights from experience are likely to factor in to my presentation of questions and interpretation of responses. This is a double danger both because of the ambivalent nature of the subject and by virtue of working cross-culturally, which requires added explanation of terms and concepts. I will endeavour to reduce the risks here by constantly cross-checking my own views, assumptions, expectations and feelings with the co-researchers.

Bearing in mind that most formally trained administrators and/or managers have probably been influenced by the Western worldview, it will be necessary to attempt to assess the extent of this influence in negating the indigenous worldview elements that, otherwise, would have affected the administrative praxis. In addition, an attempt will be made to assess those elements of the Shona and Ndebele worldviews that positively impact the administrative process in a modern setting, with a view to establishing how they may be used more advantageously. This exercise will also be done bearing in mind the Church context and the centrality of theology behind any Church administrative praxis.

Because of the socio-historico-political background of Zimbabwe, we have a four-fold split in the church: Rural and urban, high-density and low-density.[1] These differences reflect varied levels of sophistication, education, leadership, competence, resources and expertise, as even standards of living can have a bearing on the administrative process. I expected to show that the way administration is done in a (less sophisticated) rural church is likely to be different from an urban one. However, in my preliminary investigation, I found little fundamental difference in terms of worldview influence between administration in high-density and low-density settings. Rather, any difference in philosophy and approach seems more affected by sophistication levels – that is, education, training, income and expectations – than

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[1] These demographic terms, applied to urban and peri-urban suburbs, were an attempt to change negative colonial terminology. They relate, as the names suggest, to the larger properties (formerly owned by whites) but now part of the middle and upper classes and to those smaller properties still exclusively inhabited by blacks but at the lower end of the economic spectrum. Typically, they are on opposite sides of the city or town. Some of both are now "middle density" areas.

demographics. I shall explore this further and now expect the dichotomy to be two-way rather than four-way as originally anticipated.

Since this enquiry is to be conducted primarily in the context of the Church – and specifically Christian ministry – it will also be necessary to identify and suggest the theological basis for administration. This I hope to do as the basis of the foundational assumptions behind "Christian" administration (or, more correctly, administration in a Christian context). This is important, since for the Christian administrator, one's Biblical and theological foundations should shape attitudes, approaches and praxis in ministry. Moreover, where there are obvious dichotomies between a human worldview and a Biblical one, it should be possible to show why an adjustment from one to the other is necessary for those involved in ministry.

The primary source material garnered through questionnaires (Chapter Three), interviews (both individual and focus group; Chapters Four to Seven), and observation (throughout) will be measured in several ways: (1) Rating scales, to measure (a) the quality of understanding and/or insight of the respondent to administrative issues within their context and in the light of their worldview in relation to their administrative praxis and (b) the quality of administrative performance; (2) Attitude scales, to measure positive or negative views toward administration factors and practice; and (3) Comparison and contrast of one respondent's views against another's, as well as their respective quality of work.

The secondary source material in books, journals, newspapers and so on, apart from providing a basis of information for the interviews, will be used to shape the questioning of and to confirm, clarify and critique the interactions with the primary sources. This information will be measured against the respondent's views and practice to assess complicity with a view or a practice in contradiction to it.

3. **Summary**

In summary, the main problem focuses on seeking an answer to the question of why systems in Africa and Zimbabwe in particular do not work the way they might be expected to. The underlying assumption here is that the fundamental issue is related to worldview and that some worldview factors impinge negatively on one's appreciation and use of time, planning, organising, leading and controlling. If, indeed, this is a worldview issue, then the same would apply as much in the Church context as it does in the secular realm. That being the case, what does a Biblically based theological approach to administration say for the Christian and administrative enterprise? Can these findings then be used to improve the quality of "service delivery" in the context of Christian ministry?

Apart from seeking answers to questions on worldview, there are three primary goals: (1) To assess the extent to which the interviewee's worldview governs and/or has significantly changed their praxis of administration. Related to this, I also wish to establish the extent to which the person's current approach to administration has been influenced by a Western philosophy of administration and its underlying presuppositions; (2) To highlight problems relating to administrative praxis arising from the identified worldview factors and thus to suggest some solutions to those difficulties; and (3) To establish a recognisable philosophy of and theological approach to administration. The assumption here is that, for the Christian, a theological foundation is crucial to God-honouring behaviour and attitude; as such, this should provide the impetus for any necessary change. If the hypothesis is correct, one part of the solution to social change in this area will involve theological reflection and training. Thus, there will be an attempt to propose training courses for Bible and theological colleges.

Second, my approach to finding answers to this and related questions will be based on social constructionist and postfoundational epistemologies expressed through narrative and using a qualitative research design. That is, meaning and reality are socially constructed and contextually defined and articulated, using primary co-researchers for live stories in individual and group dialogue. Part of the context relates to Christians in vocational ministry. Thus, my enquiry centres on the Shona and Ndebele peoples of Zimbabwe in the Christian context, with specific focus on the field of administration and their theological understanding thereof.

The study will begin in Chapter Two with an exploration of the nature of administration in general, then in the context of the Shona and Ndebele, as well as in the context of Christian ministry praxis. The dialogues will begin in Chapter Three with a values and task analysis, then move through individual conversations in Chapter Four to group interactions in Chapter Five, both of which will discuss the philosophical foundations of administration as well as its praxis. That should point the way to some issues and problems commonly experienced in the administrative enterprise and, if the thesis is correct, highlight some worldview factors as common linkages. Chapter Six, with two case studies, will then examine in more detail the worldview factors so far identified, while Chapter Seven will discuss a possible contextual theological rationale, ethic and motive for administration and its praxis. Chapter Eight will summarise the identified issues, suggest some solutions to strengthening administrative praxis, particularly in the Christian ministry context and present some proposed training courses to strengthen this aspect in Bible college curricula. This latter input is intended to round out the social constructionist aim of prompting change from within the community.

Chapter Two

DESCRIBING THE PROBLEM: The Dimensions of Administration

1.   What Does Administration Look Like?

Robbins (1976: 4) asks: "Have you ever considered that the future of modern civilisation rests with administrators?   Their decisions make the difference between war and peace, inflation and stability, prosperity and depression; and they decide directly on such crucial issues as quality of health care, implementation of new technological advances, availability of desired goods and services, and quality of the environment."

At first glance, this comment may be seen as trying to put administrators and administration on too high a pedestal. Perhaps it is claiming too much status for the enterprise – especially if we try to make the same claim for church administration. Those in the church who not only do not appreciate administration but who even resent it would likely hold such a view. Even those who somewhat appreciate the value of administration might raise an eyebrow. And such scepticism, it seems, is very widespread.   This, I think indicates the extent of misunderstanding of the value of administration. It is much like a manager who is enabled to do all that they can precisely because they have an efficient secretary behind (or is it next to?) them. In the same way that many managers do not sufficiently appreciate their secretaries, many Christian leaders eschew administration. But, let the "wheels fall off," and suddenly the secretary or the person responsible for the administration is all-important!

What is often not sufficiently recognised is the role of administrative decisions through which, for example, the congregation receives a sermon, with its topic, text, points and application; that the choice of hymns and choruses and accompanying music are made, and indeed, that every aspect of the worship service is planned and effected. It is through administrative actions, too, that all the other ministries of the Church – Bible studies, outreach, youth groups, Sunday School, social care, counselling and so on – can function smoothly and effectively. It is through administrative actions that appointments are made, meetings arranged and held and decisions made – in addition to much of the behind-the-scenes office work that facilitates all this activity.

To use the analogy of a machine, administration is the "secret" oil needed for the machine to function efficiently. Without it, things fall apart, a variety of tasks are not done efficiently or effectively and chaos, frustration and even anger are the result; the entire organisation suffers.

Robbins (1976: 7-8) states:

> Those who have the responsibility for deciding the direction an organisation will take and who hold the authority to move it toward its goals are the single most important ingredient in determining the organisation's success or failure. … the quality of an organisation's administrators determines its success. Successful administrators anticipate change, vigorously exploit opportunities, correct poor performance and lead the organisation toward its objectives. In contrast to other groups within the organisation, administrators have the greatest opportunities to turn straw into gold – or the reverse.

While I agree that this helps to highlight the importance of administration, he seems to have managers and leaders in mind here, rather than administrators alone. Indeed, he says there is little difference between the two (Robbins, 1976: 12). In my view, however, it is ultimately the overall leader's responsibility to see to the successful achievement of objectives.

That said, Gordon McDonald in his Foreword (Engstrom 1985: 9) observes:

> The "visionary," a charismatic leader full of zeal and passion, can usually launch an organisation of people into initial action. But the honeymoon will not last forever. That's why it takes a leader with administrative skill and judgement to sustain the momentum that vision creates. And because some well-intentioned men and women in the past have ignored this simple reality, more than one worthy organisation begun in a blaze of enthusiasm has disintegrated in painful and humiliating failure.

Engstrom (1985: 13-15), commenting on the well-known *"Peter Principle"* – that a person is often promoted to their level of incompetence – highlights two related dynamics: The office, position or authority of the person on the one hand and, on the other, what he calls "charismatic" leadership – that is, the innate ability, without official title, to motivate and inspire. He notes that not every leader necessarily has both dynamics.

It is evident from experience, therefore, that not all leaders or managers are effective administrators or that all administrators are effective leaders. Certainly, however, every leader has some administration to do and every administrator has some leading to do. Clearly, there is overlap, both of tasks and responsibilities, between managing and administering. Many experts in the field thus use the terms interchangeably. Unfortunately, this blurs the task of administration and makes it more difficult to identify and define it precisely. But, the more complex the tasks, the greater the need for others to do more of the background administration. Not every leader does – or should do – all the administration unaided. Having delegated that responsibility to the administrators, the leader remains responsible for the overall success or failure of the group and its goals and objectives. Nonetheless, the leader cannot do without administration.

In the context of local church ministry, this is seen in the pastor's oversight of the various ministries within the church, but he does not necessarily involve himself directly in all the decisions of those ministry groups. Yet, when they fail, he is ultimately accountable.

That the role and importance of administration is not appreciated arises from the nature of administration in the first place. As mentioned previously, it is often unseen, silent, behind-the-scenes work. Not only is it not seen or fully understood by many of those who benefit from it, but also it is not "up front", in the public eye; easily noticeable. Precisely because it is not seen or understood, it is not appreciated. Only when it is absent are the positive effects recognised and valued.

A personal example will help to illustrate the point. As my church, Bulawayo Baptist, has grown over the years, the leadership felt the need to appoint additional pastors. Our administrative staff began, as many churches do, with a pastor and a part-time, mornings-only secretary and a caretaker. After several years, we appointed a second office assistant, together with another caretaker. An associate and then a third joined the senior pastor, to form a strong pastoral team. This, of course, increased the administrative load and we moved to having a part-time administrator and a housekeeper as well. During this time, we also extended our church planting outreach and appointed a full-time administrator to oversee that work. At one point, this meant a staff of 10. The senior pastor accepted a call to Cape Town and this was followed not long after by the retirement of the part-time administrator. We retained a mornings-only secretary/receptionist and hired another mornings-only administrator; a third mornings-only volunteer assisted both. As a deacon and then, later, as an elder, I was then given responsibility for overseeing the administration of the church. The front office was exceptionally busy, with people dropping in, many off the street and often without appointments; telephone calls in and out; meetings and a variety of ministry activities as well as all the usual office and computer procedures. The administrator was responsible for supervising the staff and co-ordinating their activities *vis-à-vis* the pastors. After a protracted conflict between one elder and a junior pastor, the second pastor was appointed substantive senior pastor. Some time later, the junior pastor left for Scotland, leaving the senior pastor to carry almost the entire pastoral load, except for the church-planting ministry. The thriving youth work was self-managed, but he obviously had oversight.

Regrettably, after three years of struggles and various attempts to adjust the work of the administrator, it was evident that the senior pastor's efforts were now being undermined and hindered. Rather than providing the required back up and support, especially in the light of the pastor's increased workload, the administrator was impeding the pastor, creating friction

with the other staff and hindering other ministry leaders from doing their work. As a result, required work was not being done, some was not being done well and frustration levels increased. Both the Church's ministry to the congregation and its influence in the City were jeopardised.

Apart from spiritual concerns, which were a major part of the problem, we also had an inadequate take-over from the previous incumbent without sufficient explanation of work expectations, while another snag stemmed from a personality clash. Eventually, productivity and relationships were affected to the point that it became necessary to fire the administrator. In her place, we then appointed the Receptionist as the Senior Pastor's Secretary on a full-time basis and retained the former volunteer as Ministry Co-ordinator (mornings only). The latter supervised the two caretakers and housekeeper and worked with the Church Planting Co-ordinator. In the meantime, we had appointed a Pastoral Assistant to work on advocacy and the home cell groups and had taken on a full-time Youth Co-ordinator. In addition, we accepted a Ministry Intern, responsible for leading the music and worship. This system worked reasonably well, albeit for a short time before the Ministry Co-ordinator left for health reasons. That reduced the staff to nine: the Senior Pastor, Receptionist, Church Planting Co-ordinator, two caretakers and a kitchen orderly, the Pastoral Assistant, Youth Co-ordinator and Ministry Intern. Following the departure of the Assistant Pastor, Administrator and Ministry Co-ordinator, the Senior Pastor, once again, increasingly felt the weight of overseeing the total operation of the Church, such that it clearly became a burden. This was despite the existence of a sizeable leadership team of 18 Elders and Deacons and a heavy reliance on delegation of ministry responsibilities to the congregation. Although strenuous efforts have been made to appoint a Ministry Manager, it has been difficult to find the right person. With the departure of the Ministry Co-ordinator, there was an evident lack of cohesion and some decisions "fell through the cracks". After some months, a member of the congregation offered to leave his full-time secular job and join the Church as the Administrator. But this still leaves a need for the ministries to be co-ordinated.

This account illustrates two points: (1) That, although administration is often hidden, when the work is not done satisfactorily, other work and relationships suffer. In the context of the Church, this is first evident in the office and with the Pastor, then filters to the Executive Board and, eventually, becomes obvious to the entire congregation. Although they may not be aware of the details, nevertheless, they know that "somehow, things are not working". It is as if some "oil" has not been applied timeously or in the right places; that which was needed to support the "ministry" has not done so and the result is that the main function suffers. The resultant squeak and the rubbing bring friction and heat. Sometimes, the "machine" breaks

down – in major cases, irretrievably. Often, this becomes clear only after the damage has been done, when good administration has been absent. Only then is sound administration appreciated (even if it is still not fully understood). (2) There has been the realisation of the difference between administrating and managing: while there is obvious overlap, there are significant skills and temperament differentials. Not all those in leadership roles can do both equally well. This illustrates the theological point that the Church functions best as a team because we are the _body_ of Christ. (See Chapter Seven on a Theology of Administration.)

Unfortunately, many churches seem to operate, often for years, without realising that their ministries could actually be more productive if their administration was improved. That many leaders – and administrators – often seem happy to accept mediocrity in this area in no way absolves them from attempting to improve where possible. Yet, however one defines the concept of "better", it is incumbent upon the wise leader and/or administrator to work towards improvement.

The discussions that follow will attempt to illustrate these principles in more detail by highlighting some Shona and Ndebele views about administration in general and in Christian ministry in particular. We will explore cultural understandings of administration and some of the problems they face as a result. Worldview factors will obviously come to the fore, but later (in chapter 3), I will seek to assess in more detail the interplay between these and one's praxis.

Before entering into these dialogues, however, it is necessary first, to attempt to identify the broad parameters of administration and, second, to highlight a crucial component within Christian ministry, that of spiritual gifting. This will allow us to dialogue meaningfully together as we seek to understand administration in the Christian context. As we then address worldview issues, we will be able to do so from an informed position.

1.1 <u>The Broad Parameters of Administration</u>

Unfortunately, in my experience, not everyone appreciates the role of administration and some, including even formal administrators, do not enjoy the task. Many pastors and other ministry leaders have negative views about administration, charging that it is a necessary evil that takes away time and energy from "real" ministry. This view, I proffer, is due in large measure to ignorance of the purpose of administration.

1.1.1 *Some Definitions*

This leads us to a discussion of one's **philosophy of administration**. By this, I mean all the assumptions, presuppositions and expectations that one brings to the administrative task

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based on temperament, leadership style, self-image, one's attitude toward others, toward work and to the particular task. And, in the Christian context, there is also the important dimension of one's theological bent, together with the understanding of ministry and one's sense of call to it. These assumptions and expectations, however, are rarely vocalised, thought through or fully appreciated or understood. Nor, sadly, is a distinct theology of leadership – let alone administration – widely taught and articulated. Yet, these determine in strong measure just how we do what we do and, often, why, with whom, where and when.

Robbins (1976: 6) comments:

> A micro perspective on administrative philosophy focuses on establishing an organised system of administrative thought. It looks at concepts and methods. Its objective is to describe administrative practice as thinking, questioning, and understanding. … All administrators have a philosophy, comprising a system of attitudes, approaches, precepts, and values that guides the way they deal with organisational problems.

He goes on to point out that the determinants of administrative behaviour are: Organisation history, cultural norms, education and experience. He suggests the present has been determined by the past; thus, the history element comprises, among other things, "previous successes and failures, dominant administrative philosophies espoused by prior administrators, and precedents set by earlier administrative decisions. The last three determine the individual's value system."

Understandably, however, as a secular writer, he says nothing about where or how one's religious faith comes in at this point. For the committed Christian, of course, this is central. Hence, the role of theology in the formation of one's praxis, which is briefly discussed below and in further detail in Chapter Seven.

At this point, though, I refer to one's philosophy of administration as that collection of mental data, coming from one's worldview, temperament, personality and experiences that determine what is done, why, how and to/with whom.

To open the dialogue, and as a point of departure for identification, I would proffer some (Caucasian/Western-based) definitions of administration as follows, such as the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English [LDCE,] 1978): "The control or direction of affairs, as of a country or a business; the act of putting something into operation, esp. by someone with the power to do so."

Lindgren (1965:22-23) offers a broad, two-pronged idea:

> 'Administer' is derived from the Latin, *administrare,* meaning literally "to serve."
> This Latin root is useful in correcting shortcomings of much modern church

administration, since in considering the verb "to serve," we have to ask, "To serve what?" The idea of administration cannot stand alone; it needs a referent object for the administrator to act upon. Administration, then, is not just activity, but *purposeful* activity, its purpose being determined in the context of a particular field of endeavour – business, education, church. … *Administration is the task of discovering and clarifying the goals and purpose of the field it serves and of moving in a coherent, comprehensive manner toward their realisation.*

Similarly, Robbins (1976: 15) likewise broadly defines administration as: "The universal process of efficiently getting activities completed with and through other people."

But, he also defines it in terms of functions:

It is planning, organising, leading and evaluating of others so as to achieve specific ends. Our goals are determined in the planning function. Allocation of scarce resources is the principle factor in both planning and organising. Leading is achieving the goals through people. And finally, the evaluating function reviews performance against the established goals and, should it be necessary, initiates corrective action.

Further, he suggests (1976: 5) that administration, as a field of study on a macro level, "… concerns itself with the determination of how our life's resources are to be effectively and efficiently utilised, and toward which ends, we also extract a microscopic (micro) or individual philosophy of administration."

Thus, an administrator is one who facilitates the above and one's philosophy of administration is the mindset governing the approach to the task, people and resources involved.

1.1.2 *The Overlap with Management*

As noted above, closely linked to administration is the concept of management. In broad terms, the former can be distinguished from the latter in that it deals with processes, while the latter tends to emphasise working with people. However, it is recognised that people are necessary to implement processes and, contrariwise, processes are needed because people require direction. An effective administrator is usually one who is concerned about and works well with details. A manager has solid people skills. But the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive and, indeed, often overlap.

Some definitions of management are:

"To control; to deal with, to guide, esp. using skill." (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English: 1978).

"The application of skill or care in the manipulation, use, treatment or control (of things or persons) or in the conduct (of an enterprise, operation, etc.)" (Oxford English Dictionary, 1978.)

"The manager, then, plans, organises, motivates, directs and controls. These are the broad aspects of the work. He adds foresight, order, purpose, integration of effort, and effectiveness to the contributions of others. That is the best use of the word 'manage'. That is the work of the manager." (Mintzburg 1973: 2)

Although not everyone manages in this sense, everyone does administer. Therefore, administration, in broad terms, can be thought of as working with the details of paper and people; it is "behind the scenes" rather than "up front" activity. Still, there is some confusion here. Pell (1999: 13), for example, sees little distinction between managing and administrating; thus, he defines a manager as a facilitator: "Your [the manager's] job is to make it easy for the team members to accomplish their jobs." Although he is speaking of managers, the same principle is true of the administrator for, if that work is not done well, others will be handicapped in doing their work suitably.

By contrast, Robbins (1976: 354) asks whether all leaders should be administrators [in his view, read managers]? Conversely, should all administrators [managers] be leaders? … "[Because] effective leaders are important inputs to a successful organisation … all administrators should *ideally* be leaders. However, not all leaders necessarily have capabilities in other administrative functions, and, hence, not all should hold administrative positions. The fact that a person can influence others does not tell us whether he can also plan, organise, or evaluate." Thus, he speaks of "leaders" as those who can both influence and administer.

To clarify the distinction, Andrew du Brin (1998: 5-6) discriminates between leaders and managers thus:

> Management includes planning, organising, leading and controlling. Although leadership is part of the manager's job, a manager must spend time on the planning organising and controlling functions. Leadership strives to accomplish change, whereas management focuses on maintaining equilibrium.

He continues by saying that,

> Management is more scientific than leadership. It relies on foundation skills … making effective use of information technology. Management uses an explicit set of tools and techniques, based on reasoning and testing, that you can apply to a variety of situations. Leadership requires eliciting teamwork and co-operation from a vast network of people and motivating a large number of people in the network. A leader frequently displays enthusiasm, passion, and inspiration to get others to attain high levels of performance. Managing involves less outward emotion and a more conservative demeanour to achieve goals once they are defined.

Personally, I do not agree wholeheartedly with du Brin's distinction. It seems to me that while leadership, management and administration can all be studied and have recognisable techniques and principles, there is sufficient "woolliness" in all three that makes it difficult to pin down specifics and categorise neatly. It is similar, I feel to medicine: there is much that is "scientific" but there are also many areas where the doctor or surgeon must use guesswork. I am not convinced that his categorisations are as neat as he attempts to make them. Second, his approach highlights the fact that these concepts are often used interchangeably. Where he speaks of management, others – and I tend to agree – use administration. And what he calls leadership, others would call managing.

That said, Higginson (1996: 31-44) uses Hickman (1990) who helpfully categorises five key areas of corporate life and then lists nine distinguishing characteristics for each between managers and leaders. These five categories are: competitive strategy or advantage; organisational culture or capacity; external/internal change; individual effectiveness and style; and bottom line performance or results. Higginson (1996: 34) then makes seven observations about these. Of the first, "Many [people] are a mixture of managers and leaders," he says:

> This may seem like a blatant contradiction of Hickman, with his neat division between the two types, but the fact is that he does not state his thesis as crudely as his list might suggest. He describes 'manager' and 'leader' as metaphors representing two opposite ends of a spectrum. 'Manager' signifies the more analytical, structured, controlled and orderly end; 'leader' the more experimental, visionary, flexible, uncontrolled and creative end. But as with all spectra, somewhere in the middle is an area where it is difficult to distinguish one from the other.

Whether we agree with these definitions and observations or not, they nevertheless bring to light four key components of administration: Planning, Organising, Leading and Control. And, whether these are expressly the responsibility of the manager/leader or the manager/administrator does not detract from our examination of them or how they function cross-culturally.

However, Mintzburg (1973: 8-11), in labelling this the "Classical School" of management, suggests this approach is not helpful because it still does not describe what *actual* work is done in administration. Nevertheless, while there are several schools of management or administration theory, all of which highlight the difficulties in establishing what actual work a manager does, this four-fold grid gives us a useful scheme with which to identify the main components of administration. Thus, I have taken this four-fold framework as the basis of my investigation.

1.1.3 *Some Questions of Cultural Perspective*

1.1.3.1 Western or African?

This naturally raises some questions. One is, 'How does this fit with my co-researchers' cultural perspective?' Or, 'Am I not imposing this framework on them?' It may appear at this juncture that the use of this perhaps "Western" grid may imply that the African perception of administration can only be understood this way. Such an implication is definitely not intended.

My rejoinder is three-fold: First, as previously stated, administration is a woolly, ill-defined and often misunderstood concept that most people have not deliberately thought about and so do not typically have a recognisable philosophy or, for the Christian, even a theological approach for. This made our dialogues difficult from a social constructionist perspective, since my co-researchers found it difficult to articulate and discuss the concept clearly without such a guideline. Hence, I felt it necessary, for the sake of clarity and to facilitate more informed discussion, to provide a framework around which to focus our conversations; thus, this grid is one point of departure for our discussion. In no way am I assuming that it is the only approach to discussing administration; it served merely as a guide. Not only were my co-researchers happy to accept it, they did not even take time to reflect on what alternatives they may see as more culturally relevant. Second, as I have struggled with this subject over the years, the issues and concerns I have identified have tended to fall fairly naturally and logically within this four-point framework – with the addition, of course, of time management. Third, my co-researchers repeatedly confirmed in their interviews that this was a helpful guide and that they were very comfortable with it. There was never any attempt to suggest an alternative. That my co-researchers found it acceptable is an indication, perhaps, that it was easy to fit it into their worldview perspective too – even if some adaptations were necessary.

1.1.3.2 Local or Universal?

This, in turn, raises a second question: the universality of administrative, managerial and leadership principles. From my perspective, a Christian worldview derived from an understanding of the broad sweep of Scripture tells me that God (*Yahweh*) is a God of order and, as Creator, He crafted all human beings to function in an orderly way. Moreover, one of the results of sin is the antithesis of this orderliness (see Chapter Seven, Theology). It is not unreasonable, then, to expect that His intention for humanity is orderliness, good, and rightness for all human beings who are in a right relationship with Him. And, since these concepts apply to all human beings, they can be understood properly as universal. Furthermore, whether one is Christian or not, leadership and followership, managing and organising, the existence and need for order and the problems with its absence are observably universal factors. Hence, Christian or not, we see the fundamentals all around us. Daily life itself demonstrates this. Indeed, the notion of self-discipline – and its clear necessity – also makes the point. What varies from culture to culture, of course, are the assumptions

behind these elements, how they are understood and, in turn, how they are practised. That is what we will explore from a Shona and Ndebele point of view, within a Christian context.

1.1.3.3 Relative or absolute?

A third question is that of measurement or degree being relative, both culturally and generationally. What I might define as "effective" or "efficient" from my cultural perspective may not be the same definition that a Shona or Ndebele Christian would perceive them to be. So, what, precisely, *is* good administration? That partly depends on who you are asking.

For instance, some European cultures may understand efficiency, say, both in terms of time management (that is, promptness and speed) and what is referred to in commercial circles as "the bottom line" (profit and loss.) On the other hand, the old-style, rural-traditional Shona and Ndebele cultures have no such sense of time or of financial profit. Instead, the emphasis is centred on the quality of relationships. Would efficiency and effectiveness in this cultural context, then, be measured in the quality of relationships? That is one of the kinds of questions this study seeks to explore.

But just to make the situation even more complicated, there is the dynamic of generational relativity. As societies change (some would question whether it is progress!), so the way people respond to the influences and pressures around them change. What my grandfather in his generation or, even, my father, appreciated in terms of values may be completely different from what I feel is important today. What interested them then may not interest me now. What motivates me or puts me off may be different also. This generational differentiation is particularly highlighted in the African context given the rapidity of urbanisation, the import of technology as well as the progression of industrialisation in the West. The way a young, urbanite thinks and behaves today is clearly very different from how his rural grandfather lived. There were no computers then, no automated teller machines and no milk in packets!

Indeed, Africa is in social transition. What was considered "traditional" a decade ago was understood in terms of the rural village. In fact, many people still hold such a view. However, we now have three if not four generations of urbanites, the younger of whom may never even have visited a rural village. What, then, for them is "traditional"? The traditional definition no longer holds! We now have the rural tradition and the urban tradition. For many black urban teenagers and young adults today, this has created an identity crisis. They have been told that their roots are in the village, that Africanness is defined in terms of rural "tradition". But never having visited the grandparents' (or, increasingly, the great-grandparents') home village, there is no appreciation of what this means and little understanding of identity. The young

urbanite today knows rap music, cell phones and the Internet. Grandparents locked in the village probably have no idea of what any of these are, let alone experienced them.

This social change has a profound impact on the way people approach life and, therefore, the ways they plan, organise, lead and control. This tension is reflected in my co-researchers' narratives**:** in order to explain the rationale for a modern-day practice that may have no perceived purpose in a city setting, they will refer to life in the village. Equally, they will narrate incidents that only have meaning in their current urban context. And the older members of the group sometimes respond differently from the younger. All this points to generational change and the concomitant relativity of the way life is managed.

More than that, the theories – and resultant practice – of management, leadership and administration changes to meet the varying needs of the generations. Thus, we had "Management by Objectives" (MBO) of the 1980s. In the mid-Nineties, we saw the introduction of "Total Quality Management" (TQM) and at the beginning of this decade, we have seen "Re-engineering". There are several other concepts as well.

Thus, administration, in many senses, is fluid and flexible. Two decades ago, I managed my appointments with a desk diary; now I have an electronic calendar and the facility to contact my appointee to remind them automatically of our meeting. Yesterday, I was told the good administrator must use such-and-such a technique; today it is different yet again. On top of that, how does one aspiring to be a "good" administrator in the Africa of today function in the face of changing technology that, for many, is simply not accessible?

So, our examination becomes even more convoluted: not only are we examining nebulous concepts to begin with, we are doing so cross-culturally, where there are generational dynamics such that the praxis is regularly modified as a result.

Then, additionally, we are dealing also in the Christian realm and, therefore, there is one other crucial element still to consider.

1.2 Administration in the Christian Context

1.2.1 *The Spiritual Gift*

While it is self-evident from experience that administration and management are recognisable skills or talents that certain individuals have to varying degrees, in the context of the Church – and, indeed, of Christian ministry in general – it is important to acknowledge the existence and necessity of the spiritual gift of administration.

At the same time, a complicating factor is the understanding of the spiritual gift itself. As in the so-called secular realm, the issue of the differentiation between managing and leading in

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Christian ministry is highlighted by the definitions and awareness of the relative gifts. Some authors (for example, Engstrom 1985) see Paul's reference to the gift in Rom. 12:6 as encompassing both administrative and leadership roles together. Others (such as Rush 1988) see it as management. Still others (Wagner 1979) separate the two, arguing that Paul speaks of different functions.

Whichever view one takes, it seems generally agreed that a spiritual gift is a gift of grace given by the Holy Spirit to believers. However, there are some areas (leading, teaching and administering for example) where natural talent overlaps. Thus, although it is possible to have a natural talent for administration, for the Christian to be really effective spiritually in this area, it is a given that the spiritual gift must be evident too. Yet, precisely because administration involves natural talent, it may be possible to assume that, because someone has the one, they automatically have the other. This is not necessarily true. There may well be a strong overlap, but evident talents or skills prior to conversion do not always mean the granting of a spiritual gift in that area after conversion (see Rush 1988, Wagner 1979, Engstrom, 1985).

Irrespective of one's view here, it is important to note the significance of the administrative task – notwithstanding the apparently widespread disparagement in Christian ministry that the administrative task is "not 'real' ministry." Dobbins (1960:32) highlights the significance; while speaking to the church context, his comments apply elsewhere too:

> That administration is a detached fragment of a minister's total calling is a mistaken idea. Administration constitutes the circle of which other duties are related parts. Everything that a minister does of consequence is associated with the administrative function.

In terms of this research – administration in the Christian ministry setting – it should be noted, perhaps, that the distinctions between managing, leading and administering are blurred or sharper depending on factors such as the size of the Church or ministry organisation and, indeed, the nature of the ministry itself. The pastor in a smaller church, for instance, is much more likely to have to mix and balance these dynamics than the senior pastor of a large church whose main challenge is to manage the broader entity rather than administer the details. Likewise, the demands of a husband-and-wife evangelism ministry would differ considerably from that of a multi-staffed organisation. Using Higginson's (1996) point of reference, where one is positioned on the management-administration continuum by virtue of the kind of ministry will impact how much is done of each.

This point is important to understand as we consider the dialogue below. Not everyone in an administrative position in ministry necessarily has the spiritual gift of administration. Some in such positions are appointed for reasons other than the evident existence of the spiritual gift.

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Administrators can be appointed by election, through church policies and tradition, because of popularity or political or financial "pull" or, even, through nepotism. Thus, in assessing the discussions below, it should be understood that not everyone interviewed necessarily has the spiritual gift of administration or was appointed because it is a recognised gift in them. (Indeed, of the group, only two felt they possess the gift – regardless of their definition!)

Nevertheless, our focus is on the interplay of worldview and administration and how the former may affect the efficiency and effectiveness of the latter. For the Christian, it is to be assumed that a desire to honour God in our work would lead us to carefully consider our spiritual gifts and our work ethic, in order to enhance the quality of our inputs.

1.2.2 *Secular Influence?*

But there is another dynamic at play here as well. For some in the Church, administration is not only misunderstood but often is thought of as secular. This is compounded not only by a misinformed view of administration itself but also of the spiritual gift (particularly in churches where this aspect of Christian service is not taught). Part of the assumption here is that, because the bulk of the literature and theory comes from the (secular) business world, applying "business techniques" in the Church is somehow worldly. But, as authors such as John Maxwell (1993, 1998, 2001) and Andrew du Brin (1998) amply demonstrate, what the world is now finding as the "right way to do business" was laid out in Scripture aeons ago! This dual ignorance, then, becomes the basis for some to eschew administration in ministry, since it is viewed as "worldly" and thus to be avoided. However, when pushed to consider the nature of his work in detail, the pastor or para-church ministry leader is quick to recognise the degree of administration required. While it is true that the influence in this field – and the resultant drive for its implementation – has generally come from the secular realm (because that is where the bulk of the related research and writing has been focused), it is also evident from today's management sources that greater prominence and consideration is being given to Biblical principles, even if they may not be openly identified as such (see also, J. Robert Clinton [1988], Stan Covey [1989, 1990] and Arthur Pell [1999]).

With the above in mind, we are now in a position to begin exploring our dialogue. Hence, to the fundamental question: From a Shona and Ndebele Christian point of view, what is administration; what, if any, are the inherent problems with its praxis and how might worldview impinge on these? We will interact with our primary co-researchers to establish their philosophies and understanding of administration. This takes place through the next three chapters.

Chapter Three

ADMINISTRATION IN ITS CONTEXT – Values and Tasks

1.   What Do (Christian) Administrators Actually Do?

Having considered what administration might be in terms of definitions, parameters and concepts, we come now to explore what administration actually entails in practice and within particular cultural and Christian ministry contexts.   Since we have discovered that the concepts, even though related and overlapping, are woolly and imprecise, it is necessary to identify more concretely what administration really is.   To do this, we have entered into a dialogue with several people involved in administration in Christian ministry.   The first part of the dialogue was a questionnaire to establish values and the actual tasks undertaken.   But before we examine that in detail, we first must introduce our partners in this endeavour.

1.1 The Participants

Joyce was instrumental in starting and developing a small-and-medium enterprise management training organisation geared to training and empowering budding entrepreneurs. She served for 10 years as National Director.   She has a Bachelors degree in Bio-Technology and a Masters in Business Administration degree.   The organisation was recently restructured and as a result, she resigned shortly after the initial interview.   She now leads a project management para-church ministry.   She is married to pastor-husband, Chris; he is Ndebele-speaking, she is Shona.   For the initial interview, she was joined by her colleague, *Mbange Netha,* head of Training.   Later, after one member of the group had left, I asked her to join the focus group as a replacement, to which she readily agreed.

Dixon, in his late Thirties, is Senior Pastor of a city-centre Pentecostal church in Bulawayo. With a background in Productivity Engineering, including lecturing, he also has a Diploma and a Bachelors Degree in Theology and 13 years pastoral experience.   The Church is ethnically mixed, with whites, Shonas and Ndebeles, among other groups; it has 450 members and they hold three services each Sunday.   As part of a full-time staff of 13, he has a personal secretary, an assistant pastor (Administration) and a Youth Pastor, together with a Receptionist.   He is Shona.

Bekithemba, an Ndebele in his early Thirties, leads a high-density based Presbyterian church in Bulawayo with 75 members; there is a mixture of Ndebele and Shona, although the former are predominant.   He has a Diploma, a Bachelors degree and an Honours degree in

Theology. With eight years pastoral experience, he has no administrative assistance, but operates from an office at the Church.

Chris is the Mission Director for a multi-ethnic, city-centre based Baptist church in Bulawayo. He has a Diploma in Theology and 15 years ministry experience; he is in his late Thirties. His main role is field work in church planting and he is responsible for overseeing 23 urban and rural congregations that are predominantly Ndebele. He has not had direct administrative assistance, having utilised the Church Receptionist and other staff, but has recently gained more direct, permanent help, albeit still shared with another Church ministry. He is Ndebele and married to Joyce.

George oversees 12 congregations in a district under the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God, Africa (ZAOGA) denomination in Bulawayo's high density suburbs. While there is a mixture of Shona and Ndebele, the latter predominate. He is personally responsible for four assemblies, but is making efforts to appoint an assistant pastor. He has no office or secretarial help, but is assisted by a team of Elders. He has pastored for seven years and recently completed a Bachelor's degree in Theology. He is Ndebele but grew up in Mashonaland; he is in his mid-Forties.

Dawson is the Senior Pastor of a growing Pentecostal congregation of 300 members in Bulawayo, which is part of a national church denomination. The Church is a mixture of Shona and Ndebele, high-density and low density. It also runs a small Bible school (with part-time staff). He has two full-time administrative assistants. He has a one-year Diploma in Charismatic Leadership, together with several other certificates. In his early Fifties, he has pastored for 21 years and, although Shona, is also fluent in SiNdebele.

Barnabas, in his early Thirties, was the Rector at a low-density, multi-ethnic Anglican Church of 200 members in Bulawayo before a subsequent posting to South Africa. He has a Diploma in Religious Studies, a B.A. in Theology, a Masters in Mission Studies and a Post-graduate Certificate in Education. As such, he is a qualified teacher and has been in ministry for four years, having been ordained and taken over from his (white) predecessor who retired in 2004. He functions from a church office with a mornings-only secretary. He is Shona, but is also fluent in SiNdebele. Prior to his new posting, he completed the personal interview, but regrettably did not submit the Task Survey and only attended two of the group sessions. I replaced him with Joyce.

All of the final participants expressed interest in taking part in the project and needed little persuasion. Generally, agreeing on and holding the appointments was easy enough. I was

impressed and repeatedly encouraged by the group's commitment to our meetings; they often commented on the value of the exercise for them personally.

1.2 The Interview Structure

In an effort to ensure that our conversations are properly channelled and that we are all able to understand each other, given the difficulties in identifying the nature of administration, I have planned a three-fold structure to the interviews (see Appendices 1 & 2 below).

1.2.1 Attitude & Activity Questionnaire

This was a preliminary exercise completed prior to the main interviews. It was a stand-alone exercise divided into four sections. The first section asked the respondent to rate a series of concepts in terms of importance and approach (1 = not important at all; 10 = very important). The second was to quantify the amount of time each day (as a percentage) spent on administrative tasks. Third, was an indication of the approximate amount of time spent within the last 72 hours on specific administrative tasks. The last section was five questions relating to delegation and work satisfaction.

The objective here was to identify some basic attitudes behind the process of administration: (1) How important is it perceived to be; (2) What elements are considered important and which others are not; and (3) The respondent's general approach in doing administration. This data will serve two purposes. Very importantly, on the one hand, it will begin to alert the co-researcher to some of the elements involved and help them to begin to focus on what may or may not be administration *in their context*. Second, it will allow me some initial insight into attitudes – and hence, positive and negative actions – toward administration. This, in turn, will give me a clearer idea of what kinds of worldview issues and questions to pursue later and the areas where more emphasis in discussion may be needed.

1.3 *The Dialogue:*

1.3.1 *Task Questionnaires* (Appendix 1) –

1.3.1.1 Rating of Issues.

Respondents were asked to rate their sense of importance regarding 42 concepts relating to administration. These included such items as Results, Teamwork, Resources, Power, Efficiency, Tradition, The Past, Motivation, Rules & Regulations, Neatness, Passivity, Oral Communication, Ambition, Compromise/Consensus, Goal-setting and Documentation among others. The rating was from 1 (not important) to 10 (very important).

While these concepts could be associated loosely into six sets (People, Organising, Leading, Operations, Philosophy and Temperament) they were deliberately not put together (for

example Time, Appointments, Punctuality; The Past, Present and Future) to avoid one item influencing another. Also, the items were left largely unexplained unless absolutely necessary (e.g. Values and Processes) to avoid undue influence. While this created some problems for a few of the respondents as they did not always understand all the items fully, I felt it was important to let them think about the issue in their own way. Naturally, this allows for different viewpoints – and, hence, of importance – but I thought it better to let the person's unsolicited feelings come through rather than being directed. Also, by not defining too closely, I believe I was able to reduce in some measure the likelihood of answers being given just to please me (although I am aware that may well have happened anyway.)

The intention here was to assess the person's spontaneous mental and emotional approach to administration, without undue prior influence, with a view to identifying strengths and weaknesses arising from attitudes, assumptions and expectations. Some criteria – for example, Competition, The Future, Tolerance and Record-keeping – were deliberately included, recognising that these relate directly to worldview issues. These, of course, would be followed up in further discussion later.

The returns of five of the final participants' surveys were pleasantly and relatively quick. I had anticipated this to be a drawn-out affair, with some forgetting to do it or to return it. Only in one instance, though, did I have to contact the person – five times over a period of four months – to remind them to submit the survey. This in itself is a signal of an underlying attitude toward and dynamic behind administration. This particular person, by observation of his study, is not a particularly well-organised individual and I suspected I would have some problems like this with him. (Subsequently, he also missed three of the group sessions and, later, regrettably, emigrated. I never did get his survey response.)

Interpretations

In general terms, the overall responses were varied, but the tendency was that the majority were rated "high" (7) to "very important" (10). One respondent had three items marked at 1 (Competition, Passivity and Procrastination) and another had one 1 (Procrastination) and a 2 (Fatalism). All the others had only a few low scores scattered in the 3s and 4s range.

As expected in an exercise of this nature, there were some surprises. For instance, I had anticipated from previous interaction that the concept of time (Philosophy) would receive a relatively low rating of importance. Yet all the respondents rated it very highly (three 10s, a 9 and an 8). Interestingly, while one would expect a link with this and the sense of importance of appointments and punctuality, the responses on these two factors varied from 6 to 10, suggesting some degree of disparity in value systems.

At the same time, as expected, the concept of Relationships (People) scored 10s (four) and a 9. This is not surprising, since both Shona and Ndebele worldviews are very strong on this aspect. Five of the respondents indicated in the interview that they understood poor stewardship of time affected relationships and that there was a close link between the two. (Interestingly, the value of time was rated higher than I had expected; see below for further comments on the interviews.)

The question of the use of power (and authority – People and Philosophy) was also quite interesting. Three rated "People (as a utility)" at 10, one gave it a 9 and one an 8. This implies that there is an acceptable tendency to use people. Yet, Power as a concept was rated either 6 (two), 7 (two) or 8, while one omitted this item. It should be noted, though, that without any explanation (to avoid undue influence), this may well have been understood from the perspective of leadership rather than coercion. Related to this is the concept of Control. Here, two rated it at 8, one at 6, one at 9 and one at 4. Again, this could have been understood in terms of leadership rather than coercion, but both sets of responses (Power and Control) raise interesting questions when linked with Relationships.

Another people-related concept is that of Teamwork. Here, as expected, the ratings were all high: two 8s, a 9 and two 10s. This is not surprising, given the nature of pastoral work with volunteers through committees and the basic call to discipleship. All six respondents are in positions and involved with a range of responsibilities such that a lack of teamwork would hinder their ministries. It also ties in with the emphasis on Relationships. At the same time, it should be recognised that not every ministry leader is a team player or has a positive view of committees. In this case, although all six of these respondents clearly demonstrate a high level of competence in this area anyway; this does not necessarily apply to all ministry leaders, however. One of the respondents, in the subsequent interview, indicated that, although he tolerates committees because he realises they are necessary, he would much prefer not to be involved in them.

A further major area was that of Philosophy. This covered items such as Results, Values, Competition and Tradition. Four of the pastors rated Results at 10, while one gave it a 9. This matches their leadership role and responsibilities in leading others and building their congregations. In their interviews, they all saw Goal-setting (a function of leadership) – rated with three 10s, a 9 and an 8 – as an integral part of being effective (three 9s and two 10s). Interestingly, the one respondent who, in his interview stressed the importance of goal-setting and results as key rated this item as an 8. Not surprisingly, all five respondents rated Values (honesty, integrity, etc.) as very important (one 9 and four 10s). In their interviews, however, it

was apparent that their approach to some aspects of administration did not reflect these values in practice, as shown by consistently coming late for meetings (or, in one case, not submitting the survey at all.).

The sixth grouping related to Temperament and included such items as Tolerance, Firmness, Ambition, Unobtrusiveness and Fatalism. Tolerance proved interesting in that, given the emphasis on right relationships – together with the concomitant alacrity to rebuke or control – most respondents rated it between 5 (one), 7 (three) and 8 (one) rather than as I would have expected, a 9 or 10. Likewise, ambition was mostly rated high (8s and 9s). This is intriguing in the light of the Scriptural call for servant leadership (Matt. 20:20-28), but may be as much a commentary on the demands of leadership as emotional need for affirmation (a common trait among many pastors).   One respondent rated Unobtrusiveness at 10, saying this is a core component of his leadership style as influence.

On the operations side, it was apparent that Resources, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Processes, Neatness and Oral Communications not unexpectedly rated very high with, generally, 9s and 10s. This ties in with the focus on relationships/people and results/goal-setting and reflects the drive of many such leaders. Significantly, two gave "Processes" a 5 and a 7 respectively, indicating a subdued understanding of its importance in the administrative process, while one gave Oral Communications a 7 – strange in the light of the emphasis on speech and relationships.

My analysis of the above data is that those Pastors heading large, city-centre ministries see the value of time and its stewardship as important and more in keeping with an urban, process-dominated mind-set and approach as opposed to a rural, event-dominated mind-set and approach. Thus, their views of appointments and punctuality were "very important". Goal setting, teamwork and delegation were all major factors, as confirmed in the subsequent interviews.

Generally speaking, those elements that I had anticipated would receive high ratings – especially, for example, Teamwork, Relationships, Harmony, Oral Communications and Compromise/Consensus – all received high to very important ratings. There were some surprises, however, with those elements that I had expected to be rated on the low side but were in fact rated high. These included Appointments, Processes, The Future, Punctuality, Writing and Documentation. Given the oft-verbalised view that time is less important than relationships and the related general indifference to time, I had expected the issues of appointments and punctuality to have been rated low. Likewise, the perceived preference for oral communications (again linked to relationships) would suggest that Writing and

Documentation would not be considered important elements. Yet, all of these were rated highly.

By contrast, Tradition, Passivity, Uncompromising and Procrastination all received low ratings. Since the last three could very well be considered from a negative point of view, this is not too surprising.   However, I would have anticipated Tradition to have scored fairly high in importance since the Church is an institution of tradition. By the same token, she is often mired in and her development slowed down by the same. It would appear, however, that this element negates growth, forward movement and progress – which are the antithesis of the leader's role in vision casting, motivation, projects and activities. Since these particular respondents are leaders, this is to be expected; perhaps the opposite would be indicated by their followers. It should be acknowledged also that tradition is both positive and negative. It is positive in that tradition builds such abstracts as loyalty, a sense of belonging, purpose and roots. Negatively, though, tradition can hinder, harm and even kill.

Overall, the responses to this question, as expected, generally reflect a high focus on people, values and leadership. In other words, the responses imply that administration – for this particular group at any rate – is understood in terms of normally recognised efficiency and effectiveness; that there is a clear desire for achievement and results; and that the main pillars of solid administration – time, planning, organising, leading and controlling – are all recognised and accepted. I expect these dynamics to be highlighted further in our dialogues.

Thus, it remains to explore the worldview consequences of these notions, which should become evident through the individual and focus group interactions.

Question 2 asked respondents to indicate the average amount of time, as a percentage, spent on administration. This question was asked deliberately prior to the next question identifying specific administrative tasks so that the person would not be influenced by a "new" perception of administration. The answers should thus reflect the proportion of time spent on what the respondent previously understood administration to entail. This data should reflect the weight of administrative tasks to the whole and, in conjunction with the next question, would provide a basis for confirming the perceived importance of administration within the co-researcher's entire work domain *vis-à-vis* their actual verbal descriptions and feelings about it.

Typically, the average time spent ranged between 30-40% (one respondent), 40-50% (one), 50-60% (two) and 60-70% (one) of their time on administration. One respondent – who, interestingly, describes himself as "not an office person, but a people person" – indicated spending 75% or more of his time on administration! He is frustrated with this element of his ministry and has been requesting assistance for some time.

It should be noted, of course, that these proportions will vary depending on the nature of the person's work. But, given that all the respondents are pastors and that their work is therefore similar, the range of stated time spent is intriguing. On the one hand, it tends to put the lie to the notion that pastors are not heavily involved in administration (supposedly because they are, instead, involved in "real ministry") and, on the other, it confirms that ministry does indeed entail a sizeable amount of administration.

1.3.1.2 Identification of Tasks.

Because of my own involvement with pastors for many years, I have become aware of much of what they do, both publicly and behind the scenes. My own ministry experience as secretary on several committees, from local church to national level, has exposed me to much of what might be termed "pastoral administration". As a result, I believe I have a sound grasp of the key administrative tasks that pastors are typically involved with. But that exposure has also alerted me to the fact that many pastors only have a rudimentary appreciation of administration, with some eschewing it as a "necessary evil" that "gets in the way of real ministry". With this in mind, I was fairly certain that if I merely asked generalised questions about administration, the answers would be vague, incomplete and, for the most part, unhelpful. To avoid this, and to develop a more specific understanding of what constitutes administration in this context, I crafted a detailed set of tasks that the typical pastor would face in a weekly or monthly schedule. I anticipated that most respondents would be at least somewhat surprised at the breadth and depth of items considered "administration" in their ministry. This proved to be the case, with one respondent in particular commenting quite strongly on this.

Respondents were asked to indicate how many minutes they spent on the tasks within the last 72 hours. This period was chosen because of the recognition that many tasks do not recur daily. Pastors, typically for example, may preach only one day a week; thus most if not all the administration involved in that task, likewise, would happen only once a week. Similarly, weddings and other functions tend to be irregular.

There were two main objectives here: On the one hand, I wanted to indicate by suggestion to the respondent that pastoral ministry in fact includes a very wide variety of administrative tasks, many of which may not necessarily and normally be considered as administration. For instance, my experience is that most pastors do not usually associate sermon or Bible study preparation with administration. On the other hand, I also wanted an indication of what kinds of tasks were actually undertaken and for how long. Since administration is often loosely understood and difficult to identify with any precision, I felt it important to ensure that I

received a record of the actual administration undertaken. This data, then, would identify the specific administration done (as opposed to what the respondent may have thought was administration) and also confirm the amount of time spent on it.

At the same time, it should be noted that the period of the task survey was completely arbitrary. As such, it cannot be said to reflect a normal working week, nor, necessarily, a particular pastor's normal work routine. Nor, indeed, was it the purpose to establish those facts anyway. Thus, the tasks identified represent a mere portion – within a narrowly selected time zone – of core administrative tasks undertaken by a typical pastor.

The tasks were divided into several groups: Correspondence (Received and Sent); Meetings; Visits (Scheduled and Unscheduled; Internal and External); Ministry Preparation; Conferences/Seminars and Personal Administration.

Interpretations:

As expected, the kinds of tasks undertaken varied widely between the respondents. Although all six of the initial respondents are pastors, no two did exactly the same things in the 72-hour period. This confirms the diversity of tasks typically undertaken by the average pastor and highlights the breadth of administration in this field. Even those tasks associated with typical pastoral ministry – sermon and Bible study preparation and visitation – were not consistent. Hence, the question, 'What do pastors *actually* do?' is more than a philosophical nicety!

Five of the respondents spent a significant proportion of time on correspondence, both regular and e-mail. Three use e-mail, while three do not. The time spent on this aspect of administration varied between four to 12½ hours. One respondent did not deal with any regular correspondence at all, and only briefly for 30 minutes by e-mail. Those with administrative help, as expected, tended to spend less time on this than those without. Two respondents with help spent four to five hours each, while those without help spent an average of 12 hours on this item. Given the limited time frame in which the survey occurred, this is a significant proportion and, if extrapolated for the entire week or month, reflects the degree to which many pastors are caught up with "paperwork". Since many pastors appear not to connect their actioning of correspondence with the needs of the correspondents as ministry recipients, it becomes clear why there is the widespread perception that "paperwork" is the bane of "real ministry."

Four of the respondents functioning in an office environment spent between 1¼ to three hours on telephone work. Those without an office or administrative help have cell phones and spent an average of four hours on calls within the stipulated time. Since much of this is dealing

directly with people, the telephone is often viewed as part and parcel of facilitating ministry and, therefore, is seen as a boon rather than a bane.

Another key area of pastoral ministry is meetings. Here, however, there was a wide diversity. In one case, a respondent used a journey to Harare (six hours travelling time) to discuss with a colleague what would have been done in a formal meeting elsewhere. Four other respondents spent between one to four hours preparing for, participating in or travelling to meetings. One respondent had no meetings in the specified time frame.

Regarding visits, four respondents spent between one to three hours with formal appointments, while two respondents had no such meetings in the time period. Intriguingly, the time spent on unscheduled visits varied considerably, averaging between 20 minutes to six hours. One person had no unscheduled visits. Those who rated appointments as important (question 1) spent less time with this task than those who rated it lower.

On External Visits (you to others) – for example, hospital visitation – one respondent spent two hours on this task but, surprisingly, did not include any travel time for it. Of the others, two had none while two spent between 1½ to three hours.

Of course, a major area of pastoral ministry and, therefore, of administration, is ministry preparation (that is, sermon and Bible study preparation, group ministry, weddings, funerals, counselling, discipleship, evangelism, project planning and so on.) The time spent on sermon preparation was interesting. This topic was sub-divided into prayer, Bible study, reading, writing and practise. One respondent presumably did not pray while the others spent between 30 to 60 minutes on this activity. Time spent on Bible study ranged from nil through 30 minutes to two hours. Most of the time was spent on reading (anything from 20 minutes to four hours) while writing the sermon took between 10 minutes to two hours.   Only three respondents practised their sermons, spending 10, 20 and 60 minutes respectively on this.

I would suggest this diversity is closely linked to one's theology: the Pentecostal pastors tended to spend less time on preparation than their non-Pentecostal colleagues because of their tendency to "trust in the Holy Spirit". At a deeper level, the general eschewing of technical dynamics of sermon and Bible study preparation such as exegesis and hermeneutics "because the Holy Spirit will tell me what to say" also plays a part here.

None of the respondents spent time on worship preparation in the survey time. One indicated that his Associate Pastor is responsible for this activity anyway. I suggest the tendency toward "Body life" – that is, volunteer participation in ministry – is a reflection of such 'worship

teams' while the pastor concentrates on preaching, rather than pastors not taking the practise and preparation of worship seriously.

Regarding group ministries such as Bible studies, prayer meetings and evangelism, one respondent is not responsible for these; two respondents did not have such activities in the period under review, while the remaining three spent between 2½ to 3 hours, primarily for Bible study. One pastor spent two hours on prayer meetings and one 15 minutes; the others did not do anything. Is this a sign of the common schism between the stated importance of prayer and its actual practise?

Of the five respondents, two dealt with a wedding, funeral or baptism, with one spending nearly four hours and the other 30 minutes. Given the current high mortality rate due to HIV/AIDS and the concomitant surfeit of funerals nationwide (estimated at about 3000 a week), this response reflects more the timing of the survey for each pastor rather than the absence of such activities.

Individual ministries such as counselling, discipleship and evangelism were undertaken by two of the five pastors, with one spending 90 minutes on informal counselling and the other an hour on discipleship. Again, especially for the counselling, this is likely a matter of timing rather than an omission of it.

Three of the pastors were involved in project planning, with one spending 7¼ hours, one four hours and one 1½ hours. Personal contacts took 15 minutes (giving advice to ministry leaders), 1½, 3, 4¼ and 10½ hours for a variety of different tasks in this field.

Of the five respondents, one spent 40 minutes in prayer for a conference but, presumably, did not attend, while another spent 20 minutes in prayer, 10 minutes in preparation and two hours at a conference during the survey period.

As for personal administration, all but one spent time on this, with one taking nine hours, one 6½, one 3½, and one two hours. Of this, two spent three hours in prayer for ministry, while two spent one hour each.

Notably, the respondents became aware of the breadth of administrative tasks they face; three commented specifically that they had not thought about this before and now have a more open – if not positive – attitude to administration as a result. Personally, I found that encouraging.

1.3.1.3 Delegation and Enjoyment.

This set of questions, with written answers, sought to reveal the extent to which the respondents tend to delegate tasks and, if so, which ones and why, depending on whether

they have administrative help or not. It also sought to establish which aspects of administration they like and dislike accordingly. Hence five questions requiring brief written responses formed this section of the questionnaire.

Interpretations:

Interestingly, in response to tasks delegated where administrative help is available, all the respondents answered, including those who do not have assistance. They all delegate some key areas of their responsibilities. One respondent – without a secretary – said he delegates financial matters and budgeting because this is not his (favoured) area of ministry (expertise). A second respondent, also without a secretary, said he delegates funerals and some house visitation (to his elders) since he is busy with other things. A third respondent delegates the typing of reports and ministry e-mails since he does not have an office computer.

One respondent with a secretary delegates phone calls, visitation, typing, finances and some teaching. This, he said, is because specialised departments have been set up for these areas of work. He added that more can be accomplished if he delegates and then concentrates on leadership and supervision. Another respondent with a secretary delegates correspondence and things that can be done easily by anyone else. This reduces pressure on him, allowing him to train others and to concentrate on alternative duties.

Of the two pastors without administrative assistance, one also said he delegates repairs and the payment of bills because these are not ministry priorities for him. The second respondent without assistance also delegates correspondence, but he failed to explain why. In neither case did they indicate to whom these tasks are delegated, in the absence of formal help.

In answer to the question on enjoyment, one respondent said he likes doing things over and over again. Routine makes the administration easy. A second respondent said he enjoys leading and organising, while a third enjoys editing monthly reports because this allows him to get to know what is happening in different places and to assess progress made. Another respondent likes delegation, especially when the people do well and this promotes the vision of the church. Similarly, another said he appreciates working as a team and sharing the load as people catch the spirit of the work. He is excited about goals being accomplished and people's needs being met.

By contrast, what was hardest or least enjoyable for one was the struggle to be creative and to do the same thing differently. He feels others are quick to suggest that he is running out of ideas. Another, quite understandably, said he finds disciplining people most difficult because he does not like to see people reduced in size, while a third also finds staff conflicts

distasteful, since they take away a lot of energy which affects team spirit. A fourth finds office routine monotonous. A fifth respondent struggles when delegated work is not done and when an explanation of a process is not grasped quickly.

These responses highlight several worldview issues at deeper, philosophical and temperament levels. For instance, there is punctuality versus event, routine versus creativity; relationships versus discipline and conflict; the connection between relationships and motivation, achievement and teamwork among others. These will be explored in more detail later.

1.4 *Reflections on the Dialogue* –

Having travelled down the road called "What does Administration look like?" it is time now to look back and reflect. Where have we come from? What were some of the obstacles, low points and highlights in our journey? What have we noticed and learned?

The task survey was an attempt to establish some basic attitudes and understanding about what constitutes administration, to show what portion of a typical pastor's workload entails administration, to indicate the kinds of tasks a typical pastor might undertake in a any given time period and to reflect what a pastor might do with or without administrative help.

This data served two purposes. On the one hand, it alerted the researchers to some of the elements involved and helped to begin to focus on what may or may not be administration in this context. Second, it gave some initial insight into attitudes – and hence, the likely positive and negative actions – toward administration. This, in turn, gave some signs of what worldview issues and questions to pursue later and where emphasis in discussion may be needed.

On the negative side, initial obstacles were experienced in the slow or non-return of the survey. This did not deter me, however, as I am aware that, generally, the majority of participants in such surveys do not return them. Later respondents, though, were more forthcoming and co-operative. Also, initially, I had one to two questions seeking clarification of a few of the value questions. I had deliberately kept them open, broad and relatively vague because I did not want to influence the answers. But for some, one or two terms were too vague and, in one case, I had to explain what was intended.

The main weakness of the task list was the time frame. With the first group of respondents, I asked for a record of the tasks over a 48-hour period. In reflecting on their responses, however, I realised that pastoral ministry is so varied that this time span does not adequately allow for a substantive indication of the work done. With subsequent respondents, I increased

the time to 72 hours. Even so, the main weakness was that there was still no guarantee that what might typically be considered a pastor's "main" work (for instance, preaching or visitation) was actually done during the survey period.

In the written section, I was conscious – perhaps overly so – of not wanting to impose too much on their busy schedules and thus kept the questions to a bare minimum. This was not as helpful, then, as it might have been. Nevertheless, I was able to gain reasonable insight into this aspect of their administrative work, although more details would have been useful.

On the positive side, interestingly, three members of the initial team verbalised their new-found recognition of what tasks in their work constitute administration. This was loosely affirmed by the others also. It was clear that they had not appreciated this before. (It also provided some impetus to participating in the project in order to learn more.) Overall, the responses to this exercise, as expected, generally reflected a high focus on people, values and leadership. The attitude section produced some surprises: I had expected issues relating to time (for example, promptness) to have been downplayed. Instead, it was rated highly. In our later discussion when worldview problems relating to this aspect were raised, some tension and contradiction was evident. Equally, where I had expected the issue of tradition to be graded highly, it was generally lower than I had thought. At the same time, this section also brought to the fore the fact that, as much as worldview may impact the approach to administration, there is also the individual dimension of personality and temperament, as reflected in choices.

The written section also highlighted several worldview issues at deeper, philosophical and temperamental levels. For instance, there is punctuality versus event, routine versus creativity; relationships versus discipline and conflict; as well as the connection between relationships and motivation on the one hand, and achievement and teamwork on the other. The choices of whether to delegate or not, and what is enjoyable or not were insightful. The use of administrative help was not determined by the availability or otherwise of personnel. Rather, this choice was based on the nature of the tasks themselves – and thus varied from person to person. Equally, there was evidence here of personality and temperament in addition to worldview factors.

In other words, the responses showed that both the understanding and praxis of administration – for this particular group of leaders at any rate – does, indeed, reflect the influence of worldview, as well as individuality. Moreover, administration is understood in terms of normally recognised efficiency and effectiveness; that there is a clear desire for achievement and results; and that the main pillars of solid administration – time management,

planning, organising, leading and controlling – are all recognised and accepted. These dynamics were discussed in more detail in our subsequent dialogues.

We move, then, to Chapter Four and a consideration of personal views of administration and its factors. In these conversations, we will begin to assess administration in the Shona and Ndebele Christian context and to identify some key worldview elements that shape its praxis.

Appendix 1: Task Survey/Questionnaire

Following is the data questionnaire for Pastors to assess their subliminal understanding of concepts involved in administration and the tasks related to their particular work:

Administration Activity/Attitude Questionnaire for Pastors

1. Rate the following concepts in terms of **importance** to you and your **approach** to *administration* (1= not important at all; 10= very important); circle ONE for each:

➢ Results	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Time	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Teamwork	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ People (as utility)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Values (honesty, integrity, punctuality, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Resources (equipment, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Appointments	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Relationships	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Power	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Competition	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Efficiency	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Co-operation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Tradition	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Innovation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Effectiveness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Planning	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ The Past	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Control	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Organising	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ The Present	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Motivation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Harmony	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Processes (rules, regulations, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ The Future	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Neatness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Casual	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Tolerance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Firmness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Passivity	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Punctuality	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Oral communication	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Record-keeping	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Meetings	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Compromise/Consensus	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Writing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Uncompromising	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Ambitious	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Unobtrusive	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Goal-setting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Procrastination	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Fatalism	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
➢ Documentation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Can you quantify the amount of time each day (as a percentage) that you spend on administrative tasks? If so, how much? (please circle one)

–10%   10-20%   20-30%   30-40%   40-50%   50-60%   60-70%   75%+

3. Describe your typical day or week (circle one). Is it (i) Busy/Stimulating; (ii) Boring/tedious; (iii) Routine/ predictable; (iv) Structured/ordered; (v) Casual/ uncomplicated.

4. Indicate which of the following administrative tasks you did in the **last 72 hours** and the approximate time spent on each:

✓	TASK	Approx. Time (mins.)
	Correspondence Received (snail mail):	--------
	Individual requests for assistance	
	Individual requests for advice	
	Denominational invitation (e.g. to functions)	
	Invitations (external)	
	Official requests for information (Govt., Council, etc.)	
	Official confirmation/clarification	
	Denominational requests	
	Denominational information wanted	
	External ministries/organisations – requests	
	External ministries/organisations – information	
	Accounts	
	Reports/Minutes	
	Correspondence Sent (snail mail):	---------
	Response to assistance	
	Advice offered	
	Invitation (accepted/declined)	
	Official information given	
	Official confirmation given	
	Denominational information given	
	Denominational invitation (accepted/declined)	
	External ministries/organisations – response	
	Accounts paid	
	Reports/Minutes	
	Correspondence Received (e-mail):	---------
	Items read, but not needing any response	
	Items read, needing immediate written response	
	Items read, needing further research, consideration	
	Items read, to be forwarded to someone else	
	Personal items	
	Correspondence Sent (e-mail):	---------
	New, self-initiated messages	
	Responses to previous messages	
	Personal items	
	General Computer Work:	----------
	Generation of written reports	

	Generation of financial reports	
	Work on spreadsheets, databases, etc.	
	"Housekeeping" – deleting files, organising folders, backups, etc.	
	Problem-solving (software, hardware)	
	Time wasted ("down time") – unable to work because of problems	
	Telephone Time:	
	Calls made	
	Calls received	
	Follow up	
	Meetings (formal)	---------
	Preparation (as chairman; participant)	
	Discussion time	
	Follow up	
	Travel	
	Scheduled Visits (people to you)	
	Preparation time	
	Discussion time	
	Follow up	
	Unscheduled Visits (people to you)	
	Discussion time	
	Follow up	
	External Visits (you to others)	
	Preparation time	
	Travel time	
	Discussion time	
	Follow up	
	Ministry & Preparation	
	Sermon/Devotion preparation – prayer	
	– Bible study	
	– reading	
	– writing	
	– practise	
	Worship Service preparation – prayer	
	– music items	
	– participant contacts	
	– Order of Service - compile	
	– special items	
	Group Ministries – Bible Studies: prayer	
	Bible study	
	reading	
	writing	
	session time	
	travel	
	– Prayer meetings: preparation	
	session time	
	– Evangelism: prayer	
	preparation	
	session	
	follow up	
	travel	

	Wedding, Funerals, Baptisms – Prayer	
	– Preparations	
	– Rehearsals	
	– Sessions	
	– Follow up (paper work)	
	– Travel	
	Individual Ministries – Counselling (formal): prayer	
	preparation	
	sessions	
	follow up	
	– Counselling (informal): sessions	
	follow up	
	– Discipleship: prayer	
	preparation	
	session(s)	
	follow up	
	– Evangelism: prayer	
	preparation	
	session	
	follow up	
	Project Planning – Prayer	
	– Reflection	
	– Recording	
	– Discussion	
	– Communication (with others)	
	Personal Contacts – Telephone: advice	
	making appointments	
	giving instruction	
	requests for help	
	receiving information	
	– Staff: telephone	
	giving instruction	
	receiving information	
	– Ministry leaders: advice	
	instruction	
	receiving information	
	– Other congregants/parishioners	
	– External	
	Conferences/Seminars	------
	Prayer	
	Planning	
	Preparations	
	Travel	
	Sessions	
	Follow up	
	Personal Administration	
	Planning, scheduling	
	Decision-making	
	Personal prayer (for ministry)	
	Time wasted (e.g. procrastination, extra time for tea breaks, etc.)	

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5. If you have administrative help, what types of tasks do you typically delegate? Why?

6. If you do **not** have administrative help, what types of tasks do you delegate and to whom? Why?

7. Are there tasks that you typically do **not** delegate? Why?

8. What do you find easiest/most enjoyable about the administration you do? Why?

9. What do you find hardest/least enjoyable about the administration you do? Why?

Chapter Four

ADMINISTRATION IN ITS CULTURAL CONTEXT: Approaching the Task Personally

1   Exploring How Administration and Culture Mix – 1

In our exploration of administration in its cultural context, we have identified some values and looked at the type of tasks a pastor might typically undertake in a three-day period.   In themselves, these do not help us with a solid grasp of *why* certain administrative tasks are done or not done – or are done differently from other cultural contexts.

Why, for example, would it take more than five hours of arguing to arrange a 150-car-long queue of tired, frustrated motorists anxiously waiting for fuel?   Why, indeed, would the manageress of the service station, observing and assessing the situation at 6:00 a.m., wait until 9:00 a.m. before starting to serve customers? Why would someone, knowing that an event starts at a specified time, be prepared to miss the opening segment of the event and deliberately come late without any sense of hurry or of missing something important? Why is it considered necessary to start a church service promptly, but not a committee meeting?

To answer these kinds of questions, it was necessary to explore beyond the mere identification of values and tasks and to look more deeply at key factors that may explain the rationale behind the approach. What assumptions and expectations, fears or concerns do people actually have when they exercise administration? What issues do they consider and why; what do they ignore and why? How are administrative tasks actually done? Why are they done that particular way?

This stage of the process, then, required a personal, in-depth examination of the participant's views of and approaches to administration.

1.1 *Individual Interview Questions*

1.1.1   Format

Initially, I devised two basic groups of questions, one set for ministry leaders and another for trainers, according to the specific focus for each.

The former set became a mixture of 43 broad, open-ended and particular questions asked on an individual basis, with the interview lasting about two hours. There were seven sections: (1) Background/Introductory; (2) Views of Administration in terms of the five basic components of (a) Time, (b) Planning, (c) Organising, (d) Leading and (e) Controlling; and, lastly, (3) Questions relating to a possible theology of these elements.

The trainers' questions (75 in all) were also mixed with, in addition to the broad questions, a focus on the specifics of how worldview issues are dealt with in helping people develop their managerial and administrative competence. My initial rationale for including trainers in the enterprise, as explained below in section (c), was to examine how administration is taught or passed on and, in the process, how cultural and worldview dynamics would be handled, especially where these were problematic in a cross- or multi-cultural setting.

In recording the responses, I used a computer to set the questions in a personalised table, with three columns. The first contained the question; the second the answer, which I typed as they spoke, and the third was for any follow-up questions and answers. I chose to use a lap-top to record the responses rather than shorthand because it is so much easier and quicker.

1.1.2   Purpose

It is pertinent at this juncture to address the matter of why *my* questions in the first place and not those of the participants, particularly since the underlying research approach is social construction and personal narrative?   Although these questions were mine, they were formulated from observation and consideration of daily life issues that are socially endemic and, therefore, worth exploring. Having asked several of them in informal contexts and not having had substantive answers, I felt it was necessary to explore them more formally. As such, they reflect issues that society in general is struggling with but not answering. In one sense, they represent my rationale for exploring this subject in depth. Certainly, this is true of the Church; and the questions are mirrored in the broader African social, economic and political crisis. The question then becomes: Why not these questions? Equally, why not ask my participants what the questions are about administration?   That would be a useful starting point, provided your participants understand the issues and can articulate them, together with some possible solutions. But, as we have seen, most people are not in that position when it comes to thinking about administration or worldview.

Hence, my questions were intended to serve three purposes: (1) To alert my co-researchers to some of the issues behind the identification and practice of administration; (2) To further prompt reflection on cultural dynamics and (3) To provide the basis for further in-depth discussion. As mentioned previously, the respondents were satisfied with the basic five-fold framework and, indeed, as with the data questionnaire, found it helpful in putting some shape to the nature of administration, identifying some of the key issues involved and reflecting on the related problems. In our conversations, they often affirmed that questions touched on important issues, some of which they had not previously considered. (As I shall later narrate, I suggested to the focus group that they devise their own questions instead of discussing mine;

they said they had no idea of what questions to come up with and, as mine seemed quite pertinent, they would be happy to respond to those. See below for further comments on this aspect.)

1.1.3   Selection of Participants

My original selection of participants was based on three criteria: (1) Those involved in local church ministry; (2) Those in para-church ministry, and (3) Those in a training capacity (secular or Christian). My assumption was that the administration demands for each of the first two would be somewhat different, given the nature of their ministries, while for the third, I was interested in seeing how worldview factors are translated and transmitted in the training process.

For the first group, I sought denominational, ethnic and demographic balance. I approached several people from Catholic and Evangelical churches, with an equal mix of Pentecostal and non-Pentecostals, and, of course, a balance of Shona and Ndebele. I also intended to invite those in rural areas as well as high- and low-density or city-centre suburbs. My rationale here was based on two assumptions: first, that the approach to administration would be affected by denominational polity, structure and tradition and, second, that because of higher levels of sophistication through education and exposure, plus access to resources, there would be a significantly different approach to the praxis of administration in urban as opposed to rural areas.

I also wanted to test the hypothesis that the praxis of administration is shaped, at least in part, by the nature of the organisation (that is, church vs. para-church). I approached two of the latter, only one of which responded positively (interestingly, also a training institution.) The head of the other organisation made it very clear – in a culturally polite way – that he was not interested. As I reflected on his particular context more, however, and having observed the operations of him and his staff, I realised that the administrative issues he faces are very similar to those of a low-density or city centre church anyway. Hence, I concluded that involving someone like that would be mere repetition.

The third group was training institutions. This was an attempt to assess how worldview issues might be conveyed, dealt with and/or adjusted in the training process. I approached three such establishments; two were secular and one was Christian oriented. Fortunately, it was the latter that I was able to interview first. That was positive and fruitful and also gave me insight into the relevant set of questions, which I prepared to adjust for the other interviews. Unfortunately they did not take place. In one case, I asked to interview the Regional Director (an Ndebele speaker). Unfortunately, she was away that first day and I spoke then to the

Business Manager. Clearly, she was unwilling to be interviewed herself and seemed to be concerned that she not go over her boss's head and usurp authority. She asked me to fax the list of questions and would then liaise with the Regional Director as to a possible date for the interview. Regrettably, the Regional Manager never had the courtesy to contact me or return my calls and, despite telephoning six times in six weeks, I was never able to speak to her. There was clearly a great deal of suspicion as, at one point, I was informed that my questions had been taken to Head Office in Harare. The Business Manager later told me I could interview the National Director (in Harare) if I wished. Quite apart from the added expense and time of travel, I had wanted to interview the Regional Manager primarily because of her local environment.

Although I never had a chance to ask specific questions in this case, their overall response nevertheless highlighted several worldview factors. The Business Manager was reluctant to take the initiative and accept the responsibility of being interviewed. The Regional Director demonstrated a high level of discourtesy in not even returning a single phone call, let alone giving any excuse not to be interviewed. She, too, was afraid as shown by her taking the questions to Head Office. Neither of them was willing to say, "No, we're not interested, thank you." Rather, the response was a cold shoulder and an apparent reluctance to accept responsibility. I have discovered from previous interaction that this is a cultural approach intended to politely indicate a lack of interest. When an answer does not come, it is to be interpreted as a "no". But this raises questions as to what, then, is passed on to their trainers in similar situations, especially regarding ethics as impacted by worldview, particularly in a cross-cultural setting. For the average Shona or Ndebele, there probably would be no ethical problem: after all, that is the normal way and the final message is accepted. Nevertheless, the question remains: What to do with the problems this approach creates?

In another case, I approached a training organisation that uses volunteers. I spoke to the Receptionist who took down my details and promised to call back once she had contacted any of the trainers. Again, despite several follow-up calls, nothing materialised. In this case, I put it down to the Receptionist not appreciating my task and, therefore, not having sufficient interest in pursuing it when faced with obstacles. Moreover, if she did not fully understand me or appreciate my task, it was probably difficult for her to convince others of the value of their being involved. Again, from a worldview perspective, a face-to-face approach is always much more beneficial and more likely to achieve the desired result. In this case, unfortunately, this did not happen with these particular trainers. Hence, none of them felt obliged to contact me to follow up on my enquiry.

In the third instance, I contacted another national secular business training institute and, initially received a favourable response to an interview. However, making an actual appointment proved difficult as the Director was constantly out on training stints and, after several weeks of fruitless attempts, we agreed to meet on a Sunday afternoon, but his mother was rushed to hospital that morning and the session was postponed. When I subsequently went for that rescheduled appointment, he never arrived. In the end, I assessed the one productive interview and realised that many of the issues the trainers face are the same as others: the cultural and social alterations they have to make in the rural-urban and pastoral-technology "clash" are very similar to those that others in administrative positions also have to make.

So, my final interviews were held with a total of six co-researcher participants (as outlined in Chapter Two): Joyce (initially as a trainer and, later, as a replacement for Barnabas), Barnabas, Chris, Dixon, Dawson, Bekithemba and George.

1.1.4   Preparation

In preparing for this stage, I first devised one set of interview questions for those in Christian ministry and another set for those in a training position. Next, I constructed a Task Survey to identify the administrative tasks carried out by my intended interviewees and their general attitude toward them. Then I held five "test" interviews. The first was with an urban church leader (an Ndebele deacon in a high density Baptist church), while the second and third were with a Catholic Archbishop (Ndebele) and the Catholic Cathedral Dean (Shona). The fourth was with a rural Ndebele Baptist pastor.

The first three interviews served several purposes. First, they highlighted weaknesses in my questions, both in terms of content and approach. Second, they prompted me to rearrange the presentation into key areas to raise issues not previously considered. Third, I became aware of ethical factors in such interviews because, with the second two, I had to consider their professional positions in the light of church polity. Fourth, I was able to gauge the potential interest level in the overall issue under consideration, as well as with some of the issues raised in specific questions. Lastly, they gave me a better sense of the time required.

The fourth interview was significant as it highlighted major logistical limitations on my planned approach to rural pastors. Since I am not fluent in SiNdebele, I had to arrange for an interpreter to take me to the rural homestead. This necessitated arranging a mutually convenient time to travel, which also had to be tied to the rural pastor's availability. Initial contact had to be made first to arrange a suitable time. While I had every confidence in my interpreter, since he was a former student of mine and I thus knew he understood the

intricacies of the issues behind the questions and the factors to look for, there was no guarantee that my questions or the answers were being communicated exactly as intended. Irrespective of the competence of the interpreter, working through a third party must always involve some distancing from the original intent and, likely, some unintended distortion over and above the normal in such communication settings. Whereas in the other preliminary interviews I had I was aware of the irrelevance of some questions, this was highlighted even more so in this case. Although my interviewer answered the questions I put to him satisfactorily, I did not come away with the sense that he really appreciated the underlying importance of the issues we had discussed. Frankly, though, that did not surprise me. Because of these language and logistical limitations, I subsequently decided against pursuing rural pastors any further. (Since then, too, fuel, has become scarce and very expensive, thus limiting the opportunities to travel any significant distance out of town.) See below for related comments on the group interviews.

The fifth interview was held jointly with three pastors from one Pentecostal church. I had not planned to meet them together but they had arranged it that way because they were not entirely sure what I wanted and felt secure in numbers. Unfortunately, that increased the possibility of copying each other or agreeing to another's answers without having to think for oneself. It was difficult to avoid the feeling, too, that for many of the questions, they gave me the answers they thought I wanted – a very typical cultural dynamic. However, what put me off was that I had to go no less than four times to collect the Task Survey responses, but failed to get two of them. I came away feeling they thought they had done me a favour with the interview and were no longer interested in the project. So, once again, I moved on.

These preliminary interviews, useful as they were, suggested some adjustments were called for.

1.1.5 Adjustments

The first adjustment pertained to the questions. While the original ministry list comprised 43 questions in total, I found, first of all, that I did not have sufficient time to ask all of them in each interview as I was conscious that my interviewees are busy people and I did not want to abuse the time they graciously gave me. (I also tried to be sensitive to their initial response to participating in the project and, if I felt they were not yet convinced of its importance, I did not prolong the interview beyond the bare minimum.) By the time I had selected my core group, I had realised that the initial one to 1½ hours I thought sufficient was not and I needed two or more hours per interview. Also, I discovered that some answers would overlap, such that it was unnecessary to ask certain questions. A third dynamic was the fact that, as I progressed

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with the interviews, the person's ministry background became a clearer pointer to their likely approach to administration because of specific demands upon them in that regard; hence, some questions were more relevant for some than for others.

As a related issue, I had recorded the responses in the first test interviews in shorthand on copies of the questionnaire. Once I had narrowed my choice of co-researchers and began the main interviews, I switched to using a lap-top computer, confirming with each participant that they were comfortable with that approach. There were no objections.

The second adjustment had to do with the final choice of co-researchers. As mentioned previously, I was keen to have an ethnic, denominational and ministry balance and so I approached six pastors. Three were from high-density and three low-density or city-centre churches; three were Shona and three Ndebele; three were Pentecostals and three were not. These six, initially at least, seemed enthusiastic about the project (even though none of us knew at that stage exactly what we were getting ourselves into and where we would be going!) Apart from the balance factor, I also considered that small is better: it is easier to dialogue with a smaller group than a larger one and the logistics and arrangements would be easier to handle.

1.2 Interview Questions (Appendix 2) –

These were geared initially to two groups: pastors in vocational Christian ministry (the same six as above) and those involved in the training of administrators. As noted above, however, only one of the latter participated in the end; it also happens to be Christian-based.

For the pastors, the questions were divided broadly into seven sections. These covered Background, the administrative components of Time, Planning, Organising, Leading and Controlling, and then a short section on Theology. While I was looking for issues connected to worldview, the primary focus with these questions was the personal understanding, philosophy and approach to administration. The intention here was to gain insight into how administration is perceived and practised and, in the process, to identify problem areas – which is the focus of this chapter. Since worldview dynamics – which are the emphasis in Chapter Six – were to be more specifically covered in the focus group discussions, I did not emphasise that element here. However, where the responses either raised flags about worldview or where worldview related examples were given, I sought to utilise that to probe further. These were also used later as follow up in the focus group discussions.

For the trainers, the questions were more deliberately mixed between administration 'principles' and worldview issues. This was necessary since I only intended to interview them

once. I expected that the trainers' responses to worldview factors would also prompt further discussion later with the pastors.

1.2.1   Responses:

The interview questions were grouped into seven basic categories: Background, Time, Planning, Organising, Leading, Controlling, and Theology. I will present the responses to the questions in each, interspersing them where appropriate, with my actors' stories and my comments. My own 'story' will be integrated and I will conclude the entire interview process with a summary analysis.

1.2.1.1 *Background* –

I began each interview by asking for a definition of administration. This may seem a little trite, but there were two reasons for this. First of all, as I have stated previously, administration is a woolly, imprecise concept and most people have difficulty in deciding which specific activities constitute administration. So, it was important that I establish individual perceptions of what the concept entails. Second, and equally important, I wanted my co-researchers to establish their own definitions rather than me either imposing my own or assuming an understanding which may not be correct.

In most cases, the definitions and understanding of administration were fairly clear, although for most of the pastors – perhaps not unexpectedly – this is not a question they have been challenged to consider often. Nevertheless, they were able to articulate a reasonably clear understanding of the phenomenon. Interestingly, they were given the opportunity to define terms from a cultural perspective, but they all used terminology typically culled from Eurocentric views. Unfortunately, because of the extent of Western education, it is now difficult to determine how much of current understanding actually has an affinity with cultural roots and how much has been inculcated because of foreign educational influence. They also described concerns and problem areas they feel or face about administration. The concepts of efficiency and effectiveness were well grasped and, generally, distinguished fairly clearly. It was evident, understandably, that those with more leadership and administrative experience were better able to articulate the subtle nuances than those with limited experience. Also, those with administrative help seemed to have a clearer grasp of the fundamentals than those without.

As expected, however, this was more succinctly so from the trainers. Joyce and Mandla, for example, usefully distinguished between administration and management, saying the former is "how the organisation runs. It is the internal systems – the workers and their welfare – ensuring the organisation is effective in delivering services and a quality product. It differs

from management which looks at planning, organising and leading. However, you can't divorce the two."

In a similar vein, though, Chris identified administration as "keeping things in order. That comprises making sure things are done on time, properly and correctly; it is planning, evaluating and monitoring." He added that "this is not just doing things haphazardly; it needs some procedure and principles." Asked why this is important, he said, "It helps you remain focused and to accomplish your goals." For Chris, "properly" is a synonym for efficiently and effectively. Likewise, he drew a distinction between administration – systems and procedures – versus management, which is "basically dealing with people."

Similarly, Dawson sees administration as "Getting work done properly. [It is] a system or a means by which tasks or work must be done that includes planning, delegating and following up." For him, "properly" means "as per plan, goals."

For Dixon, administration "involves a lot of things: organising people and resources so that we can accomplish given tasks and objectives, to fulfil the vision as efficiently as we can. It's also about motivating staff so they can enjoy what they're doing."

Barnabas understands the administrative process as "Maintenance – because it's a system that has to function properly. Planning comes in. It relates to people: you're managing people and what they have to do." Asked, then, how administration differs from management, he explained that management can be likened to the parish council, policy formulation; projects, programmes and budgets whereas administration is "Myself and my secretary implementing what council decided. I need to have flexibility to make certain decisions (for example, signing cheques)."

By contrast, George considers administration to be "Planning, organising, leading, goal-setting and evaluation." As a former student of mine, however, I wonder how much of this is my influence as opposed to that gained from the school of experience?

Beki's understanding of administration is that it involves "Setting goals; putting in place mechanisms to achieve these goals. So it involves planning, initiating what you've planned, evaluating and [then] time management and resources."

Personally, I would tend to agree with these perceptions. My own definition of administration is that it is "everything that needs to be done so that the main ministry can be done efficiently and effectively." Or to put it another way, the idea of *'ministration'* is "giving of help and service" or *'ministry'*. Since "add" is "to put together with" and is about enlarging, the concept can be understood as **ad**minist*r(y)*ation. And we note that the "ad" component, as a prefix, is

crucially at the front of the serving, suggesting the importance of it being done first. Thus, we are not dealing with a necessary evil or with something that is simply *ad hoc* and 'stuck in there' but, rather, is an integral part of the entire process. It would appear from the above definitions that the concept, while not articulated in exactly that way, is nevertheless, at least partly understood as such.

Not surprisingly, those elements that the respondents found either enjoyable or otherwise about administration differed widely. Chris, for instance, said, "[I struggle with] communication. Trying to work with a team without good communication lines. Where there are no laid-down guidelines, procedures are not in place, there are no job descriptions." He added that "worldview comes in with time management: here. I struggle with those who have a different view. For example, when people bring in reports [some time during] the day, as opposed to a specific time that I've requested on that day. Or, I might say keeping good relations in the team is needed, while someone else may say getting the job done is more important. So I find myself in a difficult situation." For Chris, then, the bugbear is that his expectations of the work are not shared by others and performance then differs.

For Dawson, the discomfiting aspect of administration is, "[Not] getting work done properly. This wastes time. This is associated with the kind of team you work with. So, the main problem is the team: either they didn't understand or they're not able to do it." Again, expectations come into play, but in this case, he is concerned with the group's performance.

Likewise, Dixon is also frustrated with "the challenges of communication and delegating to staff. Competency, efficiency, running with the vision, people [not] seeing the same thing. Sometimes I feel I need to work at all this to achieve maximum results."

George struggles with a lack of planning and goals. When asked if this is his own problem or one he typically perceives in others, he commented: "This affects most people in leadership [because of] a lack of education and training [and] a lot of damage is caused along the way [before they learn]".

Barnabas has a problem in that he tends to take on too much at times. "I lose track of time [in conversations]." At the same time, he excuses himself on this score, saying that, by spending that time, the person doesn't think they're left out. "I'm not ruled by time (except in a service)," he added. Asked if this was a question of time management or a lack of self-discipline, he admitted it was more the former. "I'm not ruthless with myself."

Similarly for Beki, the problem is time. "In an African setting, it's an event rather than hours and minutes and seconds. We tend to say 'in the morning' or 'the afternoon.' [But,] urban as

opposed to rural people see this differently. For rural folk, we have met and achieved what we wanted. Hence, your timetable should not be rigid. I see it as a problem because we are now part of a global village. We can't excuse ourselves and say we're isolated from the world."

In my own case, my struggles are not so much with the actions of administration since I am a process person by temperament anyway. Rather, my weak points are procrastination – where I tend to delay actioning something – and a tendency not to follow up on small details promptly (which tends to inconvenience others when they are waiting for a decision. At the same time, because I am a process person, I find myself frustrated with others who are not so inclined and, therefore, do not consider time management, planning or organising to the same degree as I do. Understanding and appreciating cross-cultural worldviews has thus helped me not only to put my own views into better perspective but also to help others think differently about theirs.

All this, of course, then raises the question of what other dynamics may explain the apparent endemic difficulties experienced in this field of endeavour. If one's understanding or definition of administration is not that big a factor in its implementation, what then militates against apparent effectiveness and efficiency? Thus, we look to some definitions of these two components.

Again, to avoid imposing my own expectations on them, I deliberately asked for their definitions and understanding of efficiency and effectiveness. The responses were enlightening.

Beki, for instance, described efficiency as, "Doing the right thing at the right time with the right purpose to get the right (intended) results." For him, "right" means "the appropriate thing; what will enhance what you want to achieve." At the same time, effectiveness is "linked to or overlaps with efficiency. Efficiency has to do with achieving what you want; effectiveness brings the intention." Thus, both are about results.

This is especially true for Dixon. "Results are very important. [The] time that we [take to] accomplish specific things is important. The way we use resources is also very important. Efficiency, then, puts all these together so that we accomplish maximum results for the church." And again, he links effectiveness and results: "If you spend a lot of time but accomplish little, you're not effective. 'Effective leadership = character + results.' Even if you have integrity, but don't produce results, you're no good. So we must be effective; people must see that the resources we've put in have been used wisely."

Similarly, for Barnabas, efficiency and effectiveness are also about results: "Time keeping, [making sure the] project is done well. No sloppiness, no excuses." And, in the same vein, effectiveness is, "When I give an order, it must be followed through; no excuses. [Or] if I've been over-billed, can I get a reprieve from the company or not?"

On the other hand, Chris feels efficiency "needs laid-down principles and rules; [it's] not just something done. You need all the right components." And he equates effectiveness to "properly". In other words, efficiency relates to process, while effectiveness is about quality.

George would agree: Efficiency is, "Reducing wastage – time and resources. Doing things right [while] effectiveness is "doing the right things right."

Dawson, likewise, has the same mind-set: Efficiency is "based on various factors: Communications – have things been communicated properly, received and understood properly? Commitment – if there's understanding, and there's commitment, 95% of things will be done properly." The emphasis on the concept of 'properly' again indicates a concern for both results and quality.

The trainers, Joyce and Mbange, said much the same; although Joyce said the tendency is to focus on effectiveness rather than efficiency (which she defined as "doing the right thing right").

It is clear from these definitions and observations that these particular actors are indeed aware of the fundamentals and their importance. It was noteworthy that few misunderstood the core elements. Thus, one premise I had – that there is a fundamental lack of appreciation of what constitutes administration – may not be the problem I envisaged it to be after all. That is assuming that my co-researchers are fairly typical of most others in similar work positions.

It is also clear that, for these particular pastors, administration is neither merely paperwork nor a necessary evil. While it may be true that some do not particularly enjoy it, none see it as unimportant or insignificant. Rather, it is a vital component of sound ministry. Interestingly, there is no common denominator in what they enjoy or do not enjoy about administration. This highlights both the diversity and complexity of administrative factors and partly helps to explain the variety of approaches to it – and the varied results.

The factors of efficiency and effectiveness are not only well understood but are clearly focused on results and quality – with, as I suspected, a strong sense of overlap. I found it intriguing that their definitions appeared – superficially, at any rate – not to be concretely or directly influenced by worldview aspects.

Having looked at some background issues, we then moved on to discuss the five basic components of administration. Several questions on each sought to establish understanding of the concept, its importance and, in some cases, the relevant skills for managing it properly. Again, in each case, I was careful to establish the person's own understanding of the concept and not to assume or impose my own assumptions.

1.2.1.2 *Time –*

As I had suspected, there was some disagreement as to the role and importance of time in the process of work. However, given the generally stated nonchalance with time, I was surprised at the extent to which time is indeed viewed as important. I was also intrigued by the expressions of disaffection with inappropriate time management – particularly since none of our planned meetings started on time as the majority were always late! This is despite all my actors being urbanites with a fairly well developed sense of urban processes and procedures. There is also quite a high level of sophistication. It was noteworthy that several expressed a degree of struggle – indeed, frustration – with the dichotomy between the rural and urban attitudes and approaches to time management. No-one complained outwardly, nor did I comment since it would have been interpreted as a "Western" mind-set speaking.

As mentioned in Chapter One, time itself is universal and an absolute. Yet, part of the tension for many in Africa reflects, of course, the different ways of measuring time. In broad terms, we can speak of the urban/Western/commercial form of time measured most commonly by the clock. So, for some Western cultures, time is a matter of both precision and politeness. Events are expected to start and end punctually. Being "on time" is considered very important while lateness is a reproach. Time is measured, in some instances, in fractions of a second. There must be a watch on the wrist and a clock in every room. For Africa, by contrast, the measurement of time is much less specific and more arbitrary. In rural areas, for instance, the sun – rather than a watch – is the measuring tool. The notions, for example, of being "on time" or in a hurry are not considered. The unspoken question is, 'Why?' Even in urban areas – albeit much less so – it is not uncommon to find one without a watch. Punctuality is not typically linked to politeness or even to efficiency; it is not a recognisable mindset. Instead, it is often viewed as one of the factors of the (Western) industrial/commercial world. The more sophisticated urbanite, of course, has been influenced to understand time from a Western perspective; indeed, the business world has been his "trainer" in this regard.

But, even in societies where the measurement of time is precise, there is flexibility. Not everything is measured by the second-hand of a clock. Cultural relativity is evident. For instance, from a black perspective, white Zimbabwean culture is perceived to be "time

conscious". Yet, I can speak quite comfortably of three forms of 'now': There is "now-now" which is immediately; "now" which is immediately to very soon, and "just now" meaning anything from 10 minutes to a few hours. And, being rather vague, they can all overlap. And anyone in my cultural context would understand what was meant.

There is also relativity in periods of time. So, in English, words such as era, age, generation, day and so on can all have varied meanings, without any understood precision, depending on their context. All my co-researchers expressed similar sentiments. Time, then, is distinctly imprecise.

Given this relativity, can we say there is a connection between time and efficiency in the context of administration? Why are they linked and, if so, how? Since time is finite and cannot be altered either more or less, we have no option but to use the time that we have. Irrespective of geographical or cultural location, every human being has 24 hours in a day, seven days in a week, four weeks in the month and 12 months in the year to use. Moreover, since it is a resource, there is an element of responsibility in using it. Indeed, for the Christian, one is called to be a steward (including of time – see Rom. 14:12; 1 Pet. 4:5). Wasted time – that is time that is not used productively – reflects not just inefficiency to some degree but also irresponsibility. The issue then becomes one of defining wastage. Is waiting at the bus stop inefficiency? Perhaps. What else can one do but wait? On the other hand, is one being inefficient as well as irresponsible if they choose just to wait, instead, say of reading a book, knitting, chatting or doing something active?

The link, then, between time and efficiency must be understood both in terms of agreed notions of measurement and of how that time is utilised. When one precise form of measurement of time is indicated in a particular context (say, 9:30 a.m. for an appointment), the use of another form of measurement is likely to create misunderstanding, disappointment and even upset. Both parties must be aware of the implications of the form of measurement being used.

For example, an Ndebele pastor friend once had five weddings on one Saturday. He stressed repeatedly to the couples during the counselling and rehearsals that it was essential that they all be very precise and on time. He warned each of them that if they were late, they would have to go to the "back of the queue". As it turned out, the first couple, due at 8:00 a.m., was 45 minutes late. He told them that he could not perform the entire ceremony in a mere 15 minutes and, since the second couple were due at 9:00, they would have to wait for the others to finish first. Understandably, the couple and their families were annoyed. But the second couple then arrived for their ceremony and it quickly became apparent, with all the friends and

families gathered around, that chaos would reign if the pastor's schedule was to be ignored. Reluctantly, the first couple and their families and friends left to return later (at about 2:00 p.m.) for their wedding. The chaos and disappointment could have been averted if both parties had understood the measurement of time in the same way and had the same understanding of using time.

Likewise, the relativity of the measurement of time was evident in my interviews. Dixon made an interesting observation: "Our Africanness now is different from that of 100 years ago. We have to contextualise. Life without some of what we have would be unbearable. We need to redefine today's African culture." In other words, he understood the need for flexibility and adaptability. The others agreed.

For instance, Chris said he "had to move away from time management toward relationships, the let's-get-this-done-'on-time' thinking. "Yes, relations and time have to be balanced. [But] I get frustrated when appointments aren't kept on time." Asked why this was so, he remarked: "I've been too much into time management." But where did that influence come from? "Maybe working with people who stressed this aspect; [perhaps my training at] College." How much of a struggle has this been to shift 'back'? "It's been a challenge. I'm working with both urban and rural people. When I go to rural areas, I deliberately leave town late and I still have to wait [for people to arrive for the meeting]. But I ask, should we remain there? Every hour that's wasted is a waste of resources. So, we need to reach a compromise." Clearly for Chris, there is a worldview tension here. I did not find this surprising.

Similarly, Dixon also struggles. Having commented earlier on the importance of using resources – including time – wisely, he added later, "When you lose time, you can't regain it. But I do struggle with time." I asked him in what way? "I don't have enough time in the day. I guess it's balancing up." That implies you don't delegate enough? I prompted. "Yes, our Church has grown; we're operating on the old leadership system [i.e. top down]. We need to do an organogram. We're doing things because we've always done it that way. I'm increasingly finding that my Mondays are spent at the office instead of at home with my children. This may be because if there's a need, I tend to jump in, to rescue them. I don't allow people to fail." So, what does this say for the next time? "Yes, this is a problem I need to work on. I tend to protect people because I see they can't handle the pressure that comes from peers. For example, I like music and singing. [But] I have to tell myself I can't be in the choir; I can't play the instruments [because I have other things I need to do]."

While not admitting to having a major struggle, Barnabas nevertheless did hint at a tension: "Yes, it's important. Even if I compromise other appointments. I suppose I'm dual, Western

and African." (Significantly, he was 45 minutes late for our first appointment. I think he was too embarrassed to apologise directly, so quickly explained that he'd lost track of time because he was talking to a parishioner and actually forgot about me. The implication, of course, was that he was helping someone in need, which justified his lateness with me.) Asked about the urban-rural dichotomy, he admitted, "Yes, I tend to be in a hurry; I'm raised in a town mode, not a rural mode. I'm looking at my watch, not the day or tomorrow."

Like Dixon, George sees time as valuable: "It's a resource not to be wasted at all. You have to use it effectively and efficiently."

While Beki had a similar view, he also had a different twist. He spoke of a project he was involved in that required visiting the rural areas. There was a tight schedule and promptness was required. "So we had targets to reach but people were late and delayed us, so the targets were missed. In some cases, we had to go back a second time. This was a frustrating waste of time and resources." Still, he confidently predicted, "As the new generation takes over and the older generation passes away, things will be different. New technology is coming into the rural areas and people are having to change their thinking."

He obviously sees a transition in the current era. (From a demographic point of view, it is perhaps significant that the proportion of urban to rural population is increasing, having shifted from 30:70% some 20 years ago to about 35:65% up until recently. The major reason for this was dire economic stress. But this is moving back again – perhaps to 40:60% now – because of political moves such as "Operation *Murambatsvina*" ["Throw out the rubbish"] that forced many unemployed and destitute back to the rural areas. Media reports have indicated this was designed and implemented with military precision and brutality by the Central Intelligence Organisation, the Police and the Army supposedly to quell a possible urban uprising.) As the populace moves, of course, this exposes more rural-based people to different approaches and alternative worldviews.

Similarly, Dawson also sees time as precious. "Yes, it's very important. Because time can never be redeemed. Within the confines we have, we have to do the best. It's a commodity that comes once and then goes away."

In a related question, I asked if they saw any purpose to time. I anticipated there being some difficulty with this, given the general lack of interest in it, but I was also alert to the responses because of the expressions of its overall value.

"Yes," said George. "God is a God of time. He created the days; He wants things to be done. It's all about management. How well you are organised." But, I followed up by asking how

being organised helps us to understand the purpose of time? "Because we see there is a time to do everything."

Dawson was of a similar view: "God never created anything for nothing. So, whatever has been given in a time frame, there has to be a purpose for it. For example, someone exists in this generation, it means there is a reason why they didn't exist earlier; their purpose is not attached to that generation but this generation. Everyone exists for certain purposes that must be accomplished within that time frame."

Barnabas recognised a purpose in relation to his work. "Yes. It goes back to efficiency and effectiveness. If I don't keep time, if documents don't go out, we're up the creek without a paddle. Time is crucial."

Beki, likewise, although also not putting a Christian slant on it, said: "For every event to happen, it must do so in the framework of time." So, what are some of the implications of this? I asked. "If we don't block out time to do certain things, they won't be done in life. Everything has its own time and season."

This led to the next question about whether our use of time affects other dimensions of life. Beki shared several examples. "If the first person delays you, it will affect your appointment with the next person, who will then accuse you of not being dependable and faithful and your relationship will be affected. And the next time, punctuality won't be so good. You should explain how much time you will give so they understand. Culture sometimes robs us of time. Instead of saying, 'I haven't got time,' I'll keep quiet. But then I'll be late for the next appointment – which means I will have a problem for the next person. Also in marriages: If I'm always delayed, I get home late, I don't come home on time for meals, or [to have] time for the children, this will strain your marriage."

For Dawson too, time is clearly related to other dimensions of life. "There is a lot of connection. My purpose cannot exist in a vacuum. My time must relate to others and certain things within that time frame that will accomplish my purpose. Money, people, events are all attached to time. There may be certain resources that exist at a certain time that will allow me to accomplish my purpose within that time frame."

George quoted the Old Testament: "There's a time for everything (Eccl. 3:1). When you misuse time, you pay heavily." Then he went on to explain: "I should have been at College years ago, but I wasted time. Only later did I realise what I was missing. Now I'm paying for that with extra responsibilities. If I'd used my time wisely then, I could be doing other things now. I'd be more effective than I am today.

By contrast, Chris would like to merge the two worldviews: "We need to educate people without offending them," he said. He suggested starting with time. "Let's divide the day into blocks; see that each is valuable. [He is referring here to the rural mind-set of seeing time not as a precise entity but in segments.] Without being too hard on them, we should help them to see that portion of the block that is not "used" was already planned for and cannot be redeemed and, as a result, the quality of relationships will be affected." He is suggesting here that rural folk be encouraged to understand the value of using time more efficiently. When arranging a time in that context, he agrees with the 'block' idea and thus speaks of "around 10:00". That gives both a degree of precision and flexibility.

In a different way, Barnabas also seeks to merge the two worldviews, giving two examples. "[With] pastoral visitation, you must make [specific] time for this. You should make appointments and ensure you keep them. If I'm going to be late for the next one, I'll call and let them know. Even time for prayer: You need to be ruthless." Clearly, he is aware of the dynamics of both approaches, but his relaxed attitude to time does create some tension on occasion.

On the training side, Joyce expressed flexibility saying, "We are accepting, forgiving, sympathetic, empathetic," while Mbange said time is very important. "As a trainer, I need to be there before the participants. With people being late, we then have to decide what to do. I did struggle to begin with – especially in my preparation – and the programme was affected. [We realise that] rural and urban [people] are different. So, with urban latecomers, we punish them; we try to help them to see that time affects everyone." They acknowledged that one's use of time impinges on honesty and integrity. Asked how they treat the different attitudes in their trainees, Joyce and Mbange said they separate them into two groups.

In itemising the various problems their trainees have with time, Joyce said these typically relate to "[a failure to] produce on time; to deliver. So, we look at issues of character, opportunity seeking and goal-setting." She was confirming that poor stewardship of time impacts efficiency and effectiveness. Mbange added that "[there is] need to help them see that [proper use of] time can help [their] customers." It speaks to honesty.

We have seen, then, that belying the typical indifference to time, there are some for whom time is nevertheless very important, that they appreciate the value of it and understand the implications of poor stewardship of it. This, of course, is baffling since it begs the question: Why, then, are the benefits and values of a better stewardship of time not communicated to and expected of people more deliberately? This is particularly so in the Christian arena given the Scriptural injunction to "do all in the name of the Lord." (Col. 3:17) Hence, rather than

answering the fundamental question, the responses have highlighted the problem. The possible reasons for this will be explored further in Chapter Six.

It is also interesting that the Western influence is very clear in these responses and that there is a genuine struggle between that and the African mind-set, the rural and urban, old and new. The issues of the impact of Western training, professionalism, and colonial education will also be explored later in an attempt to bridge the gap here.

1.2.1.3 Planning –

As part of the administration process, planning is rightly seen as essential. Without it, there is little direction; details will be ignored, resources wasted and small but key tasks left undone – with disastrous consequences. As the common adage has it, "failing to plan is planning to fail."

In broad terms, planning is simply "thinking ahead". Yet, in cultures where time is less precise or less important, this raises some intriguing questions about planning. For example, I asked my respondents about "tomorrow": If their concept of time is largely focused on yesterday and today, how much importance is attached to tomorrow? How far ahead is it; are they afraid of it and how do they prepare for it?

Planning, of course, also involves ensuring the right resources are used rightly. Typically, these resources include people, equipment, "space", time and money. Effective planning is about using these resources in correct balance. While many often conclude that the most important of these is money, in fact, people are the key resource. Granted, money is often required, but in many cases, it is people thinking about ideas – perhaps not requiring money at all – that provide the impetus for progress. Without people, nothing will happen, even if all the money needed is available. Yet, planning is more than just having bodies in place. That does not guarantee that things will be done well, if at all.

The old ditty about Somebody not doing something because Anybody could do it but thought Everybody would, so Nobody did is a humorous reminder of this principle. Unfortunately, the charm of this is partly because it is often true. How many decisions are made in committee meetings without someone being assigned to follow through?

As Christians called to be good stewards of what God has given us, it behoves us to consider wise use of resources. Poor planning is thus also a poor testimony. Regrettably, there seem to be many Christian events or activities that are poorly planned, with consequent wastage and, sadly, there are many Christians who do not seem to appreciate this, or even care. (See Joyce's story in Chapter Six.) Years ago, I gave a large tent to my Church for use on camps

and outings. On the first occasion, it was lost because no-one was made accountable for it and no-one was tasked with seeing that it was packed away properly afterwards or for checking the inventory. The leadership did not seem overly concerned about the loss. I vowed I would not give anything like that to my Church again.

Planning is also concerned with details. A huge machine in a factory is kept running smoothly because oil or grease is regularly applied to tiny but strategic holes. Failure to pay attention to details leads to disaster. This aspect of administration has its own fascinating dimensions and, while it is a universal need, is again relative, not only cross-culturally but also intra-culturally. Personal experience tells me this is not a "cultural" issue so much as a personality one, since it seems there are people in every culture who are good at thinking about details and others who are not. Within any people group, some are naturally inclined to think about details.

At first glance, then, planning may be a psychological issue rather than a worldview issue *per se.* Personally, I happen to be a process person, concerned with the details. I tend to think about how something can be done best, rather than whether it should be done or not. Not everyone with my worldview thinks like that. By contrast, typically, a visionary leader is more concerned with getting where he wants to go and often does not consider the details – many times to his personal and the group's detriment.

My (Shona) pastor – a visionary – and I make a good team. He shows me the big picture, where we need to go; I show him what details we should consider to get there. Often, he is frustrated with me when I raise them, but he appreciates the need for my input. And sometimes I am frustrated because he doesn't always ask all the questions, yet I appreciate his "sense of direction".

So, if planning is primarily about the future, caring for resources and thinking of details, what is efficiency in this context? All three dimensions are universal rather than relative. And again, they relate to stewardship and responsibility. What may differ from culture to culture is the approach to the future, the attitude toward resources and the ability to account for details. While these may be influenced by culture and worldview, I am aware from experience that the emphasis on the understanding and the handling of these can vary from person to person within cultures.

So, what worldview factors come into play here? What is planning from a Shona and Ndebele point of view to start with and how important is it? All my respondents said planning is important – albeit in varying degrees. They also articulated their understanding of the process and the worth of resources.

Barnabas said he enjoys it because it gives him a sense of control; he's in charge, "calling the shots" as he put it. For him, planning involves making the right appointment, setting goals and reminders; having a diary. This sounds efficient enough, but of my six co-researchers, Barnabas has proved to be the least efficient, having missed three of five group meetings (all of them confirmed beforehand) and, despite several telephoned and e-mailed requests over four months, he never submitted his task survey questionnaire. This points to the potential difference between theory and practice; between desire and actuality. What someone says they believe and what really happens may be two different things. This is not necessarily a cultural dynamic either. And it still leaves the question: Why?

For Chris, planning is "making arrangements about what you're going to do, when and how." He says it's important "because it ties in with management of time and stewardship; it assists in efficiency." Clearly, Chris sees planning as a crucial part of the process without which things would fall apart. Notably, too, planning is related to stewardship: it reduces, if not prevents, wastage. Overseeing 14 peri-urban and rural preaching points demonstrates that Chris not only appreciates the value of planning but also practices it as well.

Dixon understands planning as part of his leadership role. For him, it is a matter of "sitting down, looking at our vision and breaking it down into its components, the goals and objectives and how we can accomplish that. Then this has to be monitored with feedback. It's a continuous process.   It's looking at the global picture. When all the components are in place, then we can move." Planning, then, is not just thinking ahead, but it is also putting the constituent parts together in the right way to accomplish something. Running a multi-ethnic church of 450 members and a similar number of adherents with what, on the surface at least, appears to be a sound degree of efficiency, shows that Dixon's philosophy matches his praxis.

Taking a different tack, George feels planning is central to our humanity: "Our purpose as human beings is to plan, but the One who makes those succeed is God. Our vision comes through planning." For him, planning is what makes him tick; it translates the vision into reality and gives life purpose and meaning. While in his late-Forties and married with four children, pastoring two congregations and overseeing 12 others cannot be done satisfactorily without planning. It should be mentioned, perhaps, that George's studies for a degree in theology suffered a set back because of all his commitments and he was forced to reduce the workload and delegate more than he had bargained for. Nevertheless, he could not do what he did without adequate attention to planning.

Although Beki sees planning as important, he clearly struggles with it. "It's very important; it gives you a guideline of what you want to do and achieve. It helps you to put things in stages.

[It allows you to] make an evaluation before going to the next stage. It makes your work easier. But, it's a discipline. I'm not an administrator. I [have to] discipline myself. I can't just dream about something being done. I have to do some work and put effort into it. For example, a mother doesn't just hope the kids will be fed lunch; she has to prepare it. I need to spend time with people; but to do that I have to plan and prepare. For some it comes naturally (for instance, [taking] minutes, [writing] reports).

Beki here, I suspect, is echoing the feelings of many pastors who silently battle with the administrative demands of their ministries. And he is right: for some, it comes naturally; for others, it is a constant struggle, a necessary evil, even. Where the discipline is not there, problems arise and others must pick up the pieces.

In another vein, some years ago someone put a notice on the board at our College at midday announcing a pastor's fellowship meeting. You might think that was good planning (and communication) – until you read the notice. The meeting started at 2:00 p.m. There was absolutely no thought whatever that one might already have another commitment at that time. Clearly the assumption was that we had nothing else to do that afternoon! Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident. It is almost as if some in ministry believe their colleagues have no responsibilities until an activity is arranged for them – and the sooner the better. While some ministry leaders shake their heads at that, there are many others, it seems, who find that approach very acceptable. Quite apart from highlighting their philosophy of planning, it also says volumes about their philosophy of ministry too.

Dawson, on other hand, is very clear about his idea of planning. It is "setting or putting in order certain things that must be done or achieved." As the Senior Pastor, he is a visionary; but while he sees this as his primary role, he appreciates the need for planning and attention to detail. Working with him personally in several areas, I have found that he does not always think of the details, yet feels it is important to be involved in everything. He is a "hands on" manager.

The next question we discussed was the process of planning. I asked the pastors what steps they typically use to plan for a fairly large project. Barnabas, in planning to introduce the Alpha training course in his church as an example, laid out the steps as follows: "1. Pray [do we want to do it? What's the end goal?] 2. Approach trainers – give them the time, venue and place; discuss the provision of meals. 3. Remind the people (over a month) – verbal and written announcements. 4. Get details of how many people want it." Here, he has thought through most of the key details and issues needing consideration. Obviously, for the Christian, nothing should begin without prayer. The trainers – the people-resource – are

strategic. (The assumption, of course, is that the other people-resource, the participants or trainees, will be there also. But if someone has not paid attention to the detail, for instance of communication, they probably will not be.) Communication in various forms is critical in a project like this. Interestingly, he did not say the idea needs to be "sold" to the people; they simply needed to be reminded. Perhaps his assumption was that they would be interested automatically. But that is not a valid assumption and many leaders have been disappointed that their hard work and preparation have been wasted because the attendance at an event has been less than expected. Leaders sometimes forget that followers do not always come to an exercise with the same degree of awareness, interest or passion as they do; that enthusiasm must be developed. However, Barnabas did say that getting an indication of the numbers interested is an important step in the process. In such events, this detail determines many other aspects, not least the use of resources (for example, training materials, meals and so on.)

For Chris, a fairly large project would be planning the construction of a church building. He outlined the following steps: 1. Start with the time frame – when? 2. How [will it be done]? 3. Resources – material, finances, manpower and so on. On the surface, this appears quite sound. However, these big steps need to be broken down into smaller steps. In speaking of the time frame, does he have in mind the finish date only? If he fails to account for key dates in the project before this, he could encounter problems. Then, how much detail will he go into when considering step two – the how? And, what sub-issues must be pondered in terms of resources? This, then, is where problems often occur because insufficient detail is considered. Again, from personal experience, I'm not convinced that this is a cultural dynamic but, rather, a psychological or temperamental aspect. Every culture, it seems to me, has people who think superficially or broadly, without adequate reckoning of the details. While I would classify Chris as reasonably efficient, he admits to being frustrated with this element of ministry and clearly baulks at accepting this type of responsibility; he would much prefer someone else to be in charge of something like this. However, leadership is partly about accepting overall responsibility.

Dawson, being a visionary, sees the steps of planning as: "1. [Getting the] vision – with this, there must be 2. Communication of that vision; 3. [The] put[ting] together [of] resources (for example, people) and others; 4. Time periods; 5. Gathering materials and personnel; 6. [The] time frame must be incorporated; 7 Check points [i.e. evaluation]." Naturally, after 21 years in ministry, he has learned the process well; one of his strengths is making sure his subordinates understand both the big picture and the task before them personally.

George approaches the steps by asking a series of questions: "I ask, 'What is it that I want to achieve? What resources do I need? What help (from others) would I need?'" He then goes on to prioritise the resources: "(1) money (it answers most questions), (2) people, (3) time, and (4) environment." Interestingly, he sees money as the primary resource, but recognises that, without people, not much can be done with it.

In planning for a fairly large project, Beki would "Take time off, get away from the busyness of life; take a vacation and spend some time processing things and come back with fresh ideas." His 'stepping back' or 'retreat' philosophy underscores his anxiety and unease about the process. Apart from these broad preparatory steps, he would "call a meeting with the team; get feedback – where can we improve? When [can it be done]? How much time and resources will we need? Delegate where necessary.

Dixon has a different ethos. He revels in strategic planning and strategic retreats. "Each year, we meet with all key leaders. This is the major thing for our church. Two years ago, we changed the vision. I love John Piper's books – "spreading a passion for the supremacy of God in all things." We have to let people see our passion about Christ, about God. This is our emphasis for each ministry this year. How can we honour God in this way? What needs to change? What training is needed? What are the needs of the people? Then we have a mid-year retreat to assess. That way, we keep focused on the key result areas. For me, my main responsibility is preaching; I ask people if I'm on track, meeting their needs. Planning this is what I enjoy." Dixon likes the big picture but is also concerned to see that the smaller parts fit together well.

"First [I] pray. God impresses things on my heart. When this happens, I share it with [my co-leaders] to get confirmation, shared values. Then we bring it to the larger leadership to ask how we accomplish it. Is it realistic? [Then we] get the Church involved (special meeting) and set up a committee, which would do the nitty gritties." In terms of resources, he sees them in this order: Manpower, finances, material. "Manpower," he stresses, "is our greatest asset."

My co-researchers clearly see necessary steps in the planning process and are aware of the need to consider resources. But, again, this may not be common to everyone. Some years ago at our old campus, we used to hire our classrooms for a nominal fee. Late one afternoon at about 4:15, I was approached by a young lady asking to use the College facilities for a meeting. I asked her for how many people (to establish which room would be the best). As she was telling me and I was about to ask the next question, the thought occurred to me simultaneously that I knew the answer. But I had to ask anyway: when did she want it? Sure enough, she said, "5 o'clock." I said, "I'm terribly sorry, but all the classrooms are booked for

today." She became angry, objecting that she had already invited the people to come to the College for the meeting. She would have to locate them scattered all over the City to tell them not to come, but there was insufficient time to do so. I told her that the people using the rooms that day had already had the forethought and courtesy of booking the rooms the previous week. I asked why she didn't do that and, of course, she didn't have an answer. I also pointed out the foolishness of making arrangements when the plans are yet to be confirmed. She left, crestfallen and annoyed (both at me and with herself). It was clear that it was a hard lesson for her to learn.

My co-researchers, then, were able to confirm the importance of planning in the administrative process, to identify key resources and to describe the typical steps they take in planning. While they obviously do this with greater or lesser relish, they nevertheless understand the role of planning. Irrespective of the culture and one's personal preferences, this suggests a wide endorsement of planning as an integral part of administration. But, again, it highlights a fundamental question: Why, then, are so many events spoiled by poor planning?

1.2.1.4 Organising –

This, essentially, is about putting in place; arranging. For the administrator, this is a fundamental corollary to the other dimensions. An administrator may plan and control, but without organising properly, leading others effectively or accomplishing much of substance will be difficult. Indeed, a disorganised administrator is an oxymoron.

Organising, in this sense, also involves such skills as classifying, co-ordinating, fixing, harmonising, instituting, methodising, ordering, regulating and systematising. These skills (either through natural talent or training) vary from person to person. And, obviously, different projects require different complexities and amounts of these elements. But what cultural dynamics come into play here, and why?

This, in turn, raises the question of whether this aspect of administration is universal and/or absolute or relative. Is it a group/culture factor or is it an individual/personality factor? It is clear that, by their very nature, projects universally need some degree of organising. Whether one is organising the day's activities, a journey or, even, a soapstone carving, very little of substance occurs haphazardly. A meal doesn't cook itself. A motor vehicle is not built instantly. And a village does not just materialise. Thus, organising *per se* is a universal necessity, irrespective of culture. However, within cultures, there appear to be varying levels of organisational competence. In my experience, certainly intra-culturally, there are people more predisposed to these skills, more capable and comfortable with them, while others not

only are not good with them but actually disdain them. A similar predisposition was evident with my co-researchers.

In addition, organising, like planning, can be done on both the personal and the corporate levels. Typically, an organised person is understood to be someone who manages their daily routine efficiently and effectively so that they get things done well. It is generally associated with self-discipline. At the corporate level, a good organiser is generally felt to be someone who can direct people in the right way to do what they need to so that the overall objective is achieved efficiently and effectively. It is often associated with sound leadership.

And, like planning, organising involves consideration of details. For example, Police in the small town of Shurugwi about 43 kilometres from Gweru, the provincial capital, failed to order receipt books in time and so ticketed drivers had to travel to Gweru – an 86 kilometre round trip – to pay their fines. Or, ponder the stationery clerk who only thinks of arranging a requisition for new pens after the last one has been taken – forgetting that it takes six weeks to process the order, leaving workers without the tool of their trade. Or what about the bridal couple who must interrupt the ceremony to find chairs to sit on because this was obviously not considered (or was forgotten?) during the previous night's rehearsal? Indeed, it is often the attention paid to details that makes the difference between success and failure; between mediocre and excellent. But is this culturally recognised and developed? Some of my co-researchers affirmed this; others did not.

For instance, Barnabas drew a distinction between planning and organising. "Organising is picking up people to do things. So, having killed the elephant [as a result of planning to do so], organising would be the skinning of the elephant. Planning and organising are intertwined. A plan is a wholistic picture of intention. Organising is achieving the objectives. For example, in teaching, I plan my lesson, but I also prepare work for the class to do to assess the success of my lesson. Organising implies that you know where you're going."

While it is true that planning and organising are linked, it would appear that the one does not necessarily guarantee the other. Barnabas, for example, had planned to bring his task questionnaire several times; indeed, he verbally and in writing promised to do so – but intention did not translate into practice for four months. For him, attention to detail may be related to self-discipline.

Chris, too, sees planning and organising as connected. "[Organising] is similar to planning. Organising is the smaller picture. It looks at what needs to be done; the nitty gritty of the whole project. It looks at details: names, items." He adds that "planning is paperwork; organising is people."

So, for him, details are important. But this is only one part of the organising dynamic. An individual can be organised without necessarily involving others at all. While being disorganised can have negative implications as far as relationships are concerned since people will be impacted negatively, being organised does not necessarily require others to be involved in the process.

Likewise, Dawson also sees a connection between people and organising: For him, the latter is, "Calling and putting people together for a purpose." He sees it as important to work with teams, and so ensuring there is continuity in their work is vital. Yet, it is the attention to detail that can harm or hinder this continuity. Simply having people in place – on a team – does not guarantee being organised or efficient. Again, from a worldview factor, the dominance of relationships is evident.

For Dixon, being organised is about "mobilising; putting specific things in their rightful place Again, [it's about] human resources, specific meetings (weekly, monthly, quarterly) so that there's synergy that builds up the accomplishment of the whole vision."

Asked what things he typically organises, he said: "Apart from meeting the leaders to assess progress, I am the chief fund-raiser of the church. Sometimes, when funds are short, I tell my Treasurer not to pay me until he's paid the others. So I organise resources. We have external partners. We have a full-time HIV/AIDS pastor and so I network with all these people." For Dixon, then, organising is about generating and networking – again, with the emphasis on people.

Similarly, George sees organising as, "Putting things together. Using them for the right purpose." Asked what 'things' in particular, he noted "time, money, people and other resources." For George, then, organising is about utilising resources in an orderly way to accomplish the end goal.

Interestingly, Beki had a somewhat different insight from the others. For him, being organised has to do with the individual: "How organised are you – socially, emotionally, mentally and spiritually? [Being] organised has to do with the person first." Would you describe yourself as an organised person? "Yes, slowly but surely. It's a skill you develop in life." But what sort of things do you organise? "Time, resources and people." So, while Beki understands the personal component in being organised, together with the need for self-discipline, he also sees organisation as involving the interrelation of resources.

As we have seen, organising involves skills. When asked what skills a good organiser has, Dawson said, "You need to be able to put people together – so you must be a 'people person',

while George stressed the need to consider details. [Why is this important?] "So that he is prepared; he [the leader] looks at the vision and sees how to get there. He is a leader, but he's also a specialist to do things he's planned ahead. You have a triumvirate: the visionary, the manager and the organiser. The visionary shouldn't be too involved in organising otherwise he'll be bogged down by details."

Dixon seemed to concur by saying, "The visionary leader is different from the organising leader. 'Leadership is influence' (quoting Maxwell 1998); so an organiser puts things together to benefit the organisation. Every leader must be visionary (but with varying degrees). He must have a good idea of the overall picture and the results of what he wants. He must be able to see what kinds of people he needs to attain. He must ask how he can empower them. A good organiser can get rid of people who don't produce. If someone takes responsibility, there must be accountability. At the end of the day, failure is upon the delegated leader. A good organiser communicates – fires those who are not performing." Clearly, though, Dixon sees not a two-person dichotomy as does George, but rather, the two or three skills being manifest in the same person: The leader (that is, the visionary) must also be able to manage and organise.

Once again, these observations highlight both the overlap of the three functions and the slight nuances of each. Leading, managing and organising are not fixed entities, with their own separate skills and requirements, without any connection to the others. And, while there is an emphasis on details for some, plainly this is not an ability that everyone sees equally as necessary. The focus on people, once more, is also evident. This connection with Leading then takes us to the next aspect.

1.2.1.5 Leading –

This is perhaps the most complex of the five components we are exploring in our five-fold profile of administration. As mentioned earlier, not only is this often used interchangeably for management and administration itself, but the skills and dynamics involved are also multifaceted and related. We could explore a wide variety of issues from leadership style (including temperament and personality), through communication, decision-making, creativity and innovation, the change factor, motivation and delegation to the dynamics of power, authority and manipulation. Moreover, leading has somewhat different dynamics in individual versus group contexts. In addition, there are official leaders (because of position and, often, natural talent and training) and unofficial leaders (by virtue of natural talent – but with no training – and group acceptance), both of whom exercise varying degrees of influence.

To what extent are these issues – their definitions and related skills – universal and absolute, or contextually relative? Obviously, leadership itself is universal, since there are leaders everywhere in every cultural group and in every sphere of life. But is there a commonly accepted, universal understanding of the basic constituents of effective leadership? Or are these perceptions relative and culturally shaped? More expressly, are there relative and culturally specific emphases on any of the constituents and their related skills? For example, are there cultural dynamics that encourage decision-making in one people-group whereas the absence of that dynamic in another hinders decision-making? Or, again, are there worldview factors that enhance creativity and innovation in one group but militate against them in another? Are power and authority understood universally as separate entities and are they used – and abused – for the same reasons and in the same ways? Are leadership styles universal or culturally shaped? Are the same styles appreciated or desired universally or does culture shape our acceptance of one over another? In short, what worldview factors come into play for each of these dynamics and what influence do they have?

To reiterate: throughout this study, I am using the terms leading, managing and administrating as distinct, yet overlapping and complementary. In my view, a leader is anyone who influences, whereas a manager (in simple terms) primarily organises people while an administrator focuses on the background needs to facilitate the manager. In brief, a manager is primarily a 'people person'; an administrator is mainly a 'process person'. But these designations are not rigid or exclusive. Thus, a leader may not be a good manager or administrator, nor might an administrator be a good leader or manager, but they all have to do some of each at some point. Indeed, in my experience – certainly in Christian ministry circles – it is rare to find any two elements equally strong and effective in one person. But they cannot be divorced and put in isolated boxes.

So to begin with, what does leading "look" like from a Shona or Ndebele point of view? Barnabas, for example, says the first requirement is "to be clear where you're going yourself. [Be sure of] your own beliefs, convictions, [You] have to have vision to share and hopefully persuade people to buy into it. [It is] to be unique and distinct." In a Christian context, he says, "It's discerning the will of God and to rise to that call. Yes, there'll be criticism and dissent, but there'll also be support (not necessarily that they like you – that can be a problem.) For example, with [the *murambatsvina*] squatters [in our Church], we had two groups, one saying they should go, one that they should stay. I had to lead the congregation through that."

(Postscript: A story was related to me about that incident. The squatters, living at a camp on the outskirts of Bulawayo had their homes summarily demolished one mid-winter Saturday afternoon in 2005 and were forcibly evicted by the Police, backed by the Army and the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO). This was part of a deliberate nationwide action, code-named *Operation Murambatsvina* = Shona for "Drive out the filth.") Ostensibly, it was to rid the cities of vagrants and thieves. It later transpired that it was a joint military operation supposedly to crush a potential popular uprising. According to a report authored by the United Nations *Habitat* Director, Mrs Anna Tjibaijuka in June 2005, some 700 000 people had their homes and informal businesses destroyed, affecting an estimated 2,5 million people countrywide. Several Churches embarked on schemes to house and care for them while finding alternative accommodation. Some Churches in Bulawayo accommodated up to 200 people each for a month or more before the Police violently evicted them from the churches in the middle of the night, dumping them by the roadside in the rural areas. In Barnabas' Church, an elderly parishioner had complained to him about the squatters who, he felt, were "messing up the church" and should not be there – that's not the church's job, he said. Barnabas told him that if the squatters were to leave, he would also leave. The parishioner was shocked and walked away in disbelief. Some time later he returned to Barnabas to apologise, expressing remorse for his attitude. For many, this humanitarian crisis brought home very graphically the role of the Church in society and the deeper meaning of the Gospel. In the process, several pastors like Barnabas were challenged on different fronts as they led their congregations through this traumatic time.)

In terms of how he relates as a leader to people, he says: "Great. We relate. We're objective about issues. They're free to criticise me as much as I do them. But I discourage rumours and gossip."

For Chris, leading is about "being able to give direction; mapping a way forward, when everything else seems difficult." This is not a contradiction of Barnabas' view, but rather a complementary understanding; indeed, it represents a fairly typical view of the role of leading.

Asked how he relates to people as a leader, he commented: "I can't praise myself, but in trying to marry the two – time and relationships – I think this helps me to get along. I see a problem as a challenge." Is this a challenge to get the job done or to help the person? "To get the job done. This is more important than helping the person because in the success, the person can learn as well."

Dawson, on the other hand, sees a strong overlap between leading, organising and supervising. He finds that, having provided (so he thought) the vision and direction, he often

has to step in and pick up the pieces as it were because those he had delegated to do the job have failed to do it properly. "… when you lead, you are part and parcel of the game. That's why you have leading by example. You are involved at a certain degree. So, leading for me is not commanding from a distance, dictating. I am directly involved." This perception of leading highlights the issue of leadership style. Dawson is a democratic/consultative leader. That is, once he has laid the groundwork by sharing the vision, he allows his colleagues some freedom to discuss issues, make plans and implement projects in their own ways. But he also has an autocratic streak and likes to "keep on top of things"; he would no doubt describe himself as a "hands-on" leader – one who is comfortable being involved, but not necessarily micro-managing. At the same time, his involvement in having to "pick up the pieces" may also be the result of a lack of adequate communication and/or training of his colleagues. Visionaries often tend to assume that, once they have shared the vision, their colleagues understand everything to the same degree and in the same way as they do. Only when "the wheels fall off" do they realise that there was a gap in the understanding! Then they must go back and explain items that they had taken for granted.

By contrast, Dixon sees leading as, "Giving direction on key areas and issues so that we maintain and accomplish the vision." Having shared the vision, he delegates responsibilities and then steps back to allow his colleagues to get on with it. In describing his approach, he says, "The appointment of leaders is my responsibility. [But] one thing that discourages me is that the leader is raised up to a level that is ungodly; it almost becomes worship of the person. Many are comfortable with this. I tell people, 'You don't carry my Bible; I have two hands and I can do it myself.' That [thinking] frightens me. So I have a simple relationship with the people. I am a partner, a friend, we need to work together. Because you touch a heart before you can hold the hand. If you don't do that, you become the boss; it's no different from the secular world. I'm concerned about their home life, their struggles, how we can come alongside them to solve their problems. I like to be very relational. But that brings problems, because everyone wants to meet you. So, I was forced to hire a secretary. We also have a pastoral care pastor."

It is significant, perhaps, that Dixon felt "forced" to hire a secretary. The workload created by 'relating to people' in a large, growing church was too much for him alone. Yet, he had not thought about doing his work differently – and more efficiently – before he reached the crisis point. Many in ministry leadership do not have the luxury of a secretary or personal assistant. Others come into a leadership role with such a person already provided. Unless they have utilised a secretary before, they must make mental and work-habit adjustments to take full advantage of this resource. My own pastor, for instance, is struggling to shift his

understanding of a newly appointed administrator from that of receptionist (the previous role) to that of his personal assistant. He often forgets to tell her where he is going, why and when he will be back; consequently, people wanting to see him are sometimes left stranded and the question of accountability arises. Of my six co-researchers, two have full-time office assistants, one has a mornings-only secretary and one shares some secretarial help with a ministry colleague. But, plainly, leadership style and one's personal approach to their work determine the real value of such assistance.

I also asked Dixon how he deals with church members who insist on seeing him (because he is the senior pastor) rather than someone else. "I ask them what they want and try to convince them that there are others who can help. It's a grey area, because they're very fragile and can even leave the Church because of this. Sometimes you have to cut short the formalities of meeting so that you can discuss their problem. Yes it's rude …but you may not have any option."

I then followed this up by asking how he handles the cultural tendency to spend time in discussing insignificant issues and then, at the point of leaving, raising the real reason for the visit. "I try to help them see how much time I have and that I have other appointments. I try not to offend. Sometimes, people need to find the answers themselves. You can suggest Biblical responses. They have already solved their problem, but they just want to talk. Sometimes, I just have to stand up and excuse myself from them (my secretary has beeped me, so they know ... This reduces any effects of offence." But what about unscheduled visits? "I have four other pastors to help. The rural pastors often stay at my home and so we talk over supper. But always I try to let people know. I have an uncle who thinks he can come in any time. A couple of times, I have had to tell him I'm busy and can't see him. He was offended at the beginning, but now he understands."

For George, leading is also influence; it is "living as a role model; encouraging people to do the right things, the positive things, as a Christian. [It is] giving others encouragement to achieve set goals. In so doing, those who would have gone on to the 'left side' – who need disciplining – will be disciplined in love." That said, George can also be firm when needs be.

Beki, like Dixon, sees leading very much in terms of people-relationships. "Leading is setting an example. Influencing people to get somewhere. But I feel I need more time to be with the people." By nature, he is quiet and reserved. Hence, leading for him is not about standing at the front and dictating or, even, necessarily getting excited about something to persuade the people to follow. Rather, he seeks to influence gently, without fanfare. Yet, he clearly has some practical difficulties. Asked why he does not have sufficient time to be with the people,

Beki said, "I've been busy with other things at Church which, at times, are not a priority. When you are alone, you end up doing work you shouldn't be doing." That he recognises the need but has not yet rectified it reflects on issues such as delegation skills, leadership style, his personal approach to work and, ultimately, his philosophy of ministry.

In response to a question on the skills a good leader needs, Beki answered: "[You need] research skills, understanding the deeper meaning of the text (Bible) and other sources to see what other people think. [You need] communication skills, both writing and verbal and practical skills: [you] should set an example – for instance, building, carpentry, plumbing, and so on." And what about skills like delegation? I asked. "I came to the point where I told the people that if I was doing things that interfered with my pastoral duties, they wouldn't be done. When you ask for volunteers, no-one shows up, so you do it. But when the people are sick and you don't visit, they criticise; so you're caught in a dilemma. When the wheels fall off, the people say they are too busy and the pastor is the one who is employed to do it." What about your Elders and Deacons? "The calibre of the eldership we have, they're not ministry oriented. They're more of people coming to meetings; [they] contribute while they're busy with their own things. But I've spoken to them and they are coming up with ideas and doing things for themselves; slowly they're beginning to see the reality." Clearly, this has been a difficult learning experience for him and his leadership team is also being challenged with a different perspective.

Further on the issue of skills, Barnabas commented: "Sensitivity is very important. Listening. Empathy – people need someone to respect, that they can look up to. [You] mustn't impose." He prefers corporate or joint decisions. These factors highlight the people-relational aspect once again. They suggest that 'quality' leadership is directly connected to establishing and maintaining quality relationships. Interestingly, there is nothing here about the task itself. I asked if he considered himself a team player. "Yes, very much so. I achieve more that way – a better community. If I was to leave, the community would continue because it's not one person making all the decisions. You're secure in yourself."

Chris was honest. "I don't know what a good leader is! It's difficult. If you are faced with solving a problem, a good leader needs to be able to separate the person from the problem. [You] also need to know the people you're working with; to be able to place them in the right positions." As a follow-on to this, I asked if he saw any worldview factors at play here. "Yes, you are never a lone ranger. In the end, you need good relationships because you're working with a team. You also want to groom them." So, again, the emphasis is on people and relationships.

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For Dawson, there are three necessary skills: "Communication, motivation and organising." This is similar to George, who said, "[To be a good leader is] to be a good organiser, controller, visionary, communicator (like when we used to herd cattle, there would be a leader who would come and push the others to go …) and a planner." Again, we see not only overlap but a cluster of skills reflected.

Related to leading is the art of delegation. Not everyone is equally competent in this area, nor do some leaders see any value in it. Part of these difficulties can be overcome through education. While the skills involved can be honed, it is clear that some leaders are less able than others.

Asked how he views it, Chris used the rural example of a chief who uses messengers to glean and disseminate information: since he cannot do everything, he delegates. "This is important: he can't be everywhere at the same time. [Likewise, something] needs to be done, but not necessarily by me. It [also] depends on what's to be done. In some things, I'm more particular; in other areas, it's not important for me, so I'm more open to delegating." So, while he acknowledges the principle, he also distinguishes between those tasks for which he is directly responsible and those for which he is not; understandably, he is more open to delegating the latter. However, this is related to leadership style, temperament and how one views others: the extent to which one is afraid of mistakes or blame, for instance, will likely be a limiting factor.

For Dawson, delegation is "The process of implementing the vision or goal. Even if the vision is mine, the sharing of it is my job. [Delegation is] the actual process of doing of the job – because any project has a multiplicity of factors. When we've shared and everyone knows what is expected, then we put it together according to our skills." Here, delegation is seen not just as 'transferring a task to someone else so I can do what I need to' but, rather, completing the rest of the job once the leader has envisioned and communicated that vision.

While some see delegation as an abrogation of responsibility, George sees it differently. "[Yes,] it involves others doing what you are expected to do; you pass them [the tasks] on. But you are still accountable – you take the criticism or the credit." This latter point is important: often, leaders will delegate and assume that that they have passed on the entire element of accountability as well as the task. But this is to ignore the fact that, precisely because you are still the leader, you therefore remain ultimately responsible. Asked how he feels about doing it, George commented: "It's part of empowering; so I enjoy it. If I don't do it, others won't be able to do it."

Barnabas also sees delegation positively. "[It is] 1. Recognising that someone is better equipped than me – discernment; [this is] crucial. 2. [It's an] act of humility. I'm not a jack of all trades. I acknowledge that others have talents I don't have. 3. Also it gives time to do other things; it's not absconding, it's ownership – those I delegate to have ownership of it. If I were to leave, the system would not collapse but would go on. It's empowerment." It seems few in Christian ministry understand delegation as an act of discipleship and empowering people to grow. Rather than being frightened about losing status (especially if a mistake is made), Barnabas sees delegation as necessary for the development of those he leads.

Closely related to both leadership and delegation is the art of motivation. A leader without followers, according to Maxwell (1998: 20) "is simply taking a walk." Thus, without motivating people to follow – and, by inference, to do what should be done – the leader is set to fail. For any organisation to succeed in its endeavour, those involved must be sufficiently motivated to do the required work in the expected way. Indeed, any enterprise that fails here will die. For the Church, whose members are largely volunteers, motivation is critical. For most Christians, of course, the motivation for participation is partly spiritual and intrinsic: we recognise and acknowledge God's grace in our salvation. But beyond that there is involvement in ministry itself and, while the intrinsic motivation is still essential, there is often the need or extrinsic motivation or specific tasks.

In this regard, Dawson identified motivation as, "1. Appreciating people. 2. Sharing responsibility; not overburdening people. If you give them too much, they become demotivated. Dividing burdens is an important element. 3. Showing people the objectives and goals of the vision. Showing them the finished picture (for example, I will paint a [word] picture of what the auditorium will look like when it's finished and how we will use it and benefit from it." Here, personal benefit is being used as extrinsic motivation to encourage people to contribute to the massive task of erecting a church building. But he also sees motivation from another angle: "Preaching: Can you imagine how a sinner would come to the Lord without any motivation?" he asks rhetorically. In this case, obviously, there is both intrinsic motivation (the work of the Holy Spirit) and extrinsic (the work of the preacher) motivation.

Dixon also sees motivation as having three perspectives: "First, being personal with people, showing you're interested in them, not their gifts or what they can do. Second, when there is clear vision, when people know what they're expected to do and how, that's also great motivation. Third, [there should be] regular, consistent communication. This is important because it removes misunderstanding. Then you can come back to touch their heart."

Interestingly, we see here a focus on genuineness and authenticity. The extrinsic motivation he provides as the leader is based on a sincere concern for people and their needs.

By contrast, George says motivation is very simple: Involve people. But how do you get them involved in the first place? I ask. "I give them the vision in the first place, and tell them the benefits of doing it." Like Dixon, he also recognises the importance of communicating a vision. Followers need to be persuaded.

But then comes the question of how? Beki learned the hard way: "You need to approach people on a personal level, sharing your vision, aspirations; maybe inviting that person to join you. I tried to recruit from the pulpit – [it was] a total failure. You must approach people individually." While some people are extrinsically motivated by announcements or pleas from the pulpit, a crucial element here is how that is done and the enthusiasm with which the message is presented. Often, however, there is little enthusiasm (especially if the person making the announcement is not the one appealing for help), and so, not unexpectedly, the response is often minimal. Greater enthusiasm is likely to gain a better response, but it is by no means guaranteed. Invariably with volunteers, a face-to-face approach is nearly always more successful.

Barnabas affirms this. "[You need to] recognise what the individual can do and speak to them on a one-to-one basis [to persuade them] that they can do it. Personal contact makes them feel important. They appreciate being recognised. It's about interpersonal relationships. And giving them goals to run with. Then you have to compliment them when they're finished." Again, the relational emphasis is highlighted, together with personal encouragement.

By contrast, Chris finds this aspect difficult. "It [often] happens naturally. [It's] not an easy issue. You need to understand the people you're working with and get to know what they can and can't do. That helps to plan how to best motivate them. Help them to see things outside their normal way; give them a vision – something to look forward to. Help them to understand how they can reach that stage; give them the reasons, the benefits." While Chris clearly is less comfortable in this skill than Barnabas, the same elements of the personal touch and communicating purpose and value are still seen as crucial.

Because leadership is about influence, another important and related dynamic in this facet of administration is the use (and, often, abuse) of power and authority. These are linked not only to motivation and supervision but also to leadership style which, in turn, is impacted by personality, temperament and, in the Christian ministry context, one's philosophy of ministry. And, while Christ stressed the need for servant leadership (see Matt. 20:25-28), it is not always clear how this can be practised given the propensity for followers to put their leaders

on a pedestal. Trying to be a servant is also made difficult when the world's system constantly says the leader must be 'on top'. We are taught to look up to our leaders, not down at them. Indeed, when they are doing a good job, it is hard sometimes not to idolise them. So how does one exercise appropriate authority and power while being a servant? Notably, secular management theory is now beginning to latch on to this concept as the right way to treat workers. But, when the pastor is revered as "a man of God", how does he exercise servanthood?

Power and authority also have cultural dynamics. One difficulty, however, is their similarity, which makes it awkward to clearly distinguish when each is manifest. A pointer to this difficulty is the fact that there is only one word in Ndebele – *mandla* = "power, force" – used for both concepts. In English usage, by contrast, the two are much more clearly characterized. But, conspicuously, none of my Ndebele co-researchers had this problem; for them, the two were clearly distinguishable.

Beki, for example, sees power and authority being used interchangeably. "It means knowing how much authority and power I have and how I should use them to edify the congregation. The pastor is also a member of the family of God; he still has to submit to others; he's still a Christian. Christ had all authority, but He was a people person and could come down to their level." Does that not then enhance the possibility of abuse? "Abuse has to do with your character; your understanding of what it means to be a leader or to be in ministry. For some, it's an advantage over other people. If you understand your authority, you will use it within the stipulated parameters. A lack of self confidence can make you abuse power. A lack of understanding of what it means to be a Christian leader; of servant leadership are also problems."

Beki here touches on several key issues. He speaks of knowing how much power and authority a leader has and of using them to edify. Abuse is more likely to occur when this understanding and appreciation is not fully present. If a leader does not know why such power and authority has been given in the first place, there is less likelihood of knowing how to use them wisely. They are not given for the sake of the leader but, as Beki rightly says, to edify others. Significantly, too, Beki sees the Christian leader as under authority himself. This is not only despite, but more importantly because of, his position. In my experience, sadly, there are some leaders who do not rightly appreciate this element and use their position not only to abuse their power and authority but, even, to excuse their abuse of it. And they misuse David's statement about Saul (1 Sam. 24:6; 26:9; 1 Chron. 1:22) in defence. "I am

only accountable to God," they say. Yet, is not a servant also accountable to those he serves?

For Barnabas, too, there is a marked distinction between power and authority. "There are very clear differences. Power is manipulating. [It's] a sense of control; of being in charge, of being felt. [For the most part] it's negative. Authority is the office I hold as a priest; being given a licence from the Bishop to do the work in the parish. Authority is balanced by having the Church Council, the Wardens, a corporate authority [to whom I am accountable]. I don't make all the decisions. Power is exerted when I make all the decisions. That's not my character."

Although he tends to see power mainly in negative terms, Barnabas rightly distinguishes the two elements. Authority is what you have; power is what you do with that. Power abused rejects accountability; authority accepted protects. Nevertheless, a wise leader can use power positively. Barnabas also sees the use and abuse of power as a character issue. As Beki noted, one who lacks self-confidence (for whatever reason) is more likely to abuse power to make up for the sense of loss.

Chris also sees a distinction, but in a slightly different way. "They are not the same. Authority comes with respect. Power comes with control. You need to be careful how you delegate. If you do it to help the person to realise what he's doing, that will command respect." I asked him if he struggles in this area. "It depends. Sometimes, one must take control, at other times you don't have to. I do struggle with control because I like things done a certain way. When I delegate, I've had to work hard on this and not follow behind them. I don't want to kill the person's potential." So, the motive for exercising power is part of the equation.

Interestingly, Dawson said the two aspects are the same, but then went on to show how they differ. "They are more or less the same," he said, continuing, "Power is force; authority is the legal aspect of that power; the position I occupy." So how do you use that? I ventured. "By virtue of my presence, people tend to do some things because I'm there; I use my physical presence a lot with people. For example, I was on the building site [for the new church] and so the workers worked hard. Presence makes people, compels people, to do things to their best. That also brings another aspect of relationship: My presence must be a father-figure so that they don't feel threatened."

But, unfortunately, fathers can also abuse! Moreover, it seems a very strong temptation, and difficult to resist, when, by virtue of your position, you are "given" power by the people beyond your ability to resist. I know a Zimbabwean Bishop of a large denomination with churches all

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over the world who is chauffeured in a Mercedes Benz and whose chauffeur carries the Bishop's briefcase to the pulpit and even opens the Bible for him!

Following on from his 'father-figure' comment, I asked Dawson why this is. "Because people are relational. I've discovered something about people. I relate well to people but I have found some of my leaders don't. This affects the way they discharge their duties. One may ask someone to do it, but there's resentment because there's no relationship. But if I ask them to do it, there's no resistance because of our relationship. It compels people to do it much more effectively than without that relationship." So you would use your authority (position) as part of the motivational process? "Yes, but I don't push people." Here is a classic case of using a worldview dynamic in a potentially negative situation to produce a positive result.

Dixon articulated the difficulty with power and authority well. "There's a fine dividing line here. Power has to be used. There are different levels: coercive and non-coercive. Power is good, but it depends on which type. If you are a leader, you will have to exercise power. You can't have power without authority. It's tricky. When you're in authority as a leader, you have power. They are tied very closely. Power can be oppressive; that demotivates. Team ministry goes down. They're afraid of you; things go quiet when you walk into the room. [Former South African President Nelson] Mandela is a good example. His authority is controlled; therefore the people give him the power. Our president is dictatorial; he forces his power on the people. When there's a biblical balance, you earn the respect; if not, they actually hate you."

By contrast, George had a different perspective. "Power and authority are [about] self-satisfaction. They are being able to command others to do things at your will. It's not a priority; my job is to empower." He seems to view the use of power and authority as separate from empowering; yet to do the one you must use the others. He sees both power and authority as having to do with ego and self – and by implication, bound to be abused. He may well be right in the negative sense; but neither needs automatically to be abused.

Another aspect of leading linked to delegation, motivation, power and authority is that of supervision. Since the leader cannot – and is not expected to – do everything alone, working with others is a given. Indeed, a key ethos for the Church is that of body life: after all, the giving of spiritual gifts shows God's expectation that everyone is to be involved in His kingdom work. This is reflected in the New Testament concept of the priesthood of all believers. So, apart from the leader delegating tasks, there must also be supervision, since the leader remains ultimately accountable.

Again, there are different assumptions about this that translate into various approaches. There are two extremes. One is the "hands-off altogether" approach: just delegate, motivate … and let the person get on with it until they're finished (hopefully). The opposite is the "hands-on" approach where, having delegated the task, there is no responsibility given with it and, instead, there is a constant 'looking-over-the-shoulder-to-check-up-on-you mentality'. Neither of these, of course, is recommended. They reflect a number of dynamics from ignorance about leading, delegating and supervising through unwise assumptions about people to suspicion, a lack of self-confidence and downright fear. So, a critical question is, 'How much supervision is enough?'

For George, this depends on the person. "If I'm dealing with a new person, the supervision is more constant. As I become more confident [with the person], I reduce the supervision."

Likewise, Beki says that, having explained to an individual the task that needs to be done, and maybe giving him the tools to do the job, "then I check on him once in a while to see if he's on track or needs help. It's not looking over his shoulder – that kills initiative, creativity and motivation."

Barnabas, speaking about the parish staff, is more conversational and relaxed, but also sees another important dimension behind supervision: "[It is] relating to people; not talking down [to them], but having a conversation with them. I'm not the boss, but I still retain my authority." In other words, supervision is an on-going exercise, maintaining relationships and ensuring the work is done to expectation. But, significantly, he also sees it as an opportunity to minister into the workers' lives. It is more than just 'checking up on your work'. This is, perhaps, a dynamic of leadership in the Christian context that could be emphasised more.

Chris, on the other hand – and rather tongue in cheek – suggested that supervision is not so much how often but just how? Said he: "[It's] carrying a whip and making everyone jump! [It's] following up and making sure things are being done." For him, then, supervision is about confirmation; ensuring that delegated tasks and responsibilities are carried out properly. Similarly, Dawson sees supervision very simply as "monitoring and managing" – without regard to how often. And, as part of managing, it is a people-oriented task.

While Dixon also sees supervision in terms of monitoring, he views it more comprehensively. "Monitoring is the processes you set in planning. It gives continued leadership and makes sure objectives are accomplished. You can do this in partnership, linking with others. I look at our second [leader's planning] retreat as supervising the initial process." Here, supervision is not about frequency but on-going value and purpose.

Although supervision can be linked to the controlling factor of administration as a facet of evaluation, I have chosen to include it as a facet of leading because I feel that most supervision is usually meant to be understood positively as facilitating rather than negatively as monitoring. However, I recognise this is probably a moot point. Still, I have presented it last under this section as a natural precursor into the next.

As we have seen, the leading component is complex and involves several sub-components that impinge on the assumptions behind and praxis of administration. It has been interesting to discover that much of this element is tied to personality and temperament and that leadership is governed less by cultural dynamics than personality. Nevertheless, there are some worldview factors that do influence how one leads and why. Chief among these, as expected, is that of relationships and its concomitant of community.

1.2.1.6 Controlling –

No-one in a position of responsibility wants to do a bad job. No-one likes being criticised (especially unjustifiably.) But because the nature of responsibility and accountability requires it, there is need for evaluation and measurement.

Administration, as noted, also involves the issue of policies and procedures. Where these are not followed, crisis or disaster may occur. Thus, there is need for control mechanisms to prevent inappropriate or unwise actions as much as possible. Yet, even when these are in place, there is no guarantee that the work will be done correctly. A recent newspaper article (*Zimbabwe Independent,* Ap. 7-13, 2006: p. 1A) will illustrate:

Government accountant general Judith Madzorere has expressed reservations in the way the state is managing its finances.   In a special report by the Public Accounts Committee on Financial Management in the Public Sector, the committee quoted the accountant general as saying there was a lack of discipline in the way ministries handle their books, resulting in government failing to account for billions of dollars. Some ministries have not been submitting financial statement for three years. …   She said government was losing billions of dollars because there were no adequate internal checks and balances. [No less than 11 ministries, including the President's Office and the Ministry of Finance itself were named as having violated the laws.]

Quite apart from the obvious question of the missing funds, this raises important questions about the lack of administration: Assuming the policies and procedures were in place from previous years, and assuming the checks and balances were adequate (as evidenced from the past), why were they ignored and not followed now? Alternatively, if these were all absent, why were they removed (assuming they were in place previously)? What does this say –

administratively – about those responsible for supervising, monitoring, evaluating and measuring? And, if there was any monitoring, what standards were used and why were they ignored? Presumably, there was no monitoring or standards – why not?

Moreover, no human endeavour can ever be perfect; there are bound to be mistakes somewhere at some time. And, even if a job is done very well, there is always room for improvement. We have also mentioned several skills associated with administration in particular, as well as with leadership and management. Obviously, where skills are involved, there is room for either high or poor performance. These are evaluated, in some cases formally but in many cases, informally.

Hence, within this fifth component of administration – Controlling – we include the twin elements of evaluating and measuring. And, within these, as additional sub-categories, we must also speak to the dual facets of correction and discipline. After all, the positive intent of all evaluation is improvement. Then, before one can criticise justifiably and prior to any corrective action or discipline, it is necessary to set standards – which is yet another factor.

But, as with anything requiring measurement, what are the criteria? How do we measure and on what basis? While it is clear from the above that evaluation and measurement are universal entities, what is open to debate is whether the methodologies are culturally relative or not. This we hope to explore further. Are their worldview factors for the Shona and Ndebele that determine how evaluation is done, communicated and received? What measuring tools are considered appropriate given the respective worldviews? Why? How is discipline effected in the light of these worldview factors? And, lastly, in the Christian ministry context, what do Scriptural procedures for discipline say here? (This last question will be considered in more detail under the section on "Theology" and in Chapter Seven.)

The nature of evaluation is such that it can be viewed both positively and negatively. In daily life, we are constantly evaluating both ourselves and others in many small, informal ways. For instance, I might look in the mirror and notice a small tear in my shirt; I will evaluate the situation and determine whether I can continue to wear the shirt or not. Or I might comment to a work colleague that they do not look too well and ask how they are feeling. Or I might watch a programme on television and decide it is not worth continuing and either change channels or switch off altogether. Or I might glance at the front cover of a book and read the blurb on the back before deciding whether or not to read it. These types of evaluation tend to be non-threatening and, therefore, we are not typically anxious about them. But where evaluation does become threatening – and especially where criticism may be hurtful – the sense of anxiety increases. This is most often seen in formal evaluations by superiors of their junior

workers in annual reviews; it is commonly a nerve-wracking time. Yet, in order to receive valid criticism from others, we must first be ready to critique ourselves – difficult as this may be.

In this regard, Barnabas says he listens to what people are saying. "That tells me where I'm going wrong. I listen to my Council and Wardens – that's crucial. I have a monthly meeting with the Wardens and Treasurer, the sub-deacons and lay workers for the sick. Another area is responses to sermons." While this provides some sound platforms for evaluation and correction, however, being willing to actually receive such criticism is a different matter. But is the way one responds to criticism culturally determined or part of one's personality?

In describing his evaluation procedure, Chris commented: "For example, for an event or project, having planned and organised, you'd want to sit down now that it's over. Has it been accomplished? Why not? How? How did I perform? Could I have done it better? I also struggle with failure; it's a weakness. I always like to do something well." I asked him whether this has come from socialisation – school – or from his worldview. "Pressure from parents to do things well. Also, I'm a doer, an action person. I enjoy looking back at what I've done. I need to prepare better for next time." So, Chris not only understands evaluation, he wants to do it. But the drive for that seems to be from within, not the result of worldview.

For Dawson, evaluation is both difficult psychologically and straightforward in terms of style. "This is always difficult. I tend to forget this. I measure whether the goals are achieved or not. If they're accomplished, that's a good sign for evaluation." Are you suggesting then, I asked, that quality is not important, only results? "No, as you check, the process is also evaluated." In this case, it is fairly simple it seems: if the goal has been achieved, you have evaluated and the effort has succeeded. However, this says nothing about the quality of that achievement. You could have a building project and take 25 years to complete it instead of 25 months; the mere fact of finishing it says nothing about its quality or the extra expense because of the time delays. Hence, we see that evaluation and measurement must include elements of quality assessment, not just whether a task has been completed or not.

Dixon has a somewhat similar approach, but more substantial. "I work with an executive team. I'm constantly asking [questions]. Often I see in them reluctance. I don't know whether that's because they're afraid of me or what. I realise they have a lot of grace when they speak. But I stress that I need to hear both the good and the bad." Do you have a problem with them going to others about the weakness? "This is a sore point. We had an example of that recently. So I called the person in; I was concerned that they couldn't come to me direct. But sometimes, I have found out about things myself by listening to general criticisms of things I've put into the project (not attacking me directly)."

George did not specify any criteria. "I'm also a man under authority. I have set parameters with what I do, so I have to check with my superiors." In other words, he defers self-criticism to others, which he is willing to accept because they are in authority over him. But this, surely, does not apply to every evaluation – that would be too pedantic.

Beki is obviously more personal and concrete in his evaluation: "I set goals for myself (annually/monthly) and try to achieve them. At the end of the time period, I ask what I've achieved. What did I fail to achieve? Why? How can I avoid these failures in the future? Maybe what I wanted was too much, so I challenge myself to come up with things that are measurable within a given time period. Sometimes we compare ourselves with others, but we're all different in terms of skills and abilities."

From personal evaluation, we then moved on to considering others.

Beki reckons such evaluation is easy: "It is, if you've sat down with them and explained what you want and how; where you have succeeded and failed. If they don't know what is expected, then you can't evaluate." He went on: "There is constructive and destructive criticism. [With] constructive criticism, you're working on the basis of what you've told him. Destructive criticism comes hard on the person without giving them direction." For Beki, then, appraisal clearly has a positive, purposeful side to it, but he recognises that it must be done in a way that builds up rather than tears down.

Likewise, George has two dimensions to evaluation: "(1) [You need to] set parameters and (2) [You need to] look at whether goals are being achieved." While this is true, assessment is more than simply defining limits and accomplishing goals. It seems he did not consider the issues of standards and quality. Thresholds may be set and goals achieved, but how efficiently and effectively was this done? That said, George also sees evaluation as positive. "Evaluation is putting value to a thing; seeing that the goals are met. [You] need to know whether you're on the right direction or not." So, a fundamental purpose of evaluation seems to be more the completion of the task than the enhancement of the person doing it.

For Dixon, it is critical that expectations are communicated and understood well. "I make sure that the end result is clearly known and they understand the description of the work they're supposed to be doing. What do you want to achieve? What do you want to learn from the person? What deviations are there – you need to explain that. You need to understand the project. You need to understand the right questions. Evaluations can be used for the future and to know weaknesses and strengths so they can improve."

Here we see several interesting dynamics. The importance of knowing the end result and of understanding expectations is plain. Another critical factor in the process is stating what discrepancies are allowed – that is, what leeway in terms of standards or, even, 'mistakes' is permissible. Sometimes, we delegate a task expecting the person to do it exactly the same way we would and are then surprised (upset, perhaps?) when it is done differently. But he also sees a two-way street: both parties can learn from each other – an element that is often not appreciated in this context. Frequently, criticism is given "top down" without any expectation of input from the 'junior'. Yet, if evaluation is seen as a component of the whole project and approached as discipleship, there may well be benefits for both parties. Also, Dixon points to the future – again, this is not a common feature in many cases, although formal evaluation is often done to avoid a repetition of mistakes in the future.

Dawson uses the same criteria – the accomplishment of goals – for others as he does for himself. Patently, though, this can be simplistic and superficial. How effectively have the goals been accomplished; what qualitative factors are involved here and what do we need to avoid for the future? If we were to do it again, would we change anything? These questions may be implied but, presumably, in not articulating them, he does not consider them that important. Significantly, however, he is upbeat about the positive benefits of evaluation. "[I see it as a] very positive thing. Otherwise we may not do very much. As we read Scripture, [we see] Jesus saying, 'I've finished My work …' [Jn. 19:30]. That is good evaluation. Paul [2 Tim. 4:7] says, 'I've finished the race.' [Again] that is evaluation. And David served God's purpose [Acts 13:36], which shows there was evaluation."

Chris sees two aspects, one seemingly negative and one positive: "I go back to planning. What was the original [intention]; what went wrong?" The assumption here, apparently, is that evaluation is mainly to check on mistakes and failure. However, from a positive point of view, he would "also look at the people involved – [their] skills, abilities, calibre." In other words, are these the best people for the job? In this sense, then, a key factor in the evaluation process is checking that delegation was done correctly in the first place. Hopefully, too, there is the element here of correction for the future – otherwise, why ask these types of questions? And the process can be beneficial. "[You] may crack your heads [but] if you have the tools, if you've done the planning and organising, [then] you have a point of reference and are not operating in a vacuum." In other words, depending on how you have prepared the whole administrative process, evaluation at the end can profit all round.

Barnabas was honest: "I tend to be judgemental. [I evaluate] on the basis of the completed job. If they haven't put their best foot forward [I'll let them know]. I expect a lot from people."

But what is that; what is, at least, the basic minimum? "I expect the work to be done to the minimum acceptable standard. (I don't expect the floor to be shining, but I expect it to be clean, not dusty.) I ask what I would expect of myself; that's what I expect of others." This approach also has its strengths and weaknesses. Yes, there are standards on the one hand, and it is good to communicate high expectations, otherwise mediocrity sets in. Yet, on the other hand, these standards may not be well articulated. And, if you happen to be a perfectionist, those standards may be too high! Does he see evaluation as positive or negative? "Positive. It's good to be criticised. I prefer objective criticism. You should build the person." Whereas, criticism is often given – and received – with a negative frame of mind, Barnabas sees it as a tool for affirming, building and shaping. Indeed, this is part of discipleship.

These observations on the fifth element of administration – controlling – while not exhaustive (other factors will be explored in more depth in the focus group interviews), nevertheless identify the core aspects of evaluation, measurement, standards, correction and discipline. Interestingly, the main focus seems to be on the extent to which the goal or task has been achieved, rather than on the person involved. At the same time, encouragingly, there was some insight that evaluation should be seen positively rather than negatively. However, there was a lack of clarity on measurement and standards – and very little was said about correction. (Discipline will be examined from a Christian perspective in somewhat more detail in the next section and again in Chapter Seven.)

1.2.1.7 *Theology* –

Since Chapter Seven will focus specifically on the development of a theology of administration, I will only make some preliminary comments here in the light of the introductory questions at this stage in the process. Somewhat more detail will be given in the focus group section later.

In including this topic in the individual interviews, I wanted to establish the degree to which there was any insight about administration from a Scriptural point of view and, more particularly, to ascertain whether any of my co-researchers had given any thought to this issue theologically. It was apparent, as I suspected, that virtually all of the pastors had difficulty articulating a theology of administration. They all attempted it, in varying degrees, but it was obvious that most have given this little, if any, prior thought at all. In one sense, this is not surprising since the Church, typically, does not challenge us to consider the topic. Nor, it seems, do Bible schools. Yet, as is becoming all too plain, administration, like the tentacles of a spider web, is inextricably linked to every facet of an enterprise's operations. This suggests

that, where the Church has not clearly articulated a theology of administration, she has inadvertently hamstrung herself. My co-researchers' comments are insightful in this respect. I began this segment of the enquiry by asking if they saw God being interested in administration in any way.

Barnabas strongly affirmed this: "Yes. In the Old Testament, we see how the angel gave precise measurements for the temple [1 Kings 6:1-38]. The detail [is phenomenal]. The same with Noah's Ark [Gen 6:14-21]. [Then there were] the seven years of drought with Joseph [who served Egypt] as the chief administrator." [Gen. 47:13-26] As an afterthought, he added: "And God doesn't like laziness."

We see two insights here. First, there is recognition of God's attention to detail which, as we have already noted, is a requirement of effective administration. Second, there is the interesting insight of laziness. I do not think Barnabas was suggesting here that all those who are not administrators are lazy, or that God was setting this as a unique standard for administrators. Rather, he was merely affirming that God's expectation is for diligence, responsibility and sound stewardship – all hallmarks of solid leadership, management and administration.

Likewise, Chris agreed that administration is evident in Scripture. "I think it's there. In the Old Testament, [we have] Moses and Jethro [e.g. Ex. 18:13-26]. In the New Testament, some brethren felt they were left out in the [food] distribution, but the Church appointed people to be responsible (Acts 6:1-6)."

Dawson, while also agreeing, took a different tack: "When God created the universe, the way in which the process of creation [is outlined in Genesis 1], it sounds like God showed us that administration is very important. [In fact], the system and process He set up to operate is described as very good. When He put man in the Garden and instructed him to do things, it sounds as if He is very keen [for proper order and systems]." In other words, he says, God's acts of Creation demonstrate purpose, method and orderliness – all the hallmarks of an administrative mind-set.

Similarly, Dixon concurred: "Yes, it's stewardship. God is interested in this. Paul tells Timothy [1 Tim. 5:17] that those who are working hard are worth double honour. The Scriptures talk about laziness (e.g. Proverbs) and the sluggard. [We are called to] learn from the ants [Prov. 6:6]. David led Israel with skill and integrity (Ps. 78:72). He was a skilful leader in organising his soldiers. [And we] see Jethro with Moses."

George, equally, sees such a mind-set in Scripture: "[We see this] in Genesis: in Creation, God created man to administer what He had already created. Why did He choose Abraham? [One reason was] because He had seen the administration skills in him – [and that] he would pass on the message to all his children." I am not sure that we naturally tend to see Abraham as an administrator, but the fact that he became very wealthy reflects not only Yahweh's blessing upon him but also the requisite skills to develop and maintain what, in those days, would have been a very large agro-industry operation (see for example, Gen. 13:2; 24:35; 26:12-14).

And Beki, too, affirmed the general idea: "Yes, God is interested in administration, especially the idea of planning. When God was speaking to Noah about the ark, this needed planning in terms of measurements and resources. [There was also] the building of the tabernacle: Moses had to go to the people for these items [Ex. 26:1-37]. God is an administrator. Even Creation shows how good God is in planning: He does things in order, not haphazardly – the first day, the second day, and so on. And Paul talks about doing things in an orderly way [1 Cor. 14:40; Col. 2:5]."

Patently, then, there is the realisation here of God having an administrative mind-set, even though this may not be commonly articulated as such. Although this will be explored in more detail in Chapter Seven, this is a crucial acknowledgement at this point for, if God were not interested in administration, there would be no need, nor would it be possible, to develop a theology of administration – and, consequently, the Church would have few direct guidelines on how to function; chaos and confusion would reign supreme. (Perhaps it could be argued that part of the – at least functional – weakness of the Church is somewhat due to the lack of a well articulated theology of administration and that, if this were adequately expressed, there would be much improved functionality with a resultantly better testimony!)

But, the fact that God's administrative mind-set has been acknowledged must lead us further. As we then next delved briefly into the main components, my co-researchers became more animated about the idea. We spoke first about the concept of time as the basis for all God's acts within which man must also operate. I asked them if God is interested in time.

"Yes, because it's part of His purpose," said Barnabas. "To overcome chaos, time must be set aside for each phase. Whatever we do in the parish reflects a God of order. Gen 1 – creation – it didn't just happen. We're called to that by God; to use our time efficiently because God hates wastage."

Chris also agreed that God is interested in time, saying, "[Scripture] talks about 40 years, seven days …. Yes [God is interested in time]. Because, look at Creation, for example.

Things are done in a certain period, then there's a time for resting; things didn't just happen. [There is] sunset and sunrise. Jesus says, 'Let's get the work done while it's still day time.' [see Jn. 9:4] I see us coming from somewhere and going somewhere. [Gen. 1:1 says,] 'In the beginning …'." However, while readily acknowledging the concept of time in Scripture (which, incidentally, is a theological study in its own right), that does not necessarily indicate the extent of God's supposed interest in time.

But Dixon made a better job of answering the question. He began by quoting Eccl. 3:1 saying, "There's time to do specific things, and when we miss out on this (*chronos*) we can't re-collect it once we lose it. God wants us to make use of our time. So our worldview of time has to change. I'm always fighting my rural pastors. You should have a plan for each day. You don't need an office. As a preacher, I make notes and I can look and see what doctrinal areas I've covered and what not. We tend to ride on experience because we've been a bad steward of our time. Jesus only had three years to do his ministry. He told us that 'the time is coming when …' [see, e.g. Jn. 16:25, 32] Here we are alerted to the idea of stewardship and to the possibility that our worldview of time and what we do with it may have to change. Why? Because there is a theological reason for time. (This will be explored further in Chapter Seven.)

The theological question that arises out of this, however, is whether God sees a link between, and has a reason for, earthly time (that is, history) and eternity. In other words, if God's Kingdom is working toward eternity, why bother to have history (time)? Is there a connection, and if so, what is it?

Dawson suggests there is a link. "I think so. In my opinion, I am not sure if at the beginning of Creation, God was concerned about time. When Adam and Eve were created, He gave them the leeway to eat of the tree of life. This should have given them eternity. But God tells them they will die if they eat the fruit. If Adam hadn't eaten that, he wouldn't have died. So, God only bound himself to time or He only operated in time after the Fall of Man. That's when the "probation of man' (from birth to death) comes in; outside of this, there doesn't seem to be any point to time. Time only appears from when man sinned and ends when God ends this order. Therefore, time only relates to our lifespan on earth and nothing else. When Adam fell, God said, 'We should drive man out unless he lives forever.' This is the cutting point from eternity. If Adam had eaten of the fruit of life, he would have been in eternity. But God has to give us a period to be reconciled to him. Sin necessitated time so that we can reconcile to God; then we're ushered into eternity. God has put Himself in to our time in order for Him to accomplish

certain purposes through us because we're operating in time, although he himself operates in a different way."

This raises some interesting thoughts. While it would appear that the offer to Adam of eternity implied a non-value of time, such that time only became valuable after the Fall, the question arises as to why God introduced time as the outcome of His first act of Creation ("Let there be light … and He separated the light from the darkness. God called the light 'day' and the darkness He called 'night'. And there was evening and there was morning – the first day." – Gen. 1:3-5)? Was there no purpose of time before the Fall? Second, it is incorrect, as the above reference indicates, that time only appeared when man sinned (Gen. 3). Third, he says sin necessitated time so that we can be reconciled to God. But that suggests that there was, indeed, no purpose of time before the Fall and, therefore, no reason for God to initiate it as early as He did. While it is true that reconciliation takes time – and perhaps the greater the rebellion, the more time is needed – that in itself does not satisfy.

Dixon, by contrast reverses the rationale, "We can only understand time in eternity if we understand time now. The Scriptures talk about 1000 years being just a day from the Lord's perspective [2 Pet. 3:8]. Unless we understand time as now, we may fail to see the urgency of the task of the church to reach out, to be salt and light to people. Eternity, in the natural mind, just baffles us. God already knows about tomorrow; it's too profound. But it's also a call to be serious: the people of Issachar understood the times they lived in [1 Chron. 12:32]. If we understand time now, we can preach seriously. We won't waste time telling stories. People need to honour God; when we have this perspective, everything changes."

Yes, it is true that there is an urgency to preach and teach. But that does not on its own, in my view, provide a strong enough _theological_ reason for the purpose of time. Again, this is demonstrated by the existence of time before the Fall.

George has a similar view to Dixon: "History shows where we came from. We now check on the right and wrong of the past for the better. God made time so that we become better." So I asked him why we can't become better in eternity. "Because we'll be making up for all the mistakes of the past." But there's no past in eternity. "Time helps us to know that we're moving toward eternity. It's a governor, a controller. So that we know we're not stagnant. Jesus said the fig tree blooming shows that the rains are about to come [Matt. 24:32]."

So, for George, time serves the dual purpose of sinners "becoming better" and as an aid to help us understand that eternity is coming. But, again, I'm not convinced that either of these are sound _theological_ reasons for time.

Beki suggests the theological purpose of history "Has to do with showing how the earthly kingdom functions and what the heavenly kingdom is like; the difference between the two. The earthly kingdom has a start and an end, but the heavenly kingdom has no beginning and no end; it is perfect." This implies that time exists to better define or interpret eternity. Since eternity is a difficult concept for finite man to grasp and understand, that seems fairly reasonable – but I'm still not convinced that it's the only, or main, reason for time.

Barnabas, again, was honest: "I hadn't thought about it." Then, after a pause, he offered, "[With] Adam and Eve, the implication [is that] before the deed was done [there] is eternity. God didn't want decay, but a sense of foreverness. But this can't be in our present state; we have to die because of our sinful nature. There has to be a stop to the rottenness." In other words, Barnabas sees God's purpose for time as being to take care of, to deal with, sin. I would concur and add that time allows man – within a finite existence – to appreciate, on the one hand, the enormity, the terribleness and the tragedy of sin while, at the same time, having the opportunity of seeing something of God's holiness, purity and glory through Creation and learning of the goodness of good on the other.

We then moved to the second component, planning. I asked my co-researchers if they felt God is a planner and interested in planning.

"Yes," said Chris, pointing to the fourth Commandment: "For six days you shall work, and on the seventh, you must rest." [Ex. 20:8]. Without elaborating, the implication is that God had arranged the process of Creation and planned a break at the end of it all.

Dixon said God expects us to plan. He referred to Prov. 16:3 saying, "When we commit our plans into the Lord's hand, He will direct our footsteps. God wants us to plan. He wants us to prepare messages. Some even misinterpret Scripture ([that] the Holy Spirit will remind you is totally out of context) – it has nothing to do with writing exams, planning or preparation. It's not about inspiration. John Maxwell says, 'Failure to plan is planning to fail.' When we commit our plans to the Lord, He will cause us to succeed. As we hear from Him, we adjust our intentions. He is a planner Himself – look at Creation."

The observation here is that, since God evidently expects us to plan – as demonstrated in wanting us to do things for Him – He must have a planning mind-set. Moreover, that He promises to make what we commit to Him succeed also implies some degree of planning on our part. Creation, says Dixon, shows that God is a planner.

Similarly, George used the principle in Proverbs and the example of Creation as pointers: "Planning is for us, to think about the future. But the one who makes those plans succeed is

God. In the Creation process, He didn't do everything in one go – which shows He had a plan. There was a sequence. The stages all fit together."

In the same vein, we discussed God as an organiser. I asked whether Scripture reveals anything about this.

Beki responded, "The Old Testament genealogies show that God knows His people. [In] Numbers we see various censuses, with the people being organised into clans and tribes. In the New Testament, we see Jesus organising His disciples (for example, the 72 sent out in twos [Lk. 10:1]; the calling of the 12 [Mk. 1:14-20]); the feeding of the people (He told them to sit in groups and told disciples not the throw away the leftovers [Matt. 14:13-21 and 15:29-39].)"

Barnabas had a similar idea: "Yes [God is interested in organising]. For example, the disciples feeding the 5000 – [they were] put into groups. Afterwards, they collected the food – don't litter the neighbourhood! You can't do this without planning and organising. The 72 being sent out: there was a format, [they were] given instructions and they came back. If they'd broken the instructions, they'd have been in trouble. How do you lead people for 40 years in the desert? See the 12 tribes. Look at the Judges period. Aaron was made Moses' speaker. All that shows organisation. [You have the] elders of the nation of Israel; the disciples to look after the widows while the apostles did the preaching. [There's the] raising of funds for preaching (Paul [2 Cor. 8:1-15; 9:1-15]). [And there's] being community. In the corporate world you have individualism but in Scripture we see community; everyone benefits."

Chris, too, sees the organising component: "Helping the brethren with distribution [Acts 6:1-5] points to structure and method."

Stating the fundamental principle, Dawson affirms, "Order only comes from organising. God is a God or order, so there must be organising. Paul speaks of spiritual gifts and orderliness [Rom. 12: 4-8; 1 Cor. 12:27-31; 14:26-35,40]." As noted previously, one aspect of sound administration is structure, method or order. This cannot properly be achieved without a disciplined, orderly mind-set.

Dixon looks to natural revelation to illustrate his point: "The scientists didn't discover that the world is round. The Scriptures already told us it was: Is. 40:12 says, 'Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand?' while v. 22 states, 'He sits enthroned upon the circle of the earth …' We can see this with satellites today. The Matopos [a large rocky area of granite

hills and *kopjies* outside Bulawayo] will never topple over. It's all planned and organised. [In fact,] you can't do anything without planning and organising."

George, by contrast, struggled with this question. "Not off hand. David was a good organiser of his army. Solomon. Paul [without offering any illustrations for either]." Evidently, this is not an area that he had contemplated.

We next moved to the issue of leading. This ought to be obvious, given God's dealings with His people through the aeons. But considering whether God *is* leading – as opposed to the people following merely because He is God – may be a little more difficult to ascertain. We should be mindful, of course, that God's dealings with His people and, indeed, the characters portrayed in Scripture, have provided us with solid examples of both good and bad leadership. Many scholars and popular authors have written about leadership principles because of this wealth of material. However, all that subsumes that God already has the mind-set to lead. That may be a logical step, but the question must still be asked all the same. Bear in mind, too, that as we work toward a theology of administration, we must address the theological question of the purpose of leading to begin with.

I asked Dawson if there is a Godly way to lead. "Yes," he confirmed confidently. First, Jesus taught servant leadership [Matt. 20:25-28]. [He] always [had] a servant approach. Second, we don't want to dominate. Godly leadership is by example. We have to emulate and be emulated. We don't tell people to do what we're not willing to do ourselves. Third, love. When you love people, you can sacrifice. Sacrifice is not in the world. When you serve, you sacrifice; you can do outrageous things. I've seen how wonderful it is when you do things because you love people."

While these may be sound leadership principles, they do not necessarily address the finer question of whether God is actually leading because that is who He is. However, we can say that Jesus would not have enjoined His disciples to do something He was not willing to do or did not see as important Himself. Hence, in pointing to the principle of servant leadership, we can confidently infer that is what God thinks about leading. Indeed, the fact that Jesus did that as well as taught it as an expectation shows us this is the case. Likewise, that God was prepared to sacrifice His only Son – and that Jesus was prepared to be sacrificed – also show clearly the manifestation of this trait and mind-set. No-one can willingly go through the agony of the Cross if there is no emotional acceptance of the notion.

Dixon also pointed to Jesus' example of servant leadership: "Jesus is the greatest Leader. He has taught us what it is to lead. It is 'the towel before the title.' This is the ultimate. This is the

perfect way of spiritual leadership. Jesus is the epitome of leadership. There is a paradox in servant leadership. He has power and authority, but at the same time He was a servant."

Similarly, George used the same example, albeit with a slightly different explanation: "Yes [there is a godly way to lead]. Not from the front, but from the back, not from the top, but the bottom. [That's] servant leadership. This is when you are their leader; you don't pull them by the nose. That's why I am concerned about influence, not power. Secular leaders use power, while Christian leaders should use influence."

Again, this is looking more at the how rather than the why. Nevertheless, we can consider the issue of power versus influence at this juncture. God, being all-powerful, could simply use His might to accomplish all He wants. But that would not square with His grace and mercy; nor would it illicit a genuine love from His "followers". No, God needs to demonstrate His power so that we learn to respect Him, but He must also encourage intrinsic motivation for His people to follow obediently. While no-one on the team explicitly upheld this, I think it would be safe to aver that they would agree.

Beki implied this the most when he said, "Scripture gives us the criteria about leading. It's all in the Bible. It has to do with God and our relationship with Him; obeying what God says in His Word. Godly leadership revolves around Him and glorifying Him, not ourselves." In other words, ultimately, it is the glory of God at stake. If He does not lead properly and if His people do not learn to lead properly, He will not get the glory He deserves. In the end, respect, awe and glory are earned; if you do things the wrong way, they will not be reflected.

Equally, Barnabas commented "Yes. [This is] leading in a different mind set – you're exposing a different ethos, attitudes. [You're] looking at discipline, principled people, having a moral standard." So what about servant leadership? I asked. "Yes, but you're still clear as to where you're going. The servant articulates a goal while being humble. For example, Mahatma Ghandi knew where India should go. Martin Luther King, Jr. [understood] freedom of the neighbour, but he was leading the American people. Servanthood is not to be submissive in a blind way. But it is to exercise authority from your baptism. We renounce the devil, we lead the world."

Likewise, Chris said much the same, albeit from a varied angle. He highlighted the distinction between secular and Godly leadership. "When I compare secular leadership and the Christian way, there is a difference. For example, I see the secular approach emphasising results versus the Christian that also looks at results but emphasises the people too. The world wants the best, regardless of the "cost" to people. The Christian way says people are important."

All these insights point up at least one strategic factor: God leads – and expects His people to lead – differently from that of the secular world. This should not surprise us since God is who He is and is not of this world anyway. His whole mission is to bring glory to His righteous Self. Thus, we conclude that God does indeed have a mind-set to lead, not only because He shows us a model through His Son but also because, if He did not, there would not be the desired followership or the results that should come from that.

As we come to the final sub-topic in this stage of the interview process, we briefly examine what theological basis there may be for evaluation. I asked my co-researchers if there is a typical way that God evaluates.

Dixon understood the question from the human perspective and so responded: "One must be faithful to Scripture and the Word of God. God cannot compromise in the way He evaluates. Either we're living according to His way, or we're not. This is obedience or disobedience (Josh. 1:8). Deut. 6:6 and 11:19 exhort us to "Teach these laws …" True leadership is done God's way. There are many doing things today in a worldly way. There seems to be growth, but in the end it's destruction. If you're not doing it God's way, it will catch up with you. Many are only interested in materialism (Kenneth Hagin and others); this is arrogance. God will judge our leadership by His Word."

George commented: "We are under evaluation every day." How? "He uses other people. We are under God's authority; so there are people above us who will be checking up on us. He would raise prophets to remind Israel they are going astray. If they refused, He would send pagans to mete out His judgement over them." Why does He do it this way? "Because He's God; you can't question Him. He created everything. Being a Christian is the grace of God, so He can use anyone to mete out His judgement.

By contrast, Beki considered a key theological factor: "The Judgement is the final evaluation. God has told us what He expects of us and the kind of life he wants. In the end, He will evaluate each person according to what he has done [Jer. 17:10; Matt. 16:27; 1 Pet. 4:5; Rev. 20:13]." Why does He do it this way? "He's the God of the second chance, a God of grace and a God who says: 'Son, you have fallen, but you can do it.' In the Old Testament, we see a God with grace, but this is more so in the New Testament. Within His judgement there is also grace."

Referring to other Scriptures, Barnabas said, "See the churches in Revelation 2 and 3. Look at Jesus and the fig tree [Matt, 24:32] – you see judgement. Then there are God's expectations: for instance, the parables of the talents or the ten virgins. God deals more harshly with us as pastors because we've entered a domain that others have not entered. He

will deal more harshly with us than the ordinary people (Jms. 3:1)." Here he highlights the issue of responsibility, especially those in leadership or positions of influence.

Chris took the same line: "The Scriptures give us a blueprint of what He expects of us. We can't avoid this or checking whether we've done what He wanted. We're also waiting for the Day of Judgement." Again, the essence of responsibility is there, but we are also reminded that God has already set the standard; therefore, there must be an evaluation: have we lived accordingly?

Thinking about this question, Dawson reflected that, "Revelation talks about books and a Book [20:12]; it sounds as if life is only recorded in one book, that is, eternal life or salvation. The other activities that make up our lives are recorded elsewhere. God searches the intents of our hearts to see how we are doing [1 Chron. 28:9]; this helps me to evaluate myself." The idea here, of course, is that God would not record our deeds and promise judgement if there was going to be no evaluation in the end. Hence, God must have a sense of measurement. Indeed, He cannot speak of obedience and disobedience without such a concept in mind.

My final question in this section was an attempt to encapsulate a broad theology of administration. For some, this was difficult to articulate, especially considering that they had not been given any prior warning to prepare for this question. But that would have defeated the object of this particular exercise at this point anyway. It was important that I record their *ad hoc* responses, since that would be a true indication of their reflection on the subject.

Dawson, like a couple of others, admitted: "I'm not sure. I am sure, from a Biblical perspective, that obviously my administration is Biblically sound. But I would also think my administration exists to articulate the vision and purpose of God to my subordinates and congregation to the degree that our purpose and calling as a local assembly and ministry at large will be fulfilled and accomplished in our generation." This is a broad, sweeping statement with Biblical allusions, but can it legitimately be considered a theology of administration?

Chris, thinking on his feet, suggested: "[It is] stewardship, assisting in accomplishing what God has planned for the Church to do." But what is this in broad, simple terms? "To transform mankind into His image (a process requiring administration with resources – gifts, talents, people, and so on.)

Barnabas was up front and honest: "[I've] never thought about it." [He had difficulty articulating the idea.] "I view my vocation, my ministry, whatever I'm doing [as] reflect[ing] the will of God and what He's called me to do. If I'm speaking to someone on the phone, I must

be distinct from others. The way I speak should be different. They are made in the image of God. It's all intertwined. When someone I know approaches me for help at the door, the way they do it is different from someone else (compared to a [secular] company). [The] relationship is different. At school, I'm a teacher, but they have different expectations of me: I'm supposed to be accommodating, kind and so on. I'm probably too tolerant (but that's the nature of being a pastor) and I forgive easily." Clearly, the emphasis here is on being unworldly, distinct. That is true, but does it really express a philosophy of order, details, methods and suchlike?

Similarly, Beki pointed to motive: "I'm doing this for God in God's time, for God's purpose. If it is done outside of God, not glorifying Him, it's just a mere human achievement. So, I can have all the administrative skills but if I don't have a relationship with God, if I'm not doing it for His glory, it's useless. Sometimes, in our planning, it's not an end; it's a means to an end – to glorify God, to do His purposes, to fulfil His will. Good administration does not entail a successful ministry. You can be good in this area, but still not feel God's heartbeat. So God should be at the centre of everything." Again, true; but that is not the whole sum; it speaks to a solid foundation, but what of the rest of the 'building'?

For George, "God is the great Administrator and so, as His child, I follow suit and do the best I can. I'm far away from doing the best, but I'm doing the best I can and I'm still open to learning new techniques about administration." Why is He the great Administrator? "He doesn't have to learn from anyone, but we have to learn from Him and others He has revealed it to." Here, likewise, there is an underlying appreciation of the foundation, but not much of the superstructure.

Dixon seemed to come a little more closely to the idea: "[It is] a shared responsibility, encompassing teamwork [and] consultation. [It] involves invitation from others outside our zone to bring input. It's training. It's no longer a one-man thing. [It's] teamwork. This comes from Jesus: He realised that the only way the world would change is through a team. His whole ministry revolved around this. He taught them, then sent them out. They came back and said, 'Hey it works!' When they were afraid – when He was going to His Father – He encouraged them and empowered them. So, when He was no longer there, the disciples could do much more than what He did."

1.2.2   Section Summary:

In broad terms, three points emerge from the above dialogues. First, it is clear that there is indeed a connection between administrative praxis and one's worldview. Second, these individual interviews further highlighted the parallel fact that administrative praxis is also

shaped by one's personality and temperament. And, third, in the Christian ministry context, as it should be, there is the dimension of one's theology and philosophy of ministry, together with the awareness and use of spiritual gifts.

Since there is further elucidation of these issues in the focus group conversations as reflected below, and since Chapter Six will explore the factors that shape worldview while Chapter Seven will seek to develop a theology of administration, I will limit myself here to brief comments on the individual understanding of and approach to administration.

Regarding the framework used, my co-researchers were satisfied with the five-fold structure of Time, Planning, Organising, Leading and Controlling. They were also comfortable with the questions in general and did not feel a sense of imposition or of irrelevance. Indeed, as I suspected originally, the discussion introduced several dynamics about administration which they had either not thought very much about previously or were intrigued with as we explored them.

Two interesting factors emerged from the discussion on Time. On the one hand, there is a perceived need to be good stewards of this resource and yet an apparent apathetic acceptance of the problems caused by a laxity of this stewardship. On the other hand, there is an identifiable tension between the desire for good stewardship as reflected in the Western approach to its use and the more casual African approach. So, we look for a bridge of explanation.

For the Planning component, while my co-researchers acknowledged its importance, together with that of identifying the necessary and available resources, there was no immediate answer to the seemingly endemic problem of poor planning as evidenced in many events being spoiled by this lack. So, again, we search for a bridge of explanation.

The discussions on Organising highlighted the interconnectedness between this, leading and managing, with the recognition that several skills are involved and overlap. It seems that one aspect of this component – the ability to focus on details – appears to be a personality/temperament issue rather than a worldview topic. Interestingly, there is a stress on organising people rather than things. But the ability to do this well is seen as a function of leading – which not everyone can do as effectively as others.

Significantly, the Leading component pointed strongly to the elements of personality and temperament being more influential than worldview factors. I suspect this may well be because of the complexity of it with its range of sub-issues and the related skills involved.

The discussions on Controlling brought an interesting dynamic to the fore: There appears to be an emphasis on the achievement of goals and tasks, rather than on the people accomplishing them. While evaluation tends to be seen positively rather than negatively, there was little insight on measurement. The issue of discipline – linked as it is in the Christian ministry context to theology – will be considered in more detail later.

Lastly, we looked at personal theologies of administration. Although, understandably, there was a wide range of ideas on this, as I suspected, the articulation of this proved less than satisfactory, pointing to a need for a more deliberate consideration of this by the Church. Nevertheless, there was common acknowledgement that God has demonstrated an identifiable interest in administration. It remains now to flesh out the specifics in Chapter Seven (but see further comments from the focus group sessions below.)

1.2.3   *Reflections on the Dialogue* –

Having travelled down the road called "Exploring How Administration and Culture Mix", it is time now to look back and reflect. Where have we come from? What are some of the obstacles we encountered along the way? What were some of the low points in our journey? What were some of the highlights so far? What have we noticed and learned?

These individual discussions sought to explore definitions, motives, philosophical understanding and personal application in the praxis of administration. Specific questions were asked utilising the five-fold grid. In the process, we also attempted an initial identification of some worldview factors that might impinge on the praxis of administration.

Hence, my questions were intended to serve three purposes: (1) To alert my co-researchers to some of the issues – both social and personal – behind the identification and practice of administration; (2) To further prompt reflection on cultural dynamics and (3) To provide the basis for further in-depth discussion. As mentioned previously, the respondents were satisfied with the basic five-fold framework and, indeed, as with the data questionnaire, found it helpful in putting some shape to the nature of administration, identifying some of the key issues involved and reflecting on the related problems. In our conversations, they often affirmed that questions touched on important issues, some of which they had not previously considered.

The conversations were individualised because I first needed to follow up on factors brought out in the task survey in terms of their own approach to and understanding of administration. I did not feel a group approach at this point would be helpful as I suspected that, where issues had not been thought through, there may be undue influence from others without adequate personal reflection. I wanted to establish individual definitions and identify specific problem areas that, I hoped, would highlight pertinent worldview factors which would then be explored

further. I believe the questions at this stage did prompt reflection on key issues behind administration and allowed the participants to share their own insights and frustrations. There was some consideration of cultural dynamics, but not as much as I anticipated. The responses in this part of the dialogue were insightful and set the tone for the group discussions later. Respondents were motivated to think of administration at deeper levels, why they do what they do the way they do it and what cultural dynamics drive that. There was also some consideration of cross-cultural dynamics and a few difficulties in that area.

On the negative side, there were two main weaknesses of this approach. One centred on the difficulty of minimising undue influence on responses through both the nature and form of the questions. I was constantly aware of the probability of "putting ideas in their heads". I attempted to reduce this by keeping my questions open and general, asking for their definitions, opinions and insights. I sought wherever possible to get their explanations, rather than simply affirming my assumptions. Nevertheless, the questions were based on my prior experiences and resultant consideration of issues and I recognise that these may well be different from my co-researchers.

The other main weakness of the individual discussions is the flip side of this: From previous informal discussion, I already knew that the lack of reflection on what constitutes administration is reasonably widespread. I did not expect my co-researchers to be any different. Indeed, they were not. But this presented me with a constant problem: How could I get them to substantively discuss pertinent issues about administration if they had not thought about them beforehand? Thus, my questioning sought to prompt them to such consideration. I feel it was significant that, in asking them to reflect on the validity of my questions – particularly from a cultural point of view – they all affirmed that they had not thought about such issues and were very satisfied that I had identified factors for enquiry.

Positively, the individual conversations brought a raft of issues to the forefront and it was clear from the discussions that these provided several worthwhile talking points. In the process, it also prompted the participants to reflect on their attitudes and approaches to administration: by focusing on issues, we were able to identify problem areas, weaknesses and gaps, all of which provided reflection for improvement in their own ministry contexts. This, of course, enhanced motivation, interest and involvement in the project. I was pleasantly surprised at the level of commitment once the final team had been selected.

By the time I had settled on my final group of co-researchers, I had interviewed three other people and these 'pilots' allowed me to adjust the questions and to add or subtract from my

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initial list. I found, too, that even as we progressed further in the journey, the nature and number of the questions changed.

The dimension of Time reflected some interesting dynamics and worldview factors. Despite the pervasive indifference to time, there are some for whom time is nevertheless very important; it is appreciated, valued and the implications of poor stewardship are understood. This, of course, begs the question: Why, then, are the benefits and values of a better stewardship of time not communicated to and expected of people more deliberately? This is particularly so in the Christian arena given the Scriptural injunction to "do all in the name of the Lord." (Col. 3:17) Hence, rather than answering the fundamental question, the responses have highlighted the problem. The possible reasons for this will be explored further in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. It is also interesting that the Western influence on time management is very clear and there is a genuine struggle with that and the African mind-set, the rural and urban, old and new.

On the Planning front, there was the recognition that, while resources may be accessible, they need to be strategically prepared and positioned to gain maximum advantage. Inherent in these observations, however, is the tacit admission that this is not generally done adequately. These particular conversations highlighted the interesting disparity between what is understood as good planning (and, perhaps, even what is wanted) and reality, where planning is done poorly or not at all. There was no concrete suggestion to overcome the apparent widespread disinclination to plan in general. At the same time, it was noted that these particular actors are principal leaders who have had to learn to plan if their enterprises are to succeed. Hence, there was recognition of both general and strategic planning.

My co-researchers, then, confirmed the importance of planning in the administrative process and recognised the need to identify key resources. While they obviously do this with greater or lesser relish, they nevertheless understand the role of planning. Irrespective of the culture and one's personal preferences, this suggests a wide endorsement of planning as an integral part of administration. But, again, this disparity highlights another fundamental question: Why, then, are so many events spoiled by poor planning?

With Organising, the observations highlighted both the overlap of the three functions of managing, leading and organising, as well as the slight nuances of each. (This was confirmed further in the group discussions.) It became clear that leading, managing and organising are not fixed entities, with their own separate skills and requirements, without any connection to the others. This blurs their identification and praxis. And, while Organising involves an

emphasis on details for some, plainly this is not an ability that everyone equally sees as necessary. The focus on people, once more, was also evident.

When it came to Leading, the interconnected dynamics of leadership style, communications, creativity and innovation, decision making, change, delegation and motivation, power and authority and supervision were briefly touched on to assess individual approaches and underlying assumptions. These were explored later in the group context, where further insights were derived.

Although the complexity of the Leading component and its several sub-components demonstrated the interaction of multiple worldview dynamics, we also discovered that many aspects here are tied to personality and temperament. It seems that leadership is governed less directly, perhaps, by cultural dynamics than personality. It was also evident that the Biblical concept of servant leadership – as expected with those involved in Christian ministry – plays a part in the praxis here. While this allows for the worldview factor of dignity, the emphasis on people in general was very evident in these discourses.

Regarding Control, the core aspects of evaluation, measurement, standards, correction and discipline were touched upon. Interestingly, the main focus was on the extent to which the goal or task has been achieved, rather than on the people involved. It was recognised that evaluation should be seen positively rather than negatively. However, there was a lack of clarity on measurement and standards, while very little was said about correction. Rather than conclude that these issues are not important, it may be fair to say that the responses were more a reflection on my questioning rather than a lack of appreciation of or interest in these factors. Indeed, this issue was explored more extensively in the group conversations as I felt the joint interaction on this particular area of administration would be more insightful. In summary, there clearly was a mixture of both the individual's approach (that is, personality and temperament rather than worldview *per se*) and the usual emphasis on people.

Our journey in this chapter has taken the seven of us through some background issues on the five-fold grid of administration and its praxis to some brief comments (developed further in Chapter Seven) on a theology of administration. Included in this was the conversation on training. All of this was on an individual basis, to explore personal views, insights, assumptions, expectations and concerns. In the process, we also identified some interesting cultural and worldview dynamics that shape the praxis of administration in the Shona and Ndebele contexts. These will be explored further in Chapter Six.

But for now, we continue our journey by bringing the travellers together as a group. This not only broadens the individual exposure but also encourages consideration of alternatives. This

was especially enlightening given the variation in cultural backgrounds between the Shona and Ndebele and with the different church backgrounds. In general, this aspect provided great stimulation to the discussion and positive motivation for participation in the enterprise.

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

The following are the respective sets of questions put to the pastors and trainers in their
respective interviews:

1. Pastoral

INTERVIEW (Individual)

1.   What is "administration" for you?
2.   What administration elements can you identify in the work you do?
3.   What problems areas do you associate with administration? Why?
4.   Are there any elements of administration that you enjoy? Why?
5.   What is efficiency for you?
6.   How would you define effectiveness?
7.   How do you view time? Is it important, unimportant?
8.   Do you think there's any purpose to time?
9.   Do you see a connection between time and other dimensions of life, e.g. relationships?
10. What do you understand by planning? (Church/ordinary)
11. Do you think planning is important? How so?
12. Would you say you enjoy planning?
13. How do you approach the task of planning (fairly large project)?
14. What resources do you consider when planning? Is there any priority to them?
15. What proportion of your time do you spend in planning?
16. What skills would you associate with planning?
17. What do you understand by the term "organising"?
18. What sorts of things do you typically organise?
19. Would you say you enjoy it? Why?
20. "Leading" – What do you think about?
21. Describe the relationship between yourself and the people you lead
22. What skills do you think a good leader needs?
23. What do you understand by delegation?
24. Do you see any value in it?
25. How do you feel about doing it?
26. What, for you, is a good way to motivate?
27. Do you see any benefit in it?
28. How do you view and use power and authority? Are they the same?
29. "Supervision" – What comes to mind?
30. What skills does the effective supervisor need?
31. How do you typically evaluate yourself (in your work)?
32. What criteria do you usually use in evaluating others?   What primary expectations do you have of them?
33. What measuring tools do you normally use to evaluate?
34. How do you usually view evaluation – positive/negative?
35. Do you think there's any indication in Scripture that God is concerned about administration?
36. Is God interested in time? Why?
37. Have you ever thought about God having a reason for the difference between earthly time (history) and eternity?
38. Does God have anything to say to us about planning?
39. Do you think Scripture reveals anything about organising?
40. Is there a "Christian" or a Godly way to lead?

41. In your view, is there a way that God typically evaluates?
42. If so, why does He do it this way?
43. Would you be able to describe your theology of administration?

2. *Trainer*

Questions for Business/Management Trainers

1. What is "administration" for you? Is this different from "management"? How?
2. How do you think your Western training has impacted your understanding of administration?
3. What aspects of "colonial administration" can you identify as different from "African"?
4. What problems areas do you associate with administration? Why? Are these based on the Western concepts you have or are there problems even from an African viewpoint? How so?
5. What is efficiency for you?
6. How would you define effectiveness?
7. Are there any factors of *Ubuntu/unhu* that may play a part in how one might approach administration? If so, what are they and how do you see them interacting?
8. Do you think the negative effects of colonialism have impacted your view and approach to administration? If so, how?
9. How do you personally try to minimise these effects and how do you help your trainees?
10. Do you think levels of sophistication (i.e. rural vs. urban) impact how you need to put across administration concepts? Can you give some examples?
11. Are there elements of an African worldview that make administration easy?
12. As an administration trainer, how do you view time? Is it important, unimportant?
13. How do you put across these concepts of time to your trainees?
14. What problems do your trainees typically have with time? How do you tend to deal with them?
15. What do you understand by planning?
16. Do you see this as a Western concept that you have had to accept, or was it already part of your African mindset? If the former, have you had to make any mental adjustments? If the latter, has this helped in doing it any better?
17. Do you think planning is important? Explain
18. How do you approach the task of planning (fairly large project)? [i.e. Do you identify any steps, procedures or factors needing consideration?]
19. What resources do you consider when planning? Is there any priority to them? Why?
20. What skills would you associate with planning?
21. What problems do you typically encounter with your trainees regarding planning?
22. How do you typically attempt to overcome these?
23. What do you understand by the term "organising"?
24. How much of this comes from your African worldview and how much from your Western training?
25. Are there any conflicts at this point? How do you deal with them?
26. Do your trainees typically struggle with these too? How do you help them?
27. What skills do you think a good leader needs? Why?

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28. In Western thinking, there is the idea of leadership style. Do you also identify this in an African perspective? If so, how?
29. Do you convey any sense of leadership style to your trainees?
30. When it comes to decision-making, what issues to you typically struggle to get across to your trainees? Why do you think this is so?
31. What role do innovation and creativity skills play here?
32. Do you perceive any specific socialisation processes within the African worldview that (a) instil and (b) limit creativity and innovation?
33. How do you typically encourage creativity in your trainees? Are these ideas borrowed from the West (because of your Western training) and, if so, have you had to adapt them at all?
34. How do you typically help your trainees to overcome barriers to creativity?
35. Do you encourage your trainees to wrestle with problems? Why?
36. Are there typical approaches you use for problem-solving? Why?
37. In the African worldview, what are the struggles with change? Why?
38. Many view improvement for the sake of it as strange? Do you agree? Why?
39. How do you feel about uniqueness? Do you encourage your trainees to think uniquely? Why?
40. What is logic for you? How do you typically measure something as "logical"?
41. How far do you see this differing from Western logic?
42. Do you find yourself clashing with "Western" logic? How so?
43. Are you aware of male and female differences in this area and how do you typically deal with them?
44. Are there elements in administration that frustrate you because they don't seem "logical"?
45. What aspects of logic do your trainees typically struggle with? How do you help them?
46. What do you understand by delegation?
47. Is this typically easy to get across to your trainees or do you encounter common problems with this?
48. How do you help your trainees with these problems?
49. What is satisfaction? How do you help your trainees identify it?
50. What, for you, is a good way to motivate?
51. From an African perspective, what would be good intrinsic motivation? Does *Ubuntu/unhu* play a role here?
52. Are there African worldview elements that drive achievement? If so, what are they?
53. How do you typically approach risk? How do you help your trainees accept it and use it?
54. How do you view and use power and authority? Are they the same?
55. Do you have problems conveying these concepts adequately to your trainees? If so, how?
56. How do you attempt to help your trainees deal with the negative elements of these factors? (E.g. abuse, coercion, patronage, etc.)
57. Is there such a thing as "supervising in an African way"?
58. Are there any elements of this concept with which you struggle? If so, why and how?
59. What skills does the effective supervisor need?
60. Do your trainees struggle with the same problems you do? How do you help them?
61. What measuring tools do you normally use to evaluate people?
62. Do these have any basis in your African thinking/worldview? How?

63. On what basis do you determine quality? How is this shaped by your African worldview?
64. Is there any conflict here with Western views? How so?
65. How do you typically help your trainees deal with conflict? Which resolution techniques are you most comfortable with? Why?
66. Africa has missed out on the Industrial Revolution with its necessary emphasis on design and precision. Do you think this may have a bearing on the African approach to administration?
67. Mathematics and measurement teach accuracy. Do you think the absence of these concepts in an agrarian setting have hindered the process of development and its administration in any way? If so, how?
68. Given your understanding of modern management and administration, what aspects and values of the rural African worldview might constitute a weakness for today's needs?
69. Are there African worldview components you typically encourage your trainees to consider developing? Why? Is this conscious or unconscious on your part?

Chapter Five

ADMINISTRATION IN ITS CULTURAL CONTEXT: Approaching the Task Collectively

1. Exploring How Administration and Culture Mix – 2

1.1 Focus Group Discussions:

1.1.1   Format

This third form of conversation was structured as a group activity. Initially, and admittedly as an incentive, I arranged to start with a breakfast, to be followed by our discussion time. However, given the penchant for arriving late for appointments, we invariably started anything from 30 to 60 minutes late and spent another 30 to 50 minutes eating and chatting before getting down to business. After the fourth such session, a member of the group suggested that we use our time more wisely and, instead of a full breakfast, just have some tea and light snacks. This appealed to me, not only because it would allow us to steward our time better but the cost of the breakfasts were becoming prohibitive!

Initially, too, I had planned the sessions roughly on a monthly basis, assuming that we could cover the questions in a total of four sessions over as many months. However, in the first session it quickly became apparent that this time frame was likely to be unrealistic. Indeed, subsequent events – consistently starting late and the depth and breadth of discussion – showed this to be true. As it turned out, we needed nearly twice as many sessions just to deal with the issues pertaining to the nature of and approach to administration. (See also below on "Adjustments".)

The questions themselves (See Appendix 3) were based on the overall framework, but with the addition of an eighth section on political considerations: How the colonial period may have impacted the approach to administration and the extent to which this may have changed since Independence. (I added this to the group dialogue as I felt this topic would be better discussed in such a setting, rather than individually.) This set of questions sought more deliberately to examine worldview issues at a somewhat deeper level. And, having gained some insight from the personal conversations, I was able to identify some additional issues needing further exploration. This set of questions was thus expanded to 128. (But see also below on "Adjustments".)

1.1.2   Purpose

The intention of these focus group sessions was three-fold: (1) To highlight issues raised through the questionnaires and personal interviews and to discuss them collectively; (2) To

provide a sounding board for participants to share insights and thoughts together, with worldview factors as the core interest. My expectation here was that their varied backgrounds would bring a variety of insights to the conversation and thus flesh out the details. Also, I anticipated that this would both filter out the inconsequential and to solidify or confirm the main issues.   (3) In collectively discussing key issues, the group may also consider possible solutions to problems identified.

1.1.3   Selection of Participants

The focus group initially comprised the six pastors whom I had finally selected for the personal interviews and the rest of the project. Subsequently, however, one of them (Ndebele, non-Pentecostal and low-density) emigrated to South Africa after four sessions (although he only attended two anyway.)   Another (also Ndebele and non-Pentecostal but high-density) only attended one session and seemed uninterested and uncommitted for the rest; despite confirming his intent to attend, he did not. So, I felt I had to replace them as from the fifth session. (See below on "Adjustments".)

1.1.4   Preparation

In my preliminary investigations and conversations, I had already identified several worldview factors – for example, the emphasis on relationships and the sense of community; the interplay with the spirit world; and the prominence of oral communications among others. These raised interesting questions relating to the factors of administration such as creativity and innovation, leadership style, decision-making and so on. The focus group discussions thus sought to explore these elements more fully and draw out other aspects not considered in the individual interviews.

Since I had already developed a grid of 150 worldview questions, I had to choose which ones to use; I was confident, however, that several would be answered tangentially in the course of the conversations without me necessarily having to ask them directly. The foundational questions were supplemented in the discussions with secondary questions as follow up to specific answers. In this instance, I prepared one three-column table, with the questions listed in the first and space left for the answers and supplementary questions in the second and third. The second column was divided into six rows, giving space for each respondent's answers, which I typed as they chatted back and forth.

I then planned the discussion sessions. To begin with, I had planned four monthly sessions of about three hours each, spread over the five months of October to February. Unfortunately, not only did we rarely achieve three hours of discussion – mainly because we always started

late and lost valuable recording time during the meal – I but also discovered that my time frame for discussing the issues was a woeful underestimation.

1.1.5 <u>Adjustments</u>

In travelling this journey, despite some careful planning beforehand, things have not always turned out as expected. As with the personal conversations, adjustments have had to be made with the group as well.

In addition to expanding the number of questions to include more issues, I quickly discovered in my first group session that the flow of the conversation and that of my questions would not necessarily match. This obvious detail had not occurred to me, so I had to make on-the-spot adjustments as the participants interacted. Related to this, it was again the case that some answers made some questions redundant, and so I did not waste time pursuing those. Instead of pressing home the set questions, I had to be selective. Where the group discussion had missed a point, I followed up with a supplementary question.

After two sessions in October and November, both of which had useful but animated and drawn-out discussion, I realised that, by January (the proposed third session), I would already be behind schedule and it was obvious that I would not finish the questions in four sessions. Nor was it feasible to think of monthly meetings. I was very aware of the sacrifice the team members were making (Monday is usually the pastor's day off) and that I was eating into their private time. Nevertheless, they were all committed to the enterprise and affirmed this was still the best time to meet. I then had to persuade them of the need to meet more frequently. I was very grateful for their sense of commitment.

At the sixth session, and in response to my concern about the time frame, the team agreed to dispense with the breakfast as much formal discussion time was lost during the meal, and that a simple tea with croissants or doughnuts be served instead. This also helped to reduce costs.

Having met twice in April, during which I was able to reassess a likely timeframe for covering the material for the remaining chapters, I apprehensively broached the possibility at the end of the seventh session of meeting fortnightly for the rest of the year. As expected, one in the group immediately commented that this would be difficult given increasing ministry demands. He suggested, instead, that we arrange to meet for a concerted effort, perhaps over a weekend, to address the remaining issues in one fell swoop. To be honest, I had not thought of this as an option. But with obvious assent from the rest of the team, it was clear that maintaining a longer schedule of meetings would probably be counterproductive. Such an

approach, too, would give me more flexibility with my writing schedule as I would not be restricted to the group's ability to meet. This would also obviate absences at any given session, as had been the case up to this point. (Subsequently, I arranged a two-day retreat at a guesthouse in Bulawayo.   Six of us left on a Friday morning and returned on the Saturday evening, having covered considerable ground. It was a very productive time for all of us. Even so, it was not sufficient, and I had to arrange a second, follow-up session for the final topic on Theology.)

Significantly, by the end of the fourth session, I had become somewhat apprehensive of the danger of imposing my own preconceptions on the process. After all, the task was not so much to obtain their views on my concerns, but rather, to discuss their views on the issues as they see them. So I asked the group what they felt about the questions and suggested that they come up with their own instead. I reiterated the importance of them giving their insights as part of the social construction/narrative approach.

Interestingly, they said they would not know what questions to ask and that mine seemed good anyway. Frankly, I was a little surprised at this wholesale acquiescence but, at the same time, not completely bemused as it merely confirmed my perception that administration is not something that people typically think about concretely or are able to articulate without some prompting. They did propose, however, that I circulate the questions ahead of time for them to peruse and to adjust if necessary. This I readily agreed to and circulated questions for the fifth session 10 days beforehand. While there were no comments or suggested changes on these, on further consideration and to keep the number of interview sessions to a manageable number, I subsequently decided on a slightly amended approach. From the sixth session, I circulated a coalesced set of questions pertaining to the topic for discussion. These revised questions were more broadly framed and arranged to cover the narrower, more specific questions in umbrella fashion.   I thus devised a much shorter list of questions for the remaining sections of the discussion for Chapter Five by extrapolating from the original list and, where necessary, merging or rephrasing questions in broader terms. This, in turn, necessitated me devising a second table to record the conversations.

The suggestion at the end of the seventh session to have a weekend retreat meant revising the list of questions yet again. Also, by that stage, I had not yet considered the material for the proposed Chapter Four (Theology), and so had to push forward to prepare for that before I had anticipated doing so.   I then worked to coalesce the remaining questions before circulating them to the team for their consideration prior to the retreat.

A second major adjustment related to the participants. In pondering the replacements, it was suggested to me that, in addition to the other factors already outlined, I consider some gender balance as well, particularly since there are some denominations with women pastors. I then approached the same lady who had assisted with the trainer/trainee interview as I was confident she already knew the purpose of my project and understood the rationale of the exercise. Happily, she readily agreed. Thus, the remainder of the focus group interviews – to complete the focus group's sketch on administration (originally Chapter Two, now Five) and to consider the shaping of worldview (originally Chapter Three, now Six) – comprised five male pastors and the one lady in a para-church ministry who joined us at the end of the leadership discussion.

A third major adjustment came at the end of the retreat. My initial intention was that Chapter Three (Shona, Ndebele and Christian worldviews) would constitute the largest section of material. However, both the questions and the discussions were more extensive than I anticipated. Therefore, I decided to split Chapter Two on the nature and practice of administration into three: the survey (Chapter Three); the individual interviews (Chapter Four) and the group discussions (Chapter Five). This, I felt, would avoid a top-heavy, uneven presentation in terms of coverage and provide a more even-handed, balanced arrangement. The worldview material would now be covered in Chapter Six.

1.2 *The Dialogue:*

To reiterate, the intention of these focus group sessions was three-fold: (1) To highlight issues raised through the questionnaires and personal interviews and to discuss them collectively; (2) To provide a sounding board for participants to share insights and thoughts together, with worldview factors as the core interest, and (3) In collectively discussing key issues, the group may also consider possible solutions to problems identified.

Thus, apart from confirming a contextualised definition of administration and each of its components, the group questions also sought to explore more complex issues such as the socialisation of creativity and innovation, the impact of a rural, agrarian setting on an urban, industrial/technological one and the influence of the black African worldview philosophy of *Ubuntu/unhu.* An additional discussion item in this section dealt with the political/social dynamics that have impinged on the formation of worldview and the praxis of administration. Given the historical background of the Shona and Ndebele in Zimbabwe, together with our colonial history, I thought this subject would be better discussed collectively rather than individually.

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The group interactions, while covering several of the questions from the personal interviews, sought to enhance those responses with collective insights and focussed more on worldview and cultural issues. The even mixture between Shona and Ndebele participants and from Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal churches provided for interesting interaction. The discussions on administration for the initial Chapter Two (later Chapters Three to Five) were held over eight months (late October to early June), having been interrupted by the Christmas break and College-related, end-of-term work demands in December and April respectively. By late March, the meetings had increased in frequency, but ended with a weekend retreat to finish the questions for Chapter Five and to cover those for Chapter Six (worldview factors). The discussions for Chapter Seven (Theology) took place in September, in a one-day retreat format.

Initially, I had intended to include in these discussions an additional component of proverbs from the participants relating to key elements of the administrative process. The rationale here was that proverbs summarise and speak pithily to a social lesson. They often express moral or ethical expectations or warnings of a society that are difficult to convey in simple terms. They are descriptive, appealing, easy to recall and reflect deep, philosophical concepts. Unfortunately, only one proverb was given at the first group session and, despite repeated requests in later sessions, nothing more was forthcoming. I realised afterwards that our use of proverbs is often related to specific issues where a particular proverb is appropriate; we do not normally connect a proverb to an abstract concept such as administration. Hence, I decided to incorporate some randomly selected proverbs as part of the training input in Chapter Eight.

To begin with, the focus groups involved those in pastoral ministry only and not the trainer respondents. This was for two reasons. First, I was conscious of the element – and cost – of time and recognised that non-Christian, commercial respondents would not have the time or the inclination to participate in such discussions. Second, I was not concerned with either their task assessment or views on administration in a Christian ministry context. I was primarily concerned with their attitudes and approach to training administrators and the issues arising from that role *vis-à-vis* the impact of worldview factors.

1.2.1   Responses:

Again, I will present these conversations in their broad categories, while incorporating my own 'story' in the process, where applicable. I will conclude the section with a brief summary of the

conversations and observations from them. Again, the chapter will end with an overall analysis of the discussions.

The focus group conversations will take the individual interviews a step further and seek to identify somewhat more concretely what worldview factors are involved and how. It is not my intention to discuss those in depth in this chapter, however. Rather, the particular worldview factors so identified, together with what helps to shape them in the process of socialisation, will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

1.2.1.1 Background –

Having already discussed individual definitions of administration, I began this group session with two related questions concerning the clash of cultures in terms of approach and what, if anything makes administration difficult. Immediately, worldview factors came to the fore.

Chris, for example, highlighted the difference between the urban and rural approach: "For rural people, it's the event, not the time; it doesn't matter how long it takes. In the Western approach, there's a finishing time." That explains, in large measure, why it is perfectly acceptable to be "late" for a function – including a church worship service. I suspect, however, that the more important the occasion is perceived to be, and/or the more important the dignitary leading the event, the earlier people will tend to come. In the Church context, of course, that raises some interesting questions about the importance of meeting with God, listening to His Word through His messenger and so on. From my cultural perspective, being late communicates either a lack of interest or sense of importance in either the event or the speaker. Both would be considered rude. If the event is important or the speaker interesting, I would want to be there punctually so as not to miss anything of value. In my church, though, there are some people who regularly come 20 or even 30 minutes late.

Beki also highlighted this tension: "For the [black] African, relationships are more important than events. We're more hospitable. But [now] I have a clash: I was invited to a friend's funeral this morning, but had an appointment with you. If I went to the funeral, you would ask, 'What's wrong with Beki?' Now, I'm here and my friend is asking the same question!" [Laughter and nodding heads in agreement from the others.] Oops – but you can't be in too places at once. Yes, but the bottom line here is he has effectively told his friend someone else is more important than him – and their relationship! That could be a problem for their future. Some apologies and explanations are called for.

George introduced a different dynamic: "It's all about appointments. [With the African way,] people just walk in. With the Western way, if you bump into someone, you're not welcome.

You can't just walk in; you have to make an appointment."   This is interesting.   With an emphasis on the relationship, George – typical of many – sees the Western approach as event-oriented and anti-people.   Yet, would it not be true to say that the very reason for having an appointment is precisely because both parties are sensitive to the other's commitments and needs? Is the focus here really on the event or is it on the people making the event?

Picking up on this, and in response to the difficulties faced with modern administration, Barnabas commented: "The guy comes, without a specific time mentioned, but he expects you to be there the whole day just for him." Here, the tension between "waiting to be hospitable" and having a complex range of responsibilities to see to manifests itself.   This is probably exacerbated in the urban context since, in a rural setting, the visitor could quite easily, presumably, have a discussion in the fields.   Alternatively, the farmer can leave his fields to entertain the guest without feeling that the crops will die without immediate attention.   This, of course, cannot apply in the urban, technological world today where immediacy and promptness are often critical.

Chris chipped in: "When a rural guy phones, I don't bother to make an appointment because I know he won't keep it." In other words, the expectation and understanding of the rural mind-set tells him that making an appointment would be a frustrating waste.   But, he still needs to organise his time so that when the visitor does eventually arrive, he can see him.   Sometimes, that may not be very convenient.   Beki affirmed this saying, "Time is an event, not minutes, hours and seconds.   With appointments, when the guy shows up late, the rest of the day is affected."

For George, the tension is manifested in the area of planning. "As Africans, we lack vision and planning.   That's our problem.   We need to discard what doesn't help us.   Africa is the richest continent, but the poorest.   It's because we don't plan; we only look at arm's length."   Dixon then jumped in, also highlighting the planning component as a problem: "[In] planning my daily schedule, I get frustrated if I don't complete this.   [But the] African approach is much more relational.   [It's about] prioritising with people, not tasks.   [With] preaching, I get to Thursday and start to get worried about what I'm going to say.   I need to make time for that.   Something must lose out so I can prepare adequately.   So, there must be a balance.   Life is about balance."

Yes, and the clash of worldviews is about defining what that balance is.   What, after all, are the priorities, and why? As dominant a priority as relationships are, there must come a time when other demands take precedence. Apparently not. Some years ago, I had a student who was pastoring a local church in Bulawayo.   Late one Saturday night, a large lorry carrying a

coffin and relatives of the deceased arrived. The family members insisted that, as their pastor, he must accompany them immediately – in his pyjamas – to Masvingo (some 400 kilometres away) for the funeral. So he did! When he reported this to me the following Monday, I asked him why he didn't politely refuse. He said if he had, he would have been reported to his overseer and then to the Bishop. So, despite having already had a busy day, a preaching commitment the next morning and not being properly dressed for the occasion, he set out on a five-hour journey in the middle of the night all because, if he didn't, relationships would be affected!

In a follow-up question, I asked if we cannot do tasks <u>for</u> people. Dixon responded: "Yes, tasks do relate to people, but some don't. We have to talk about vision and objectives. If we don't see where we going, we'll waste our time." Again, that is true, but would the event not be understood more relationally if the value of it to the people is explained more clearly (rather than just the purpose) and if, in the process of assessing the potential value, it is planned effectively for maximum gain?

1.2.1.2 Time –

Noticing the emphasis on the time factor with the previous questions, I then moved on to this item. I asked, if time is not as important in a rural, agrarian setting, can we speak of a sense of failure about the "when" of something not being done? Is there a "right" or "wrong" time?

Dixon responded: "Yes, it's about how long it takes. In Western thinking, time is clearly blocked [off]. For Africans, the issue is not when it's done, but that it is. If someone has made an appointment, in the African set up, you have to start [the discussion] with basic stuff – the weather, and so on. If you don't, you offend. If the task takes a long time, you haven't failed. Eventually, you get to the point."

I narrated a story which the group readily identified with in which someone visited me in my office (without an appointment). We spent quite a while chatting about a wide variety of mutual interests. All along, I was wondering why he had come to see me; what was the real reason for the visit. Then, after more than an hour, he stood up to go. As his custom dictates, I accompanied him downstairs to the front door to wish him farewell. As we stood on the steps and he was about to leave, he turned and said, "By the way …" I knew immediately that he was now going to explain the real reason for his visit. The whole group laughed.

George agreed: "In the African sense, there is no failure. In the Western approach, it's defined. In Arab thinking, you don't have exams. What matters is whether you can do the thing, not whether it's within a set time. With Westerners, you get complaints; they want

delivery now, within a set time period." He then related the story of a father who did not want his son running his shops. Yet the son was a marketing manager for big companies and obviously had the necessary expertise. Eventually, with the businesses going down, the father accepted the idea. The problem was fear of change. The time it took was a secondary concern, even though this affected profitability. George also told a personal story: "I wanted to marry a girl from Masvingo. The in-laws wanted to know my *mutupo* [his clan name]. When they found out, they weren't interested. So I forced the issue by making her pregnant. They still refused. I stayed with her for 10 years before we were married. But then I became a Christian." Again, time was not the issue: there was no desire to hurry.

Another identified time-related worldview factor affecting administration is the connection between yesterday, today and tomorrow. As the team explained, one's understanding of today depends on what happened yesterday, and my thinking about tomorrow is based both on yesterday and today. All of which raises questions about the future. So, I next asked, When for you is 'tomorrow'? How far into the future are you comfortable with? How do you respond to an "uncomfortable tomorrow"? This question speaks to both time and planning. I have heard some say, for instance, that they find it difficult to think more than a week to 10 days ahead. However, in our discussion, this apparent fear was eschewed, with George saying he has no problem thinking 10 years into the future. Others, while not setting any limits, tended to agree. Rather, the team focused on the dynamic of vision and strategic planning.

For the first part of the question, Dawson said, "[This] depends on the context. In Ndebele, it's the same as English. [They are] not scared of the future. They still thought long-term in the village. Cattle were prepared with this in mind: For example, the father would prepare his *mombies* (cattle) for his son's marriage."

Dixon put this down to modernisation. "It's not Western. Planning is necessary. Strategic planning – key result areas – must be given to the people. You can't not do it."

Then Dawson shifted gears. "We don't understand ourselves. The general understanding is that the African leader's role model is the chief. But why did the chief not lay down the vision? He just told the people. It's the same in Church: you're just told to do it. But I see something interesting here. The African Man has been so spiritually tuned. Therefore, the spirits should tell you, not him [the chief]. The spiritual world is real. So, we don't articulate the vision clearly."

Dixon quickly took this up: "The chief dies knowing everything. Therefore, we must be strategic. If we want to think about being effective, productive, we can't do that now. We have to have the long-term clearly in mind."

George raised a related issue: "How does the Lord call you into ministry? Unless I say, 'The Lord told me …' it's not real." Dixon responded: "There's a problem in Pentecostal circles: who can argue with this [i.e. 'The Holy Spirit told me.']? But this can be blaspheming against the Spirit. There must be a clear dividing line. We must check ourselves to see if it is the Lord speaking."

Beki chipped in: "I'd like us to do this [vision casting] for the Church. Vision is difficult. I wish we could leave a heritage for those we leave behind. When a visionary dies, everything collapses."

1.2.1.3 Planning –

Shifting more deliberately from time to the planning component, and to clarify the matter further, I asked a follow-up question: Do you see this (modern planning) as a Western concept that you have had to accept, or was it already part of your African mindset? How so? Have you had to make any mental adjustments? To this, Beki strongly exclaimed, "No, Great Zimbabwe [a large, stone-walled city built c. 1100-1400 A.D.] shows planning. Our problem is we have to take a step back. We've been educated and trained using the Western model. [Originally] we'd meet under a tree "today", not at 7:30. So, for instance, I can be involved with school (= a time table, fixed times for lessons) and then meet my peers – with a completely different approach to time, [one that is more] flexible. We're liberated from diaries. [For] my Western colleague, his diary is his life; if he loses it, wow! For me, it doesn't matter."

Dixon followed up: "There's something we can't change. Our Africanness now is different from that of 100 years ago. We have to contextualise. Life without some of what we have would be unbearable. We need to redefine today's African culture." To which Dawson agreed, "We can't divorce ourselves from globalisation. This is not colonisation (limiting people's rights). But Westernisation has helped development. But this came with the colonisation package, which led to misunderstanding. I can't live without a watch now. What is "tomorrow"? Westernisation is just civilisation. The Gospel didn't come from the West." Dixon ended the point with a question: "But demands today are different. [We] have meetings and so on. We may need to forego some "traditional" requirements. Can we still be "African" by making some changes? Does the modified context [not] require this? "

Clearly, then, while there is an identifiable tension as the two worlds collide, it is also recognised that modernisation (including urbanisation and technology) is creating new demands to change the way we do things. The 'new' world, changing as it is, requires culture and tradition to change too – which they do. Unless one is flexible and willing to adapt, it seems, the perceived tension is likely to remain problematic.

Probing deeper here, I sought to elicit a distinction between the two worlds: Does the industrialised/technological world require a different process of strategising from an agricultural one (for instance, strategising for crops or animals versus strategising for task development – for example, developing a machine to do the job as opposed to working with people)?

Dawson, interestingly, raised the important worldview factor of the spirit world: "The spirit world has a major influence. Strategic planning cannot be divorced [from this]. So, he leaves it open to change. Therefore, plan, set goals but keep alert to the Spirit. [We] must be flexible. This is good since it keeps us open to what the Lord may want."

For George, though, the problems are selfishness and witchcraft: "Africa is selfish. I want it for myself. I don't want to pass it on. Take witchcraft. Look at the [Western] doctors: [they do] pathology to find out how things work. But Africans can't do this; only the *n'anga* knows. This is magic." The implication here is that there can be no strategic planning because the ordinary person is not supposed to know how things work; that is the realm of the *n'anga*. I asked George what the basis of that selfishness is. "Ignorance. We don't want to take advantage of situations for the good of our people. People don't want to pass things on. They want to be secretive." Almost as an afterthought, he added: "Things are done at night. We travel on special animals (hyena). We need to change the mind-set of witchcraft for the good of everyone."

Dawson agreed, adding, "There's a lot in Africa that can be developed, but we lose it fast. All over the world, there are so many Africans at the forefront of industrialisation. We have the personnel, but we can't retain them. This is the key problem. We can do very well if we can do this." Dixon affirmed this sentiment too: "Each country has gone through its "industrial revolution". See Japan: They're making cars all over the world. We have all the resources which we extract – and pay 10 times the price to import the processed products. We have enough leaders – for example, Strive Masiyiwa [and] Mutumwa Mawere [two successful local businessmen]. We've got sharp guys. We can regain what we've lost. We have people overseas who are working on developing their skills, on projects."

There is the recognition here that resources are accessible but need to be strategically prepared and positioned to gain maximum advantage from them. Inherent in these observations, however, is the tacit acknowledgement that this does not appear to have been done adequately up to now. And, while the above conversations tended to focus on strategic planning, there was no concrete solution suggested for the apparent widespread reluctance to plan in general. However, as noted earlier, this may well be due to the fact that these particular actors are principal leaders who have had to learn to plan if their enterprises are to succeed.

1.2.1.4 Organising –

Inherent in the above comments, too, is the indispensable link between planning and organising. Our earlier observation was that you cannot have one without the other. Planning is one form of organising; but you cannot organise without planning. We also noted that planning is structuring and tends towards paperwork, whereas organising is definitely about people.

I then asked the group how they would identify a good organiser; what attributes would they look for and why?

Chris, first off the mark, expressed the view that an organiser is "more of a manager: [he addresses the question] how can we get this done?" Yet, this is only part of the picture.

As a visionary, Dawson opined: "Results begin to show. [The organiser] has no hassle putting people together, by natural lifestyle. A leader must be able to manage and organise. The visionary puts the main structures together; that's the limit of his organising." But, again, this is merely a part of the whole.

George expressed a more comprehensive view: "[The organiser] must look at detail, before anything happens." Why is this important? "So that he is prepared; he looks at the vision and sees how to get there. He is a leader, but he's a specialist to do things he's planned ahead. You have a triumvirate: the visionary, the manager and the organiser. The visionary shouldn't be too involved in organising otherwise he'll be bogged down by details."

But Dixon then asked, "Is an organiser synonymous with leading and managing? Give them a concept and let them run with it." [What is the similarity between leading, managing and organising?] "The visionary leader is different from the organising leader. Leadership is influence [quoting Maxwell again]; so an organiser puts things together to benefit the organisation. Every leader must be a visionary (but with varying degrees). He must have a good idea of the overall picture and the results of what he wants. He must be able to see

what kinds of people he needs to handle. He must ask how he can empower them. A good organiser can get rid of people who don't produce. If someone takes responsibility, there must be accountability.   At the end of the day, failure is upon the delegated leader.   A good organiser communicates – and he fires those who are not performing."

Not everyone would agree with all of this. For instance, it may not be the administrator's role to hire and thus fire.   But, in the sense that the manager must also organise people, this function may well overlap.   So, again, we see the relation between organising, managing and leading here.

This takes us to the purpose of organising. Dixon maintains it is "To bring order, clarity to the vision. To identify the giftings, to place people in roles, to achieve the results. To bring [out the] maximum potential of the group."   Chris picked up on this, adding, "If you don't involve the people, you may not achieve your goals. If you have a big vision, you can't pay attention to the details." In other words, you need people – who, in turn, need to be organised – to accomplish the tasks.

But how do you do it? How would you typically organise? Is there a difference between organising in the village and organising in the city? Said Dawson: "There will be a difference in the nitty gritties. But it's basically the same." So what are the nitty gritties? "In the city, the type of training is different. You have to put people together, no matter where you are. But the way city people relate is different: [there is] sophistication, technology, [and] other points of reference."

Dixon seemed to hit the nail on the head: "Your worldview affects how you organise. The way we put people together, delegate responsibilities, train them is different, but the concept is the same. Some leaders are very good at organising. The worldview is important here. If our worldview is [related to the idea of] chieftainship, we will try to control every facet of the operation; we are concerned with the details; this may bottleneck the system. If our worldview focuses on empowering, then everyone is a key player."

Significantly, though, this speaks as much to worldview as it does to individual leadership style and personality/temperament.   Not everyone thinks and functions like a chief; nor is every leader necessarily concerned with empowerment.   Nevertheless, these comments highlight again the fact that one's perspective – based on worldview – shapes the approach to administration.

That said, however, we must address the general demeanour toward organising. It seems as if a common mindset says, "The event itself is what is important, so just let things happen," or,

"When the people come, then we can start to organise," implying that aspects such as planning and organising are not seen as necessary or important. Would you agree? If so, why is this, do you think?

Clearly this is an area of struggle. Dawson illustrated the tension: "It's wrong to say, 'We can't start until the people come.' But you can't do anything without people! You have to start the process before the people come. [You] must always be ready to adjust." Dixon supported this: "This dynamic is always changing. You may have to change plans at the last minute. A leader who can organise can shift, but [still] take into account relationships. You [need to] look at the options; [you] need to decide which is best." The implication here, of course, that this does not happen every time. That underlines the skills factor.

Chris narrated an incident: "A classic example was going to a rural church for a meeting. But only the leader and his wife were there; the people were busy in the fields – so there was no service." In other words, the failure to organise properly meant the event did not happen at all. Chris also gave the example of a community leader who may have agreed to arrange a meeting but then is informed of a death. "He is obliged to go to the funeral as well. Therefore, he will have to adjust for the sake of keeping relationships [intact]." While the tension created by having two events at the same time is a universal phenomenon, perhaps it is true to say the response to that tension may be culturally determined. One critical factor in this case would be the ability to communicate with either party to arrange the adjustment.

To which George commented: You must always have Plan B. Many leaders are trained outside [their immediate context] and then come back and fail because the goalposts have shifted [that is, the context in which they function is different from the training context]. They are disadvantaged; it's better to train people in their context. For example, [have a] "block release" for a short time. [Also,] equipment is readily available in the cities; in the rural areas, this is a problem." And Chris quickly added: "Exposure is also important."

This then led naturally to the last question: What problems do you identify with organising and why? To what extent are these linked to a rural or urban setting?

Dixon gave an example of his Sunday School. "There are many meetings. To plan for these you have to arrange with people, gather the resources. You are putting people in place. And different people are organising at different levels at the same time. There are many bits and pieces to put together (leaders of 10s, 100s.) You often need to reinforce messages. For example, our Sunday School system changed because of insufficient teachers and less materials. But that meant the classes were too big. The teachers were not properly prepared

or planned. Gradually, the whole children's ministry was in a shambles, despite having a pastor responsible for it. But unless you go there and check, you don't know what's happening. So you need to monitor." Just in this one illustration we see a variety of skills called for: Adequate consideration of resources (in this case, people, teaching materials and space, among others), recruitment, training, supervision and monitoring.

On top of this, as Chris pointed out, "You need clear job descriptions. The key here is communication. Therefore, a good organiser must be a good communicator. Use verbal and written means." What is the best method for the circumstances? "For me, this is the biggest challenge. It depends on the particular meeting and its needs. The whole event must be considered for the results. I would rather invest time and effort to ensure that everything is understood beforehand, [what] the expectations, [are] and so on." How much influence does this provide? I asked. "I would hope that they would have learned from my [leadership] example and from on-the-job training. To make sure everything happens takes a lot of work." Again, without them being specified, we see a range of skills alluded to here: Communication, job descriptions, the (detailed) demands of the event, expectations of the participants, time management, training, example (which comes from character and exposure) and forethought.

George added a further dimension: "You must be influential, [one] who commands respect from people, otherwise they won't take you seriously." How is influence attained if Organising happens behind the scenes? I chipped in. "As you go through the details, influence helps you in organising the people. You need the skills of looking at the details – resources, time, who? But you must have Plan B to avoid wastage. The influence comes when the people see you have organised and have plan B; you also need to persuade the people to come. It's also important to take someone along with you; to share in the organising. For instance, I always take one of my elders on home visitation and gradually get them to do things. This will reduce mistakes. Delegation does not mean unaccountability." Several more skills are noted here: Influence, attention to details, having a back-up plan or arrangement, being careful to avoid wastage, mentoring, delegation and accountability.

Lastly, Dawson added yet more insight: "[There should be an] understanding [of] how to get people to do it. People must identify with what you're saying; if they don't, they won't respond. This is important for the organiser so that the details can be accomplished. People doing the details is the same as everyone reaching their final goal. If people don't buy into the details, we won't get to the final goal. I agree with Dixon: [You] always need to check. When people don't have the vision themselves – they may not catch it properly – they lack ownership; this remains with the visionary. You must keep in touch. The carrier of the vision has the bigger

burden. This is often why, when the founder dies, things disintegrate: the guys don't seem to carry the same degree of burden and vision as you do."

Here we see aspects such as understanding people (psychology), motivation, selling the vision, monitoring and verification. While the role of worldview is recognised, we also see individual personality and expertise too.

1.2.1.5 Leading –

The interviews for this topic were changed in approach somewhat to facilitate easier discussion. Instead of a wide range of very specific questions, I proffered a smaller, coalesced series of broader, representative questions selected from the original list. This was with the hope that the conversations would cover more ground and that the interaction of the responses – following the flow of the conversation – would be less problematic to record.

At the request of the group, I also circulated the questions in advance. The idea here was that they would monitor the style and if they were not 'culturally appropriate', they would rephrase them accordingly. As it turned out, however, they made no adjustments, and used the advance copies instead to reflect on their answers beforehand.

Thus, under a set of representative questions on decision-making, judgement, logic and risk, we first discussed seven questions. In this particular interview, only three members of the group were present. I began by asking what skills a good leader needs.

George, obviously influenced by John Maxwell, said, "Leadership is about influence. Thus, if you have good influence, you become a good leader. Then there's communication. And planning." Why do some have influence and others don't? I prompted. "Some think leaders are born; but this isn't true; good leaders are trained." So, is influence innate? "You can be trained into it."

I disagree partly with George here. Yes, I think that, because leadership involves a variety of skills, training can improve ability. But I also think there are definite innate qualities of leadership that are not produced by training as such. This is evidenced by the interactions we see, for instance where, in a crowd, a decision must suddenly be made (often in a crisis). Usually, it is merely a few minutes before someone "rises to the top" so to speak and begins to take charge. Invariably, the rest of the group is willing to follow – until such time as they consider the decision to be wrong or ill-informed; then someone else may take the lead. This is not the result, necessarily, of training. Character, poise, communication, judgement skills and decisiveness all play a part here.

Chris added another dimension: "You should include the organisational part; that's another skill – the ability to put things together."   As we have already noted, there is a clear overlap with organisation and leadership.

Looking at an alternative view, Dixon said, "A leader can be bad. It depends what you're leading them to. You can have sound influence even though you're leading badly. I think it's both: leaders are both born and made. Leaders are always thinking of how to get things done. You can lead by fear, intimidation, and oppression. [Primarily, leading is about] putting people and things together for an intended purpose."   Interestingly, that sounds very much like organising!

Having at this point, as a group, covered several issues in dealing with the factors of time, planning and organising, I was intrigued that very little had been mentioned directly about anything to do with the underlying philosophy behind much of Shona and Ndebele worldview. The group's answers had focused quite narrowly, really, on the specificity of the questions rather than on a consideration of background factors. Since leading, arguably, is the critical component in the whole administrative/management process, I felt it important to raise the philosophical background as an element in the analysis process. After all, a key point of the research in the first place is to ascertain the influence of such philosophical underpinnings.

So my next question introduced the philosophical issue of *ubuntu/unhu.* A quick explanation of this is obviously necessary here, but a deeper discussion will be covered in Chapter Six. *Ubuntu* (Ndebele) or *unhu* (Shona) is a philosophical concept lying behind much of social interaction. It is rarely deliberately articulated, being taken as a given, a norm an expectation. Mbigi (1995: 1-2) outlines this philosophy. He says it is "a metaphor that describes the significance of group solidarity. … It is a concept of brotherhood and collective unity for survival among the poor in every society." As such, he suggests, "*ubuntu* is a universal concept that can be applicable to all poor communities."   In summary, he says, "the cardinal belief of *ubuntu* is that *a man can only be a man through others*. [Hence Mbiti's well-known statement about African worldview: 'I am because we are.'] In its most fundamental sense it stands for *personhood* and *morality*." According to Mbigi, the key values of *ubuntu* are: Group solidarity, conformity, compassion, respect, human dignity and collective unity. While these concepts have been alluded to several times in various ways in our discussions thus far, no-one in either the individual or group sessions mentioned or identified this expressly up to this point. Perhaps, though, the sentiment behind it can be summarised with the all-pervading idea that relationships are key. Plainly, that summation has come through loud and clear.

Thence to the next question: Does the philosophy of *ubuntu/unhu* shape the way you make decisions or seek to solve problems or resolve conflict? Does it say anything about the use/abuse of power or of conflict resolution? This immediately provoked some animation and general banter; the atmosphere quickly became 'interesting'.

Dixon was quite clear: "This shapes the African worldview. It speaks of community, of respect; [of] a good character that is acceptable, a role model. It's the glue that builds and binds the community. Therefore, this is everything. Society is bound together: there is harmony, support (emotionally, physically), a sense of belonging. It makes a community very strong. They are morally good. There's no selfishness. Resolving conflict is always fair; [there's always] consideration for the other person. It gives a good balance; guides our moral values; reduces selfishness."

George quickly chipped in: "Everything I do must be dignified. It must command respect. If people despise you, they will despise your God. So I must do good for humanity." Chris added: "It takes away the idea of oppression because you're dealing with people."

Interestingly, no-one here actually answered the question directly. All three responses imply an affirmation; the underlying assumption is: 'It's obvious, isn't it? Of course *ubuntu/unhu* plays a pivotal role in making decisions, resolving conflict and handling the abuse of power!' But if that is the case, we must ask: why do some leaders, then, make selfish decisions; why do some abuse power? The obvious inconsistency here between philosophy and action was not recognised or answered directly.

So, then, I asked, 'What pressures/limitations do you feel most acutely in the decision-making process? Why? Are these personality/temperament factors, or can you link any of them to worldview factors? If so, which?

In addressing this question, George used his study at an inter-denominational Bible college as an example: "My organisational structure demands that I get approval from the top [to study there]; there are policies one is expected to follow – and sometimes they limit. When I was applying, I bypassed the usual group [of decision-makers] and went straight to the Bishop, who gave me his blessing. So, courage separates the men from the boys. You don't want to get your fingers burnt." In this case, George's Pentecostal denomination tends to be rather autocratic in its decision-making systems. Indeed, several pastors have resigned in frustration over similar situations. For George, courage and determination are necessary to beat the organisational limitations he feels.

For Chris, the struggle is more interactive: "When someone else sees things differently from you – because of a different mind-set – things are not done properly so that the plan goes ahead. There's need for understanding, communication and planning. This will help to avoid failure. *Ubuntu/unhu* comes in because I'm looking to the people I'm working with to be part of the decision. For me, consultation is key. This avoids further conflict down the line."

By contrast, Dixon is frustrated by issues revolving around "financial resources, manpower (and training) – I'm reluctant if there's failure. So I look at what I'm hoping to achieve with this decision; how will it enhance the organisation? If I need to prepare before I make the decision, I focus on planning." This naturally fits with his 'results-oriented' philosophy.

From there we moved to typical approaches used for problem-solving and whether any of these are affected by worldview. Significantly, all three respondents understood the question in terms of people-problems and conflict (c.f. their answers to the last question in this section).

Chris commented in a way that most people do not automatically think of, although it is much more obvious in a cross-cultural setting. "If a problem involves people, you have to come to terms with their worldview: [that requires] consultation. For example, [if you're] counselling a wife in the absence of the husband, people can come to the wrong conclusion. Or, after a death there's [often] a conflict with some property the late husband left with his sister that the wife only discovers later. In one such case, I was quick to jump in to suggest things; the husband jumped on me, calling me all sorts of names. But there are some issues you cannot resolve; they aren't your responsibility. Some can be resolved by the family, rather than you as a pastor. You need to be aware of other alternatives. The tendency is to think: 'I'm the chief here, I have to resolve everything.' But that's not the case." For Chris, then, a primary issue is being aware of the other person's mind-set. Yet, in a cross-cultural setting, that's not always possible.

For George, it seems, the answer is quite simple: "If it's about resources, consultation isn't necessary if you have them; if you don't, then you need to consult. Then the people will accept what you're trying to do." But he went on, "Similar to Chris's example, I have a case now where, five years after the death of the first wife, the husband married; [that was] two years ago. The younger sister of the first wife is refusing to work with the "new" couple. It's an issue now!" His illustration is not clear on how the resources come in to play, but he was highlighting the importance of communication and consultation.

And, like Chris, Dixon also affirmed: "Any problem-solving will involve our worldview: that's our life. It depends on the problem. Sensitive issues need special care. This is wisdom: the

correct application of knowledge; what we know. When a problem is solved well, everyone is happy."

The underlying assumption here appears to be that problems typically involve people; people means relationships and relationships have to be maintained at all costs. So, communication, understanding, sympathy and other people-related dynamics are important for problem-solving. Does that suggest that non-people related problems are not important or that important problems are only so because people are involved?

The next question was about thinking processes. What is "logic" for you? How do you typically measure something as logical? Do you see any difference here between men and women? Are there worldview factors involved? With your exposure to Western culture and worldview factors, do you see any difference?

For Dixon, logic is, "A sense of wisdom. It has to do with an argument, a rational philosophy. Our worldview is clearly seen. It's the way we think, see life, and live it. When I went to the US, twice someone asked: 'Is this the way Africans think?' I thought, 'Am I thinking differently from these guys?' The lenses through which I see the world may be different from others; it's ingrained in my system." As an afterthought, "This can be different for men and women; African and European; Zimbabwean and South African." He points out that logic is a factor in one's worldview and that there are differences, but he did not actually describe what is logical for him. Understandably, this is difficult to articulate. His example of a conversation in the United States brought home to him the fact of such differences, but describing what they are is tricky.

George responded: "To me, this is *unhu* – the sense of thinking. Western thinking has affected us so much. We used to think of women as constant dependents; now we think they are equals. I now listen to my wife; I ask if her approach won't lead to the same result." Referring to the topical issue of gender and rights, George tries to illustrate how logic may change or adjust to suit the current social environment. Even, so, this does not describe the nub of the question: How are decisions made in the light of one's worldview?

But George's comment elicited some further discussion from the others on equal rights for women. At present, this topic is in the embryonic debate stage as far as the general public is concerned (although civic organisations have been working in this area for several years now.) George's shift in thinking (regarding his approach to his wife) would definitely raise eyebrows in some circles. For Dixon and Chris, it was not a problem. Dixon also commented that he tries to help his wife with the cooking when she's had a particularly busy day. While

not related directly to administration issues, this conversation illustrates the clash of two worlds and the cross-cultural dynamics at play, with the changes that some people are making as part of what is seen as modernity.

Related to thinking was the question on what helps to develop judgement skills?

None of the participants, it seems, appeared to appreciate the significance of this aspect. Both George and Dixon kept it simple: "Trial and error; advice from elders" [George] and "Education, learning, research, and consultation" [Dixon]. Chris did not comment, nor did any of them attempt to illustrate.

Related that question was the response to risk. On what basis do you weigh up the alternatives to come to the best choice? What "costs" do you typically consider (especially non-economic)?

Chris was quick off the mark: "Looking at the end result: [asking] is it worth it? Should I take the risk? Some of us go out of our way to take risk because they want to be seen. Even if the decision is not the best, you don't want to lose sight of the *ubuntu/unhu*. I'll be seen as the man of the hour. It also has to do with the motive; who's getting the glory? In a typical community setting, will the community benefit (for example, with projects)? [The idea that] if there are individual benefits for me, I'll take the risk is wrong for me. If the community will benefit, [then] I'm prepared to take the risk. I also struggle with failure. I'm looking at success (reputation)." For Chris, then, there are several related elements: relationships, the motive (good versus bad), whether others will benefit or not. While others may not consider it, he is personally willing to take a risk even if it harms him but helps the community. He was honest too: there is sometimes a risk of failure – and he is afraid of that. If his reputation will be injured, he might think twice about doing something; if it will be enhanced, he perceives the risk as worth it.

As far as George is concerned, responding to risk varies: "It depends on what you want to achieve. If the rest of the group hasn't been exposed [to the idea], you are prepared to take the risk. You know the end result, even if others don't. In our family when children were born, there were some rituals. But when I became a Christian I said 'no' to that; there was opposition, but I knew my God. Now everyone believes." As a follow up to his final comment, Chris chipped in here: "If it's not going to succeed, why bother?" This points to the common fear that often stops people from trying.

In the second interview on Leading, all six of the participants were present. We discussed questions relating first to power, then to creativity, innovation, change and conflict. We began

with how authority and power affect decision-making. Why do some people want the power, position and prestige, yet are unwilling to accept the accountability that goes with it?

As an illustration of one aspect of this issue, I related a story from several years ago in Harare where I went to a local newspaper office to get the circulation figures. Even though such information is legally required to be made available, I had to go through three managers before finally getting the information. The lady at the Circulation Desk referred me to the Circulation Manager who, in turn, referred me 'upstairs'. Neither of them was willing to do what their job description clearly empowered them to do. The third manager simply gave me a printed paper with the figures on without even asking me why I wanted the details. The first two were afraid of the consequences – whatever they were.

In response, Dawson quickly said, "[This is] laziness. This is the mark of someone who is not a leader. Procrastination is not a quality for leaders. But training might be part of this. But there must be self-motivation." While linking the mental attitude to laziness, procrastination and a lack of motivation, he did think training (or better, instruction?) would help. However, this does not fully address the apparent fear factor.

To this, Chris responded: "To deal with the fear factor, we need training. The leader needs to know how far he can go; what expectations are there; the parameters." But are these not typically outlined, at least in a professional setting? I ventured. "Yes," he admitted, "often the details are not given." So, while the position and prestige are clear and attractive, the concomitant responsibility and levels of authority are not always explained adequately.

George responded with: "Authority and power give prestige; you always have the final say – but if there are any repercussions, you want to pass them on to others. These are disgraceful; you don't want to be disgraced." But, I asked, doesn't the position inherently carry with it responsibility? "Most of us want to have the glory of God. When criticism comes, we shy away. We try to come up with all sorts of stories." Again, he was alluding to the fear factor. "Yes, fear is a factor."

Joyce, with a corporate view, said, "You have to get permission from the 'leader'; if he's happy, then everything is OK. From an NGO [non-governmental organisation] perspective, while you have a job description, we are inherently afraid to do things; so we put it off. They don't develop benchmarks, targets." Why? I asked. "Laziness. So the senior leader must develop goals with his junior." Once more, then, in addition to the fear, we see laziness as a problem.

Dixon then added several extra insights: "There are two levels: the leader and followers. Sometimes the followers don't know, so they go along with what you say. Why the unwillingness to be accountable? Everyone likes a nice position, but we don't like criticism. Some though don't know what comes along with the position – so they need training; for example, job descriptions. When you know why you're doing what you are, you can measure yourself. Another reason is that the perks become THE issue, never mind my ability to do the job. The '3 Cs' – cash, a car and a cell phone." And, in response to the others, he added: "Sometimes we label people as 'failures' when we haven't explained the vision properly and what the expectations are. When we spell these out, then we can find out if he's a leader or not. We've given him the power to do it; now let's see if he can. If he's not a leader, he will be coming every minute to me to check whether he can do it or not. While there is fear of failure, there is also the fear of people – what will they say? Anyone one afraid of failure will never lead. As Christians, we have the Holy Spirit. So we should never be afraid of what He has asked us to do. I have one of my team leaders who constantly needs special attention. But a lot of this is also personality and self-image."

We see a number of themes here. For one thing, followers it seems do not always know how to follow. If the leader is not sure where to go, that could be a double problem. As Maxwell (1998: 20) says, "He who thinks he leads but has no followers is merely taking a walk!" Next, is the issue of training, mentioned already as a weak area. In some cases, says Dixon, the prestige of the position and the drug of power take the leader's focus off the main thing and superficials become the hub of everything. We also see another reference to the fear factor – along with personality dynamics of a lack of self-image and self-confidence. As we know, in some cases, these weaknesses are then compensated for in the abuse of power.

Beki added another important element: "Leadership style and personality also play a part – for instance, the *laissez faire* approach." One's leadership style is inherently tied to personality, temperament, one's view of people and how to interact with them, as well as the perception of the demands and authority of the job. While several styles have been enunciated in different ways by numerous authors (Voges, 1985; and Means, 1989), those such as Engstrom and Dayton (1976) who identify a *laissez faire* style, speak of being casual, laid back, indifferent, relaxed. In extreme cases, they may even appear uncaring and heartless. But other styles – for example, the Dictatorial, Autocratic, Democratic and Participative (Malphurs, 1995) – also reflect personality and temperament traits, as well as one's view of others. As we observe leaders in varying situations, we see this is a universal dynamic. Hence, as noted earlier, it cannot be argued that Leading is only or, even mainly, determined by one's worldview.

From the issue of power, we moved to creativity. I asked the group how they feel about improvement, difference, change and uniqueness. I have asked my students previously about improving something just for the sake of improvement. I have been surprised at how little interest this has evoked. "No, we don't see any point in that," is a typical response. Some years ago, I asked a class why all the street vendors selling vegetables on the pavement sell the same goods as everyone else – for instance, tomatoes – and often, in the same way (for example in the same size plastic bags)? Why doesn't someone come along and sell something different from the others – and make more income in the process? Their answer was intriguing. It's because of fear, they said. Why? "Because if my neighbour is doing better than me, I will automatically be suspicious that they may have put a curse on me not to sell so much or do so well. Instead of being falsely accused and have a bad relationship as a result, I would rather sell the same things as they do even if that means less income overall in the end." So, again, the dynamics of fear and relationships come clearly to the surface.

Dixon had an interesting comment at this point: "Leaders always seem to be doing the same thing the same way because they don't change. How do you ensure creativity? Every leader needs time each day to think. Change is the key that leads to freshness. As leaders, we need to be thinkers. People notice changes – even the small ones. I once crushed some papers and threw them by the door. Some people just kicked them; others picked them up; others moved them. Some didn't even notice."

Beki followed up: "Sometimes we see things as leaders but we avoid them. We notice a problem, but I'm afraid of the repercussions if I do something. For me, my approach is, if things aren't right, let's fight, let's cry, but don't leave things to deteriorate. The traditional approach is to maintain things as they are; don't rock the boat. Change comes with its challenges. My leaders criticise me for being too 'bookish' – too many meetings. One individual wants to "go for it" – let's be practical. But when I gave him some responsibility, he didn't do it! Sometimes we have to ignore such criticism. One time, I looked after an orphan [at the Church] who then tried to poison the janitor. I was crushed. I thought about it and decided I had to carry on – I was doing something to help the community."

Although his observations shift from creativity to criticism, again, we see several issues mentioned. He admits to a different attitude and approach to dealing with problems and tensions: he likes to get things out in the open, discussed and amicably resolved, contrary to many who feel comfortable doing nothing, hoping the situation will clear itself. He personally prefers joint decisions with planning and preparation. But one of his team, by contrast, thinks it is better to 'just do it' – yet, when given the responsibility, found out the hard way that

planning and preparation are necessary. Beki was also clearly hurt by the response by the orphan to his help, but saw the larger picture and determined to carry on.

Dixon then asked, "How do you deal with difficult people? People feel it when you sideline them. Actions speak louder than words. Sometimes it's counterproductive. They can feel your anger. They then become the devil's evangelist. We need [Maxwell's Law of] the Buy-in: people need to be persuaded as to why something needs to be done. It's good to throw people in the deep end. They will understand why the pastor is saying things and they come back to find out how to do it properly.   I thrive under criticism."

Responding to Beki's team mate who criticised but then did nothing, Dixon suggests the leader, rather than getting angry, should seek to point out the advantages of doing something. But, sometimes, people have to learn the hard way. And, while criticism can often be hurtful, it is often useful.

Picking up on the idea of checking people's reactions, George described a situation he created: "I opened the tap [at Church] just a little and stood back to watch. The ones who noticed the dripping tap and turned it off, I then wrote their names down. These will be good leaders.   [There's] another test, like a competition: the one who comes tops, I give an opportunity to lead. Most of my 'guys' are good leaders now. Creativity is the fuel that keeps us moving."

Responding to this and Dixon's earlier comment, Dawson said, "I have a problem when people don't see that changes have been made. They're not leadership material. The effective leader needs to notice things. Even if it's only for correction. A good sign of leadership is to be prepared to move in spite of criticism. Criticism also makes us check ourselves.

Joyce stressed the recurring emphasis on relationships, almost at the expense of everything else: "This is also related to relationships. The organisation [itself] becomes less important than these." This would explain, for instance, why senior and middle managers sometimes do not do what they are required to in certain situations, even though they know they should and are harming the organisation by not doing so. But relationships are paramount!

Chris added yet a related dimension of fear: "Some people are afraid of risk – of harming relationships; it's all about influence." The suggestion here is that, while the risk and fear factors are present, effective, properly motivated influence can minimise the perceived damage.

Although much of this last question was answered in the context of criticism and problems, I followed it with the next obvious issue: How is creativity developed? Are deliberate links between creativity and problem-solving presented to facilitate skills-building? I tried to illustrate the fundamental point with a story. Several years ago, a missionary colleague related an interesting account of how his four-year-old son and the four-year-old daughter of some Shona friends were occupying themselves on the lounge carpet while the adults chatted over tea. He observed that his son, engrossed in his toys and constantly active, was exploring, testing and curious. Meanwhile, his 'girlfriend' merely sat on the carpet doing nothing; she didn't even attempt to play with the toys. The son's father pondered this distinctly different approach and attitude to play by the children. I, too, have often wondered, then, what drives inquisitiveness, challenge and questioning. As I asked the group, there were several responses.

George commented, "The old Africans didn't allow their children to venture out, to explore. When mother looked at you, you knew what it meant. As children, we were never allowed our rights. But now you have a 4-year-old child telling her father that she will stay in South Africa – without her parents! I wish I'd grown up in these days! We were so oppressed. Creativity has to be encouraged," he went on. "When you repress it today, tomorrow they will be reluctant. If they mess up, tell them nicely." I added that in my father's generation, the philosophy was: 'Children should be seen and not heard' to which he readily agreed.

But Chris was not satisfied: "But why did your parents do that to you, George?" "This was dignity," he said. Chris went on, "Children today ask questions we would never ask." He gave an example of his son playing with a water pistol and he tried to explain about the wastage. "Why, Dad, what's wrong – there's plenty of water," his son responded. "So we sat down and had a discussion to explain the shortage of water. When they grow up, they're better able to understand."

Dawson agreed that play is one of the factors. "Creativity in the rural areas is developed in the same way. We'd make wire toys; you start from scratch and make what you want. Girls would do "cooking" from mud. We'd make all sorts of things from nothing."

Beki, acknowledging the value of modernity, was nevertheless cautious: "Technology is also affecting creativity. I value it, but if we allow it to bring up our children, at the end of the day, they won't be the best that we want them to be. For example, you get into a home situation [where you see] the parents are busy doing their own things while the children are doing their thing. There's no communication. Creativity comes from nature. We need to take the children out to see nature. Today, kids can tell you the latest movie or Internet thing, but they

don't know the local wildlife. They're growing up very fast, and we become afraid of what will happen tomorrow. We need to learn from what is there – the natural world. But [this technology] is also a problem – look at pornography on the Internet – we need to monitor them."

Joyce, with a different perspective, said, "As a mother, I've discovered a child can be creative using anything in the house. The important thing is for parents to realise they have a role to play. Give them responsibility; show them things."

In wrapping up this point, Dawson commented: "Culture is also very dynamic. We need to treat our children in this context. In today's world, if I don't structure a proper holiday with my family, I'm in trouble. The traditional 'holiday' in the rural areas makes me more tired because I'm constantly solving other people's problems, working in the fields and so on. My wife is working [in town] and sometimes, she comes home very tired and I offer to do the cooking. Sometimes, we have to go away as a family. Everyone looks forward to that. But in ministry, it takes discipline. We shouldn't raise our children in the way we grew up, but we need to change with the times."

Beki and Dawson, in particular, drew out the need to adapt to the times. Culture should be dynamic; it should help the current situation, not hinder it. This, of course, means that worldviews change as well.

Moving on from there, and picking up on the prior emphasis on people and relationships, I next asked: In a relation-oriented environment, are people "used" – considered a 'return on investment'? Is this considered an abuse and, if so, is that sense of abuse minimised in any way because of the emphasis on relationships? I raised this question because, despite the stated value of relationships in so many instances, my own experience is that some people abuse the relationships they have for their own ends. I related how I worked for a Christian man in Harare some 20 years ago. His philosophy was: Because the person I'm dealing with is a fellow Christian, he is obliged to give me a special deal. He based that on Scripture (e.g. Gal. 6:10), but I understood his approach as misconstruing the intent; such an attitude is an abuse of the relationship.

George picked that up: "There's no free Christmas party. If you're invited, there's always a pay back." He then related how people in the business world are often invited to parties with the express intent – especially at Christmas – of buying them presents and flattering them to elicit contracts or business deals. "But it should be different in the Christian realm. We should love the other person without any hidden agendas."

Joyce tried to balance the perspective: "But you also have God-given wisdom. There is opportunity for others to assist me." While that is true for the Body of Christ, when the relationship is deliberately sought with a scheming motive for gain, it comes very close to abusing the other person.

Beki related his experience: "Even pastors get into this; they get alongside someone; [they think,] 'As soon as I have what I want, that's the end of the relationship.' I once refused to do a funeral. My senior pastor was this person's friend. I told him, 'You should go to help; he is your friend.'"

In summing up, Dawson commented: "I'm in a multi-cultural church. We use English. One of our (white) leaders had a close relative who died. I went to see him [just] because I knew him. But someone may have thought I had an ulterior motive in doing so. We have such communities all over the world. Depending on your view, you can assume that one group is taking advantage of another. This requires spiritual maturity. We can be carnal if we're not careful."

The last question in this section was an attempt to explore some of the negative aspects of leading; in particular, conflict and criticism. In asking how they react to conflict, I laid out three typical approaches:

    a. Traditional – it's dysfunctional, therefore avoid or eliminate it

    b. Behavioural – organisational conflict is inevitable; accept it;

    c. Interaction – deliberately stimulate it to promote improvement, change

Dawson said: "(a) is not good leadership; you'll never correct things [that way]. [But, often, we think:] 'We are 'men of God' – we don't want to listen to others because we think God has spoken to us."

Dixon chose b and c. "C needs to be done very carefully; when you stimulate you should be able to manage it. If you overstep, you may create more disaster. People have different backgrounds. Your choice here depends on the type of leadership you have. If it's dictatorial, you'll tend to use the traditional approach. But if you see this as building people, you'll have a different approach. You should separate the idea from the person. I accept constructive criticism."

Beki added another dimension: "Sometimes, people get involved in cold wars or silent wars. They're not verbally communicating. They're avoiding each other, but they're pained. For *makiwas* [whites]*,* they're honest. For example, if you give a bad sermon, they'll tell you, but in our culture, I won't say anything directly, but I'll not give them another opportunity to preach

again. That's the traditional approach." He then explained a conflict situation at his church. "We had children join the worship team (uninvited). As I thought about it, I realised it wasn't right. As we discussed it, some supported it; some were against. Now, the team leader wasn't happy about the children leaving. I wanted them out (after all, can children be expected to understand the deeper purposes of worship?) But the pastor's wife (a Sunday School teacher) didn't like that, so she influenced her class. So there was this conflict between her and the children. Then the children's families got involved and it ended up [with them] taking their children elsewhere. They saw the leadership as using the children to fight their battles. But simply moving away won't help; nothing will be sorted out by itself. You can't sweep things under the carpet; you need to confront."

The group, generally, was agreeable that the 'traditional approach' is not appropriate. Yet, why, then, is it "traditional"?

The issues presented in the Leading discourse, show once more a primary concern for relationships, together with a fear that these will somehow be harmed. We also see worldview and personality working hand in hand.

1.2.1.6 Controlling –

Given the primacy of relationships in both Shona and Ndebele cultures, together with the fear factor as identified earlier, the issues of supervising, monitoring, evaluating and measuring take on extra significance. It is questionable, however, whether these technically belong under Leading, since the normal expectation is that the 'leader' would do them. I have chosen to place supervision under Leading (see previous responses to this topic above) and have left monitoring, evaluating and measuring under the factor of Controlling because I think these are more administrative than about leading. Again, however, I accept that, depending on the need, the 'leader' may well be obliged to take corrective action – even, perhaps, against the administrator! Therefore, I recognise this is a moot point, and would not want to be dogmatic about it.

Questions come to mind such as: Are these elements incorrectly understood or merely poorly defined? Are these dynamics adequately communicated as expectations? If not, why not? Given the fear factor, enhanced by the strong, inherent desire not to harm relationships at any cost – even when the organisation, apparently, will suffer – how are these dynamics tackled? What are the underlying assumptions – and how are these shaped by worldview?

Again, this segment of the dialogue was changed from the original intention. I had intended to approach it as a topic on its own as one of the group sessions. But, as noted earlier, the

group suggested a change in approach to a single, retreat session. Since I had not finished this topic by then, it was covered in the single session along with the last topic of this Chapter and the material for the next two Chapters. Also, rather than discuss the specific questions as in the first topics, I coalesced them for this one as well and sought, through the broader queries, to uncover the more specific issues as they came up in the dialogue. Hence, there were three segments to this topic: monitoring, measuring and evaluating. At the same time, there are some general, background issues needing clarification first before we could look at any details. Hence, I began with some miscellaneous questions as an introduction to this factor.

Moreover, I had not given as much attention to the topic of Control in the individual conversations because I felt the responses would be more helpful if I garnered them within a group setting. Thus, I merely 'introduced' the factor then, expecting to draw out more discussion later from the group meeting. I also wanted to confirm the primacy of relationships, recognising the impact of this aspect on this particular factor, yet without assuming it as a given. This explains the 'new' questions in this part of the dialogue that were not covered in the individual interviews. In the first part of this interview (covering 10 of 18 questions on the topic), only four of the group were present.

We began with some general questions about job satisfaction, authority and professionalism. In order to establish some connection with worldview, I began by asking whether the element of appeasing the spirits shapes the ways we measure, monitor and evaluate. At first, this caused some confusion and I had to explain the question a little further, differentiating between appeasing the spirits in ceremonies or in terms of daily interaction and decisions. It was the latter I was referring to and after this clarification, Dawson commented:

"Everyone believes in the spirit world, but we believe differently. I believe they exist but, as a Christian, I'm not obedient to them. To answer the question: No. The spirits are there, but I'm not affected by them. But my neighbour would probably be influenced [by them]. Because of their [the neighbour's] obedience to them [or] faith in them, the way you measure, monitor or evaluate would be affected. With a leader, the assumption is that he realises the people are influenced and so he takes that into consideration. Whatever happens on the ground influences what happens; the spirit world influences the physical world. The spirits are forceful, aggressive and dictatorial. They don't allow people to use their mind. You cannot negotiate with them. But the Spirit of God is a gentlemen; He doesn't force himself on man. If you didn't do your assignment because of the Spirit of God, I can't accept that. But if you are under the control of the spirits, then I have nothing to say." In other words, for the African

Christian, there is a clear distinction between being aware of the spirit world and being influenced by that world on the one hand and being influenced by the Holy Spirit on the other.

With that in mind, I then asked whether *ubuntu/unhu* says anything in this area. Dawson again jumped in: "Suppose you say to me as a leader, 'Does *ubuntu wami* control these, my subjects?' Then, yes, this says something. Sometimes a leader fails to control because he feels it will compromise his [sense of] *ubuntu*. If his personality is 'cool' he will approach it a certain way."

But, once more, there was some confusion, as it became apparent that all four of the team understood the question to refer to a group (or congregation) setting. This natural assumption on their part highlights the almost automatic, subconscious focus on community, a crowd, a collection of people. But when I explained that I was referring to measuring, monitoring and evaluating individual workers they collectively reassessed the question and their intended answers. (Perhaps I should point out here that I was not deliberately thinking about my own worldview but about the work setting between the 'employer' and the 'employee'.) At this point, Dawson said, "Personality determines how I approach the person," while Joyce commented, "Culture is involved. Western [culture] is individualistic; [the] African is group-oriented. We treasure the relationship rather than performance."

George then chipped in with an illustration from a recent conversation on an E.T. (emergency taxi, or kombi). He related how one person was arguing that only rich people get bank loans. If your father is wealthy, you are likely to get the loan. But if you have a good idea but come from a poor family, you won't get the loan. Everyone seemed to agree with this conclusion – that the relationship counts – until the other person, getting out of the vehicle said, "OK, I'll just buy the bank!" [Laughter] Dawson added: "So, it's the idea, not the relationship [that counts]." Interestingly, this remark did not elicit any other response.

We then moved on to needs and job satisfaction. I asked, how important is it to satisfy needs? What needs do you typically seek to satisfy (a) Your own? (b) Others? Do you agree or disagree with, for example, Maslow's hierarchy? Or other approaches? Why? Is there a link between satisfying personal needs and ethics toward the job/organisation?

Speaking generally, Chris observed that "There must be some acknowledgement [of the work done]. For example, at the end of the year, [you should] sit down with the person and give them some encouragement – perhaps a letter – it means a lot."

More specifically about her own needs and satisfaction, Joyce said, "This is about reaching self-actualisation [*a la* Maslow]. That would affect performance on the job. For others, the

tendency has been to focus on basics (for example, bus fare, household needs and so on.) But when you analyse your workers, you can have some who will stay for years despite low salaries because they have a sense of being needed; being wanted is important."

Dawson affirmed this: "It's good to love them and show appreciation, even in front of the congregation. The vision is yours, but they're supporting you in that. It's good to support and encourage them."

George added another dimension: "In the cults, people are so committed that they sacrifice themselves for the cult because their needs are met. So, if you know how to meet these needs, people commit themselves." There was general agreement with this notion. The recognition, then, of the importance of meeting needs and of satisfaction was clear.

Turning the conversation to the spiritual, I then asked whether as a Christian, the need to satisfy God and being satisfied by Him comes in here. Chris volunteered: "It depends on the leader – how you set the standard for people to follow. If I do things in a lax way, people will follow, [but] not necessarily agreeing with the way I'm doing it. As a leader you have to set the standards. So, we talk about training. But much of this is about your own conviction as a leader. What do you use to measure, to evaluate? The Bible talks about the pastors and teachers being gifted to equip others to do the work. So the way you pass on the skills and motivate others to do the work is crucial.

Following this up, Dawson noted: "Sometimes, Christians in general want to satisfy God, but I was thinking that the average Christian is thinking more about getting from God than serving God. He serves God more on the basis of benefits to or for himself. Even our commitment [is questionable at times]. We serve God, we are committed to Church and God, not because of Him, but because we hope to get from Him."

George: "Once you have the sense of satisfying God, you become an apostle." [Laughter.] He was saying that a personal sense of being satisfied can sometimes be used (or abused) to claim unwarranted position, power or prestige – and few people are willing to question it.

Next, I asked about the appropriateness of rejecting requests or orders. 'When might it be appropriate not to accept someone's authority/orders? When is rejection of authority inappropriate?' I raised this issue in the light of some (Western) business thinking that suggests the person who can respond (to a superior's request) has the real power because they can refuse. Given the worldview factor of relationships, I wanted to check whether this is culturally acceptable. Almost universally, the group responded negatively. Dawson reacted strongly: "[It's] very inappropriate. Only when it contradicts the faith. But when we are

together, this is very inappropriate. Rather than direct rejection, you can offer alternatives. In a church set-up, there are other factors. This situation would require other things to be done (for instance, discipleship; [or] step them down from that leadership because they are hindering growth – which I am responsible for before God. So, we discuss, negotiate." Chris quickly added: "The key here is negotiation. Let's talk about your skills."

George contributed a personal illustration: "When I was in secular work, I was over many who were older than me. They refused to do something, so I fired them. But when we went for the Church service, we had problems [with some of them who were there]. [Laughter.] So, I confessed to God and decided not to fire them. The following day, they had all gathered and I forgave them. (See below, on 'Monitoring'.) [But] if the order is against my conscience, then I have to refuse." He went on to suggest that, in an important situation, such as a fire, there would be an expectation to help put it out.

Joyce added further insight: "Where someone has a specific gifting, you may refuse because you don't want to be a square peg in a round hole." In other words, where the request is inappropriate and the person's expertise suggests an alternative approach or a better decision would be more beneficial, a (polite) refusal may be in order.

Then I moved to another important issue in sound administration: professionalism. I asked if this is only a modern (that is, urban/office) concept? Interestingly, the group was unsure about what this entails – despite all of them being in professional positions. George began by speaking about types of work as 'professional'. When I prompted that attitude has more to say to this factor than the type of work, the group all agreed. Joyce then defined professionalism as "Doing the right things in the right way at the right time." The rest of the group concurred. For confirmation, I asked whether there would be the same attitude and sense of expectation in a village setting as in an urban one; is this relatively determined? The group all agreed that the attitude is all-embracing, irrespective of the type of work or the environment.

This observation, of course, raises some important questions about expectations of both leaders and followers. If the general attitude behind professionalism is understood and expected, why does it seem to be lacking in so many instances where administration is weak or problematic? What can be done to strengthen this area? Given the group's response, I suspect that the twin dimensions of education or awareness and of personality are the major factors at play here.

From there, we moved to the theme of measuring and I asked a related question about quality. Are there worldview factors determining quality? Is this defined culturally? Does the concept and definition of quality change as one shifts from an agrarian setting to an urban, technical one? Is quality relative?

Joyce opened the discussion on this one: "This depends on what you're talking about. If you're talking about a laptop, there will be specifications so [that] it works the way it's supposed to. When you're talking of people, you're talking of productivity; of discipleship. It [quality] also has to do with excellence."

Dawson quickly followed up: "It's not relative, although the things we measure may be different. The rural guys can make a fence using poles and branches and do a very good job. But you can't have this in town; you have to do it differently. But still quality is there." However, while he pointed to the setting and resources impacting on how a job is done, he did not consider the factor of sophistication or, even, better quality materials in an urban setting (often because there tends to be more money available and a better choice.)

In considering the question of what quality is, George responding to Joyce's comment, proffered: "Excellence is a higher value. For example, you can have two farmers: one produces poor quality maize – you can see it's not good; the other produces maize of a higher quality and you can notice the difference." He added: "Quality is about meeting the standards." The group affirmed this illustration and there was general agreement that quality is measurable, even though what is measured and how may differ from setting to setting.

This led naturally to the question of how one measures, both activities and people, both formally and informally. I also asked about perfectionism and whether any of this shaped by worldview.

Chris said he looks at the outcome. "I want to see something that is well organised, performed according to plan; [that is] orderly. I tend to be more of a perfectionist. I want to see high standards. [How do you handle people who do less than expected?] I have to admit I have struggled. As a Christian, I have to respond accordingly. I've had to learn there are other factors to take into account. What kind of people are you working with; what qualifications and skills do they have? Are my expectations in line with their abilities? You just have to know the people you're working with. Otherwise it's difficult to measure the quality of activities. You would expect more from those who have been trained and have the skills." For Chris, as a perfectionist, his measurement of others would be against himself and his own expectations – but at least he recognises this may not be a fair estimation since skills

and abilities differ. While he acknowledges the difficulties in measuring, this is probably due to a lack of clear-cut, deliberate standards. For most people, this is a problem since, unless one's work demands such conscious, deliberate evaluation on a regular basis, we do not typically think about the specifics of how to measure any given situation.

By contrast, Dawson said he is not a perfectionist. "But I do get offended if things are not done perfectly. If you are not a perfectionist, you are aware of the issues affecting the performance and there would be flexibility." He added that he is not lax, but he is happy to work towards perfection rather than demanding it. This highlights the fine distinction between perfectionism and demanding high standards. The former tends toward an attitude about one's self and others (and, usually, their inabilities to match up), while the latter is performance based. Equally, both can be frustrating for those doing the work and being evaluated.

Joyce then commented: "A *laissez faire* leader [that is, casual, unconcerned] needs to be balanced." In other words, the laid-back approach should not be indifferent to quality. [So, is quality about personality rather than worldview? I asked.] Dawson suggested both are involved; one affects the other.

From there, we moved to the issue of monitoring and I asked whether the emphasis on relationships enhances or inhibits the responsibility to monitor job performance? Why does it appear that some people are afraid to monitor – even allowing the situation to reach crisis point? Interestingly, the group affirmed that the desire to maintain good relationships at the expense of correcting the wayward worker(s) may well lead to a decline in standards and performance over the whole. [See George's earlier illustration – on rejecting orders – when he fired some workers and then reversed his decision.]

However, Dawson drew a distinction between the purposes of the relationships: "There's an individual relationship and a 'political' relationship. [In other words, the value of the relationship and maintaining it can vary depending on the purpose.] This is about personality and leadership style. Bad leadership will bring repercussions later." While emphasising the importance of the relationship, he was nevertheless acknowledging that bad leadership – a matter of both personality and style – can lead to further complications. For further clarification, I then asked if any consideration would be given to the fact that, as the overall situation deteriorates (because of poor performance), the relationships themselves would also deteriorate. This was accepted, but it was clear from the general response that this aspect was not a main consideration.

Joyce commented: "It depends how the leader wants to be viewed. This will affect the way he [does or] doesn't want to ruffle feathers. If you're not afraid, then in the end, you do what you have to." George then retorted: "This is where training comes in: when you have a problem, you know what to do." Chris followed up with: "When people benefit from the situation, they will want it to continue." And Dawson added: "When you have an elite benefiting, they will always benefit from the majority. This even happens in church." This points, again, to the factor of motive in the relationship highlighted earlier.

Next, we looked at the process of monitoring and how this is done, both in terms of the leader of followers and followers of the leader. I also asked whether the followers are satisfied with what they see.

Chris spoke to an important trait in today's leadership: "The key is accountability. [We often think,] we are Christians doing God's work, so why should we be monitored; God knows, so why bother? But if we're operating as a team, we need to be accountable to those who are part of the system and whom you are serving. I find it helpful to inform others of what I'm doing and where I'm going."

Dawson followed this up: "Many times, seniors don't want to be monitored; they want to protect something. I've noticed it's difficult for my juniors to monitor me. It takes strong discipline for the senior to do all that he is supposed to because few would confront him. I wish there was a better system for monitoring seniors. There needs to be teamwork and accountability. This will always keep God's work on track."

Joyce agreed: "What happens now is a loose system that doesn't demand accountability. We need a systematised way of evaluating." [Is this a social, developmental phase, or are there issues blocking a move in this direction?] "It's an educational issue. It's also good for those in top leadership to be opened up; evaluation should be by consensus. When a leader is not open to the congregation for monitoring, then it's easy not to be accountable." To which George added: "Let people know what you're doing – [give them] your weekly schedule."

Although no-one actually answered the question directly, they all pointed to two fundamental issues in the monitoring process, particularly in Christian ministry contexts: That accountability is not as strong as it should be in many quarters and that more education is needed in this area to help both leaders and followers to be better stewards. It may well be that there are theological undertones here that militate against full accountability and the process of monitoring. This will be explored in Chapters Six and Seven.

I then raised a worldview dimension that has created problems in different ways: that of age and its concomitant of respect. This is particularly evident for younger leaders who, having just qualified from college, must assume the mantle of leadership over people who are older than them. In essence, it is their position that 'keeps' them in leadership until such time as they gain natural respect through the way they conduct themselves. A second major problem that many young leaders face is that their seniors often feel threatened and refuse to have them serve with them. While this particular issue is complex and has more to do with a proper sense of call, a correct theology of ministry in the first place, as well as personality and self-image, it raises significant questions about measuring and monitoring.

Beki commented, "In terms of attracting elderly people, this has meant some work. You have to convince them that there is something to learn. 'What can this youngster teach us?' In ministry, our authority comes from God." He then gave an example of a funeral he led as a young pastor. "Some older folk were sceptical that I would cope and thought it was going to be a disaster; but afterwards they asked, 'Can we come to your church?' They won't talk about it openly, but in public they appear not to worry. It surfaces when it comes to commitment with the older people in the Church. Sometimes they object to a certain activity as being 'childish'. But the idea of the Gospel is to challenge those cultural dynamics that get in the way. We need to be sensitive."

For George, it's a matter of position and education: "When Jesus came back to his home town, they couldn't respect Him because they thought they knew who He was. But you should respect and obey those who are over you. We need some education. Age gives power, but position also has power. The old man should assist the pastor, not the other way round."

Joyce chipped in: "If a pastor is younger, he will tend to attract younger people. From a commercial context, it's the systems that safeguard the young 'boss'. From an African context, when you have someone put in leadership when they are younger, the title or position has authority."

George quickly added: "My mother-in-law is also a pastor like me and my father. Sometimes, we may be talking about something and I notice my mother-in-law sneaking out because it's her son-in-law speaking. I also face the issue that I am now better educated than they are." To this, Beki added, "It's a struggle. My father-in-law and mother-in-law declined to stand for leadership in the church. But afterwards, he admitted that cultural issues got in the way. There is always resistance to change."

Picking up on his earlier story of firing workers, George observed, "When I was managing, I was overseeing three shifts of 45. There came a time when they rebelled. I had to put my foot down. I fired them, but then reinstated them. From then on, they respected me."

Beki then related knowing a pastor who, when he started, wasn't supported by the Board and four years went by. He then fired the Board and introduced new, younger people. The Church then moved forward.

Speaking of his denomination, George added: "We discovered that it takes two years before a pastor is fully accepted. We used to transfer pastors after every three years. Now we are saying he should be there for five years."

The remaining eight questions were subsequently covered as part of the group retreat referred to earlier and for which there were five participants. Again, this change in the conversational dynamic provided not just additional comments from the fifth person, but more dialogue among the group.

In the context of monitoring, another dimension is that of time management. When a job is not done in time, such that there are unfortunate consequences, what happens in a worldview setting where time is secondary anyway? What is the role of deadlines in such cases? Is there, particularly in the agrarian setting, the concept of "hurry"?

One of my students illustrated this question recently. Together with other students, we were on our way to another student's house to share our condolences in the loss of their two-year-old son. We left at 2:15 p.m. The first student remarked: "We have to be there by 2:30." Given the distance, that was not possible. So I asked him why. He said we needed to leave the house by 3:00 p.m. (It was anticipated that the 'service' would take about 30 minutes.) That sounded like a deadline, I suggested, and asked what it was for. He responded by explaining that there was a major championship soccer game on and he needed to be back to catch the second half at least. We all laughed. I said: "So, if you live in the city, you have deadlines, but if you live in the village, there are no deadlines – unless you're also watching the soccer." "Yes," my student stated matter-of-factly without realising the significance of it, "there's no such thing as deadlines in the village." "Oh," I suggested, "it seems that technology changes one's worldview and culture." Silence.

In response to the question, George related the following: "My grandfather used to say, 'When the first rains come and the ground is still warm, we must plant the seeds. If we wait and allow the soil to get cold, the seeds, won't germinate." There was never a year when he didn't harvest. So the deadline for us was to plant quickly before the soil got cold.

To this, Joyce added, "The rural areas do have deadlines – they are looser," and Beki affirmed, "In the rural context, time is loose. You first do one thing and finish it before doing something else. The urban worldview doesn't apply. You are event oriented; as long as it's done, it doesn't matter when."

And George interjected, "Don't have commitments on the same day. Educate the people politely, gently – and they will change. Then you can hold a stick to them. It's the way you approach them."

The last segment of Controlling has to do with evaluation and discipline. Evaluation (either formally or informally reporting the monitoring or measuring) necessarily must involve some degree of judgement or criticism of others. Where the worldview emphasis is on community and relationships, to what extent is such evaluation hindered or, even, evaded – to the eventual detriment of the person and/or organisation? If this is so, how does it negatively impact on quality and productivity control? What might be done to minimise the loss of benefit from, and enhance the benefit to, the person and organisation?

Joyce was first off the mark: "It's a skill you have to develop. From my experience, someone who is honest and candid tends to be more respected." The others agreed with this, with George relating an incident of "guys and girls having 'disappeared' [from Church] when I put my foot down about lax living. Those who came for counselling are now happily married. The others are starting to come back because they've realised the value of the discipline and counselling. Not all our leaders understand discipline properly**:** it's not to tear down but to build up. When I put someone under discipline, I give them a mentor to work with. This is benefiting the congregation who is also learning about discipline and its value. It helps when we discipline in love."

But what about when someone makes a mistake, how do you (a) as a superior; (b) as a junior, typically approach the situation? Are you primarily concerned with the person or the work that needs correcting? How do you evaluate (a) formally and (b) informally?

George quickly chipped in: "The problem is, we look at the person not at the wrong done. When we see the person tomorrow, we still see what they did, not taking account that he has changed. I believe the Gospel changes people. Having repented, we shouldn't dwell on the past." To which Joyce asked, "What about elders who do wrong?" "I haven't had any situation like that, but there are others above me who would probably deal with that," George responded. Joyce asked about senior pastors. Said George, "Seniors are always difficult. If you are senior, that's OK, but if you're junior it's very difficult."

"But it will be the organisation that suffers," commented Beki. "Rumours go around about our leaders that create problems. We need to find a way out. Perhaps use the back door approach to talk about it: without making it specific who you're talking about."

Related to this is the reverse aspect: How does one respond when they are evaluated – or even criticised? Again, there are different levels: (a) by a superior; (b) by an equal, (c) by a junior? How might one's worldview affect this?

Dawson was first to answer: "It depends how they approach me. Usually, we are defensive. If they approach me "well" – start from the positive and then show me where I've missed it – then it won't be difficult to acknowledge. But most people start with the negative. But then I feel my efforts are being watered down; my integrity is being attacked, so I'll be defensive."

"I agree," affirmed Chris. "It depends on the approach. It's also important to distinguish between the person and the mistake. If you don't, you make things worse." To which Joyce added, "It also depends how you say it."

"Yes," continued Beki: "It should be three compliments and one criticism. Build up their self-esteem first. If they feel they're a failure, they won't try again. Help them to be better in the future. Maybe perfectionists are too hard: if you blow it, you don't get a second chance." He then related the following story: "I was doing survey work for a Christian organisation. Our leaders asked me how one person was doing; I told them I couldn't work with him – he was results-oriented rather than people-oriented. I [also] told him. Later, he reported that I had done a good job – but he never told me." At which point George chipped in: "He needed training. Both the leader and the subordinates."

Picking up the last thought, Dawson recounted: "One time my daughter was very offended. She complained that I only see her wrongs and not her rights. At first, I was upset, but then I thought about the times I have complimented her and I realised it wasn't very often. I learnt a lesson that day."

Here, I raised a specifically 'Christian' question: Is there a distinction between the "secular" way you might discipline someone and the "Christian" (that is, pastoral) way? What worldviews come in to play in these two approaches?

Dawson responded: "Yes, there's a difference. From a pastoral point of view, discipline is important because it upholds the standards of a holy God. It also tells people that [the behaviour] is not acceptable. It is for restoration and correction. There was a lady in our Church who got pregnant but didn't tell anyone. My wife saw her after some time, three days before the wedding. We discovered she was pregnant. We only had time for one counselling

session. The service was planned during a Sunday service. I told her that we would discipline them then marry them. The boy is not a Christian, so we couldn't discipline him. We publicly announced it and asked the congregation what to do about her." The idea here, of course, was to demonstrate that the behaviour was unacceptable; action was needed, otherwise the wrong signals would be given. Yet, the approach was not harsh, punitive and exclusive but, rather, it was aimed at restoration. George added: "In our Church, even for a private sin, we announce it in the Church once it is sorted out." In such cases, the congregation can be discipled about right and wrong behaviour. While this 'public' approach – where appropriate in a church setting – may not apply in an office or organisational context, the pastoral, restorative dimension is clear.

While we are dealing here with Christian ministry and the expectation is that everything works smoothly because people generally do what they are asked to when they have to, experience tells us that, nevertheless, there are times when instructions are not carried out properly or promptly. So we must ask**:** What do you do if the person (junior/senior) does not accept the discipline or doesn't change? What dynamics concern you at this point?

George related two stories: "One of my deacons who had been promoted in his ministry, no longer reported to me. I tried to talk to him, but he couldn't change. I tried a second time, but nothing; so I kept quiet. Last night, he asked me, 'Pastor, why don't you talk to me?' I said, 'I've tried to correct you with the wrongs you've done, but you don't respond. That shows you don't accept my leadership. So why should I bother?' We talked some more and he repented. He told me about gossip and rumours about me. We showed that wasn't true. So now we're back to normal."

Then he gave a second account: "In a secular setting, if you don't do what I say, you're fired. I have a maid whom I encouraged to finish her O-levels. One day, she was offended because I hadn't told her I was going away. She started putting extra salt in my food (to which I am allergic). When we found out, we had to dismiss her because we could no longer trust her."

Following on from this, and bringing the dialogue on Controlling to an end, is the matter of force. This is pertinent in the Christian ministry context not just in general terms but particularly because most of the workers or followers are volunteers. When is coercion (for example, "If you don't do this, you're fired!") considered legitimate and, therefore, acceptable? What problems do you have with it and why?

Ensuing from the previous discussion, George retorted: "It would be different in the Church. If they are still adamant, you do it politely, but in the end it's the same. If you let the person continue, it will be very difficult later."

Beki suggested, "In a Church setting, firing is a last resort. Emotions and attitudes shouldn't be involved. It should be done in love. Some leaders hold grudges; they wait for an opportunity to get rid of the person. You should do it prayerfully and thoughtfully: If I was in their position, how would I like them to treat me? [Make sure you] have all the evidence. Discipline should be part of discipleship. After discipline, what's the next step? Relationships should remain."

Dawson, to nods of agreement, affirmed a prevalent observation: "Christians also take others for granted: believers take advantage of each other. They accept mediocrity; they don't perform to standards. But good ethics should be taught to staff of Christian organisations. Christian ministry is not a licence for slackness and poor performance." To which Beki added: "Even spelling mistakes in documents. They can't even be bothered to correct their mistakes."

Joyce (explaining a discipline case) responded: "We also went through that. As a Christian organisation, we had to go through our ethos and explain it to our staff. We had to make some major changes. First and foremost, we had to ensure the organisation is achieving its objectives; this was more important than the relationships we were keen to maintain. We realised that Christianity is a way of hiding things that need to be dealt with. By doing that, we were actually conforming to Biblical standards. We need to put in systems." Dawson quickly chipped in: "That's why the Bible says, 'Hold the rod and spoil the child'. We have allowed non-performing people to bring the Church into disrepute. In many Christian organisations, things are just not done properly and it's accepted."

George, tongue-in-cheek, suggested: "We should make our wives our secretaries" to which Dawson flashed back: "Then they'll hinder our ministry!" "But," he quickly added, "my wife knows me." Then, as a wife herself, Joyce commented: "But we think we are interfering in God's work if we say anything." "No," said Dawson, "You are our 'help-meet.' The man needs the woman's help; you are stronger than him in some respects. We have to let you help us. My wife says, 'I will never say anything to you unless it's to help you!'"

In wrapping up this particular conversation, George seriously observed, "If it wasn't for my wife, I couldn't be doing today what I am. I know where my strength comes from – my wife." [Nods all round and a coy smile from Joyce.]

Having considered the five-fold framework of administration, we now come to one more important dynamic that impacts how administration may be perceived and practised, especially cross-culturally in modern day Zimbabwe.

1.2.1.7 Political/Social –

This section of the dialogue sought to explore the impact of colonialism on the development of worldview, together with the potential changes after 26 years of Independence. As mentioned earlier, Africa is in social transition. These changes are largely because of developments in the political and social arenas and so we must investigate the extent to which these have influenced the shaping of the Shona and Ndebele worldviews in Zimbabwe.

The political and social history of Zimbabwe mirrors that of most of Africa and can be classified broadly into three epochs: early migration and settlement, with wars and slavery; a colonial period, often ending in guerrilla war in the struggle for self-rule; and the Independence era. Since my study is a consideration of contemporary approaches to administration, I will explore the impact of the latter two only. These are important dimensions, since the colonial period was typically the imposition of one culture and worldview upon another through both socialisation and education. Then, with the advent of Independence, there has come the opportunity to reassert one's own worldview on the way things are done. The fact that much of the colonial influence remains in this sense is not to suggest that everything about colonialism is wrong or negative.

For Zimbabwe, the colonial period can be said to have begun, informally, with the first European settlement by missionaries (such as Robert Moffat at Inyati in 1859) and hunters and traders (Courtney Selous, Henry Hartley) and others. The formal, more legislated stage could be said to have begun with the arrival of the Pioneer Column, under the aegis of Cecil John Rhodes and the British South Africa Company, that reached the capital, Salisbury (now Harare), on September 12, 1890. This phase of Zimbabwe's colonial history ended some 90 years later in 1980. This was after 15 years of a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) from Britain in 1965 and a 13-year guerrilla war (accompanied by international sanctions) and the granting of Independence by Britain on April 18.

From an administration point of view, we now have an interesting social dynamic: those currently in senior and semi-senior management roles are old enough to have experienced the negative elements of the colonial period and to have been impacted accordingly (both in terms of socialisation and their educational background). On the other hand, those born shortly before and after Independence, who are now entering positions of junior and middle

management, do not have the colonial influence behind them. While the older generation can speak with personal knowledge of colonialism and the liberation war, the younger generation cannot.   This has created two groups**:** those with colonial experience of systems, policies and procedures (some of which they have wanted to get rid of because of the perceived connection to colonialism) and those who are now looking further afield – particularly to the West and technology – desperate to build structures that will provide the lifestyle that Independence promised. Then, again, on the one hand, we have the older generation who have some experience of village life, while on the other, many urban youngsters cannot identify with such an environment. Moreover, the drive for more education at Independence (the introduction of free primary schooling and the building of more schools) dramatically raised the literacy rate and, consequently, the acceptance of and drive for more sophisticated lifestyles. All these dynamics have an impact on attitudes toward and the consequent praxis of administration. That these expectations at Independence have not been fulfilled for many due to the collapse of governance and, concomitantly, of the rule of law and the economy, as well as the endemic rise of corruption within the last seven years has no material effect on the praxis of administration. Yet, they illustrate many of the macro-issues we have been dealing with in this study.

A fundamental question at this point is, why? Why has governance collapsed? Why has there been a seeming rejection of *ubuntu/unhu,* to be replaced by selfishness, greed, corruption and a lack of respect and dignity? Why have financial institutions – as one very visible illustration of business – been allowed to get to the point where curators are called in for insolvency (with millions of pensioners' hard-won life-savings lost in the process)? Where were the laid-down policies and procedures, checks and balances and professionalism that should have prevented these crimes? What has happened in the national psyche to let the situation slide inexorably to this collapsed state?   What administrative principles have been ignored and why? As we examine these and other questions, can we avoid a repetition in the future? And, can we, indeed, prevent a repeat in the Church?

As with the latter part of the discourse on Controlling, this segment of the dialogue also took place within the retreat session and the questions were framed with that in mind. We began with the colonial period.

The first question was aimed at exploring the basis for the fundamental work ethic. And so I asked to what extent the original colonial work ethic (that is, working to pay hut tax; working to pay rent or send things to the family back home) has developed a negative attitude to work

that hinders productivity?   Why do people work?   How many are "just doing a job" vs. developing a career? How has the colonial era shaped *your* work ethic?

Dawson commented first: "One of the reasons we don't like work is that we have developed a stereotype of work**:** black workers were trained to work, whereas the master was trained to employ. People are upset because their lives are being exchanged. When my work makes you stinking rich, it makes me very angry and I won't work well.   But if our people can be trained to work in line with their talent and skills, their attitude will change. They won't be worried about the watch; but they'll be prepared to sweat."

Following on, Beki said, "Work is not employment per se. But through the colonial influence, for me to be productive and get returns, I have to be employed. But this mentality is killing people.   People should know where their giftings are, [in] the city or the rural.   So indigenisation has helped: they have realised they can do things themselves."

Joyce concurred with Dawson: "Ownership is a problem: Africans have been taught that they are not owners, therefore they don't have the right sense of responsibility. A job is working for someone else, not for themselves. Empowerment is crucial. It will take a lot to change the mentality. There is a tendency to do the minimum, as long as I do enough to survive."

This prompted Dawson, who followed up: "When a black businessman gets something, he spends it immediately. I must have things – so I remain at zero. Most whites are rich because of development, reinvestment. Our minds have been trained to get.   Our generation is part of the system; the younger generation may come with new thinking."

But George had a different view: "Work is holy. After the Fall [Gen. 3], work became stressful. The lack of enjoyment reduced returns to the minimum. Come the colonial era, the thinking was same**:** no matter your effort, you were never rewarded [adequately].   For instance, America benefited from Africans [as slaves], so now we need to be reimbursed through reparations. The problem is, when we have an extra dollar, we think of getting an extra wife." [Laughter.]

The next question was sensitive and the group responded carefully. I asked: "One of the frequent criticisms of colonialism in Africa is that it reduced self-worth, self-image and self-awareness.   How might this have impacted the administrative process? And did it stifle innovation and creativity in any way?"

Joyce began: "This is a major problem. I was watching a movie on TV on early colonialism. There was a rubber plantation in West Africa. Those that didn't work had their limbs cut off as

an example. Even in industry, the work doesn't give you a sense of self-worth. It categorises you. To come out of it takes a lot."

Dawson affirmed: "This is especially since you don't know what the end product is and its ultimate value. You see the 'others' driving fancy cars, but you know it's because of me [the worker]. That destroys self-worth."

"When you look at the colonial era, those who did the work were blacks. But it's the [white] manager who does all the thinking," said Chris.

Dawson acknowledged this: "Yes, but we're doing the same thing. I have been taught that I have to pressurise the workers. All my bitterness that's been building up must be vented against my workers. An angry man is a dangerous man to work with. Now, blacks are practicing more brutality than previous guys."

George then related his saga: "When I started work, I was paid $8 a week, out of which I paid $3 to college. My friend was then promoted above me and he pressured and harassed me. He didn't like me paying the amount to college. I wrote my exams and passed. One day, the white's toilet was messed and I was blamed and had to clean it up. Previously, I had rejected ancestral worship at home, but now I began thinking about it. I applied for leave and went home with my two new certificates. During the three weeks I was away, I was promoted four times. During this period, I also became a Christian. When I returned to work, I had to use a different entrance and, when I got back, the security guard wouldn't let me in. In the end, I eventually became the General Manager. In the meantime, my friend had begun stealing and I was short in my stocks; I had to fire him. When he was convicted, I paid his fine and found him another job elsewhere.   [Two whites – George's former bosses – died after he shouted at them for accusing him and blaming him for being black because they had been passed over for the promotions.] Then the workers accused me of getting magic while I was away on leave in the Eastern Highlands. Then the foreman died. [With all the pressure,] I wanted to transfer to another company. A white manager was instantly dismissed shortly after this interview. Now, on this particular day, my boss, the General Manager, called me in and shouted at me. Following the next weekend, he was struck with a terminal illness and again I was blamed. He accused me of doing all this since I became a Christian. I was accused of not forgiving people, so they were dying. I went to my pastor after work. He counselled me not to say negative things to people because such things will happen. He encouraged me to pray for my former boss not to die." Naturally, this story was met with some amazement. The immediate thought of the spirit's involvement (*ngozi*) was apparent with the rest of the group. While relating this story, George testified that, in the midst of these work pressures, he decided he

would shoot his former bosses but on the Sunday before he was able to get ammunition for a gun he had bought, he was led to accept Christ. That radically changed his mindset about his situation.

Responding to the Pastor's advice, Dawson asked: "Why? Yes, the power of the tongue, but not to that extent. So, why? How do we explain that?"

George attempted to answer: "I don't respond in anger now. While I was studying for my degree, a man in a church I was recently sent to wrote a letter suggesting that I should be transferred because I was at college while my wife was also working (this was supposedly against Church policy). Some other elders wrote another letter accusing this man of manipulating to get me. Later, he called me and asked for forgiveness. The 'hullabaloo' in the Church situation then died down." Here, George was indicating how his Christian faith altered his approach to both people and situations. Despite antagonism and unjust criticism, he had learned to respond in more positive, helpful ways.

The third question followed on: "Did colonialism in any way reshape the factors of planning, organising, leading and controlling as the social emphasis shifted from rural to urban?"

George began: "Our administration today is aligned to the colonial era. We don't know anything else; that's the norm." The rest of the group affirmed this as Dawson quickly explained: "Yes. But colonialism is usually seen negatively. Yet there is a positive element of development that may not be labelled as colonialism. The white man didn't only bring oppression; he also brought education. Is there a necessity to draw a line in colonialism? The Portuguese were definitely colonialists. But the British colonialism, while it had its negative side, there were positive elements, especially on the social development side." To this, George added: "The British didn't colonise you physically, but mentally. We were proud of 'my British'."

There is a sense here, it would seem, of 'better colonialism' versus 'worse colonialism' and recognition of some values of what was done in the former cases. From an administration point of view, the general agreement of the group was that the philosophical bases of the current systems, although initially foreign, are now understood, accepted and practiced as the norm.

We then moved to another topical issue: "Since the "born-frees" [a colloquial term for those born after Independence in 1980 but now unfortunately in some circles carrying derisive political connotations] are now in a position to develop their own work ethic, how do they

perceive productivity? Are the main goals the acquisition of things and the expansion of materialism? Does this enhance or inhibit the administrative process in any way?"

Dawson opened the conversation: "Materialism is difficult to deal with these days. But it's also part of the Biblical prophetic word about being caught up *"in the last days"* (see 2 Tim. 3:1-5). What I watch a man in London doing, I want to do too; I get caught up. We live in a global village. Today's born-frees have a major problem**:** materialism is a major spiritual problem."

Added Joyce: "It stretches beyond Independence. There are examples coming up of entrepreneurs and productivity. When I entered college, we experimented with many things. The Government wanted graduates who wanted owners of productivity. There have been several like this; they are focussed; they want to move. Many are CEOs. The period after colonialism has produced a new ethic and they are getting better by the day." To this, Dawson quickly added: "We must give Government credit for [the policy of] education with productivity. There was a good emphasis on working in this." [This emphasis, known as "education with production" was an attempt by the first President of Zimbabwe, Rev. Canaan Banana, to redress some of the imbalances of the colonial educational system that appeared to stress intellectual acumen over practical ability. Numerous projects, especially in the agriculture, were launched.]

Beki observed a slightly different perspective: "It's more of an issue of how we measure 'success'. The born-frees [tend to] put things up front**:** the size of the bank account and so on, instead of developing the person himself to be innovative, creative, with home-grown ideas. We see people sacrificing good jobs in Zimbabwe for street sweeping in the UK so they can get luxuries back home. Isn't that some kind of new slavery? I'm not against immigration, but we should move for the right reasons." [This comment was in response to the nearly three million Zimbabweans now domiciled outside the country in the "*Diaspora*" because of the political, economic and social crisis gripping the nation. Many families have emigrated temporarily to the United Kingdom while a growing number of spouses are relocating to find peace jobs to provide hard currency to send home to support their families struggling under hyperinflation.] His basic point was to suggest that the young adults of today are more concerned with materialism and the acquisition of things; this drives their innovation, decision-making, assumptions and desired results. Indeed, life in Zimbabwe today is about survival**:** every day people need to make plans to get the basic necessities of life; one's day has to be planned around incessant queues, shortages and having to make do. We are a nation of planners!

Hence, to the next question I proffered: "To what extent has the colonial work ethic hindered the drive to higher achievement? Does this still apply to today's urban young generation? What about the rural young generation and the development of higher achievement with them?"

Dawson started by suggesting that Colonialism doesn't affect today's generation, while Beki, bearing in mind the current socio-political crisis, submitted, "The key question is: Where is the country going to?"

George, following State propaganda, opined that it is the media that highlight the negatives rather than the positives.   [This conveniently ignores the fact the media merely record and mirror what is happening, how people are feeling and what they are saying; if much of that is negative, then that is what will be reported.] He went on, "With today's generation, few of us feel loyal to the country. The media is always negative about ourselves and our country. Our young people are affected by the media." While it is certainly true that young people are affected by the media in powerful ways, it is not the media that makes situations negative. Nevertheless, negative perceptions can influence the way people approach situations, make decisions and respond to others around them. So, planning, organising and leading may be affected by the environment.

Taking this a step further, Joyce commented: "There are limited opportunities. There are too many restrictions in Zimbabwe. So people see going abroad as a way of achieving what they cannot here." In other words, the socio-political crisis in many ways is inhibiting people from doing what they want in the way(s) they want. Many professionals, for instance, have emigrated out of frustration at not being able to do their work the way they feel it should be done because of the shortages of equipment, supplies, spares and so on. They are either unable or unwilling to make the mental, emotional and, in some cases, physical adjustments necessary to do their work. Standards have been compromised and, as professionals, they are not prepared to accept that. Under these trying circumstances, they have three options: (1) Continue as best they can, becoming more frustrated in the process; (2) Quit altogether and do something else; or (3) Leave the country to go somewhere where their career can move forward and they gain both satisfaction and expertise.

Speaking from experience, Dawson picked up on this: "While there are genuine reasons for leaving, 90% are moaning. I also went out for a short period and my wife was in the UK for three years. I didn't want it that way, but my need to get across to point B was urgent. My allegiance to the country remains unquestionable. Our people are outside the country not because they want to be. People may think this is not patriotism. But when you sweep a

street in the UK and get 10 times what a general manager gets in Zimbabwe, what do you do? But that makes them materialistic and they don't come back. It's a real problem. You work hard to achieve what you want and then you come back; but others get caught up in the materialism and then cannot come back. The economy is persisting because of the people outside the country sending money back to the country.   But why has this happened? Why has the nation vomited its inhabitants? When you go outside, you leave lots of people behind."

George made another generalised comment: "Our leaders were educated overseas, without consideration of our context. Now they don't have the resources to use their training." This, of course, begs the question, Why not? Why be trained in the first place if it is not for the benefit of society as a whole (as well as yourself in the first instance)? Can this be explained away as selfishness, short-sightedness or a lack of social consciousness?

Following on, Beki observed: "It's not about the education but about implementation. Education is a means to an end. I must apply or modify what I've learned." That, too, begs the question: Why is the implementation not there? Does that demonstrate a lack of planning, organising or leading?

Related to this is the propensity, especially evident in our politicians, to eschew accountability. Said Dawson: "Have you heard how our guys blame everyone else but themselves? But at the end of the day, it's me who chooses what to do with my education. It's very sad that we've developed this thinking." To which George quickly added: "Blame-shifting started with Adam."

He reiterated the importance of patriotism and loyalty and I followed up to suggest that the Church has a role to play, particularly in inculcating a new, positive culture and mentality of responsibility to society. I suggested that, as a God-ordained institution, the Church has an obligation to help lead society in the right direction, morally and ethically.

Commented Dawson: "One of our problems is that we have personalised it for a few individuals. If I don't sing the ZANU (PF) [the current ruling party's] song, I'm rejected. If I don't belong to them, I'm rejected. When someone goes outside the country and accepts me and my ideas, I support them. The Government has unwittingly created people who are unpatriotic. If no-one wants my work, I'll go elsewhere. This even happens in the Church, because of insecurity in our calling, in our understanding of the Gospel. So we lean on others. We must be confident of our calling and who called us. If I'm secure in my calling, I won't be threatened when someone disagrees."

Joyce picked up the theme of the Church's role in development: "I have noticed the Church has a very big role to play in terms of development; encouraging the young generation. The rural young are really needy. While people need the Gospel, we also need to be wholistic to help people to reach for higher achievement. There are several para-church ministries in the rural areas; this is one sector that has access to the rural areas right now. Christians need to work with these organisations to bring about improvement in schooling. Our calling now is to work to raise hope, to help those who are discouraged; to bring in resources so rural people can develop themselves."

But Dawson asked: "How does the Church fit in to that, alongside Government? According to Scripture, [the] Government is the custodian of what God wants them to do. So, is the Church supposed to do these kinds of works as local congregations, or should the Church serve through para-church agencies like World Vision?" Suggested Joyce: "It's a responsibility that we have within the Body of Christ; it's not about a particular channel."

Closing this particular conversation, Chris remarked: "I would like to ask our ministers: Why are they in that job? Is it selfishness and materialism? When my grandfather was working, did he have a nation in mind, or just his family? So what about our politicians – do they have a nation at heart?"

The fundamental point here, I think, is the recognition – on a variety of levels – of the importance of leadership, both within the Church and as the Church influences society. At the same time, the lack of action points to a lack of planning and organising for this; the necessary culture, expectation and consciousness appear not to be present.

So, from there, I moved on to a broader but related topic. I suggested that Africa has missed the Industrial Revolution with its evolving emphasis on design, precision and order. I asked: "To what extent has this played a part in her perceived underdevelopment?"

George was first off the mark: "Underdevelopment is deliberately done by the West. They are afraid of competition and want to keep us under their thumb. They take our resources and then sell back the finished product. You will not be able to buy the machinery to make the finished product." While this widely held perception is understandable, it is not factually correct. The question of Africa taking the initiative and turning her resources to her own advantage in such a way that the West can acknowledge the need for partnership on equal terms often does not seem to be considered here.

Dawson was quick to pick this up: "Yes, the Westerners have been very cruel in that respect. But shouldn't we dictate how we sell our materials?" Joyce then hit the nail on the head: "This

is something that really needs to be addressed to African leaders." Responded Dawson: "You are very right. But what about us? [Because] this is also in the Church. You see a missionary: he gathers us together and aligns himself to the soft one whom he uses to exploit the rest of us. He will give a 'token of appreciation' to him. We think things are working well. We don't see the exploitation. While we are being used, he is eating with the missionary." And George concurred: "That's why there are leadership conflicts. There is a Westerner behind the leader; he is blowing on the embers." Added Dawson: "This happens in the Church too. We need to teach our people to be honest." To which George concluded: "So our crisis in Africa is about leadership. We need leaders who when they say "yes' mean yes and not no."

Again, the issue here, perceived correctly I believe, is one of leadership. When leaders properly understand their role, the organisation (or the nation) is more likely to do and be what it should; what should be done is likely to be done fully and correctly. Obversely, when a leader does not do their job properly, the organisation (or nation) cannot be and do what it should. But it was interesting to note that, while the group focussed on the West's exploitation and on leadership, there was actually little consideration of the cognitive influences of the Industrial Revolution in terms of prompting innovation, planning and organising through design and precision.

I followed up that question with another, related one: Did Africa miss the preciseness of maths and so the ability to think exactly (you have to be exact, otherwise you are wrong; 'it' doesn't work)? If so, how may this have been mitigated through the Western educational system?

George commented first: "Development is a process. We must be careful about categorising Africa; other continents were also undeveloped at one time." While that is true, the question is still pertinent, however.

Joyce had a surprising rejoinder and supplementary questions: "Where would Africa be if there hadn't been colonialism? What do we mean by development?" As Dawson had pointed out earlier, Colonialism had both positive and negative elements and, although the negative must rightly be commented upon and, where necessary, condemned, the positive elements rather than being recognised, are often ignored altogether. He observed: "But the good thing is that, when I have the Gospel, my self-confidence is restored."

Commenting on a cultural practice, George noted: "The rich people [referring euphemistically to whites] talk about how to make money when they are eating at the table. But the poor people [that is, blacks] leave the children and wives to eat separately. [He was suggesting

that this cultural practice inhibits growth and development because there is insufficient exposure to ideas.] The Church should educate our people to talk together about the holiness of God, and then move to other things.   Who is teaching our children? Our maids. The Church should help our people to teach these things. About manhood, about womanhood. For instance, I started bathing with my son; I talked to him. At first, he was very tight and shy; now he is free and he is learning. We need to help our churches to educate our children."

Dawson: "But what do poor people talk about? Poor people are poor because they lack innovation."   Interestingly, in previous discussion, I had raised the question of whether innovation and creativity is impeded in a rural setting because of the lack of resources and opportunity for exposure that urban children more readily have access to. Then, the response was that rural children do have such opportunities and are innovative and creative.   So Dawson's latest comment begs the question, Does poverty limit innovation or does the lack of innovation necessarily lead to poverty?

My next question fitted in with this: Has technology and materialism propelled the younger generation into a more innovative mind-set than their parents? Does every new generation plunge forward in "development" the same way?

Dawson affirmed: "Yes, it's a combination of both. Technology helps to do it; materialism comes because I want it."

Beki agreed that technology has fostered innovation: "There's a negative side to technology, but the positive side has helped people to be more innovative and creative. You can do things much quicker." George added, but without elaborating: "Technology is a challenge for us."

Next, I followed up with influences on worldview: How might social and technological changes impact one's worldview?   For example, how does the modern generation, exposed to computer technology and sexual promiscuity, respond to worldview factors that clash with the values and expectations that these changes bring?

Beki responded: "Young people today look for the 'label'. This is not just clothes. We are part of the global village." In other words, they want identity, genuineness, choice and a sense of being part of the world.

Commented Dawson: "That influence comes from the media, especially the electronic. And most of this is Western. But this Westernisation does not change his [the young person's] identity as a Zimbabwean or African."

So how, I asked, do you think all this has impacted the Church?

Following on from the previous question, Beki elaborated: "Technology has changed the way we do ministry. As a pastor, we have to be in line with what is happening, especially in terms of young people. The Church is 10 years behind. So the way we do ministry should change so we can reach out. When I was doing Grade 7, I had no problem with girl friends. But today, they are asking about dates, going to the movies. Young children are involved (sexually)."

Dawson retorted: "That makes me sick. There's nothing wrong with technology. But tied in with it are moral issues. But if it creeps into the faith, it becomes a moral issue. We often put technology and morality in the same package; we should separate them. This is why there is no power, no effectiveness. It affects the pastor and all the leaders – including those who are parents who have the same problem at home as at church. So the whole Church is affected; it cannot produce the power of God; it's become like a club." Added George: "Our children's friends teach them; it's peer education."

Joyce also acknowledged the depth of the problem: "There seems to a generation of parents who are unwilling to speak into the lives of their children. So the young ones are getting lost. Yesterday, our grade one son came to me to say a girl told him she loved him. I asked him what he said. He told her he didn't want her to hear anything like that again. Last year, three boys at crèche were talking about French kissing and lying on top of each other. So I get really worried."

George counselled: "We need to be very careful. Not taking care is being completely irresponsible. What kind of children are we building? What parents are these who just allow their children to watch anything while I sleep? Leadership has a lot to do about being in charge of our families." To which Beki prompted: "What are we as pastors doing in our homes?

In response, George related the following story: "I have a young daughter. She told me one day that I was too strict. One day there was a movie on TV (our children don't watch if we don't watch it). This particular time, there was a very strict father who raised a daughter. She took it but it was difficult. One time, she sneaked out with a boy who tried to kiss her but she refused. But he told his friends that he had kissed her. The father was angry. Later, she got married. My daughter was watching; I was watching my daughter as well. She told me I was just like that father. But I think your strictness will work out well in the end. I told her that parents care for their children. Getting rid of this problem is so big because the peer pressure is so strong."

Highlighting the problem in a different way, Beki noted: "We have a group who are solid Highlanders [a local soccer club] supporters. They left a seminar in Church to go and watch a game."

Clearly, then, there is a chasm between what is normally expected of Church and the average Christian on the one hand and what some (many?) are actually doing on the other. Also, some (many?) pastors are worried about these developments. The issue, of course, is not the presence or absence of technology but, rather, the teaching of the Church and how successfully that is put across.   Is the Church, then, fulfilling her role adequately in this regard?

We have explored some political/social issues, both from the Colonial era and currently, and have identified some problem areas impacting the underlying philosophies of and approaches to the administrative enterprise. As I suspected, we have discovered that our environment plays an important role in the actions of planning, organising, leading and controlling and how we approach them.   These environmental factors are subtle yet pervasive and not easily noticed.

Before moving to an analysis of our group conversations thus far and to conclude this investigation of the administrative enterprise in a Christian ministry context, I shall comment briefly on one last important element in our enquiry (to be explored in more detail in Chapter Seven.)

1.2.1.8 *Theology –*

I had originally intended to cover this topic as part of the initial group sessions as the last segment of the dialogue and in preparation for a more detailed Chapter on this topic. However, with the group's suggestion to change the format of the conversations from the series of short interviews to one comprehensive session, and since Chapter Seven will focus specifically on the development of a theology of administration anyway, I subsequently decided to drop the responses from this section and move them to that chapter.

At the same time, two other contiguous reasons occurred to me for the change. First, I realised that the single retreat session we had planned would be insufficient to cover all the remaining questions. Second, since we had already discussed this individually (see Chapter Four, "Theology"), it had become clear from the shallowness of those responses that a more comprehensive input was needed to do justice to this section of our enquiry. Thus, I subsequently thought it would be more advantageous to have a second, albeit shorter, 'retreat' session just on this topic. That would allow for more in-depth discussion and provide

more substantive material for identifying and dealing with possible solutions (to be discussed in Chapter Eight).   Thus, a second 'retreat' session was planned with separate questions on this topic.   The responses to a theology of administration given in the individual interviews were picked up and explored in more depth.

1.2.2   Reflections on the Dialogue –

Having travelled down the collective road called "Exploring How Administration and Culture Mix", it is time now to look back and reflect.   Where have we come from?   What are some of the obstacles we encountered along the way?   What were some of the low points in our journey? What were some of the highlights so far? What have we noticed and learned?

These conversations provided an integrated, cross-ethnic opportunity to share insights, feelings and perceptions about administration, its praxis and the related worldview dynamics in a group setting.   The group was fairly balanced between younger and older, Shona and Ndebele; Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal leaders.   Having started with an all-male group, one of whom left mid-way, we ended this part of the dialogue with five men and one lady.

The intention of these focus group sessions was three-fold: (1) To highlight issues raised through the questionnaires and personal interviews and to discuss them collectively; (2) To provide a sounding board for participants to share insights and thoughts together, with worldview factors as the core interest.   My expectation here was that their varied backgrounds would bring a variety of insights to the conversation and thus flesh out the details.   Also, I anticipated that this would both filter out the inconsequential and to solidify or confirm the main issues.   (3) In collectively discussing key issues, the group may also consider possible solutions to problems identified.

On the negative side, I struggled methodologically in recording the first discussion.   I had approached this part of the dialogue with the same assumptions as the individual discourses, forgetting that conversations are not directed but free-ranging, with a statement by one sparking a tangential thought by another which leads a third to mention something else related but not duplicating the initial point.   Trying to match the comments with my questions was somewhat awkward.   Later, I amended the approach by focusing the questions and thus directing the conversation more narrowly.   Later still, I coalesced related questions into a much smaller selection and used the group's answers to stimulate more follow-up questions related to my original interests.   This helped significantly as, on the one hand, I was able to focus more clearly on relating the answers to the questions while, on the other, the group was more focused on discussing the issue at hand.

Another difficulty I had was reckoning the sheer volume of interaction in the group discussions. Initially, I had considered four interview sessions of about two to three hours each, dividing them between the core facets plus the Politics/Social and Theology topics. The breakfasts – an incentive to get busy pastors to take time from their day off and to participate in the project – while enjoyable, did not allow for the "formal" discussion/recording and so, although pleasant enough, were not adequately productive. Later, after I had recognised the folly of my first endeavour, the group suggested a different, more valuable approach. Later still, they suggested a joint retreat. Concomitant with these, I changed the strategy of my questions from very specific to very general. Decidedly, there was an improvement in both the usefulness of the dialogue and my ability to keep track of it.

A third limitation I experienced in terms of methodology was the assessment of the comments. I had no idea how to sequence the responses and interact with them. I thus chose to follow my questioning outline and simply recorded the answers as they came in the conversations. Since it has not been my aim to analyse the responses methodologically, I was not unduly concerned with that anyway. Moreover, my purpose in Chapter Two was to explore assumptions and the praxis of administration and so simply recording the answers met this need adequately. Later, for Chapters Four and Five, I changed the format considerably and allowed the group to "speak" to the issues they raised.

Positively, there were three major advantages to this approach. First, the make-up of the group – balanced in terms of age, ethnicity and denominational background – helped to achieve broader insight, contrast and, in some cases, interesting diversity. Although similar in most respects in terms of worldview, the points of differentiation and praxis were compared and contrasted more fully. This forced the participants to explain themselves more cogently, which enhanced the logic behind their explanations. By the time we reached the Chapter Five discourses, the group had a solid grasp of administration issues and were able to overlay their worldviews on those.

A second positive dynamic was that the group interaction broadened individual perspective, not only on administration itself but also on the interplay of worldview with it. The combination of administration and worldview was clearly not something that the participants had thought deeply about beforehand and, by being deliberately drawn to contemplate, explain and interact with others, their own understanding and appreciation was enhanced. A related advantage was the cross-ethnic exposure. While African worldview has many commonalities across its range of ethnic groups, there are significant differences to make comparison interesting. The conversations thus highlighted alternatives and personal preferences and

enhanced the recognition for sensitivity. Then again, the varied ages – and later, the gender component – made for yet another layer of appealing interaction and insight. All of this spurred motivation to participate in the project.

A third major plus of the group dialogue was the way it forced a change in approach to the conversations. Initially, I had planned very directive, select questions. As the group gelled and began to warm to the overall theme, their ownership of participation became evident as they suggested alternative ways of approaching the sessions. These ended with a weekend retreat that allowed us to concentrate quite intensely and uninterruptedly on the subject at hand. During this retreat, the (planned) shift in methodology between Chapter Four (first specific, then general but personal questions) and Chapter Five (group members responding to my questions and reacting to their peers' answers and stories, with a focus on worldview, plus my interjecting items of interest from time to time), proved most beneficial.

Having looked at the group methodology, we move now to a brief review of the conversations themselves. What, in essence, did we discuss together?

The first dynamic, of course, was Time. Here it was evident that there is no such thing as 'failure' in the use of time. Everything takes as long as it will. Nor is there any need to rush or hurry. After all, what is "late" if you are merely going to participate in an event anyway: as long as you get there before it finishes, you cannot claim to be late. Obviously, in an urban context, however, this mind-set has major implications and, understandably, creates some tension and frustration. It also helps a little to explain, somewhat, the *laissez faire* approach to planning. Another dimension covered was that of sequence: the focus on the past and the present impacts the interpretation of and approach to the future. I was surprised that most in the group did not seem to have as much of a problem with the long-term future as I had expected. Again, this may be connected to the nature of their leadership, although I am aware of others whose sense of future is very short and for whom strategic planning is difficult.

Planning, notably, was understood to be linked to the spirit world. Things are done in relation to or with, and not in isolation from, the ancestors and the spirits. Yet, there was also the recognition that the African world has shifted**:** the modern is not the old; the situations and settings have changed and, with them, the way we must do things. This calls for adjustments in thinking and actions. Alongside this, the group noted the availability of resources and the related need to tap into them to produce the desired results. The awareness of successful role models helped to confirm the point and provide encouragement that it can be done.

From there, we moved to Organising. It was significant that, collectively, a variety of skills were identified: An adequate consideration of resources (for example, people, materials and space, among others), recruitment, training, supervision and monitoring, communication, job descriptions, the (detailed) demands of the event, expectations of the participants, time management, training, example (coming from character and exposure) and forethought, attention to details, having a back-up plan or arrangement and being careful to avoid wastage. In this, we see related aspects such as understanding people (psychology), motivation, selling the vision, monitoring, verification and evaluation. The mentioning of this range of issues exposes the underlying recognition of the complexity of Organising. That, in turn, highlights potential difficulties as there is no guarantee that every leader has all or most of these skills or, even, is aware of them. Furthermore, while the role of worldview is acknowledged, we also see individual personality as part of the process.

Similarly, the issues presented in the Leading discourse reflect a complex raft of factors and skills connected to both worldview and personality. We looked at decision-making, judgement, logic, risk, bad leaders, *ubuntu/unhu*, power, creativity, innovation, change and conflict. The philosophical background of *ubuntu/unhu* became an immediate and major interest point, sparking animated discussion. Significantly, this was not introduced by any in the group, but once I had broached the topic, it clearly became the cornerstone of all future dialogue. This clearly confirms the notion that one's attitudes and actions are often dictated by an underlying philosophy (as part of one's worldview) that is taken for granted, not regularly articulated and assumed by everyone to be understood. Hence, the rationale for decisions and actions is not always explained. And, because of the complexity of the process, there may be problems intra-culturally, which are aggravated, of course, in cross-cultural situations. From a worldview perspective, once more we saw a primary concern for relationships, together with a fear that these will somehow be harmed. That worldview and personality work hand in hand was also evident.

The fifth dynamic, that of Controlling, covered the three aspects of measuring, monitoring and evaluating. In the first two, and as expected for this, it was clear that relationships govern the general approaches. At the same time, both worldview and personality help to shape the way a person does them. It was significant that the perceived need to maintain a healthy relationship may override the need to maintain a healthy organisation. While the group accepted this perspective, they were not as averse to it, nor did they seem to see the negativity of it, to the extent that I had expected. This may help to explain the apparent *laissez faire* attitude toward the larger whole (that is, the organisation), proportionate to the

prominence attached to the relationship(s).   Related to this, it was agreed that accountability and education about it require more emphasis.

Likewise, it was also clear that both worldview and personality play a part in how the leader effects control. While *ubuntu/unhu* shapes some of the responses, it is also dependent on the individual. There are universal 'people traits' – the desire for harmony, the matter of self-esteem, the need for careful criticism – so as not to offend. These are not specifically worldview factors. But, it was clear that, in their dealings with others, the issues affecting relationships were, again, of primary concern.

The last area was the broader perspective of the political/social environment. Here, we explored some issues from the Colonial and current eras, and identified some problem themes impacting the underlying philosophies of and approaches to the administrative enterprise. Their influence on the four main components of planning, organising, leading and controlling are subtle yet pervasive and profound. From a negative point of view, this influence is aggravated by their subtlety as we rarely consciously consider how our social environment affects our administrative praxis. It was noticeable that several questions in this section were not addressed directly; instead, personal experience was used to illustrate concerns in round-about ways to avoid causing offence. I was aware that, as a white Zimbabwean, I was automatically perceived as part of the problems of the past; yet my friendship with the group – as well as the formality of this investigation – allowed them to approach the questions more objectively and with less concern about how I might feel personally. On a positive note, these conversations were obviously also cathartic, since it was probably the first opportunity the participants have had to vent such feelings and opinions, doubtless shared by many Zimbabweans. As such, they were releasing frustration (and probably some entrenched bitterness) as well as raising internal issues and questions long ago repressed. They also had a chance to speak to several social concerns that, while impacting them either personally or for ministry, they clearly had not reflected on before. In such an environment, expecting them to clearly articulate "secondary" factors of administration while speaking to deeply emotional primary issues would, perhaps, be asking too much. All the same, the elements of planning, organising, leading and controlling came through in their stories and responses, albeit in subtle ways, impacted to some extent by their worldviews.

In this and the previous two chapters, we have dialogued – first through a survey (Chapter Three) and then individual (Chapter Four) and collective (Chapter Five) discussion – on the nature and practice of administration. In the last two chapters, we have attempted to address

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the specific question: What does administration 'look' like, both in general terms and, specifically, in the Shona and Ndebele Christian ministry contexts?

While "worldview" was briefly defined in Chapter One, we have referred extensively in these chapters to various reflections of it. Thus, we must now turn to a deeper consideration of this phenomenon. What is worldview in more detail and, more particularly, what do the Shona and Ndebele worldviews look like? Moreover, what is the Christian worldview and how does that interface with one's "natural" worldview? For these and other questions, we come to Chapter Six.

<u>Appendix 3</u>: Focus Group Questions

<u>Focus Group Questions</u>

1. What do you understand by, and how would you define, administration?
2. In your line of work, how often do you feel a tension between what you perceive to be the Western approach to the demands of administration and some typical African concepts and/or underlying assumptions? If you feel there is a tension, how does this typically manifest itself?
3. What concepts or values that you typically associate as "African" make modern administration difficult for you?
4. What concepts or values that you typically associate as "African" make modern administration easy for you?
5. Are there any concepts in modern administration with which you are comfortable?
6. Do you sense any differences between a rural, agrarian approach to admin and that of an urban, industrialised approach? If so, what are they?
7. What is efficiency for you? Why?
8. How would you define effectiveness?
9. Is it generally true that the ancestors are "in charge" so to speak? If so, does this not breed fatalism – that is that I can't change things, so why bother even trying? Is there a deep-seated, hidden fear that I shouldn't do anything until and unless it's absolutely necessary – just in case an ancestor (the spirits) direct/s otherwise or is/are offended? In other words, does my sense of the ancestors affect my decision-making in any way? Does this impact the way I view relationships in any way and, therefore, what decisions I make with or for others?
10. How important is the past for you? Your roots? Is it possible to see where you are going without knowing where you have come from?
11. What is the basis for the emphasis on the past? To what extent is this shaped by the presence and influence of the ancestors? Do the ancestors have any role in looking to the future?
12. In an agrarian worldview, time is much less precise than in an urban setting. But just how important <u>is</u> time in an agrarian situation?
13. If time is not as important in a rural, agrarian setting, can we speak of a sense of failure about the "when" of something not being done? Is there a "right" or "wrong" time?
14. Do you feel your use/stewardship of time has been influenced by an urban mind-set/lifestyle? How?
15. Are you aware of any proverbs that speak to the issue of time?
16. What makes a good planner? Why? Would you describe yourself as one? Why?
17. When for you is "tomorrow"? How far into the future are you comfortable? How do you respond to an "uncomfortable tomorrow"?
18. Since planning is largely a future-oriented activity, how do you typically cope with this aspect, especially long-term planning? Do you think this makes planning difficult for you?
19. Do you see this (planning) as a Western concept that you have had to accept, or was it already part of your African mindset? If the former, have you had to make any mental adjustments? If the latter, has this helped in doing it any better?
20. How do you personally approach the task of planning (fairly large project)? [I.e. Do you identify any steps, procedures or factors needing consideration?]

21. How might worldview affect strategising especially in the light of anticipating events, occurrences, tasks? Does the industrialised/technological world require a different process of strategising from an agricultural one (c.f. strategising for crops/animals vs. strategising for task development – e.g. developing a machine to do the job; working with people)?

22. Strategic planning [planning in view of competition, opposition] presupposes that planning as a concept is necessary and that competition exists to drive this planning. Is that a correct presupposition for other worldviews?

23. Strategic planning speaks of strategising and planning in a competitive environment. What does your worldview say about competition? If your worldview questions the success of others (e.g. going to the n'anga either to find out why your neighbour is succeeding where you are not, or to curse him so that he fails), how do you view strategising in this context? (If you are in business and see no problem with it because of your business training, to what extent have you been influenced by such Western worldview thinking at this point and how does this square with your African worldview thinking – for instance, in terms of *ubuntu/unhu*?)

24. Are there any proverbs on planning?

25. What skills make a good leader? Why?

26. How much weight do you put on subjective, intuitive factors in the decision making process? What factors do you recognise here?

27. What personal issues/factors do you recognise as limitations to your decision-making process? (How are these related to/affected by worldview?)

28. On what basis do you make efficient decisions? What "pressures" (e.g. of time) do you feel most acutely here?

29. Are there typical approaches you use for problem-solving? Why?

30. Many seem to view improvement for the sake of it as strange? Do you agree? Why?

31. How do you feel about uniqueness? Why?

32. Decision-making is about analysing alternatives. Can you say on what basis you do this and why?

33. What is logic for you? How do you typically measure something as "logical"?

34. How far do you see this differing from Western logic?

35. Are there elements in administration that frustrate you because they don't seem "logical"?

36. How important for you is the cost-ratio factor in making decisions? If you consider this issue, why? What non-economic factors do you take into account as part of the cost in making a certain decision? Why?

37. How do you respond to risk in decision-making? Do you typically take the "easiest" route to always avoid confronting risk? How do you assess risk and on what basis? How do you seek to minimise it? Does risk challenge you in any way? How/why? Which types of decisions do you consider risky?

38. What helps you to develop judgement skills? How?

39. If the community plays such a large part in decision-making, would it be right to suggest that management/administration, in some sense, is a collective exercise? Why?

40. In a traditional, rural setting, is decision-making by the chief a top-down "boss telling the people" situation, such that participation and innovation are suppressed? Or does the chief make decisions based on investigations of what the community actually wants, where they have an opportunity to think creatively about issues? How is creativity encouraged and/or acknowledged in this setting?

41. Does a rural environment, with its limited resources and opportunities, thereby limit alternatives and creativity? (c.f. children's toys & playing)

42. If past experience is the most common way of approaching decisions, does the transition from an agrarian lifestyle and worldview to an urban, technological one limit creativity because there is no experience to draw upon? In other words, is there one form of "creativity" in one social setting (e.g. agrarian, rural) and another form of "creativity" in a different setting (e.g. urban, technological)? Is the development of creativity limited because of the inherent limitations of the social setting?

43. To what extent has the colonial work ethic (working to pay hut tax; working to pay rent or send things to the family back home) developed a negative attitude to work that hinders creativity?

44. How much innovation is encouraged by an agrarian lifestyle and worldview? In a context where the spirits dictate much of life, does this not militate against innovative thinking to some extent?

45. How important is perception (i.e. the ability to creatively formulate problems)? How is it developed as part of the socialisation process (either as a child or as an adult)?

46. What helps you to develop creativity? How?

47. In moving from "traditional" rules and procedures to modern (neo-colonial, industrial) ones, how big a part did the colonial assumptions and policies toward Blacks affect their attitude to work and tasks, especially in the areas of innovation and creativity?

48. How do you feel about change? (Do you generally resist it, fear it or welcome it?) Why?

49. To what extent has the colonial work ethic hindered the drive to higher achievement? Does this still apply to today's urban young generation? What about the rural young generation and the development of higher achievement with them?

50. If productivity is viewed as a means to one's personal goals, has the colonial work ethic created an attitude that productivity is negative because it benefits the master? Since the "born-frees" are now in a position to develop their own work ethic, how do they perceive productivity? Is the main goal for the expansion of materialism?

51. Do you think the *Ubuntu/unhu* idea of conformity limits creativity? If so, what is the way around that problem?

52. To change the thinking about the way organisations function requires social innovation and change. How do you think this can be best achieved?

53. Can you think of any proverbs that talk about leadership and encouraging people how to make decisions?

54. What about proverbs about being creative?

55. How are various skills identified and encouraged in childhood? How are administration skills identified, encouraged and developed?

56. How do you feel about uniqueness? What encourages you/limits you in thinking unique thoughts?

57. What is your understanding of a supervisor's role: to facilitate the subordinate to do the work effectively and efficiently, or to direct the subordinate in performing the work itself (i.e. "interference", etc.)? Are there worldview factors that demand a show of power/authority here?

58. How do you view the elements of power/authority? Are these elements an asset or a hindrance in supervision? Why?

59. How do you feel about satisfying needs? Do you agree or disagree with Maslow's hierarchy? Why? What aspects in your work satisfy which needs?

Why? As a Christian, where do you see the need to satisfy God and being satisfied by Him coming in?

60. Does authority come from above because the superior person says (or has the position to say) something, or does it come from the subordinate who chooses to accept it or not? When might it be appropriate not to accept someone's authority? When is rejection of authority inappropriate?

61. Is the problem of an unwillingness to accept responsibility, while wanting the authority, a failure to understand and implement delegation correctly, or is it a worldview issue related to a lack of self-confidence (exacerbated by colonialism)?

62. How does the issue of norms and conformity relate to the worldview idea of the force of 'community'? What typically happens if the leader feels he is right but the group is wrong? Has the general approach to this changed/been affected by modern education and urbanisation?

63. If the concept of kinship [with upward and downward status] is strong, what does this say for the "boss" who may be younger or in a minor position socially but who, because of work position, must be obeyed? Does this idea allow for the ignoring of orders, rules, or policies because "I'm not supposed to respect this person"? How has the urban idea of the manager over-ridden the cultural idea and does this cause some tension? How does an older person relate to his younger boss socially (away from work)?

64. Does the subordination of chiefs to the paramount chief, and the patronage that comes with that, influence patronage in other areas too?

65. Is the system of patronage the result of the abuse of power or does the abuse of power result in patronage? Which comes first?

66. Does "legitimate" power always come from one's position? Why?

67. What role does reward play in enhancing power (relate this to nepotism & patronage)?

68. When is coercion (e.g. "If you don't do this, you're fired!") considered legitimate and, therefore, acceptable? What problems do you have with it and why?

69. To what extent would you say it is quite common for people to think of relationships and connections in terms of a possible "return on investment"? In a relational environment, are people "used"?

70. How do you respond to "political" manoeuvres, given the strong impact of relationships in your worldview? How do you typically deal with inappropriate conduct? How much of an issue is this for you in the decision-making process? Why? How do you relate to this in the Church context?

71. Are oral-oriented people automatically good listeners – or do they also need "assistance" (e.g., after a sermon or speech, someone usually summarises what was said.)? How has the introduction of writing (through colonialism) hindered or enhanced these listening skills?

72. Which approach to conflict do you feel most comfortable with and why? (Does it work?)
    a. The traditional approach – it is dysfunctional, therefore eliminate it
    b. The behavioural approach – accept organisational conflict as inevitable
    c. The interactionist approach – deliberately stimulate it to promote improvement

73. Which conflict resolution techniques are you most comfortable with and why?
    d. Problem solving
    e. Super-ordinate goals
    f. Expansion of resources

> g. Avoidance
> h. Smoothing
> i. Compromise
> j. Authoritative command
> k. Altering the human variable
> l. Altering the structural variable

74. Do you know any proverbs that talk about the use/abuse of power? Of control? Are there any proverbs that suggest how discipline should be done?

75. Are there worldview factors determining quality? How is this defined in different cultural contexts? Does the concept and definition of quality change as one shifts from an agrarian setting to an urban, technical one? Is quality relative (i.e. what constitutes a good quality [as opposed to quantity] crop vs. what is required for professional performance of a [technical] project)?

76. In evaluating performance, the characteristic of time is an important measure. In a context where time (at least mentally) is not considered important, what is the response to and understanding of the importance of deadlines? Where time is not important, what does "hurry" mean? In an agrarian setting where time is much looser and less specific, what is a "deadline"?

77. Evaluating, of necessity, must involve some degree of judgement or criticism of others. Where there is a worldview emphasis on community and relationships, to what extent is such evaluation hindered, shirked, evaded or played down – to the eventual detriment of the person and/or organisation? If this is so, how does it negatively impact on quality and productivity control? What might be done to minimise the loss of benefit from, and enhance the benefit to, the person and organisation?

78. If the ancestors govern the daily life of the living, and must be appeased for blessing and a fruitful life, how is this harmony restored/maintained if the ancestor was offended – perhaps even murdered?

79. Africa has missed the Industrial Revolution with its emphasis on design, precision and order. To what extent does this play a part in her perceived underdevelopment? [See the "psychology of change".]

80. Has Africa missed the preciseness of maths (you have to be exact, otherwise you are wrong; 'it' doesn't work) and so the ability to think exactly?

81. Might the attitudinal (worldview) factors that helped shift Western Europe from a subsistence agricultural society to an industrialised one be used in Africa? (Designing, building and using a machine takes a different mindset from that of planting seeds and nurturing animals.)

82. Would you agree that the five aspects of Respect, Dignity, Solidarity, Compassion and Survival constitute the basic idea of *Ubuntu/unhu*?

83. Would you agree that the four aspects of Morality, Interdependence, the Spirit of Man and Totality properly reflect the tribal values of the village community?

84. Do you think *Ubuntu/unhhu* is unique to Africa, or is it manifest in different ways in other cultures?

85. Do you identify these cultural values with the respective spirits:

Morality and dignity:	Rainmaker (*Gobwa*)
Performance and enterprise:	Hunter (*Shavi Reudzimba*)
Authority (know the truth	Divination (*Sangoma/N'anga*)
Power and conflict:	War (*Majukwa*)
Survival of self and one's group/Clan:	(*Mudzimu/Wemusha*)
Particular obsession, ability and creativity:	Wandering (*Shave*)

Bitterness, anger and revenge: Avenging (*Ngozi*)
Cynicism, negativity, destruction: Witch (*Mutakati*)

86. Do you think the concepts represented here play a role in our approach to work, people, things and how we relate to each of these? How?
87. What managerial/administrative/entrepreneurial opportunities and education (i.e. hunting) did you get as a child? Have they helped you in any way in today's modern world?
88. Could you articulate a theology of administration?
89. To what extent do you think this might be shaped by your worldview as opposed to Scripture alone?
90. Do you have any sense that your theology of administration is actually shaping your practice of it?
91. How might the issues we have discussed cause you to change the way you administer? What advice might you give to fellow Christian administrators?
92. Where does the Christian with his worldview fit in here?
93. Does the Christian worldview not have a role to play in helping to reduce negative perceptions and attitudes? If so, what does that say about the millions of Christians who are dissatisfied at work and need motivation because their Christian worldview is not being properly applied to their work environment? Is the Church, in fact, helping to inculcate a proper view of work from a Christian perspective? [This relates to the "Protestant work ethic" – but what is that, precisely; did it come from a Christian background to begin with, or was it something developed by "Protestants"?]

Chapter Six

ADMINISTRATION AND WORLDVIEW: Connecting with Culture

We have explored administration from a task perspective. We have looked briefly at what six individual Christian leaders think about it, how they do it and some of the problems, frustrations and tensions they face. And we have examined the topic in a group setting, where various church backgrounds, traditions and practices added further insights. In other words, we have put our study of administration into a specific social and operational context. In doing so, we have noted the dual factors of worldview and personality playing a part in how administration is perceived and done.

In this Chapter, we want to investigate two actual narratives and delve into the related worldview factors affecting what happened in each. First, we will consider Joyce's story and discuss the factors involved, then follow that with Beki's story.

But before we travel down that road, we must first get our bearings. In Chapter One, we briefly defined worldview as "the way we see reality" (Hesselgrave, 1991: 197). As we have walked together with the co-researchers, we have discovered some specifics about Shona and Ndebele culture and worldview in particular. But we must now consider in a little more detail what we are talking about when we speak of worldview.

1   What is Worldview?

1.1 *In General Terms*

Sire following on from his landmark work on worldview (*The Universe Next Door*, 1976), seeks to address some outstanding questions from that. In his latest work (2004: 100-101), he points out that most worldview analysts explain the concept by beginning with the notion that it is a "system of beliefs", "a set of presuppositions" or "a conceptual scheme", but then he asks whether this is accurate. "Does it not miss an important element in how people actually think and act? Isn't a *story* involved in how we make the decisions of belief and behaviour that constitute our lives? Would it be better to consider a worldview as the *story* we live by?" He argues that the Christian worldview begins with ontology which becomes story that is reflected in the Bible. "Indeed, the Bible is story – a history. It is these narratives that transmit the worldview."

He then goes on (2004: 122, 133-5) to posit a revised definition of worldview in two parts:

Part 1: (basic ontological definition)
A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being.

Part 2: (the fundamental questions)
[These cover foundational issues of ontology, epistemology and ethics. First presented in *The Universe Next Door* (1976), he stands by the original set, although he acknowledges that some would object to his exclusion of the aesthetics dimension.] The seven questions are:
1. What is prime reality – the really real?
2. What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us?
3. What is a human being?
4. What happens to a person at death?
5. Why is it possible to know anything at all?
6. How do we know what is right and wrong?
7. What is the meaning of human history?

While other worldview scholars may present the concept differently, I am persuaded nevertheless, that behind the definitions, there are necessary questions. At the same time, I remain unconvinced that Sire's particular set of questions are the main – or only – ones. This, of course, is a Western approach to worldview, but is still broad enough to accommodate minor approaches. Some worldviews may require additional questions.

Later, however, Sire acknowledges that worldview is culturally shaped and multidimensional. He notes (2004: 153) that worldview is two-dimensional in that it applies to both the individual (that is, private, narrow, specific) as well as the group (public, broader, vaguer). He recognises his approach is Western, having delineated seven worldviews: Christian theism, deism, naturalism, nihilism, existentialism, Eastern pantheistic monism, the New Age and postmodernism existing in North America and Western Europe. Then he continues (2004: 161): "But I do want to emphasise that these broad strokes both miss the finer points of our individual worldviews and somewhat misrepresent any one person's worldview. Even the way I have described the Christian worldview may constitute only my version of that worldview." Although he admits to not having considered the Islamic worldview – while pointing out its growing importance – perhaps it is unfortunate that he has not made any attempt, yet, to consider typical black African worldviews either.

As a contrast, Noebel (1991: 8) in his expansive work contrasting three major worldviews (Christian, Marxist/Leninist and Secular) suggests that worldview refers to

any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world, and man's relations to

God and the world. Specifically, a worldview should contain a particular perspective regarding each of the following ten disciplines: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics and history. [These distinctions are arbitrary since it is often difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish where to draw the lines differentiating them.]

As he acknowledges, these criteria are arbitrary and not everyone would see them as having significance. Like Sire, though, he is coming from a Christian perspective and, hence, he sees man's relation to God (and, thus, the concept of theology) as foundational. Some might argue that the dimensions of law, politics and economics, likewise, should not be delineated since they arise from the social interactions of the group. Nevertheless, they provide a useful grid with which to examine one's belief and value systems. Unfortunately, again, Noebel writes from a Western perspective and does not thus address the specifics of an African worldview. (To be fair, that was not his intention in the first place; he has presented a grid and compared and contrasted three selected worldviews.)

Nash (1992: 26-30) simplifies the defining process, suggesting that every worldview encompasses five key dynamics, namely a sense of God [or, in broader terms, religion], ultimate reality, knowledge, ethics and humankind. At the same time, he stresses (1992: 32) that, even though there may be disagreements among followers or critics of a given worldview as to the details, these basic categories still apply in principle.

Indeed, commenting on these disagreements, he points out (1992: 33) that:

> Whether we know it or not – whether we like it or not – each of us has a worldview. These worldviews function as interpretive conceptual schemes to explain why we 'see' the world as we do, why we often think and act as we do. Competing worldviews often come into conflict. These clashes may be as innocuous as a simple argument between people or as serious as a war between nations. It is important, therefore, for us to understand that competing worldviews are the fundamental cause of our disagreements.

This observation supports the current study which has illustrated the potential for – and, indeed, actual – conflict even in a field as prosaic as administration. Frustration with apparent disorganisation, a lack of time management, varying philosophies of leadership and, even, a fist-fight over fuel all add credence to this principle.

While these opinions provide a base for understanding worldview in general terms, however, our concern here is more specifically an African approach and, in particular, the Shona and Ndebele worldviews. But to understand those, we should first explain the backgrounds to the development of these two ethnic groups as far as Zimbabwe is concerned.

1.2 *The Shona and Ndebele Perspectives*

In broad terms, both ethnic groups have their roots in the Southern African development of the Bantu peoples who have emerged from the migrations southwards down the continent of Africa from about the Second to the Eighth Centuries. This means there are some fundamental similarities in worldview and culture, as well as obvious differences. A brief history of each will bring to the fore key elements of their respective worldviews.

1.2.1   The Shona Peoples

The Shona peoples make up the largest ethnic group in Zimbabwe. According to Mazikana and Johnstone (1982: 22-23), the ancestors of the modern Shona arrived in the plateau area of what is now Zimbabwe some time during the iron-age of the Second and Third Centuries. They settled in the northern, eastern and southern parts of modern Zimbabwe, spilling over into neighbouring Zambia and Mozambique. They displaced earlier groups of Khoisan (stone-age, hunter/gatherers) and pushed them westwards.

They were pastoral, subsistence farmers with cattle, sheep and goats who, with their iron implements, also engaged in surface mining. Other groups continued to arrive and migrate across the Limpopo. After some time, some of these trekked north again, arriving in the south of the country during the Tenth Century. As these eclectic groups mixed, trade in gold, copper, ivory, cloth and beads flourished, both internally and with others from the east and north. During the 11th Century, a state system was formed, headquartered at Great Zimbabwe (from *Dzimbahwe* = house of stone) a large social and religious centre near modern-day Masvingo that eventually became the economic hub of the region in the 13th Century. After approximately 400 years, it seems to have been abandoned probably because the area could not sustain the growing population. There appears to have been a movement west to Khami, near present-day Bulawayo, as part of the Torwa state where similar stone ruins exist.

As this 'exit' migration took effect, the groups in the north, under the growing dynasty of Mutapa, began to assert greater authority. By the early 1420s, they had merged into a state under this dynasty (Mazikana and Johnstone 1982: 38). With the arrival of the Portuguese in the 16th Century, trade with the Muslims declined and, with an oppressive, exploitative colonial approach, hostility grew. Another rising dynasty, the Changamire in the south-east, joined forces with the Mutapa in open revolt in 1693. Although independence was restored, commercial activity continued to decline and the Changamire state disappeared altogether. Eventually, too, the Mutapa dynasty collapsed and the successors became mere chiefs.

Mazikana and Johnstone (1982: 43) describe life in the Mutapa state of the 16th Century as similar to that of the 19th, *viz.*

> The richer men had many wives … the presence of dead kings and other leaders was maintained through spirit mediums; certain days of each month were set apart as holidays or *mudzimu* (spirit) days with feasting in honour of the ancestors; people carried *hakata* or divining bones or sticks and threw them for guidance in making decisions…. The Mutapa himself had a large court consisting of his family, counsellors, military leaders, officials of state, spiritual leaders and healers, and servants. Visitors would also be present: bringers of taxes and tributes from subjects and neighbouring people; Muslim African traders; Portuguese traders, missionaries and officials. At ceremonial occasions, sub-rulers would also attend. As for the military system of the state, there was a small permanent army. In times of emergency, thousands of men could be mobilised.

These background details help us to appreciate some dynamics of Shona culture and worldview in general. They briefly demonstrate that administration principles were understood and practised extensively so that this entire system could be maintained and be the influence that it was. But we should also mention some specific details. For example, Gelfand (1973: 101-109) speaks of the "teleology" of Shona culture, that is its end purpose or underlying objective. Simply, he says, this is to survive. He points out that the Shona have done so for millennia and this approach to life has allowed them to overcome the vagaries of change and calamity they have faced. He stresses that this teleology is subconscious, but can be observed in myriad ways. He emphasises that it is not the highest common multiple or lowest common denominator of the desire of any number of Shona individuals. He explains (1973: 101): "… there is in Shona culture something stronger than any individual or any number of individuals to which individual likes and dislikes have been subordinated." He continues (1973: 102-3):

> The imperatives of Shona culture might perhaps be reduced to three basic guidelines: 'live together', 'keep the peace' and 'multiply.' These guidelines reach out into every department of Shona life and they find themselves re-echoed and reinforced in that other all-pervading element of Shona culture, that is the familial monotheism of traditional Shona religion. … [T]en centuries ago, man stood at bay. But even then, if men united to defend themselves against a hostile environment, safety would be an illusion if the community were a divided one. And even then, if men lived together and at peace with themselves, what hope would there be for the survival of the older generation if they did not have a younger generation to take over from them the defence of society against the hostile environment? In the case of the Shona, survival demanded that even the dead should not pass away completely but that they should continue their service to the community as the spirit members of community made up the living and the dead.

This 'survival instinct' expressed through the concepts, on the one hand, of harmony and, on the other, of eschewing conflict in any form, illustrates the cultural emphasis on relationships and the way(s) people are treated. The *person* becomes central. Thus, from an

administrative point of view, time – an abstract concept to begin with – and its concomitant of punctuality, for instance, is much less important than the event where people are present and 'I' can interact. The fact of being there is the issue, not of being 'late'.

Likewise, 'keeping the peace' explains the tendency to approach tension or conflict situations, most commonly by keeping quiet for minor infractions, but also seen through the use of mediators for major breaches. It also helps to explain the failure to correct or discipline another correctly in a 'working' environment. (This is not to say there is not a culture of discipline; there must be for any society to survive, and certainly children and family members are rebuked when needed. The point here is the apparent reluctance to take action in the face of failure, misconduct or loss of control on the basis that the relationship may sour, but without seeming regard for the welfare of the whole – which may well involve even more relationships.)

Much like the fish that cannot define water because that is what it is used to, so the average Shona person is typically unaware of these underlying dimensions that breed assumptions and presuppositions and which lead to what are understood to be logical, 'obvious' practices. Hence, the difficulty my co-researchers had in not being able to verbalise the reasons for doing some things and not doing others.

As with all sub-Saharan African worldviews, the Shona and Ndebele function very much around their religious life. Indeed, nothing of significance happens without some link to traditional religion; everything, eventually, has a spiritual cause. Thus, the worldview components of cosmology and religion are critical.

Gelfand explains (1973: 110) that, while there are several names of God, there are two that are used most commonly: *Mwari* = 'The Great One" and *Musikavanhu* = "The Creator of the People". A less common name is *Mutangakugara* = "The One who existed from the beginning." For many Christians, the former has been adopted as the equivalent of Jehovah – and is often used in translations unless the meaning is more specific – and they see little difference between the two; however there is some theological debate as to whether they constitute an exact match or not.

Mwari, as the One who made everything, both good and bad, thus can bring happiness or disaster. He is above everything and everyone and cannot be communicated with directly except through the mediators – hence the mediums, spirits and hierarchy of ancestors. One cannot really argue or reason with the Great Spirit. The family spirits – *vadzimu* – are more intimately concerned with the living as their descendants. Since it is not acceptable to

approach an important person – such as your father – except through an intermediary, there must be such a one for God.

The *vadzimu* (sing. *mudzimu)* maintain links with their dead relatives through the spirit of the grandfather and protect the interests of their living descendants (Gelfand, 1973: 114). In times of sickness, calamity or death, the *vadzimu* are consulted to see which of the spirits has caused the family to lose protective power and allow evil to enter their homes. In this system, the living and the dead are still all one family. But not everyone can pray to the *mudzimu:* the head of the group must pay respects on behalf of the family when any member is in trouble and ask the reason. Everyone is present in the hut for this ceremony and thus knows when the answer is given; there are no skeletons in the cupboard! This develops unity: as the parents care for the children, so the spirits care for the parents and will continue to do so when the children become parents themselves. It also means that prayer, rather than being personal, is a family affair.

The father and mother of the family both have four *vadzimu*: the spirits of their dead father, mother, grandfather and grandmother (Gelfand, 1973: 116). Any of these may become angry and punish the guilty. "In other words, the Shona must always have their dead in mind and no-one will doubt the findings of a *n'anga* (diviner) that the illness came simply because the guilty person had failed in some way to respect a spirit elder. The ritual also instils into every person a sense of discipline and obedience. On no account must anyone refuse to carry out the requirements of the ritual for, by omitting it, the dead will be angered … If something wrong is done, everyone will know, so it is better to obey" (Gelfand, 1973: 117). But the *vadzimu* are not concerned with every omission or asocial act perpetrated by one person against another. Their anger is limited only to certain acts which are bound up in the religious practices of the people. If it is a matter of survival, then it is a concern of the *vadzimu.* (Gelfand, 1973: 118)

It is taboo to disregard or forget your *vadzimu,* and no request or demand by them, however small, can be disobeyed. (Gelfand, 1973: 119-120) The *vadzimu* are concerned about several aspects of life: (1) The provision by the family of bride wealth (*lobola/roora)*; (2) The female *vadzimu* on the mother's side will be angered should her husband or any of his sons kill the beast given (*mombe youmai)* by the son-in-law on marriage; (3) The *vadzimu* will be annoyed if, after a married man's death, his family does not hold the ceremony of *kurova guva* in honour of the spirit of the dead man which is brought from the grave to be settled in the village; (4) The *vadzimu* will be angered if a person is not accorded a proper burial; (5) If a man marries a woman with the same totem, the most serious offence of *makunakuna* (incest)

is created; (6) If a man leaves his village without informing the *mudzimu*, the offended spirit may demand his return so as not to weaken or break up the family unit; (7) Should a wife die leaving young children, the spirit elder may be concerned and want her father to replace her with one of her sisters; (8) No-one should go to a vacant site (*dongo*) where a family once lived and now the *vadzimu* still hover. They are not to disturb the peace in the area in any way so as not to upset the spirit world.

While the Shona say no-one is forgotten or lost, typically only the ancestors of two or three generations, those in living memory, are remembered by name in prayers and rituals (Gelfand, 1973: 120.) Ultimately, says Gelfand (1973: 121) a person owes everything to his *mudzimu.*

> There is no doubt that a person owes his *unhu* (personality) to his *vadzimu*. His behaviour, his consideration for others and his honesty are derived from his *mudzimu*. Equally … a person owes his safety and protection entirely to his *vadzimu*. If their protection is removed for any reason, he may suffer any kind of illness, accident, tragedy or even death. Thus if a person is accidentally injured through no fault of his own, or if someone steals from him, he should see his *n'anga* to determine whether his *vadzimu* are not annoyed or want some form of offering. … His *vadzimu* are not annoyed or concerned at the evil action of someone outside the family, only with the wrong doing of their own kin.

Generally, the *vadzimu* are seen as positive or good spirits. But there is a negative side too. Gelfand explains (1973: 122): "Should a *mudzimu* become angered or seek revenge, operating even outside its family circle to achieve its object, it becomes known as *ngozi*." One example of this is the spirit of a murdered man – whether intentional or not. He will seek revenge for the death from the family responsible. An *ngozi* may also arise when a man, employed by another, is not given his due and dies without being paid. His spirit returns to punish the guilty man until his family meets his debt. *Ngozi* may also emerge when a son or daughter scolds or beats a parent and when the parent dies, the spirit will seek revenge. In the former two offences, the *ngozi* will kill; in the latter, only illness occurs.

While the *mudzimu* is the personal spirit of the nuclear family, the clan or extended family is looked after by the *mhondoro.* This is the spirit of the founder of the clan (Gelfand, 1973: 112). All the descendants related to the founder share a common *mutupo* or totem, a special, sacrosanct 'label' of identification; thus, all of them are brothers or sisters. Hence, "everyone has to help one another where they can and they all stand or fall together. Each becomes dependant on the other" (Gelfand, 1973: 114). From this arises exogamy, by which no clansman may marry a woman with the same totem.

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Another key worldview dynamic relates to leadership and governance. In Shona culture, this is reflected through the institution of the chieftainship. Bourdillon (1987: 111-112), in outlining the role of the Shona chief, says:

> The chief is traditionally guardian of the values of *rupenyu* (life) and *simba* (strength, well being). Life comes from the land, of which the chief is the 'owner' and strength or power comes from the chief's status and his accession rituals. … The chief is responsible for the prosperity of his people and particularly for the land and its produce. Thus drought may be blamed on the incompetence of the chief or on the fact that the wrong person was appointed. Until 1981 [that is, the year after Zimbabwe's independence] … the most significant task of the chief was to preside over his court … [he] was not so much a judge as a chairman or president of his court. When a case was being tried, any man present who felt he had anything to say on the matter had a right to express his opinions. … In any case, the ideal of the Shona courts is reconciliation rather than the imposition of a judgement, so that the successful conclusion of a case depends more on the disputing parties and the pressure put on them by the acquaintances than on a decision of the chief officer, whose role is primarily to guide and assess the proceedings.

It is evident from this that the chief is seen as a custodian of resources – both the land and the people – and has a responsibility to govern in such a way that these are protected and utilised harmoniously. We see again, too, that relationships are primary. Notably, this may help to partly explain why it is evident in many Pentecostal and independent churches that the pastor (especially, if there is more than one, the senior pastor) both does and is expected to "rule", as it were, for the benefit of the people. Hence, the underlying dynamic of a "benign dictatorship". This not only gives enormous power but the resultant expectations make servant leadership very difficult too. (This will be explored further in the next chapter on the theology of administration and, in particular, leadership.) Indeed, Bourdillon (1987: 115) continues:

> A weak personality would not be highly respected as a chief, nor would a financially poor man. Persons have occasionally been turned out of a chiefship because they could not meet the expenses demanded of them for rituals, hospitality and generosity associated with the chiefship. On the other hand, a domineering chief is also disliked and quickly loses respect and influence, as would a wealthy yet close chief. A chief should be authoritative and firm, but he should speak with the voice of his people and act for the good of his people.

This appears to fit well with many independent pastors who rule over their ministry "kingdom" and fits naturally with a materialistic mind-set in the face of searing poverty. After all, the position demands it; God must bless me. Even if the underlying worldview factor is not consciously evident, it is difficult to argue against someone who relies on what they understand God to have told them and their theological concept and resultant expectations of the role of the pastor. This is especially so if that person is the founder.

Another interesting dimension is the connection between the chief and the spirit world. In Shona culture, says Bourdillon (1987: 116):

> … the founding ancestors of many chiefly dynasties are said to have obtained their positions through knowledge of 'medicines'; that the founding ancestors of chiefly dynasties are usually the spirits believed to control the productivity of the chiefdom; that the ruling chiefs are successors to these founding ancestors and must have their approval and protection; that the chief's political power arises from the religious power of his ancestors. From all this arises the role of the chief to mediate between his people and the spirit guardians of the chiefdom. Thus in time of drought or when pests threaten crops in a chiefdom, it is the responsibility of the chief to arrange for a consultation with the medium of the senior spirit guardian and to organise appropriate rituals. Some people say that no one should approach a senior medium on a public matter without first consulting the chief; in any séance the chief has a place of honour beside the possessed mediums and the senior spirit mediums generally take an interest in the private affairs of the chief's family. … The traditional chief is thus a religious as well as a political ruler.

Here, again, the underlying concept can be translated very easily to a church or ministry context, allowing the 'pastor-chief' to assume his status because he has an extra measure of spirituality, hears from God more clearly or frequently (because he is "the man of God") and thus must mediate between his people and God. He and the Holy Spirit have a special 'connection'. At the same time, Bourdillon points out (1987: 117) that the precise nature of the relationship between the chief and the spirit guardians of the land varies and depends partly on the traditional history of the particular chiefdom.

So, in the context of church or ministry, one's perception and expectation of a chief's role may also vary and, hence, the way this dynamic is subconsciously drawn upon in leadership style may also vary. Thus, for instance, one pastor may be the "chief" of all he surveys, while another pastor may see himself as one of the elders, albeit a slight step above (because of title and position).

These dynamics of Shona life – their historical and agrarian roots, the focus on relations, the centrality of the spirit world and governance through the chieftainship – shed light on several of the factors already exposed in the attitudes, responses to and praxis of administration we have explored so far.

Most of these observations, however, have their roots in the rural setting. Yet, we noticed (Chapters Two to Five) that a major point of tension in modern administration for our participants is the result of the differences in lifestyle between the rural and urban contexts. This was most acute in terms of attitudes toward and use of time and the approach to planning. That rural and urban lifestyles are worlds apart is not surprising; what is not always

appreciated are the cultural tensions arising from the demands of urban life which militate against the habits, customs, desires and even fears based on cultural practices and a worldview that is basically rural in outlook.

To sharpen these differences, we now have a situation where perhaps up to four generations – great-grandfather, grand-father, father and son – were all born in the city and, with each succeeding generation, the connection with the rural lifestyle, culture and worldview has become ever more distant. Indeed, it is not uncommon to find even older children who believe that milk comes from a plastic packet; they have never seen a live cow! Young adults were told as they were growing up that their African identity comes from their rural roots – yet they have never visited their great-grandfather's village and have very little idea of that worldview. So, what is "traditional" now? Indeed, what does it mean to be African? Naturally, this forces a change in worldview and, with it, the presuppositions, expectations and practices of a wide range of living dynamics. This includes, of course, one's approach to administration. Thus, several of my co-researchers, being urbanites, had difficulty discussing the rural worldview in detail because, other than infrequent visits usually for ministry, they now have little appreciation of the deeper things of rural life.

To illustrate, Bourdillon (1987: 318) in noting some of these changes comments on a survey as early as 1979:

> Many urban families try to overcome this problem [the widening gap between urban parents and their children because of the absence of key relatives] by sending their children to stay with rural kin for a while. [In the survey of one secondary school in Harare], all of the 103 children interviewed had been brought up in the urban areas; yet ninety per cent of the girls and eighty-two per cent of the boys had spent some time staying with a grandmother in the rural areas, and the majority said that they had been taught their manners by grandmothers and fathers' sisters (*vatete*). But this education serves only to further hide the growing divergence between the traditional ideas of kinship to which nearly all Shona give at lest notional assent, and the new patterns of relationships necessitated by urban life.

Not surprisingly, 25 years on, the resultant social problems are more manifest now with an even wider generational gap and, increasingly, the complaint is heard that "our culture is breaking down." The social changes brought by urbanisation and technology are perceived, rightly or wrongly, as removing or reducing what is considered 'culture'. Of course, these changes are not limited to the Shona alone. Nor does this intermixing of cultures – typified by the concept of the global village – actually result in a lessening of one's culture or sense of being. All cultures are dynamic and adjust as they come into contact with others. But, it cannot be gainsaid that European colonialism has negatively impacted African cultures. All

ethnic groups across the African continent have been affected, both positively and negatively. Indeed, European politics has had massive social implications, the biggest, arguably, being urbanisation. We see here, then, the clash of two worlds.

In discussing some of the resultant problems facing urban Christians, O'Donovan (2000: 21) helpfully summarises the basic contrasts between African and Western cultural values:

African Culture	*Western Culture*
1. Strong community values (group participation, group decision)	1. Strong individualistic values (individual initiative, decisions)
2. Community identity	2. Individual identity
3. Community living style	3. Private living style
4. Extended family emphasis	4. Immediate family emphasis
5. Wholistic approach to life	5. Categorical approach to life
6. Importance of the event	6. Importance of schedules & clock time
7. People-oriented priorities	7. Task- and goal-oriented priorities
8. Real-life (situational) thinking	8. Abstract and academic thinking
9. Preference for real-life learning	9. Preference for academic thinking
10. Spiritual worldview	10. Scientific worldview
11. Emphasis on spoken communication	11. Emphasis on written communication
12. Emphasis on spoken agreements based on relationships with people	12. Emphasis on written agreements based on policies by committees
13. Respect for the elderly	13. Respect for the educated
14. Traditional inherited leadership	14. Elected (democratic) leadership
15. Death is passing into the spirit world (survivors must perform rituals)	15. Death is a practical problem (survivors need counsel & support)
16. Resolve conflicts through mediator	16. Resolve conflicts face-to-face
17. Practical (ritual) response to spirit realities	17. Intellectual response to spirit realities
18. Practical (ritual) approach to religion	18. Intellectual approach to religion
19. Vulnerability seen as weakness	19. Vulnerability seen as a strength
20. Much interest in the spirit world	20. Little interest in the spirit world

It is clear from this comparison that there are fundamental disparities between the two. Moreover, even a cursory reflection will bring to the fore an appreciation of the clashes in terms of approaches to time, planning, organising, leading and controlling. It is, perhaps, in the context of the two worlds at odds in the city that the problems with administration as highlighted in earlier chapters should be viewed. It is not that one culture or worldview is right or wrong, but rather that the two tend to meet more noticeably in the urban arena. Obviously, administration is needed and exists in the rural setting – otherwise there would be chaos – but it is the clash of two worlds in the city where the distinctions are practically pronounced.

Since these are generalisations, the same is naturally true of the Ndebele too. And, although there are many broad similarities with the Shona, there are some key differences. As we now explore these, we begin with the historiography.

1.2.2   The AmaNdebele

The AmaNdebele are the second largest ethnic group in Zimbabwe. They are an off-shoot from the Zulu of South Africa. According to Omer-Cooper (1978: 146), this group of Ndebele under Prince Mzilikazi, son of Matshobana (a Zulu chief), fled from King Tshaka in Zululand in the 1820s due to internecine wars. Mzilikazi moved his kraal, Mosega, to the Transvaal, but this was destroyed in January 1837 by a joint operation of two Boer commandos, Potgieter and Maritz. In two separate groups, one travelling north-westerly and the other north-easterly, they then crossed the Limpopo River and settled in south-western Zimbabwe near the Matopos Hills. They expanded north-east up to the Sanyati River as far as Kwekwe and north-west to Wankie. (Mzilikazi himself took a group as far as the Zambezi River but turned back because of the scourge of the tsetse fly.)

All of the tribes Mzilikazi conquered on his way from Natal were incorporated into the Ndebele tribe. Following the Zulu tradition, one key element of Ndebele culture was their military organisation. Explains Omer-Cooper (1978: 134-135):

> At the settlement in the central Transvaal the Ndebele state crystallised along the lines on which it was subsequently to develop. The regimental system of the Zulu was retained, each regiment being accommodated in a special military settlement under the command of an *induna*. As in the case of the Zulu, each of these military towns was regarded as a section of the royal household and contained some of Mzilikazi's wives. In the case of the Ndebele, however, the army and the civilian population could not be distinguished from one another. The whole group were immigrants living by force of arms in an alien country. There was thus no hierarchy of territorial chiefs separate from that of the military *indunas*. The regimental headquarters constituted the territorial divisions of the tribe as a whole.

(These *impis* or soldiers would raid into other territories, taking women and cattle and devastating crops. The Shona were affected up to the Shamva River, north of Harare, and perhaps, beyond. This is the substance of historical acrimony between the ethnic groups, although inter-marriage has been fairly common for many years. This acrimony is not overt now, but manifested itself during the pre-independence liberation struggle and during the 1982/3 *Gukuruhundi* (Shona = sift the chaff) massacres in Matabeleland; today, it is seen in political positioning, employment and, even, socially through jokes. In public, the underlying tensions are politely ignored; in private, there are varying degrees of animosity.)

Omer-Cooper (1978: 147-148) says that, while Mzilikazi was away on the Zambezi, some *indunas* decided to appoint Nkulumane, his elder son and intended successor, as king. But Mzilikazi rushed back and executed the leaders of this supposed rebellion. Nkulumane, having been sent to South Africa, had subsequently disappeared (and probably executed) while Lobengula, his half-brother by a minor wife, was protected from punishment and later reconciled to his father. Mzilikazi died in 1868 and Lobengula succeeded him as King in

January 1870, aged 34, after putting down some continued resistance. The *Encyclopedia Zimbabwe* (Sayce, 1987: 280) states that "the central point of the Ndebele kingdom was then established at what is now Bulawayo [*GuBulawayo* = 'the place of slaughter', so called because of the slaughter of those resisting Lobengula's ascendancy to the kingship].

Lobengula razed Bulawayo in 1893 when the British South Africa Company (BSAC) forces attacked as part of the Anglo-Ndebele war, fought to establish sovereignty over land and mineral rights; he fled toward the Zambezi River and died, reportedly of smallpox, near Kamativi the following February.

Culturally, the Ndebele, as an off-shoot of the Zulu, were militarily inclined and saw cattle as the main economic and pastoral commodity. Mazikana and Johnstone (1982: 70-71) explain that,

> A number of towns, called *amabutho* developed from bases of the 'regimental' age groups that were a feature of the Ndebele social and military system. The *amabutho* served as centres of military districts. They, and the ordinary villages and towns, each had chiefs and advisors concerned with political, social, judicial, spiritual and other administrative roles, as well as military responsibilities. In every respect (though in degrees differing according to time, place and circumstance) these roles were carried out in accordance with the central authority of the state at GuBulawayo. At every level, including that of trade and commerce, inter-relationships and inter-dependencies existed between the various towns, districts and people of the state. The unity of this whole organism was emphasised at the annual *iNxwala* [a major annual festival at the beginning of the rainy season or New Year; it sought to highlight agricultural rejuvenation, spiritual purification as well as social loyalty and unity]. Outside the central area of the state existed tributary communities which were not integrated into the Ndebele state or way of life. Their peaceful relationship with the state depended upon their recognition of its ultimate authority, and upon the provision of men, services and materials when called upon to do so.

Regarding the *iNxwala*, Bozongwana (1983: 44-46) stresses its significance, pointing out that approximately one month before the main festival, the chiefs, kraalheads and military commanders would meet with the King to discuss social and economic matters affecting the realm. Domestic policy would be spelled out and customs and other requirements reiterated. Chiefs and kraalheads would be appointed or demoted; security issues debated and plagues, illnesses or other phenomena reviewed. The main ceremony itself (*iNxwala enkulu*) would be notified to the King by the high priest keeping a record of the lunar calendar. After recording 13 notches on a stick, the year was declared at an end and the New Year celebration should be held as soon as possible. "Streams of women carrying calabashes of beer on their heads travelled miles and miles to the royal kraal. Accompanied by their grown-up girls, roads leading to the royal kraal were filled with rushing men, women and girls all in their best attire.

Men drove cattle to be slaughtered at the King's kraal. There were so many of them that the dust caused by their movement covered the sun." The high priest, as Master of Ceremonies, would begin the festival with a long whistle, after which he led in singing the national chant, *ingoma yeNxwala,* which was sung only once a year. The most sacred part of the festival – the *umthontiso* ritual – involved the whole tribe as it attempted to purify and unite itself [in the] national spirit. Milk from black cows was mixed with other herbs and people took some of this to strengthen and purify themselves. The King was the first to partake and the high priest invoked the spirits as he treated the King. "The oracle in which the life of the tribe lay was a medium sized calabash with a small neck and with it was an ostrich egg, porcupine quills and many other things around it. The whole tribe sang and danced in joy. The music was often interrupted by a call for silence while the high priest spoke and praised the King's ancestral spirits and pleading that they bless the realm particularly the King so that he triumphs over the enemy. The priest recited the spells over the oracle as if the ancestors actually lived in it. Regiments assembled and displayed their fighting skills as people watched silently. They made mock attacks as the King watched in amusement." As part of the festival, young maidens prepared themselves and were paraded past the King who would choose his next bride. Whoever won was taken to the royal kraal for training and stayed in an area reserved for queens. At the end of the celebrations, the high priest closed the *iNxwala* and people went back to their homes.

It is clear from this that, administratively speaking, the Ndebele were more cohesive and centralised than the Shona, which have several subdivisions. However, although the Shona do not have a king, nor do they have one unifying spectacle, the similarities between "kingly administration" (that is, one overall leader) and "chiefly administration" (a single leader in a given area) would be very analogous.

Like their Shona counterparts, the cosmology of the Ndebele is a central factor in their worldview and culture. Bozongwana (1983: 32-41) describes two spirit entities: *idlozi elihle* (good spirit) and *idlozi elibe* (bad spirit). These two fight against each other. "Sometimes," says Bozongwana, "a spirit is baptised into the host by the parents while at [other] times the ancestor spirit forces itself into the host." He adds that, "their activity in the host is marked by disturbances so that the host becomes aware of what the intention of the spirit is. The host normally acts under instruction backed by force. Sometimes the disturbance occurs in the head, while at [other] times it takes place in the body causing it to quiver or shake violently. The victim may speak the language of the indwelling spirit while he or she is in a trance, and may have supernatural power and perform wonders."

He goes on to say that the chief work of the *inyanga* (good spirit) is to "heal the sick, bring good luck, protect and drive away the evil spirits which cause suffering and death. This kind of spirit is often hereditary, although at times one acquires it through invocation, that is, an experienced witchdoctor by using charms, will summon a friendly spirit to make use of the applicant as host."

At the same time, he says there is also the "violent good spirit". This is the *isangoma* (male) and *isanuse* (female). "This is a witch-hunting spirit dreaded by wizards and witches. Sick people consult it to see who is harming them. [Only] good singing and dancing by a crowd will lure the spirit to come and speak through the host." This spirit, Bozongwana adds, reveals its presence shortly before or after puberty, but seldom after marriage. The *isangoma* is both a doctor and a fortune-teller. The designation is seen in the vestments: "he has to fight and kill an eagle, vulture and a python for bones which comprise his robe and girdle."

Evil or witch spirits, continues Bozongwana (1983: 36-40), are mostly said to be found in women. They are believed to possess supernatural powers at night and can enter locked doors and interfere with the sleeping person in an effort to make them sick or ill. The presence of these spirits in the home is often linked with disturbances or sounds or movements on the roof or ceiling. There is the smashing or dashing of things to the floor, disturbing sleep and causing panic and confusion in the house. Sometimes these spirits take the form of an animal such as a hare, snake, bird or baboon to disguise themselves, and these are known as familiar spirits (*imikhoba, izinto* or *izituhwane*). Witches will often ride on ant-bears or hyenas at night to get human flesh and blood.

Again, like the Shona, the Ndebele have their herbalists and fortune tellers. These, typically, are not spirit-possessed. Bozongwana (1983: 41) calls these 'bone-throwers' or *izinyanga* "a class of dishonest people or swindlers" who acquire bogus knowledge in the use of medicines and herbs. He relates how three of them declared his father dead but had not been brought home, so his spirit was causing sickness in the family – yet his father was still alive! Although this may have been the case here, I think there are many Shona and Ndebele who would dispute this and swear blind that the *n'anga* or *inyanga* has been absolutely correct every time and that the troubles have been cured as a result of following the instructions. Belief in the system is so pervasive and strong that the existence of some cheats will not diminish the overall "faith" in them!

The cosmological and religious components of the Shona and Ndebele worldviews do not seem, at first glance, to have any direct bearing on the practice of administration. However, this may be because people do not typically associate spirit activity with administrative

dynamics and, therefore, do not – or perhaps, cannot – articulate such a connection. Yet, given the pervasiveness of spirit activity and the assumptions about the spirit world in everyday life, it is difficult to avoid concluding that the influence is there, albeit unrecognised. In my conversations with my co-researchers, questions along this line met with limited or tangential recognition. Still, the desire for positive relationships and the fear of the negative – both of which the spirit world influences – must have at least some indirect impact on such factors as planning and controlling.

In broad terms, despite their differing roots and routes in their histories, the worldviews of the Shona and Ndebele have a large degree of overlap and many complementarities. Both groups, for example, practise ancestral veneration; they see God (Shona = *Mwari;* Ndebele = *Nkulunkulu*) as distant and approachable only for major circumstances – and then only through the mediums of their spirits and ancestors as mediators. Both are very relational, event oriented and concerned with the spirit world. Both are pastoral, with the Shona focusing their agricultural efforts on crops, chiefly maize in the more fertile north and east of Zimbabwe, while the Ndebele understand their livelihood in terms of cattle. (The drier climes of south-western Zimbabwe, bordering on the edges of the Kalahari Desert of Botswana, are not suitable for cropping anyway.) These agricultural and social differences, together with a general personality outlook – the Shona tend to be rather placid while the Ndebele come from a militaristic background – also play a large part in the details of their cultures.

Having briefly examined the Shona and Ndebele backgrounds and some aspects of their worldviews, and as seen from our individual and group conversations, it is noteworthy that the differences in culture and worldview are not vastly significant. There are many similarities and this explains, therefore, why their approaches to administration are not conspicuously different. Indeed, the similarities between the two worldviews – albeit in broad terms – have allowed me to explore them as a common entity without being unduly concerned about or side-tracked by marked differentials that would otherwise require separate detailed inspection, analysis and comment.

1.2.3   *Ubuntu/unhu:* A Core Underlying Philosophy

But, to explain this broad "outlook on reality" a little further, it may be helpful to explore one fundamental dimension, an underlying philosophy common to many sub-Saharan ethnic groups, not just the Shona or Ndebele. This is referred to as *ubuntu* or *unhu* (see also reference to this in Chapter Five). Kapolyo (2005: 35-36), in outlining the humanity, for instance, of this concept points to the centrality of the person: "God, although clearly acknowledged as the Creator, is nevertheless not the centre of creation. Human beings fill the

pride of place and God is imported, as it were, to explain the origins of *abantu* (people)." Mbiti (1969: 92) puts it lucidly: "it is as if God exists for the sake of man." Yet, comments Kapolyo (2005: 35), while there is acceptance of a rift between God and man, "there is, however, a conspicuous lack of even a hint of a reversal of the tragedy of the separation between God and his creatures. There is no hint of salvation or utopia in some distant future. Hence, says Mbiti (1969: 99), "This remains the most serious cul-de-sac in the otherwise rich thought and sensitive and religious feelings of our peoples. It is perhaps here, then, that we find the greatest weakness and poverty of our traditional religions compared to world religions like Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism or Hinduism.'"

A human being, explains Kapolyo (2005: 36), is body, life and spirit. Thus, he

> possesses *ubumi* – strength, vitality or life force. This life force is more than just brute force; it is a sharing in the creative nature of God and therefore has the ability to originate things, to dominate the lower creation and to influence causes, not in the same way that God creates, dominates and influences but in a derivative sense as befits one created by a higher and fuller force. Human beings are able to both grow and diminish in their possession of this vital force, and therefore, to become more human through procreation and especially accession either to chieftainship or to any of the special functionaries who stand between human life and the world of the spirits.

With *ubuntu*, says Kapolyo (2005: 39), one who is authentically or truly human is caring, humble, thoughtful, considerate, understanding, wise, godly, generous, hospitable, mature, virtuous and blessed. "The over-riding quality is virtue, which is defined as the practice of giving of oneself to the promotion of the good of the community. All these virtues or values, except the last one, 'blessed', are oriented towards others."

As we pointed out in Chapter Five and is evident from the above, *ubuntu/unhu* has implications for the practice of administration. But how? To demonstrate both the subconscious and conscious kinds of linkages, I would like to refer to Mbigi. He has taken *ubuntu/unhu* and, in addition to explaining it, suggests, interestingly, how it can be harnessed to transform the modern management environment in Southern Africa. He notes (1995: 4) that "Africa's achievements and genius do not lie in technology but in **social** and **spiritual** spheres. … Social innovation, of which the crafting of relevant organisational collective rituals and ceremonies is an important dimension, has to be brought to the centre of organisational transformation and renewal in Africa."

He points out (1995: 1-2) that this is not uniquely a Shona or Ndebele philosophy; rather "it is a concept of brotherhood and collective unity for survival among the poor in every society. … In essence, *ubuntu* is a universal concept that can be applicable to all poor communities."

However, he then takes it out of the universal realm to emphasise the African sense of identity: "The cardinal belief of *Ubuntu* is that *a man can only be a man through others.* [This reflects the African worldview of self**:** 'I am because we are.'] In its most fundamental sense it stands for personhood and morality. The key values of *Ubuntu* are: Group solidarity, conformity, compassion, respect, human dignity and collective unity."

In the context of organisations and management, Mbigi's underlying premise here is that,

> unless the development structures, strategies and processes can harness these *Ubuntu* values into a dynamic transformative force for reconstruction and development, failure will be almost certain. For African organisations and companies the challenges of social and political innovation far exceed the technical challenges. Our suggestion is that we must harness the social experience and innovation of the African people and align them with successful management techniques from the West and the East. In essence this requires careful and creative strategic alignment by African managers. … The most pervasive and fundamental collective experience of the African people is their religious experience. It is integrated into all aspects of their lives on a daily basis. It is therefore important that conceptual frameworks of powerful strategic ideas must try and make reference to the African religious and cultural experience if effective transfer and adaptation are to take place. (1995: 2-3)

His thesis is premised on four theories arising from *ubuntu:* (1) The Corpse Shadow Theory, which focuses on the need to burn the past before renewal and a new vision can occur; (2) The Nhorowondo Theory, which emphasises the need to appreciate the historical roots of any technique in order to adapt it successfully [for the future]; (3) The Collective Fingers Theory, which tries to emphasise the importance of collective education and rituals in order to manage change in Africa successfully; and (4) The Rainbow Spirits Theory (*Dembetembe),* which symbolically and metaphorically represents possible dominant cultural elements, values or dimensions in organisations.

Presenting the latter as a management model, named after the Rainmaker for the vaHera clan of which his grandmother served as a medium, he explains (1995: 18) that the Rainmaker, at the highest level of the spirit 'structure', "is the moral conscience of society in balancing justice and fairness. It is the checks and balances in tribal political systems. In times of political crisis the Rainmaker will rally the people and play a leading role in removing the corrupt ruler. [He/]she would interpret traumatic experiences and emerging realities."

Mbigi's endeavour here (1995: 19) is to capture "the spiritual symbolism of Afrocentric religion and use it as a dipstick for assessing corporate culture in organisations." He goes on to explain (1995: 20):

> The spirit in African religion is one's total being or soul. It represents our inner self and our total being. The spirit is who we really are. It is our values and our

culture in terms of an organisation. It is the climate and values of that particular organisation. We are using the African spirit as a metaphor to describe certain prevailing or dominant values in particular organisations and situations.

He then outlines the value of each spirit in the context of organisational or corporate culture, suggesting that "for the positive spirit to be predominant, one needs to separate it from its negative counterpart in a cleansing ceremony. … The issue is not to destroy the negative spirit but to marginalise it. In a corporate sense, one needs a corporate cleansing ceremony, in which one harnesses the positive spirits, through bonding, and marginalises the negative ones" (1995: 25-26).

The "Dembetembe Model" of Management

Rainmaker Spirit – GOBWA

Hunter Spirit – UDZIMBA

Divination Spirit – N'ANGA

War Spirit – MAJUKWA

Family Spirit – MUDZIMU WEMUSHA

Wandering Spirit – SHAVE

Avenging Spirit – NGOZI

Witch Spirit – MUTAKATI

THE CULTURAL VALUES	THE SPIRIT
Morality and dignity	Rainmaker (Gobwa)
Performance and enterprise	Hunter (Shavi Reudzimba)
Authority – know the truth	Divination (Sangoma/n'anga)
Power and conflict	War (Mujikwa)
Survival of self & one's group	Clan Spirit (Mudzimu wemusha)
Particular obsession, ability & creativity	Wandering (Shave)
Bitterness, anger & revenge	Avenging (Ngozi)
Cynicism, negativity & destruction	Witch (Mutakati)

(Source: Mbigi, L. (1995) *Ubuntu: The spirit of African transformation management*, Knowledge Resources: Randburg. pp. 19- 20)

He then goes on to discuss how the spirit world and related cultural practices can be used as a model for corporate transformation. For instance, he speaks of the "corpse shadow theory". This is the idea that you do not bury a dead body if it casts a shadow; the shadow signifies negative feelings such as guilt, bitterness or fear, which must be cleansed if the person is to

be transformed into a useful ancestral spirit. For organisations in Southern Africa to be transformed into dynamic, quality entities, he suggests, they need to come to grips with the dark side of their past. This is because, "in the Afrocentric religion, in order to know **what you can become** you must start by knowing **who you are**" (1995: 55). He says "the destiny of any particular organisation does not depend on budgets or strategic plans, but rather on how one harnesses the various self-organised **circles of influence** within that particular organisation." In other words, it is the people and their interpersonal relationships that constitute an organisation's greatest asset and its strongest tool for transformation.

Picking up on this in more detail in chapter four, where he responds to the competitive agenda issue (1995: 62), he says that, while the traditional definition of competitiveness revolves around productivity, market share, quality, cost and innovation,

> there is dire need to broaden [this] to include **relations** and speed of delivery … A world-class organisation has to improve both profitability and the social relationships of the workplace in such a way that the shop-floor workers can be motivated to produce quality products and services. The workers need to develop initiative and creativity, which is the tradition and spirit of the enterprising African village. There should be management systems and values that facilitate shop-floor "grass-roots" empowerment to canonise the values of respect and human dignity. This is the spirit and cornerstone of the grass-roots democracy of African traditional communities and societies.

In pointing out that modern business approaches and philosophies – Total Quality Management (TQM), Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) and Total Productive Maintenance (TPM) among others – have tended to fail in Southern Africa, he says the reason is the lack of contextualisation. This introduces the Nhorowondo theory. "In Afrocentric religion, no idea or situation can be transformed into reality unless there is a totally transformed human being driving it. This person is normally called a spirit medium. The Western equivalent for this is a champion or change agent" (1995: 73). The Nhorowondo theory, according to Shona culture, asserts that, in order to contextualise any concept or practice successfully, one must be prepared to trace its roots (1995: 75). Who were the key people behind the original idea and what was their agenda? Then we must "unpack only the elements of that particular practice that are appropriate and able to address our own problems. This should be done in a very creative way." In recruiting the change agent he adds (1995: 79), we should focus on talent and passion, not education and experience.

Next, Mbigi uses *ubuntu* to create a human resources model. He argues (1995: 84-85) that, in the South African context prior to the democratic era, the human resources (HR) approach was purely administrative; since it was not perceived as adding value to the company, the visibility and status of the HR department was very low. Unfortunately, this approach did not

allow such staff to manage the changes in unionism – with the concomitant fears, polarities, mistrust and alienation – very well. This led to a reactive model, where the HR staff was expected to play a decisive, visible and, even, policing, role in industrial relations. This, in turn, has produced a "witchcraft" image in the eyes of management and a "sell-out" image in the eyes of the workers. In response, some HR practitioners have adapted to a business model, assisting management to achieve strategic business goals. But this has seen a loss of warmth and passion for long-term implementation and, consequently, has been hard for workers to accept. An alternative is the welfare model, where companies are expected to assist their employees with their social problems such as education and housing, as well as health and sporting services. Although this is positive, Mbigi says (1995: 86) it is isolated from the function of wealth creation and can also be abused by management to develop a dependency syndrome to exercise controlled exploitation of workers.

What he calls the development or *ubuntu* model (1995: 86-87) is premised on Africa's developmental needs. "HR practitioners have an intellectual role in their companies: that of interpreting the emerging patterns of a chaotic environment, as well as generating new models or ideas to guide the organisation. The focus of [this] model is [w]holistic development. [It] focuses on continuous improvement and development of people, products, systems, structures, markets, productivity and quality as well as performance." Under this model, he says (1995: 88), HR practitioners would be guided by four cardinal principles: Morality, Interdependence, Spirit of Man and Totality (MIST), all of which are based on the *ubuntu* idea of unconditional respect and dignity.

In outlining these, Mbigi says (1995: 88) morality is a critical issue since "no institution can attain its highest potential without touching its moral base." This is why corruption, endemic in public institutions in Africa, tends to lose credibility. Interdependence avers that "the optimisation of wealth creation … requires the collective co-operation of all stakeholders … which can only be achieved by acknowledging [such] interdependence." The spirit of man principle recognises that man is the creator and benefactor of all wealth creation. … Man is the purpose of all organisations and they must work in harmony with him in the spirit of service." (1995: 89) And lastly, there is the principle of totality. Wealth creation is complex and requires the attention and continuous improvement of everything in the organisation, by every member of the organisation. … The building of a great organisation must start with little improvements … in [the] five universal standards of relationships, quality, quantity, cost and timing. … This is the essence of *ubuntu* – collective participation of every member through freedom of enterprise is a precondition to the creation of enterprising communities in Africa.

These five *ubuntu* principles can simultaneously affect the management issues of co-ordination, communication, competence, competitiveness and compassion."

From there, Mbigi moves on (1995: 102-105) to discuss four other cultural dynamics in relation to training: Attitude to change, attitude to reward, attitude to team and attitude to change management. He says "the Afrocentric view [of change] is a belief in destiny [which] has helped to foster an adaptation to the dramatic aspects of change [in South Africa], which has been very beneficial." (1995: 102) The *ubuntu* idea of rewards is that "one works for an additional reward so that one's fellow man can enjoy the fruits of one's labour. Whatever one earns is for the collective good of the community" (1995: 103). On teamwork, he notes (1995: 104) that, in the Afrocentric view, "one thinks in terms of collective survival. Group loyalty is the key issue in building a team." In observing the American, European and Eastern attitudes to change management, Mbigi then contrasts them with the *ubuntu* outlook. "In Mother Africa," he says (1995: 105), "focus on change efforts has to be [based on the] creation of harmony between the individual and his **community** as well as nature, particularly **ancestral spirits**. … The question of **freedom of choice** for the individual is out; what is critical is **freedom from want**. It is also theoretical nonsense to expect individual self-reliance and independence. One survives by joining hands with others."

In explaining the last of his four theories, Mbigi asserts (1995: 110) that traditional approaches to managing change involve training and development. He asks what the change agents, particularly human resource practitioners, should do in order to escalate the learning processes to match the daunting challenges of change, reconstruction and development in Africa. "The traditional African education practices focus on the following areas: collective ceremonies and rituals, story tellers, dancing and music as well as facilitation by an outsider, soothsayer and *sangoma*. The facilitator is always an outsider. In fact, there is a proverb from the African Shona tribe that a thumb, although it is strong, cannot kill aphids on its own. It would require the collective co-operation of the other fingers." Thus, he introduces the Collective Fingers Theory. Using *ubuntu* as a model and the fingers as a symbol for collective development and reconstruction, Mbigi suggests five aspects (starting with the thumb): Respect, Dignity, Solidarity, Compassion and Survival. Each one needs the others. The implication for the organisation is the need "to harness the collective energy and support of key players in the organisation. It means that one needs to open collective forums, which are inclusive in nature and must, as much as possible, include everyone in the organisation." (1995: 111) He then outlines five phases for this corporate training strategy. Phase One must include a residential (but off site) programme run by an external facilitator. It must not be factually oriented only but should critically include ritual and ceremony to initiate bonding.

Personal disclosure and stories by the facilitator are crucial. Phase Two involves a *"bosberaad"* (that is, a picnic or *braai* to discuss business issues) for all key players in the company. Again, ritual and ceremony are key to bonding, together with an external story teller. Phase Three should achieve critical mass with the inclusion of everyone in the organisation in inclusive strategic forums. Here, ceremony is even more important. This builds a shared will to survive. Phase Four helps the organisation to build capacity and skill. An unsuspicious, participative skills audit is needed. Once more, ceremony and ritual build trust and bonding. The fifth and last phase is training the trainees to be learners; they should "become self-empowered and authors of their own destiny so they can mobilise the resources and people around them to help them on their learning journey." (1995: 114) In this phase, communication is critical. This should involve more than just relaying of facts. It should include "the extensive use of symbols, story telling, music and rituals. When an event happens, it must be accompanied by pomp and ceremony. Bring a choir when the company results are announced, or have a braai." And he adds, "there must be one annual production, quality or world-class festival day to celebrate the achievement of the company."

Mbigi's final contribution in this exercise is to suggest how the African village is relevant for organisational design. He posits (1995: 117-118) that central to corporate change in Southern Africa is the new society and institutions being created. "One major problem causing change initiatives to fail in South Africa," he observes, "is that they are undertaken with the unrealistic assumption that the organisational design in terms of structure, authority and relationships will remain untouched." With the socio-political and socio-economic changes taking place in the region, organisational design is being challenged. "The organisational design that is emerging is something far removed from the known industrial organisation to a much more feudal style that can only be found in its original form in Africa." He says new issues are now hotly debated: the need to create trust, multiple stakeholder accountability, group care and loyalty. There is also an emphasis on participation and inclusive structures and governance. "This is a clear testimony that the mechanical, scientific attempt to marginalise primitive human feelings and run organisations purely on rational logic has failed. Indeed, there is a clarion call for community creation in organisations, which is a call to retain the collective bonds of the traditional African village." (1995: 118). He then outlines several changes in approach such as moving from single shareholder accountability to multiple stakeholder accountability; the need to harness community spirit; the need for inclusive governance and performance structures; the need to shift from adversarial relationships to mutual trust, co-operation and tolerance and the need to move from managing people and resources to mobilising them, among others. He adds (1995: 120) that, if business is to be enhanced, there is need to seek an in-depth

understanding of how a village functions, extracting relevant elements and bringing them back to the corporation.   He goes on to suggest six dynamics from village life that deserve consideration: (1) Grass-roots democracy functioning through open discussion forums (Ndebele = *indabas*; Shona = *dare*); (2) Rituals and ceremonies to celebrate achievements or share misfortunes and recognise achievement; (3) The respect for position, authority and expertise, which thus brings order and stability; (4) The appreciation of mutual trust, respect and care; (5) Collective unity and a common agenda; and (6) The open discussion of problems to arrive at an acceptable, if not final, solution (1995: 121-122).

We have made some effort here to note several details of Mbigi's proposed management philosophy because he presents a culturally relevant and worldview based model (he is not, however, the first to suggest integrating *ubuntu* into management theory and practise.)   We have endeavoured to show how it can be applied in the business/management/organisational realm.   The concept clearly has significance for our exploration of administration from a cultural perspective.

Hence, in asking my co-researchers for their responses to this idea, they all agreed with Mbigi's hierarchy.   But Joyce pointed out that it does not reflect a Christian worldview and, in fact, is problematic for the Christian because of the deep, unspoken links to the spirit world. George agreed, adding that acceptance of this approach for the Christian would raise serious questions about one's faith. Beki pointed out that African cosmology is anthropocentric: whatever happens, good or bad, is understood not so much in terms of God but of 'me' and whether or not He is blessing me.   He noted, also, that Africans tend to be more comfortable with the Old Testament, looking to God's power in life to deal with sickness, childlessness, work-related problems and so on.

On Mbigi's use of *ubuntu/unhu,* Dawson said many of these values are carried over into the Church.   He suggested that respect and other values are valid for the Christian, but the philosophical concept should only be used superficially and not to a deeper level as this is likely to result in negative linkages with the spirit world.   Joyce commented that the idea of having celebrations is a good one, but also agreed with Dawson's caution against taking the model too far.   Beki noted that *ubuntu* helps with productivity because the concern is for the person rather than the work itself.   In the Western approach, he said, you are given an office and a job description and if you don't pull your weight, you're out.   But ministry involves people, and their situations must be taken into account.   So *ubuntu* should add value to the Christian faith.

Dawson then commented that the chief is typically dictatorial/autocratic, which he says, agrees with Scriptural standards and Biblical leadership. "But again, it is at a different level. God is an autocrat. He doesn't ask other people's opinions. As a leader, I share some of His responsibility. There is some element of chieftainship, but I must be flexible and sensitive that I am dealing with people; I must exercise leadership and authority to the extent God has given me. Completely democratic leadership is not Biblical and neither is dictatorship." Joyce chipped in: "It's a delegated authority." "Yes," Dawson went on, "but I'm also accountable. I need to rule, but it must be within the limits of my delegated authority from God. The pastor is not accountable first to the congregation but to God. Authority and accountability must be balanced."

1.3 A Christian Worldview

Since we are examining the praxis of administration within the context of Shona and Ndebele Christians in vocational ministry, we must now briefly explore some of the main factors of the Christian worldview. Of course, it becomes apparent immediately that, in addition to noting the clash of perspectives in terms of Shona/Ndebele and Western worldviews on the one hand, and urban versus rural lifestyles on the other, for the Christian, there is a third dynamic that complicates – and yet, also ought to reduce or eliminate – the tensions arising from this modern-day collision. Part of this tension is reflected in the dissonance between praxis and theology. This will be discussed in Chapter Seven as we seek to articulate a contextual theology of administration and, in the process, address the possible reasons for this variance between belief and behaviour.

Some claim to eschew the concept of a Christian worldview; this is neither Biblical nor realistic. But, as we seek to identify and define the Christian worldview, however, we face the same problem that all Christians do: like the fish that cannot define water because it has nothing with which to compare it, the average Christian is not taught their faith specifically as a worldview but, rather, as a system of beliefs and a resultant expected lifestyle. Indeed, there is a given expectation – nay, a constant challenge – that the life so lived will reflect what is believed as well as bring honour to the One upon and in whom such belief is based. Although it is not usual for a believer to think in worldview terms since the term "worldview" is not typically used in this context, the transformed lifestyle that is the hallmark of a faithful disciple is evidence of a changed worldview perspective. Hence, it is legitimate to speak of a Christian worldview as being a particular view of reality. Thus, we must pay attention to the clashes resulting from this worldview and one's natural worldview.

The Christian worldview comes to every believer as a challenge to their culture, identity, lifestyle, priorities, expectations, judgements and, even, emotions. It is for each believer to decide how their faith will translate into transformed thinking and living according to the call from Jesus Christ, via the Word and through the enabling of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the acceptance of Christ as both Saviour and Lord should be life-transforming. But what does this religious worldview look like? How do we identify it; what labels do we attach to it and, significantly, what implications does it have for our human-based worldviews and cultures?

Green (Dockery and Thornbury, 2002: 62-78) suggests that the theological foundations of a Christian worldview must include consideration of God (particularly as Creator), the Fall, Redemption and the lordship of Christ, while philosophically, such a view of reality must also look at truth, faith, communication, the past and the future. He acknowledges that not everyone would choose these particular themes, but suggests the theological issues are the basic minimum. (By contrast, for instance, we saw earlier that Noebel has no less than ten key philosophical/social areas including, for the Christian, God.)

In another approach, Van der Walt, in using Niebuhr's well-known four-fold grid about Christ and culture as a model, posits a similar four-fold approach to Christian worldview. Before laying these out (S.a: 39-40), he first asks why Christians, although holding to a broad confession of faith, still have such divergent views about their faith. He then explains (S.a: 38) that most Christians do not fully understand the core concepts of their confession in an all-encompassing sense, but tend to see them in narrow terms only. The key concepts he lists as creation, fall, redemption (or grace) and the Kingdom of God. This failure, he says, has resulted in a dualistic Christianity, with a secular or natural component and a religious or supernatural one. This, in turn, has led to confusion about the link between redemption (grace) and nature and, from this, we have four approaches to Christian reality. These he lists as**:** (1) *gratia contra naturam* (that is, grace **against** nature), where the antithesis between creation and redemption leads to a rejection of worldly things such as politics, philosophy and science; (2) *gratia supra naturam* (grace **above** nature), which is the classical Roman Catholic view since Thomas Aquinas, in which grace (that is, redemption) does not reject nature but only perfects it [without changing it]; (3) *gratia juxta naturam* (grace **alongside** nature) which is the typical Lutheran view, where both nature and redemption are equal in value but without any liaison between them, such that, while a Christian can be a politician, his faith does not say anything to his politics; and (4) *gratia in naturam* (grace **penetrating into** nature), which typifies the Reformational view because grace is able to transform creation. This, van der Walt, suggests, can be labelled *gratia naturam transformans.*

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This four-fold grid helps to explain the links between the Christian and natural worldviews and, to some extent, the reasons for various actions and inactions as Christians. Still, we should explore more directly the dichotomy between the expectations raised by our Christian worldview and the problems caused by the mistakes we make in our administrative praxis.

David Gushee (Dockery and Thornbury, 2002: 109) gets a little closer to the problem when he notes the dissonance between belief and behaviour. "One of the great flaws of the moral instruction that young people typically receive," he says, "is the failure of teachers, preachers and parents to ground moral norms in a broader Christian worldview. High-schoolers may know they are not supposed to have sex before marriage but not why they should not do so." This observation applies to a wide cross-section of lifestyle issues. Christian education, it seems, has done an excellent job in imparting Biblical information and truth, but has been less effective in challenging and changing behaviour. It is tragic, perhaps, that the noble ideal of Sunday School – to correctly nurture young children, teenagers and adults in the ways of the Lord – may actually inoculate them against the deep issues of the Gospel precisely because the deeper issue of the foundational worldview is not adequately covered.

This problem must also be asked in the context of culture. Is the gap between belief and behaviour not also, perhaps, the result of a gap in understanding between, on the one hand, the Biblical culture and that of the "missionary" (whoever that is, not just the vocational evangelist) and, on the other, the "missionary's" culture and that of the recipient of the Gospel? If *intra*-cultural teaching is falling short of the demand, how much more *inter*-cultural or *cross*-cultural teaching? But if we are not sufficiently cognisant of our worldviews (natural or Christian) to begin with, the resultant clashes will likely continue unabated.

Concludes Gushee (Dockery and Thornbury, 2002: 126):

> In the time between the first and second comings of Christ, we catch glimpses of what N. T. Wright calls 'the victory of God', but we are not privileged to see that victory in all of its fullness. The church remains a pilgrim people, on the way to the heavenly city but not yet there, meanwhile called to reclaim the earthly city for Christ and experiencing both victory and defeat in so doing. This is who we are, where we are, what we are doing, why we are doing it, and what we can expect. It is our worldview, the story of our life and the life of our world.

Having drawn attention to the concept of a Christian worldview, we are better able now to evaluate the administrative enterprise from such a perspective and to ask how a Christian should administer. However, as I have already pointed out, there is often a dichotomy between belief and practice or, more legitimately, perhaps, between what others expect me to believe (but which I may not for a variety of reasons) and my praxis. In addition, this dichotomy may well be aggravated by cultural norms that contradict the Word of God. This is

why it is important to investigate and to articulate a theology of administration and then to inculcate that into one's natural worldview (adapting the latter, of course, in line with the Word of God). This will be explored in the next two chapters.

2   A Parenthetical Note on Personality and Administration

We have taken some time to briefly examine the Shona and Ndebele worldviews as well as to suggest an outline of the Christian worldview as an added factor in the mix. It is perhaps necessary at this juncture, however, to point out another dynamic in the praxis of administration, especially on an individual basis, that worldview alone does not explain.

It will be recalled from our conversations in previous chapters that my co-researchers had varied approaches to the different aspects of administration. We saw, for instance, personal preferences in the ways each of the factors under discussion – time management, planning, organising, leading and controlling – are done (or not, as the case may be). This is over and above, or in spite of, one's cultural proclivity and worldview.

Although I am exploring the hypothesis that one's worldview is a major determinant of an approach to the praxis of administration – which suggests a 'universal' influence within that ethnic group – we have observed also that, individually, one's praxis of administration is shaped by personality and temperament as well.   Hence, within any given cultural or ethnic group, one will find some who are very effective administratively while others are absolutely hopeless. Some will be more concerned, for example, with punctuality; others not. Some will be very capable planners and organisers; others will not have the first clue. Some will be competent leaders, where their influence is 'natural', unforced and, indeed, appreciated; others try to lead or manage and get little or no response unless it is through position or, even, by coercion. Some are able to control (that is, manage, measure and discipline) such that they achieve willing co-operation and support; others find such control extremely difficult and distasteful – and consequently, are not very successful at it. Moreover, since the elements of planning, organising, leading and controlling all involve a modicum of skill, it is possible for one to improve in their execution. And skills and competencies also vary from person to person. Therefore, within any given ethnic group, quite apart from the extent to which worldview dynamics may or may not impact praxis, it is also evident that personality, temperament and skill likewise play a critical role in the exercise of administration. So, the practise of administration is, in fact, both a 'universal' (that is, culturally within one ethnic group) phenomenon as well as a relative (that is, personal) one.

In the foregoing, we have outlined the general concept of worldview, considered some of the Shona and Ndebele traditions in particular, and have highlighted in some detail – from a management perspective – the core concept of *ubuntu*. All of this was to shed light on both the worldview dynamics exposed in our conversations in the last three chapters and the following two administration cases. We turn now to the first of these. As the stories unfold, we see practically and dynamically the place of worldview and personality in the saga of the events. First, Joyce tells her story.

3 <u>Joyce's Story</u>

<u>"Graduation Ceremony of a Leadership Training School"</u>

We were nearly running late. I could hear the voice of my husband in the passage imploring everyone to get into the car. I dashed into the kids' bedroom and picked up a left shoe and jacket, plus a small toy to help keep the young boy entertained during the ceremony. Passing through the kitchen, I grabbed the bag with cool drink bottles and snacks just in time to meet my husband at the door with the keys.

Once the gate padlock locked, we zoomed past our suburb into town. It was with great enthusiasm and pride that we had received the invitation, almost two weeks ago, to attend a graduation ceremony for one of our rural pastors who had recently gone through a Pastoral Leadership Training School for a year with a well-recognised major church in the city. And we were excitedly on our way to attend this important ceremony.

We passed the last robot in town, managing to arrive at the venue just in the exact nick of the fore-mentioned time – 9:00 a.m. My first registration – mentally – of the fact that things were not quite right was given by the presence of a group of women dressed in uniform seated casually by the entrance of the church as though they were off on a trip some where. Moving to the back of the building, we again found some women chatting nonchalantly as they went about their business at church. As we glanced past the windows into the main church hall, our first suspicions were confirmed. We were definitely in the wrong place!

My husband recalled vividly that this was the venue mentioned to him. Now what were we to do? We knew no-one that we could contact in connection with this event. We dashed to the next Methodist church we knew in Nguboyenja as we told ourselves we could only but try two or three more churches before we gave up.

We arrived around 9:30 just in time to meet a gentleman coming from the back of the church. After asking, we were informed – to our great relief – that this was indeed the venue and that the starting time was indeed 9:00 a.m. Our relief was taken aback, however, as we began to

look around in amazement and notice that there was absolutely no-one there yet. We were definitely late but the first!

The organisers and graduands eventually began to trickle in after some 20 minutes. We were still seated in the car, not knowing what to do. By then, I was fidgeting around with my cell-phone trying to finalise a meeting in town with a friend to whom I needed to give a parcel. When I left home earlier on I had told her I could meet her at 11:00 a.m. as the service was going to last for just one hour – a generous allowance of an extra hour. By this time, I was trying to give her a better indication of when I could meet her. I tentatively suggested 12 noon and sent her an sms text message to that effect – to which she agreed.

We were finally ushered into the church at around 10:15 a.m. We dutifully sat in the pews as we waited for the graduands from different churches and lecturers from the school to arrive and be seated. Eventually, a lady Mistress of Ceremony greeted us with immense enthusiasm, reminding us that this was the graduands' special day, that we were to be glad and rejoice with them! After introductions, the ceremony began. We went into praise and worship, which took us the next half-hour or more. The ceremony went on intercepted with testimonies and a lot of talk about the school from the MC.

My cell phone vibrated as it prepared to ring – I had forgotten to switch it off! My friend was trying to find out where I was so we could meet! I jammed the receiver shut – but then recalled how terrible it could be if my friend had to end up waiting for me if I was not there. So I desperately tried to switch it on and send her a message. And by then I was terribly blank about how and when this ceremony was going to end. All I could say to her was that I was right in the middle of the service and didn't know when it was going to end and that I would phone her once we were finished.

The MC announced again how it had all been forgotten that there was need to have a cameraman/photographer for graduation, but thanked God because, just that very morning they had come across a photographer who was now ere and prepared to take their photos at so much per card.

As the presentation of the certificates was about to start, an announcement was made by one of the leading lecturers – apparently responsible for the co-ordination of the training programme on behalf of the particular church. The Secretary had just phoned him that morning to say that half the certificates had been left in the office. So he was apologising on behalf of the school that some of the graduands will not be able to receive their certificates but they would be given later. Also present to receive a certificate apparently was a graduate from a previous class – who had not yet received a certificate!

As I sat in the pew that morning, I was concerned: my mind was vaguely aware of the fact that much of my concentration was now on the certificates – not the graduation. Having travelled almost 50 kilometres from town with his mum and a fellow church member, my thoughts were desperately focused on the hope that our rural pastor would receive his certificate.

By now, the time was well past 12 Noon. A sermonette was delivered by the lead lecturer as he extolled the students to go and preach the word, in and out of season, to be good leaders – in finances, morally and all areas just as they had been taught.

The final series of announcements were (1) concerning the fact that the photographer was, in fact, charging a cheaper fee for a double card as opposed to one, so if graduates wanted to line up for a second photo, they could do so. Many did. (2) They were also told something they had not been told earlier: that there was a charge required to go towards the printing of the certificates. (3) The third announcement was that there was something prepared for us and we were not to go away hungry without anything to eat.

As we moved out of the church, my thoughts were on how we could politely avoid joining the food queue as we were already late. One look at our people from the rural area jogged my memory back and reminded me that there was no way I could run away as they most probably needed transport from us into town. So, dutifully, after exchanging pleasantries with the leaders who knew my husband as a pastor, we sat at the eating table in a small room at the back of the church and waited – as they prepared tea, the cups, the sandwiches and the biscuits for us to eat before we leave!

By the time we were finally bundled into the car, it was well after 12 Noon, nearing one o'clock and I knew my friend would be anxiously waiting. We finally met her outside the bank after 1:15 p.m. What a day to remember!

As the sun finally set in the western sky that day, I had a lot of questions unanswered about leadership, administrative dynamics and control.

Having shared her story, the participants picked up on the various elements, the first being that of time management**:**

3.1 The Resulting Conversation

DM: These are things that affect us every day. "We were nearly running late." Much of this centres on being late. We have a major challenge at home: it is most difficult for us to catch up on our time. We are dashing around. There's pressure. This is very characteristic of life. It poses the first challenge of administration. This easily overlaps

into my office. Yesterday, I was under extreme pressure; there was so much to do. Later I felt pity for my wife: I thought, 'How is she coping with this?'

GM: But I'm proud that we are improving. "We were nearly running late" shows a realisation that you are aware. Also, you were the first ones to arrive at the venue – even if you were 30 minutes late. The benefits of education are seen here. It reminds me of yesterday. I got home to come to college. I thought I was on time but on the way, the police stopped the ET [taxi] and that delayed us. This was a blow to me. In one of our first discussions, we talked about commitment, but my commitment to this meeting was now compromised. Most of our people have not developed a consciousness of time management.

DM: This is one group. Joyce and Chris were aware of being late. Then there was the other group who were so relaxed that nothing was organised properly. Yet, that consciousness can add to the pressure.

BM: We need to realise that time is a commodity which is non-reversible. That puts us under pressure. If someone comes late for the first appointment, your whole day is turned upside down. Even the MC [Mistress of Ceremonies] doesn't realise it: she says it's a special day, but doesn't treat it as such.

DM: But it's the event that's important.

I then shared a story of my own. I was invited to address a meeting of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) some years ago. The organiser came to see if I was available on the date (a Saturday afternoon) and said he would confirm the details with me. I usually have a sports commitment then, but it is flexible and, since this was an opportunity for ministry, I agreed. Later, the man confirmed the arrangements, both by telephone and in person. He informed me that a Deputy Minister was due to address the gathering before me. He also indicated it was an all-day affair. I had been asked to speak at 2:00 p.m. I arrived at the venue at 1:50 expecting to be met and ushered to the right seat. No-one was there! At 1:55, the first person arrived – a woman – who began looking for a broom to sweep the floor. Several minutes later, three other ladies arrived and proceeded to prepare the room. No-one greeted me. At 2:20, the man who had originally asked me to speak arrived, together with some others. At 2:35 I was asked to take a position behind the podium, along with five other people, one of whom was the Deputy Minister. After waiting for several more minutes, there was an introductory welcome (about 10 minutes), followed by the first speech for 15 minutes; the Deputy Minister was then introduced (five minutes) upon which she began her speech which lasted for 30 minutes. Someone else then stood up and began a third speech. I could

tell from what was being said that this was not a short, introductory talk but another address. By this time, it was 3:45 and I was yet to be introduced, never mind present my speech! I motioned to the organiser and called him outside. In whispered tones, I let him know that I was unhappy at having been invited to speak at 2:00 p.m. only to find myself kept waiting for nearly two hours; I pointed out that, on the basis of his having confirmed the time, I had made another commitment for 3:30 and so was already late for that through no fault of my own. I gave my apologies and told him I was going. Naturally, he was upset, but I emphasised the need to uphold one's promises.

DM: Yes, we haven't been acclimatised to the urban way. Our background is that we haven't worked with watches. Because of the community based village, we do things together. The other guy is not in a hurry. He understands that "we" are doing things together; so he expects me to pass by at some time. But we have now left that community village scenario. No-body told us things would change in town. Then both of us get offended. So, there needs to be some rehabilitation for us. That's why the MC [in Joyce's story] didn't apologise. When you come into a different environment, you must learn what the new expectations are.

BM: That's the problem with our weddings and our funerals. The different needs mean different pressures of time, for example, the transport guys are chivvying us along, the caterers are chasing us …

GM: I had a funeral. One parlour offered a quote [that was] $15 million cheaper but that meant they were very busy and had to keep to time. They suggested in the afternoon, but the parlour had it in the morning.

That reminded me of a story from one of my former students. As the pastor of a large, 1500-strong congregation, he was often busy with weddings. On one particular Saturday, he relates, he had no less than nine weddings in succession. He told each couple and their families very sternly beforehand that it was essential for them to be on time, otherwise it would upset everyone else through the day. He warned them that if they were late, they would go to the back of the queue. Needless to say, the first couple arrived 50 minutes late. True to his word, he told them they – and their guests – would have to wait. Naturally, they were angry but, as they were remonstrating with him, the second couple's party arrived – so he conducted that wedding. The next couple were only a few minutes late and he did that ceremony. And so it went throughout the day. Eventually, after everyone else had finished, the first couple were wed. It was a sobering lesson to many families, guests and friends. The pastor was unapologetic, stressing the need to abide by one's agreements – including wedding vows!

DM: This [keeping time] is a major problem for us.

The discussion then shifted to the issue of the wrong venue:

GM: Chris took it for granted that he knew the place. The information should be printed on a card.

CM: For us it was an issue of communication. We were given the details verbally. In the intervening two weeks, the venue was changed but we were not told.

DM: This may have been aggravated by your busy schedule: you could have confirmed beforehand. I've been invited with cards, but I have misread it and gone to the wrong place. A relaxed schedule would have helped.

JN: Sometimes you get yourself over-committed. You don't realise it until you're caught up in the snare. Then it's very difficult to get out.

BM: Priorities are very important. For example, Andrea Sibindi [a local area pastor and former College student] goes to every meeting in town – by bicycle. He fits in his commitments.

GM: There's a saying, "If you want something done, get a busy person to do it." A busy person has an organised mind so that he gets things done. When I was in my secular job, I learned to reduce my time of the work needed from eight hours to six. In the time saved, I asked my superior for more work. In the beginning, he gave me what he didn't enjoy doing. I'd do it in no time at all. Then he'd give me some more. Then he realised he had time to relax. He would do the same to his superior and, in due time, would be promoted – and then he would recommend me for promotion to his position! In the meantime, I would have learnt something of the job and gained free in-house training.

The next issue raised was that of organising:

DM: Levels of leadership are different. The senior might have done his job but the subordinates might not have done their jobs properly. Or the senior may not have delegated. The senior must take the blame because the responsibility remains with him.

BM: We need to teach people to do fewer things better. Some leaders are trying to do everything; to be everywhere at once.

But, why do people seem satisfied with poor quality? I asked.

GM: People are hungry for knowledge. So, "half a loaf is better than nothing"

DM: Culturally we cannot refuse something even if we don't want it. [But shouldn't we push for better quality? I pressed.] It's difficult for juniors to suggest to their seniors doing it better. Also, if the seniors lack training and skills, they can't do better. If you've been

exposed, trained, equipped, you can compare and suggest something else. Exposure and development are critical.

GM: Ndebeles are very loyal. Even if you're not producing the results, they still follow. I was thinking how relationships can be matched with productivity and results. As long as we focus only on relationships, we'll never improve.

BM: When someone visits you endlessly, he drains you. For us to say, 'Ah, you just caught me. I was rushing out,' is very difficult because you don't want to offend; you want to be polite. So you spend the whole day under a tree talking about nothing. This is affecting us as pastors. I think we should be open and honest.

GM: I'm a people person. But because of interactions with other enlightened people, I'm trying to say politely, 'I'm busy at the moment. Let's make an appointment for another time.' One time, a man who owed me money phoned for me to meet him urgently. I had an appointment with someone else first – but then he didn't come. The second one wasn't there when I got to his work place. I went away and came back. Eventually, his wife arrived and the man himself phoned me at the same time. He came shortly afterwards and gave me my money. In the meantime, I had other things to spend the money on and I didn't even get it home. I've used that money to invest in further studies.

JM: We can't ask other people to accept good quality when our work is not up to standard. There's the issue of control: the Chairman didn't check with the Secretary about the certificates. Student assignments hadn't been marked. There was an extra charge unannounced for the certificates. To me, this was bad because he should have led by example.

CN: If the preacher was the main organiser, then his message – challenging the graduates to do their best; to be excellent – didn't match his performance.

DM: As Pentecostals, we challenge people through our preaching and speaking, but we don't have the skills and expertise. It's only now that Pentecostals feel compelled to sit down and study. We are stories people. This homiletics business … I was teaching at another church's Bible school. A young man from my own church who came said I was wasting our time since the Apostle Paul didn't do this. But it's important to learn the roots and foundational principles.

GM: While I was at college, I remember a lecturer sharing with me that he had been excommunicated from his Pentecostal denomination after he graduated from college.

CM: This raises the question of evaluation. Who evaluates the man of God?

DM: Questioning this is just arrogance. The power and spectacular made the Pentecostals feel superior. We threw away the baby with the bath-water. These guys had some good stuff. But the Pentecostals said, 'Who are these? We're filled with the Spirit.' The activities are OK but the organisational process isn't there.

JN: The more the [graduation] service was extended, the better it was supposed to be. (DM: The longer it is, the more the anointing. [Laughter])

DM: There are two extremes and a balance is needed. To be so relaxed that it goes on too long versus everything done to the dot … both may not allow the Spirit to work. How can people, exposed to the world all week, be upset if the service goes for more than an hour while if they go to other functions, they're prepared to stay for hours? How can a sinner, absorbed in his sin, be ministered to in 10 minutes?

JN: You get used to it. I'm now in a one-hour system [at church]. When I go to another service that's very long, I struggle.

DM: In worship, we need to understand the kind of God we worship. It shouldn't depend on what songs we sing or how long we sing for. It should be based on the focus of our worship and the moving of the Spirit.

Back to the story …

DM: Joyce eventually met her friend at 1:15 p.m. So there are chain implications. She is affected by someone else. How would we (the affected) handle the next affected person?

GM: But there were people needing transport back home.

DM: So two groups need ministry. But it's not their problem. This is the dilemma of the pastor. You almost always get caught up in this situation. I have to finish ministering to the first person before I get to the next one. So, what do you do?

GM: I give an hour's appointment.

DM: But our schedules become so tight.

GM: This forces us to be more communicable with each other.

JN: We must execute a programme that doesn't put us under pressure. Have fewer appointments.

But if we assume that there will be poor organisation, I suggest, won't we develop a habit of allowing poor performance?

JN: We need to be more realistic. We need to think about the tasks before us. I had an appointment with my pastor. But a woman came in unannounced just at the time – and then took an hour … I was kept waiting all that time!

BM: I had appointment at some Church offices. I sat for 1½ hrs waiting. Other people were getting in without appointments. Eventually, the person came out: 'Oh, I didn't know you were still here.'

DM: You pay subordinates to solve your problems. If they don't, fire them. If my secretary doesn't solve my administrative problems, I've got to run around again.

Perhaps, I offered, part of our problem is that we have become too busy; should it be like that?

DM: I've decided I need to slow down, but I have to start. [You need to make an appointment with yourself.] I've tried to withdraw from ministry activities outside my church programme. I dropped two last month. Now I feel a bit refreshed. I'm hoping to drop a third. I'll also drop a few church things too.

JN: I see Chris rushing around doing this, doing that. He often sleeps late. One help has been his new commitment to college [because he has had to turn down other requests]. It's also about others asking and you can't say 'no'.

DM: We need to ask our wives to vet our schedules. They're watching us!

GM: College helped me because I had to learn to say 'no' to other activities.

CN: It takes a lot of discipline to say 'no'. I learned from experience: when I started; I worked flat out, but in the end I suffered. I went to the doctor: there was nothing wrong with me. He told me to slow down.

DM: I had a high blood pressure problem, but I've slowed down now. I got a letter from my young daughter: Why are you doing that? Why can't you get someone else to do it? So now I pay attention to her.

GM: I'm preparing for the time when the Lord takes me home. What will happen to my wife and children? So, I'm empowering her by encouraging her to get a degree; she can then make her own decisions about her future.

DM: It's not a curse to be called into ministry. If the Church is God's institution, and if God cares for the widow and the orphan, then the Church should take care of the pastor's wife. We need to educate the Church. Just as we teach the Church to give and to use their spiritual gifts, we need to teach them about tomorrow.

On the question of giving/support …

GM: You may not have financial acumen, so you live beyond your means or from hand to mouth. Colleges should teach financial management.

DM: The Church needs to be taught how to raise Timothys. We need financial systems as well as leadership development systems. This may be hindered by denominational structures and polities.

GM: Most pastors seem to have the maintenance mentality: they have a fear of those rising up, so they throw them out. They aren't prepared to let the reins go.

JN: I wish the mother church could monitor the activities of its leaders and programmes so that they are responsible enough.

GM: But the leaders are not properly informed, trained. We need analysis; we need to be open.

DM: Should this training come from Bible schools?

GM: They give principles, which you apply in your context.

DM: Should the training be broader than Bible schools to cater for a variety of ministry needs. Have refresher courses to keep people sharp.

BM: It's true that College doesn't make you a Christian, or give you a calling or give an assurance of ministry. The calling comes first; College then sharpens you.

3.2 *Reflections on the Dialogue*

In spite of some roving conversation – to be expected in a semi-open discussion – the participants identified problems in all five areas of time management, planning, organising, leading and controlling. Notably, although several of these difficulties were acknowledged – particularly time management, planning and organising – there was only superficial recognition it seems of any connection with worldview factors. This makes change tricky because, unless and until the underlying issues are recognised, they cannot be dealt with satisfactorily.

For instance, time management was conceded as a fundamental issue that affected everyone involved, to varying degrees of negativity and annoyance, but apart from admitting the problem and saying "something should be done", there was no in-depth analysis by my co-researchers of any underlying worldview aspect that may in fact militate against taking any action, despite the general feeling that this is a problematic area.

Then again, while relationships (harmony) is a major dimension of both Shona and Ndebele culture and worldview, its cousin – the fear of offending – is more assumed than emphasised.

Often, it seems, this fear is used as a scapegoat so that the fault is conveniently excused or ignored. So, while poor time management, planning and organising meant inconvenience and disruption (even for someone not present or associated with the event at all!) it appears nothing was said at any time during the ceremony, either to the organisers or the MC, nor, notably, did my co-researchers suggest what could have been done.

That all said, however, it is positive that the problems are recognised at least. That, decidedly, is the start of the journey! Also, the discussion highlighted similar problems for my co-researchers in their respective ministries. This gave them a useful opportunity to assess their positions, attitudes and probable responses to the problems identified. Indeed, they all commented at the end of the day that it had been a constructive, thought-provoking exercise.

4 Beki's Story

Beki related the following saga from a ministry colleague:

Recently I learnt the hard way when I realised that there are some things that are happening in the Church without my knowledge and approval. Some individuals and committees feel that they can make decisions for the Church without my consent. I assume they feel they know what's best for the church [rather] than the pastor. When I dug deeper into the issue, I discovered that those who are stirring the confusion in the Church have domineering personalities. They want to boss people around, including the pastor. [A] few weeks ago in a meeting, my associate pastor was attacked ruthlessly for not conducting a leadership seminar even [though] he tried to explain his problem. As if this was not enough, I got a phone call from one of the Board members asking me to submit weekly routine and hours to him. He said he wanted to see how I do my work during the week.

Reading between the lines, I realise that some people in our Church have been left for a long time to do their own things under the name of serving the Lord, so now it is very difficult to keep them under lock and key. There is an element of a power struggle buttered *[sic]* with a lack of submission and accountability. I discovered from these incidents that seniority does not equal maturity.

Some of the leaders think they are there to supervise the pastor. They don't see themselves a co-workers serving along with him. If anything goes wrong the pastor is blamed. Their job is to expose the weaknesses and failures of the pastor and this is used as a tool against him. When the Church Board becomes a "Fault Finding Commission" for the pastor, the idea of team ministry is thrown out of the window.

4.1 *The Resulting Conversation*

DM: [On the Elder who wanted to check on the pastor's work schedule] I first thought that is wrong. I thought it was a case of him picking into the pastor's activities because they wanted something to use against the pastor. But, if the pastor just disappears, without anyone knowing where he is or what he is doing, that's also bad. Both extremes are wrong. There should be a middle path.

GM: In many churches, the Elders act like the pastor's employer. It's wrong. In my case, no-one approached me [like that]; when I do home visits, I have someone with me. Whatever I'm doing, I must have someone so that if anyone wants to check on me, they can. To avoid me being pained about them, I call someone to go with me. I tell people what I'm doing. Sometimes, I have had to take someone to hospital and I would be there all night. I would go home at 4:00 a.m. and then be at college for my studies.

But isn't accountability a problem? I asked. People don't know what the pastor actually does from hour to hour and this encourages a lack of accountability.

GM: How we get into ministry is also a factor. I started the Assembly. Everyone found me there from the beginning. But where the church is up and running [and] the new pastor comes in … he finds the elders, the structure, the ladies are all there. And there is the thinking, 'We hired him.' So the attitude is that the pastor can be checked up [on].

CN: It seems there are several negative attitudes underlying this situation. Surely, there would be regular meetings about the ministries of the church; so why ask the pastor to submit his schedule? There seems to some domineering personalities. They don't care who is who. That speaks of a deeper problem.

DM: The pastor is wounded and bitter, and his reaction (second paragraph) suggests he is going in the wrong direction. It is most important that he must change his attitude towards others. If he doesn't, the battle will go on and on; and he will lose. It will be difficult for him since he came in later.

JN: The leaders see themselves as there to watch over the pastor; it shows that he has been put in a corner.

DM: When you are in a corner, you won't see your faults as things to be corrected but as an attack – and I defend myself. I can't correct it.

GM: A key is to teach the Word of God expositorally. The Bible itself will speak to them to be submissive to the one in authority.

JN: He also needs to look at himself and to ask, why is this 'fault-finding commission' doing this? He should ask about the weaknesses and failures that they are concerned with – and then do something about them.

GM: Many pastors are underpaid. They then try doing projects which are done at the expense of the congregation. The Church must be the first priority; your financial needs come second.

BM: The leaders [might] see him as lazy and not pulling his weight.

DM: What would happen if he prepared his detailed schedule and presented it to a Board meeting? If he does it collectively, he will avoid splits.

But what if he is sloppy and doesn't have a strong schedule? I asked.

DM: Then as he prepares his schedule, he should recognise the weaknesses and make suggestions as to how he can change and improve.

BM: His point of departure is "I'm only accountable to God"

DM: Then he's got a problem

GM: Yes, there's an attitude there.

CN: He is expecting the leaders to be accountable to him. But then I ask, "If they are working as a team, why is he uncomfortable with them asking him to be accountable?

DM: If he hasn't been leading well from the start, these problems may have developed over time.

GM: He needs some leadership training. He wants the power, but he doesn't know how [to get or use it].

DM: Is he from an independent church or a larger denomination?

BM: He's from a larger grouping.

DM: Then other seniors can be called in. The elders are also accountable to the larger group. This interaction can help both sides.

DM: When I went away, I left the Church in the care of my one of our Elders and we appointed him as my assistant. Immediately I left, I got the shock of my life. The guy who took over had so many ulterior motives. His attitude was: 'This guy hasn't been doing things right. Nothing has been done right. I'll change everything so it works properly.' The first few months went all right for him, as he tried to show that I hadn't done anything right. But later the people started resisting him and he was really hurt. The whole thing centred on the attitude that nothing has been done up to now. The minute you come in

with that attitude, you leave people behind. They always have a point of reference. When I came back, it was difficult for him. He had also tried to build himself up and had made some funny statements. People started caucusing against him. If I wasn't there then, there would have been resentment.

JN: So, is it too late now? Can anything be done?

DM: It depends on his attitude. Can a senior from the denomination come in to help and advise him and the leaders? If he's not willing to change, then we can't help him.

GM: He could also ask for a transfer to a new church after he has realised his mistakes. He can then start afresh.

JN: If he transfers, then the problem spreads to two congregations.

But, if he changes his attitude, he won't need to transfer, I interjected.

CN: If he transfers, the leaders won't have their attitudes sorted out; they will assume they've 'won'. Then the next pastor will be treated the same way.

What about leadership style and communications? I asked.

BM: [He is] dictatorial/autocratic. He's tough, pushy. He's reactive rather than proactive. His communication is weak and his organisational skills are poor. He's not a good organiser or a visionary. He may have personality problems – self-image, and so on.

Should he be a pastor in the first place? I wondered aloud. Is he a square peg in a round hole?

BM: [I'm] not sure.

DM: The problems are grown to confrontation – they are ruthlessly attacking the associate pastor in a meeting.

BM: He is hot-headed, having had some fistfights in the community.

GM: This means the seniors are responsible and haven't been doing their job. Do they know?

Since the discussion was drifting rather aimlessly, I then shifted the focus to ask about worldview issues involved in this story.

GM: He has already lost his dignity. Dignity goes along with leadership. (For instance, see David – dancing – and his wife) This has opened him up so that he has lost the respect of his people.

CN: In African culture, do the people ask the chief what he is doing?

GM: Then you have lost your dignity.

JN: This should be looked at in terms of the church structure. Who reports to whom? You could have a situation where the pastor is like a CEO who has to report to a Board which is not exercising its duties properly.

BM: [He's] the Chief**:** [so] who can oppose me? Question me?

CN: Do the people see themselves as having the power to ask what the chief is doing? Does the pastor feel they have no such right to question the chief?

BM: He says, 'They don't know how God called me. Who are they to question my calling?'

GM: Then he should be an apostle [that is, a church planter].   The people were there before him; they think, 'What right does he have to question us?' They know things that you don't know.

BM: I used to go to a certain church. It was owned by a certain tribe. [Their attitude was,] 'People should know that things must be done our way.' When this was questioned, you would be told to find another church. … He's also feeling that people are after his position, so he has to protect himself.

I asked**:** Doesn't this suggest he has a wrong perception of a call to ministry?

DM: The best way to defend yourself is to minister to the people. [He then outlined the story of his church split when some of his leaders defected. He set conditions for their return, but nothing happened. Then he went overseas. The Assistant Pastor quickly changed things and invited others to meetings to gain support. On his return, he confronted the Assistant and others and was able to resolve matters. Now they are happily reconciled.] When God calls you to do certain things, He has to give you the enablement. If this guy has a calling to do certain things, God will enable him. If you don't have the necessary grace, the things you do will either hurt you or help you. If people function within that calling, things will work out.

GM: We've also had several splits. In one instance, a pastor stole some money and, as he was being disciplined, transferred church property and built a church. But the roof collapsed. Before he rebuilt it, he went back to the Archbishop and reconciled.   You shouldn't start a church in bitterness. Do it properly, start from scratch; don't steal sheep, evangelise new converts.

At this point, although the discussion on worldview factors in this story had started well enough, the conversation was obviously drifting again. So, I thought it might be helpful to provide some direction and picked up on Mbigi's suggestions about village organisation (Mbigi, 1995: 120-122) as a starting point. The following discussion then ensued:

GM: What's kept our church united for so long has been "Deeper Life Conferences". [This relates to Mbigi's suggestion for celebrations, rituals and key events.] We would meet everyone for a week. There would be teaching with invited speakers. The theme of the year would be introduced. On one of the days, delegates would share their feelings about what was happening in the Church [see Mbigi's aspect of consultation and common agenda]. Now that the Church has grown so big, we have three seminars: one for pastors, the second is for the elders and the third for the deacons. In each case, there would be a conference day where everyone has a chance to discuss anything in an open forum. In the end, everyone has a single mind about the Church. This has kept the Church united and people have been refreshed and equipped for ministry. It's this grassroots involvement that has kept the Church united.

DM: I disagree with the last point on [there not being a] final solution [to Beki's friend's problem]. There must be a final solution.

GM: Repentance and reconciliation bring a lasting solution.

Then, regarding on-the-job security, George added, "I saw a film about an old lion that couldn't hunt any more. The others attacked it and pushed it out. Through hunger it was killed by jackals. So, if you're not useful to the community, they sideline you."

DM: Yes, because it's a community thing. But the other side is the chieftainship: that's mine until I die. That becomes a sinecure – if I don't do my job as chief properly it doesn't really matter.

BM: It's more than holding a position; it's about being useful. Sometimes leaders cease to be useful. They will say, 'No matter what, I'll remain the chief/king.' But when I represent the people – a privilege – I have an equal responsibility. I don't mind what they think or feel.

GM: Whoever gets into a position of authority wants to strengthen it. That puts you in a box because those around you will tell you certain things so that you remain. The leader puts fear into the people so that he maintains power. Unlike [former South African President, Nelson] Mandela, some leaders – even church leaders – are unapproachable. Enlightened leaders shouldn't be afraid of what people are saying about us; we should check it. God may be speaking through them. Then we correct our mistakes. That has helped me so much.

4.2 *Reflections on the Dialogue*

Again, in this case, despite a stated desire for a thrust on worldview factors, these did not come out clearly until I deliberately coaxed such responses. More than in the first instance, the discussion tended to drift off into inconsequential – but still interesting – topics. The participants were absorbed in the dialogue.

The primary issues in this instance were leadership (including style and delegation) and control (accountability in particular). Once more, the problems were readily identified and some solutions proffered – but with only two direct references to specific worldview dynamics: that of dignity and the chieftainship. Only as I brought in particular aspects connected with village life did other worldview facets come into focus (job security and authority). So, once again, we see a ready recognition of problems but not a concomitant appreciation of the possible underlying causes. My worldview is my view of reality, but I don't always see the connection between that and what I do!

5 <u>Conclusion</u>

Following various references to worldview in the previous three chapters, this chapter has explored the nature of worldview in general and given several definitions of the notion. We then looked specifically, albeit briefly, at Shona and Ndebele historiography and some of the basic worldview dynamics. We noted in the latter two cases the emphasis, in particular, on community, relationships, their cosmology and the spirit world. In completing this section, we examined briefly the philosophy of *ubuntu/unhu* and shared some ideas on how this may be used to transform the Southern African business environment, with special reference to the management of organisations from an Afrocentric perspective. However, it was noted that the proposed approach, being spiritual but non-Christian, is based on deeper values anathema to the Christian. We also looked briefly at the Christian worldview and pointed out the problems arising from a clash of cultures (African and Western, urban and rural, natural and spiritual) and the resultant tensions between concept and practice or belief and behaviour.

With that in mind, we then looked at two administrative case studies from two of our co-researchers. We noted from these that, although problem areas are easily identified, acknowledged and appreciated, the worldview dynamics underlying them are not so easily seen or esteemed. Joyce's story, perhaps, lent itself more to this than Beki's. Whereas Joyce's story involved an event with several people – making worldview factors easier to spot – Beki's focussed primarily on one individual and personality/leadership style issues. In this case, worldview factors are less directly visible. Like the proverbial fish that cannot describe water since it has no other medium with which to compare it, we have seen that describing

one's worldview, especially in a particular context like administration, is very difficult unless there has been a focused effort to study it.

In the next Chapter, we will round off our conversations with a final group dialogue that, hopefully, will allow us to articulate a suggested theological approach to administration. This, too, is likely to be difficult, since this is not typically an area we are called upon to verbalise (the emphasis in typical theological training being largely upon systematic, Biblical or social theologies). Nevertheless, we will endeavour to explore the field so as to present a proposal to this effect. The endeavour here will be to establish a theological basis, grounded upon Scripture, for administration performed in a Christian service context.

Chapter Seven

<u>CHRISTIAN ADMINISTRATION: Towards Contextual Theologising</u>

1. <u>Introduction</u>

The concept of administration within the contexts of the Shona and Ndebele peoples and within Christian ministry has been explored in some detail. It now remains for us as a group to propose a theological foundation upon which Christians could seek to undertake their administrative tasks. It is hoped that, as we explore this, we will discover a Biblical foundation for the praxis of administration that will address most of the problematic issues identified in the investigation. This, in turn, may help to counter some of the negative effects of our cultural approaches to administration.

It is necessary at this point to reiterate what is meant here by "theology" and, more specifically, a "theological approach to administration" in the context of Practical Theology. As a Christian, I understand God as the Prime Source since He is the Creator. As an Evangelical (see below, section C. 1.), I see the Bible as God's authoritative, progressive revelation of Himself and His plan for "His-story". Hence, in the process of revealing God in terms of who He is and what He has done, is doing and wants to do, it offers essential practical guidelines on God-honouring attitudes and behaviour for those whom He has redeemed. This includes administration since the Scriptures reveal much about God's planning, organising, leading and controlling, together with the ways in which He expects human beings to function within His intended scheme. From these points of departure, I come to understand that general theology is our articulation about our understanding of God; it shapes the way we respond to Him and to others. Within that context, it is possible to speak of a theological basis for and approach to our behaviour and, hence, a theology. This theological approach to a subject gives the Christian a God-directed basis and rationale for functioning the way they do.

For some, this may appear to contrast with or, even, contradict, what is typically understood as theology – usually either Systematic, Biblical or some form of contemporary theology. My understanding here is not to contradict or reject these other theological perspectives but, rather, to supplement them as something analogous. For this enquiry, the broad focus is practical theology (see Section 2.2.1 in Chapter One), which draws on these theological disciplines and other fields of academia and pulls them together to provide a rationale for praxis. At the same time, the narrower emphasis is the basis for administration from a Biblical perspective (albeit not necessarily within a vocational ministry context only.)

Earlier (Chapter One, sections 2.1.4 and 2.2), the concepts of postfoundationalist, narrative practical theology were discussed. It was noted that practical theology from these perspectives means that the theologising process is context based and articulated through one's understanding of God and interpretation of Scripture, as well as the translation of these into action. It is bottom-up, that is, developed by the individual or community. This is in contradistinction to top-down theologising that is presented to the community by, usually, a formally trained theologian often using esoteric jargon. It should be understood here that, since all of us interact with God, we are all theologians. Some may be formally trained, others not. Since this enquiry is dealing with Christians in vocational ministry doing administration, we want to explore their views and understanding of God's perspective on the process.

There are two questions we wish to consider here:

"Administrative Theology" and Praxis: What is the Connection?

On the one hand, we have discovered in our dialogues that administration is not a concept that many people can articulate lucidly. Apart from the overlap and inter-changeable use of related concepts of leadership, management and administration, there is also the difficulty of defining what tasks actually constitute administration in the pure sense. How, then, in addition to all this, does one articulate a clear theological basis for administration? Moreover, in considering theology in general, the typical emphasis is usually on Systematics, Biblical or contextual theologies (for instance, Liberation, Black, African, Feminist and so on). We do not normally and deliberately investigate specific 'sub-theologies' such as leadership or administration. Nevertheless, every Christian develops over time an attitude and an approach to administration that reflects their understanding of God and their working relationship with Him. That this is probably subconscious and cannot be clearly articulated does not negate its existence. We might call this "layman's theology" for want of a better label.

That said, however, it raises the fundamental question: What does our "theology of administration" – in whatever form it may take – say about the way we actually do it? Indeed, can we make a connection at all if we cannot clearly articulate either of the topics?

On the other hand, if theology is supposed to shape our praxis, a second pertinent question also arises: Given the identified problems with administration in ministry, why does this (albeit sub-conscious) theology apparently not affect the way(s) we do administration? Or, to put it another way, if, as Christians, we have God's manual for living, so to speak, why does that not guide us as clearly in our administrative enterprise as we claim it does in other realms of life?

In seeking to address these two questions, we discussed the crafting of a culturally relevant theological approach to administration. This was done in the context of a one-day group retreat as a workshop. Initially, I had anticipated that the group would have reflected on their own theological perspectives beforehand and thus come prepared to share their insights. This did not happen. I also expected the group to work methodically through Scripture to discuss various passages relating to the core administration issues (that is, following a Biblical Theology approach rather than a Systematic one). This did not happen either. And thirdly, I further anticipated that the group would arrive at a commonly acceptable theological statement about administration that would reflect, at least in broad terms, the main issues raised in our prior discussions. Again, that never happened. In short, my expectations (broad, flexible and open to other's input as they were) did not go according to plan. Perhaps this was not too surprising, since none of us had ever attempted anything like this before. I realised afterwards that no-one in the group knew what to do in such an exercise, so nothing was done ahead of time; they all waited for me to give some direction to the process. And, not being aware of any similar example in the same field, I had nothing to share with them. There was, then, on the one hand an excitement at covering "virgin territory" and, on the other, some trepidation at moving into the 'dark' unknown.

As such then, the narrative discourse on Scripture, as will be seen from the dialogue below, was rather arbitrary. This was despite the group agreeing – contrary to my expectations since it is theologically artificial – to retain the fivefold grid we have used in our conversations to date (that is Time, Planning, Organising, Leading, and Controlling). They felt comfortable with the grid, not only because of our previous discussions along those lines but also, I suspect, because this breaks the concept of administration down into recognisable and workable components. Of course, it could be argued, then, that the theologising exercise could become more complex because the question, 'What is my/our theological approach to …?' must be asked of each of the five specific elements and not just on administration in general.

Some may feel that this form of narrative theologising is inappropriate because such a task should be done by trained theologians using formal means of articulating theology. After all, they may argue, how can a person without such training think "theologically"? And besides, to think theologically is to articulate one's theology. However, Dyrness, in speaking of "vernacular theologies", puts the lie to such views when he suggests (1992: 31) that it is precisely as the common people interact with Scripture and express that revelation in daily life that they theologise. That they may not be able to articulate it does not minimise or eliminate its relevance or, even, the task of theologising itself. Indeed, he argues, correct theologising must *start* at that level and evolve as it is articulated and evaluated against practise. It is false

thinking he says, to start with John Calvin and Karl Barth and expect the ordinary Christian to be able to express a 'correct' theology at that level.

It is in the personal practise of Scriptural truth and how that is understood that a theology develops. Thus, a narrative approach to theologising allows the Christian to share a story (or more) that reflects theological thinking – however embryonic that may be. As Dyrness (1992: 34) puts it, "this is meant to give the people their voice. … Narratives provide a more genuine picture of a people's faith than do more objective modes, as people tend to 'own' their stories more than they do abstract descriptions."

At the end of workshop, I felt very discouraged because it seemed as though the group had not accomplished what I thought should be done. On reflection, however, I realised that I had prompted and participated in exactly what Dyrness speaks of**:** a layman's articulation, through stories and interaction with Scripture, of a practical theological expression of administration. Moreover, I also realised that, in line with Gehman's (1987) suggested methodology, this is a process and not an event. Thus, I was probably expecting too much from a one-day discussion. Rather, this was the beginning of the process. It remains, therefore, to be continued and refined with further reflection, discourse and narratives. This may be a starting point, perhaps, even, a foundation upon which others may build.

Next, in seeking to address the second question, we noted Dyrness' subsequent comment (1992: 37)**:** "A corollary of this [giving people their voice] is that a people's actual theology as it is practiced is not the same as they might claim that it is." This relates, of course, to our earlier observation that, although the research group understands administration, there appears to be a dichotomy between an articulated 'theology' of it and the practice of it – as evidenced in our discourses through this investigation. Hence, having begun to theologise, we then closed the day's workshop with a brief discussion of the possible reasons for the gap between belief and behaviour.

2.   <u>Discerning a Theological Method or Framework</u>

In working towards a contextual theology of administration (our first question), it is worth noting Gehman's observation (1987: 75) critiquing previous attempts by African theologians (for example, Kwesi Dickson, Peter Kanyandago, John Kurewa, Charles Nyamiti, John Mbiti and Byang Kato, among others) to develop a Christian theology that is truly African. While commending them for beginning the exercise, he says: "We have sought to disclose the faulty foundation upon which they have begun the task. With a low view of Scripture, no theology will stand the test of time. Like so much of the experimental theologies of the West these days, they will last a few short years and then be bypassed for newer, 'more relevant

theology'." The problem is unbiblical presuppositions. "A faulty methodology will lead to a faulty theology even as a poor foundation results in a poorly constructed building." (Gehman, 1987: 76)

Since what God – rather than man – says is the basis of all true Christian theology, our starting point for developing a possible theological framework must be His Word to us, the Bible**:** How does God address the issue? O'Donovan (1996: 4) defines such theology as: "[a] biblical statement of what the Bible teaches on a particular subject as one encounters that subject in various books of the Bible."

But he then points out (1996: 5) some of the pitfalls of seeking to define an African theology using Western methodology and terminology**:** this does not answer the deep questions Africans have, nor does it allow them necessarily to correctly apply Scriptural answers to those questions. Second, there is the problem of syncretism – the merging of religious beliefs such that the truth of both is watered down and compromised. He recognises, however, that such theologising must be done in the context of the people who are practicing it. Hence, the exercise must also consider relevant worldview perspectives and how these shape one's approach to the issue under discussion because of what the Bible says about it. This is exactly Imasogie's point (1983: 26) as he calls for

> new methodologies that are responsive to the life situations of modern man, as seen against the backdrop of divine self-disclosure. … if the existential needs of Africans are to be adequately met by the Living Christ there must be a new theological guidelines that will take their worldviews seriously in mediating the claims of Christ.

This, indeed, adds credence to the narrative approach followed in this exercise. Unfortunately, as with their worldview and concrete understanding of administration, the group found it difficult to identify a culturally appropriate methodology for arriving at a theological basis for administration. So, again, this necessitated making some suggestions as prompts for this. I hoped this would stimulate discussion about an appropriate approach, but it did not. Thus, I was left to explain Gehman and O'Donovan. I stressed, of course, that this is only one way to theologise. Nevertheless, it was clear in their ready acceptance of this idea that they had no alternatives. They had no social construct of their own for such an task.

O'Donovan (1996: 4-5) suggests three steps: First, we must carefully establish what the Bible says about the subject in all the places where the subject is mentioned in the Bible. Second, we must determine what all these statements mean concerning that subject. This is done by analysing each statement according to the proper rules of grammatical analysis. We must then analyse each statement in its historical situation. Following this, we must compare the

various statements in the Bible on the subject with each other, in order to understand the Bible's complete teaching on that subject. Third, we must apply the Bible's teaching on the subject to life today.

Then, to avoid the problems alluded to above, he suggests posing three questions (1996: 6):

A. What does the Bible say on the subject?
B. How does African culture relate to what the Bible says about the subject (what beliefs and practices are related to this subject)?
C. How can we express the truth of the Bible on the subject in a way that is clearly related to African culture?

But, he says, theology is supposed to change lives; this requires application to daily life – which is contextualisation. This process involves (1996: 6):

(a) Defining the cultural problem or issue which needs to be resolved
(b) Determining what the Bible says concerning this issue
(c) Identifying what the culture says about the issue and why
(d) Determining what cultural similarities or differences exist on the issue between the biblical situation and the local situation
(e) Deciding how you would apply what the Bible says about the issue to your culture
(f) Determining how your people would have to change their worldview and their beliefs in order to adopt the viewpoint of God on the issue
(g) Determining how your people would have to change their practices in order to do the will of God in the matter
(h) Deciding what you must do to help your people make the necessary changes
(i) Deciding what strategy your local church could adopt to help your people make the necessary changes to deal with the problem

As stated previously, the group agreed to this model and in our discussions, we found it prudent to merge steps (a) with (c) and (b) and (d) with (e) as well as (g) and (h). We also decided, with the limited time available, to omit the last step.

Next, we noted Gehman's observation (1987: 76) that African theologising entails the important issue of contextualisation. He defines it (1987: 77) as:

> a dynamic process whereby the people of God, living in community and interacting with believers throughout time and space, under the illuminating guidance of the Holy Spirit, proclaim in their own language and thought forms, the Word that God has spoken to them in their context through the study of the Scriptures.

He then elucidates this definition (1987: 77-89) before expounding four proposed principles or steps in the process of theologising (chapter four). He points out, though, (1987: 90) that this is not the only way to approach theologising (compare O'Donovan above). Gehman proposes (1987: 90-108) the following four-step process which the group similarly accepted beforehand:

(1) <u>*State your presuppositions*</u>. While acknowledging the oft-intended goal of objectivity, he says (1987: 90) the traditional (Western) scientific approach cannot measure truth or error. As such, the objectivity that is often alluded to is absent. We all come from cultural and religious backgrounds; we have been exposed to ideas upon which our already existing conclusions are based. Therefore, we must first state our presuppositions – our point(s) of departure – so that our audience knows the context in which we speak.

(2) <u>*Organise a plan for theologising*</u>. While it might be acceptable for one individual to craft a theology, as Gehman has rightly pointed out in his definition, this should ideally be done by "the living community of the people of God, interacting with believers throughout time and space" (1987: 95). He suggests that, from a contextual point of view, this is right for Africa, given the emphasis on community. By involving several people, the Body of Christ participates and the necessary resources and responsibilities are spread through the whole Church.

He advises that each denomination approve a Theological Advisory Group, enjoined to work within its own structures and procedures. Each group would research and prioritise their relevant needs. A carefully selected research team of three to five members, ranging from post-graduate ministers to grass-roots laypeople, should be appointed to investigate all relevant issues about the subject. The key person on this research team is the Manuscript Drafter, who is also the chairman of the team. The Research Team would meet regularly to strategise and plan their research, which should be as thorough as possible. It would include grass-roots input, as well as cultural dynamics such as relevant proverbs, traditions, symbols and analogies. Once the draft is compiled, it is evaluated by various resource groups who question, comment and refine the initial findings. After this latest input, the final draft of the theological statement is prepared for consideration by the Advisory Group which may suggest further work as necessary. Once this is completed, the Advisory Group must consider the specific target audience(s) to whom the Biblical study is aimed and the tools best suited to communicate the information. Gehman stresses (1987: 102) that quality results come from quality research and study, which in turn, require time and effort.

While this process is accepted, it seems that Gehman is speaking in broader or deeper and more comprehensive terms than this enquiry intends. So, although I accepted the principle, I also adapted it considerably – with some cautious reservations – to suit the specified structure

of this investigation and that of my group of co-researchers who, in principle, would function like Gehman's proposed working group.

(3) Research the crucial needs. These are found in our traditional past, our contemporary situation(s), in organised churches and in society in general (1987: 103). Obviously, this investigation is dealing with an already identified issue. However, as Gehman rightly asserts (1987: 104) "there is a tragic lack of biblical knowledge among believers. Because of a shallow and superficial knowledge of the Word of God, moral and organisational problems often develop. Situations arise in which people do not know how to deal with them biblically." (While this point is widely applicable, the root problem here, it seems to me, is both a lack of accurate Biblical exposition and the exegetical and hermeneutical skills to apply Scripture correctly to practical situations. But these aspects are outside the scope of this theological enquiry. Perhaps not entirely surprisingly, the narratives reported below highlight the shortfalls here. This, in turn, underscores the importance of a wholistic approach to correct theologising, exposition and application with integrity. As this particular theologising exercise is continued and developed further, this point will become even more significant.)

(4) Establish your goals. Gehman asks (1987: 106),

> Why should the evangelical Christian churches be engaged in such a tedious process of theologising when in fact there are millions of people outside the churches who need to be evangelised? Historically, the evangelicals have primarily stressed evangelism with little attention given to theological reflection. The result is obvious today. … Despite the fact that the vast majority of Protestants are evangelical at the grass roots level in Africa today, there are pitiful few who are sufficiently trained and well placed so that they are able to give leadership to develop an evangelical theology for the African context. What Christian churches need to realise is that if this pursuit of theologising is done with proper goals, it will help us to accomplish exactly what we are so deeply concerned about, namely, a revitalised, renewed church which is growing through evangelistic outreach.

Although Gehman is dealing with theologising from an African perspective in broad terms, and while he says "our primary goal in developing an African Christian Theology should be spiritual renewal among the churches and the building up the Kingdom of God" (1987: 107), our goals in this particular exercise were narrower in focus (see below, point 3.4 under "The Dialogue").

Having settled on an agreed theological method (that is, a combination of O'Donovan's and Gehman's approaches), we next sought an acceptable approach to the second question of why one's praxis often does not correspond with one's stated theology or Scriptural convictions. This relates hermeneutic to praxis. On this, Imasogie (1983: 68) asks whether

the behaviour of the African Christian suggests a need to re-evaluate presuppositions about the traditional Christian approach to theologising. The answer, he says,

> is in the affirmative, as reflected in the following observation**:** *For years many sensitive pastors/theologians in Africa have noticed that in times of existential crisis, the average African Christian reverts to the traditional African religious practices. In some instances, pastors/priests (theologians, if you please) have themselves fallen victim to this irresistible reaction to existential confrontation. …* The mere widespread incidence of this observation arouses suspicion about the adequacy of the ideological superstructure which forms the matrix from which the prevailing Western version of Christian theology was formulated.

Explaining the quasi-scientific worldview of the Western missionary, assuming it to be superior because it is 'scientific', yet unable to fully appreciate the spiritual dynamic of his Christian faith and, therefore, imploring Africans to change their worldview, he continues (1983: 69): "… deep down in the subconscious dimension of their beings, their cultural conditioning remained intact to determine their behaviour in moments of life-problems. … To these Africans, Christianity was of no practical use in times of existential crisis." He suggests that the presuppositions underlying orthodox theologising in Africa have led to difficulties for the average African Christian who finds it easy to revert to traditional practices. Hence, we ask**:** Is the issue of an apparent lack of continuity between knowledge of Scripture and administrative praxis simply a matter of failing to articulate a relevant theology, or is it the result of failing to enculturate or contextualise theology properly? Either way, praxis is affected.

Also, as we reflect on the theology-praxis relationship, it is important to realise that action is most often predicated on what we believe. Even if that belief is not readily articulated, it subconsciously leads to action (or non-action). Belief systems are built upon and are part of one's worldview. For the Christian, we are taught from Scripture (preaching, Bible study), from what our teachers – both formal and informal – say and do (example) and from our interpretation of all this and God in our circumstances (experience). However, in many cases, including administration, there is often little direct conscious linkage between one's knowledge and interpretation of Scripture – our theological base – and the practice. Yet, this teaching necessitates a merging of two worldviews: the natural and the Christian. That what is taught as "Christian" behaviour and attitude is often not taught as Christian worldview is, perhaps, a major part of the problem here. This was clearly demonstrated in the ensuing dialogue.

3.   The Dialogue

Some worldview factors came into play as we prepared for the joint workshop. Having arranged a date and venue, and with all the participants confirmed, only two of the six in the group arrived on the day. Of the four who did not come, one pastor had a double funeral

(husband and wife) out of town – but failed to notify me; a second member travelled out of town, despite having confirmed earlier in the week he would be coming, while two others had a family emergency. This was notified to me. In this, we see worldview factors at play: A focus on the immediate, without recognition of the impact on others on the periphery, as well as a primary concern for those in immediate need rather than for prior commitments. Relationships are at the forefront, but not necessarily with any consideration of interconnectedness between them.

The workshop was then rescheduled a week later and five of the group were able to attend; the sixth had a prior commitment out of the country.

In our preparation for the workshop, as noted previously, the group decided on a mixture of both O'Donovan's and Gehman's approaches, since they harmonise quite readily. So we began by first discussing our presuppositions (Gehman) and followed this by using O'Donovan's three questions and nine steps (amalgamated) to complete Gehman's second, third and fourth stages.

3.1 Our Presuppositions

Five prior assumptions to our investigation were noted. The first was theological, in that all the participants in this exercise are Evangelicals. From a theologising point of view, this means fundamentally that we all take a high view of Scripture, seeing it as the inspired word of God and the final authority for life and practice. From this standpoint, we see Scripture as a united whole, and one of the two main ways in which God has revealed Himself (that is, through special revelation; the other is through general revelation, or creation.)

As Tienou (1990: 9) explains it: "In the history of the Christian church the word [evangelical; from the Greek, *evangelion*) has acquired the meaning of one who conforms to the essential doctrines of the Gospel and to the basic acts and truths of Christianity." As such, therefore, we hold to the cardinal doctrines of the faith: the incarnation, the virgin birth, the sinless life of Christ, His substitutionary atonement and bodily resurrection, justification by faith alone of all who trust in the sacrifice of Christ offered once and for all" (Tienou, 1990: 10). Hence, he adds, Evangelicalism "is the description of those committed to the historic Protestant Reformation understanding of the Gospel. It is a movement which is international and transdenominational in scope."

For a slightly different approach to understanding this theological position, especially from an African perspective, Ngewa, *et al.* (1998: xii-xiv) highlights the three 'worlds' of the African pastor (whom he calls Mumo): (a) The world of Christian faith, represented by the Bible; (b) The world of African culture, represented by the name he bears, the ancestry to which he

belongs and the social environment in which he and his parents grew up; and (c) The world of modern culture – his Levi jeans, Sony cassette player and his Michael Jordan poster on the wall of his dimly lit room. The search for a theology that spans the chasm between the Christ and these two cultures he loves presents him with somewhat of a crisis. Thus, says Ngewa (1998: xii) "any theology that would claim to be both African, contemporary and evangelical, that would truly relieve Mumo's tension, should reflect a number of commitments: (1) The lordship of Jesus Christ over the powers of this world; (2) The Word of God and the Spirit of God as the only reliable guides to understanding the truth about the lordship of Jesus Christ; and (3) Applying this Biblical, Christ-centred faith to life in Africa.

This presupposition, secondly therefore, relates to Biblical interpretation or hermeneutic. As Evangelicals, we take Scripture to be the inspired Word of God and the final authority for life and practice. This means we must explore its teachings and seek to apply them relevantly to, and as our final authority for, our context. We understand Scripture to have one central message**:** God's saving work for mankind through Jesus Christ and the resultant conquest of sin and evil, with the ultimate view of bringing Him the glory and honour He is due. As the Scriptures are interpreted and applied to our local context in this light, we must explore how the clash of cultures (the Biblical with our own) and the God-given principles can mesh authentically and with integrity to lead us in a lifestyle that glorifies the God we serve.

It should be noted here, perhaps, that this high view of Scripture does not, unfortunately, guarantee integrity in exegesis and hermeneutics. Experience indicates that upholding the authority of Scripture does not necessarily prevent its abuse through faulty exegesis. Indeed, as will be observed in the interaction below (section 3.5), there was very little attempt by the group to exegete the passages they referred to. In partial defence, it should be said that three of the group have had no formal theological training and so could not be expected to know how to exegete correctly. But, it may be asked, what is correct exegesis in an exercise of this kind? Stuart (1980: 20) defines it as,

> a thorough, analytical study of a biblical passage done so as to arrive at a useful interpretation of the passage. Exegesis is a theological task, not a mystical one. There are certain basic rules and standards for how to do it, although the results can vary in appearance because the biblical passages themselves vary so much.

As will be seen from the interactions with the passages below, there was little thoroughness or systematic, analytical study. This does not automatically mean textual abuse, but it does bring into question the substance of the final interpretation.   This was something I found disappointing, as noted in section 4.

The second main presupposition the group identified was that of our cultural context and the issues flowing there from. As Africans, there are inherent cultural factors that both define us and create problems for us. They are distinctly different from other (cultural) regions of the world. These include – among others, but not necessarily in order – such factors as: Fear, suspicion, envy, jealousy and time. There is the inherent emphasis on relationships and community. And, there is the ubiquitous and ever-influential spirit world, with its positive and negative forces. Then, alongside these dimensions of culture, there are also the resultant habits, traditions and subconscious assumptions that go with them that typically characterise an African as different from, say, an Asian or a Westerner. A philosophical example here is that of the concept of *ubuntu/unhu*, which we have explored previously. Then there are tribal or ethnic nuances that separate sub-Saharan people groups from each other – as typified by the Shona and Ndebele who, as having roots in the Bantu ethnic grouping, reflect many similarities but, also have significant differences peculiar to themselves. As our conversations have highlighted, these cultural dimensions reflect who we are as Africans and set us apart from others. Another example mentioned by Dawson was that African administration is linked to the chiefdom concept and its related spiritual connotations**:** you can't plan your day-to-day activities because of possible spirit intervention; only the head of the family can speak to the larger issues on behalf of the family.

The third presupposition closely related to culture is identity. But, being somewhat problematic, Beki raised this issue as a question: What does being "African" mean? While "African" might often be construed as "black" or "indigenous", given the ethnic diversity of settled peoples in the Southern African context, to what does this accurately refer? Does this apply to black ethnic groups only, or to white, Asian, Coloured and other sub-groups as well by virtue of their being settled on the Continent? If it is legitimate to speak of an Afro-American, for instance, why not an Afro-European or a Euro-African? What, in fact, is 'indigenous' given that various ethnic groups have been settled in Southern Africa for centuries? While this question can be answered in part in terms of a recognisably distinct worldview, it is also true that people groups not originally from Africa but settled here have nevertheless absorbed some African worldview dynamics and cultures. These peoples now view reality somewhat differently from those still living in lands from which their forebears originated. There are worldview and cultural elements that are no longer in accord. So, identity for some of these may be an issue. For black Africans, too, other worldviews and cultures have rubbed off and the influence of the global village is also felt. Hence, the question now**:** what is 'traditional'? This and identity are also determined by one's physical location, especially in terms of the rural or urban contexts. Each of these has their own

distinct sub-worldview dimensions that shape identity. Thus, the singular label "African" today is often inadequate; further elaboration or qualification is needed. As stated previously, of course, the parameters for this enquiry in terms of the identity of the core research group have been set at Shona and Ndebele Christians in Zimbabwe who are involved in vocational ministry in an almost exclusively urban context. As the facilitator of the group, I view myself, a Zimbabwean, as a Euro-African Christian involved in urban vocational ministry.

The fourth presupposition noted was that of generational change. George observed that it is said culture changes every 20 years. In today's global village, change is very rapid. Although change in rural settings is generally slower, the technological revolution is speeding up the process there too. Cell-phones, for example, are becoming increasingly common in the absence of fixed line telecommunications. Television, computers and other "techie" gadgets are readily available – even through solar power – and allow young people especially to familiarise themselves with what is "happening". New IT technology encourages creativity and innovation. While this change is visibly quicker in the urban context, rural areas are no longer exempt. Solar power and mobile phones are seeing to that. We may also be surprised at some of the older generation accepting such changes, but social, economic and lifestyle demands are insistent. Africa basically missed the Industrial Revolution, but the Communications Revolution is taking hold very strongly. This increasing exposure to alternative ideas and styles of living will form the basis for future social and economic development in ways that are yet to be appreciated. We may well dislike some changes, but change itself is inevitable, wherever we are.

For Joyce, a fifth presupposition is our colonial background. Colonialism (both political and social) has shaped a certain mentality in Africa. The group affirmed the widely perceived notion that colonialism has stifled creativity, innovation and, hence, development in Africa. A sense of inadequacy, inferiority and a fear of offending the superior seem very common. In addition to political and legal actions of the period (for Zimbabwe this was from approximately 1890 to 1980), there was also the parallel aspect of social attitudes. This, of course, affected all strata of society deeply, both consciously and subconsciously. Not surprisingly, colonialism left its mark on the Church: many denominations were racially divided into separate black and white congregations (often along geographical and/or demographic lines according to legal statute). Some denominations only serviced one group. As expected, much of this changed after Independence, but the adjustments were slow, yet unforced. The colonial mind-set also affected administrative systems. For many denominations, the head office functioned like a passive dictator or chief: the "workers" – those called of God – were told what to do and treated as employees. (In this conversation, Beki asked: "Is this colonialistic; did not Tshaka

do this to Mzilikazi? Isn't it better for me to oppress my own brother than a foreigner?" While not excusing colonialism, the point was accepted that such attitudes reflect widespread human tendencies and are not confined to colonial contexts alone. Added George**:** "We have a fighting spirit, motivated by greed. Accountability is lacking in most of us.")

3.2 Our Plan

Next, we briefly looked at Gehman's second step, which is to form a task force, working group or research team. For the purposes of this project, my group of co-researchers constituted the research team. As we have been exploring the issue of administration for some time now, and have reflected on our personal experiences, both individually and collectively, we felt we were able to use these as our field research. Moreover, all of us are involved in some form of ministry leadership and so are responsible for helping others in their walk of faith. This, too, gives us certain insights or perspectives on the task at hand.

As noted above, the team had very little idea of what to do or expect with such an exercise, since none of them had done anything like this before. My thinking was that we would meet together to assess and reflect upon what Scripture has to say about administration and, hopefully, come to some consensus as to what God's perspective and expectations are. As one involved in Practical Theology, I thus had a tentative idea of where we ought to – or, perhaps might – go. But I, too, have not done anything quite like this and so I was a little unsure of just how things would turn out. Although I had an inkling that one day would not be enough, even so I felt it would be sufficient time to at least devise a rough draft. But, other than meeting as a working or research group, I had no fixed ideas or definite expectations. I had circulated a copy of O'Donovan's and Gehman's approaches in advance and did not really expect the team to have any radically different ideas from these. This was confirmed as, in the end, they readily agreed to a combination of them as a methodology.

I also left open how they wanted to research and to frame the theological discourse. Again, they had not given this much thought beforehand and, despite my initial unwillingness to do so (to avoid imposing myself further), I reluctantly proffered the suggestion that one approach would be to follow the five-fold grid we have been discussing all along. (This reluctance was based on the premise that, like Systematics, theologising such concepts is somewhat artificial and arbitrary, since God has not revealed Himself or His plan in such ways. Nevertheless, they are helpful concepts that allow us to break the bigger, somewhat abstract notion of administration into more easily recognisable components.)   This, too, was quickly accepted without any question.

Another part of my thinking was the research tools to be used. I had assumed the group – three of them theological graduates – would have some notion of the need for sound investigation and assessment. Thus, I sought to provide a range of tools for their use, ranging from concordances, to various types of dictionaries to lexicons for Hebrew and Greek as well as other works. With hindsight, this may have been somewhat overwhelming. The three college graduates started with some of the semi-technical tools but soon turned, instead, to the concordances. The other two, with no theological training or background in such tools, having been somewhat 'lost' at the beginning, quickly followed suit. Not long into the exercise, then, it was evident – despite the training of the former – that the process would be far from academically thorough; that exegetical methods would be disregarded, and a "layman's approach" would be applied.

3.3 Our Research

The third of Gehman's steps concerns research. Ours centred on the following amalgam of O'Donovan's three questions and nine steps:

    (a) Identify what the culture says about the issue and why. Define the cultural problem or issue which needs to be resolved

    (b) What does the Bible say on the subject?

    (c) Determine what cultural similarities or differences exist on the issue between the biblical situation and the local situation

    (d) How can we express the truth of the Bible on the subject in a way that is clearly related to African culture?

Since both O'Donovan and Gehman obviously have a different if not larger project or purpose in view, some of their points do not apply in this enquiry. (For instance, since we are not theologising for a specific church or denomination, it is not our purpose here explore what must be done to help 'your' people make the necessary changes. Nor are we to decide what strategy a local church could adopt to help people make the needed changes to deal with the problem.)

3.4 Our Goals

Next, Gehman proposes setting goals. The group agreed to the following:

    (a) To devise a contextually relevant, Afro-Christian theology of administration

    (b) To explore possible reasons for the gap between belief and praxis and to suggest some tentative solutions

    (c) To develop an enlightened society that will venture out to do the best it can, given this new knowledge

This latter goal, although briefly discussed and accepted by the group, was not really considered in the discussion in any detail.

3.5 Our Discussion

3.5.1 *Working Towards a Theology*

Having agreed on the overall methodology, the underlying presuppositions, the basic plan, the research process and the intended goals, the group set out to explore the issues. The following summarises the ensuing discourse:

3.5.1.1 *Time:*

Defining the Problem

George began: "Time is secondary; relationships are primary."

Dawson: "Culture is not static; as different cultures mix, we need to balance. Neither is inferior or wrong."

Joyce: "The problem is synchronising the two – how can we take care of both, managing time and relationships? We need a dynamic way of doing both together."

George: "When people don't do their homework, they want to look at the past [to use culture as an excuse]; but this is immaterial."

Joyce: "We attended a wedding recently. The tradition is to take the husband and wife after the ceremony to teach them [about intimacy and other dos and don'ts.] But they are tired; we need to think about [the issue of] time.

Dawson: "Teaching is critical. Our approach here is important. Perhaps, by emphasising time, we communicate that events and relationships are less important or inferior. We need to show that we are not despising one at the expense of the other. [You should] build a good house before you tell them their house is bad; they will destroy the bad house themselves."

Beki: "We need to emphasise that both [time and relationships] are important; we need to educate people. We are part of a global village; I need to be globally relevant.   When the plane takes off at 2:00 and I'm late, I can't say, 'I'm an African.' [Laughter] We shouldn't use culture as an excuse. [We should be aware of] priorities: when it's important, I'm there."

Determining what the Bible says

(Note: References are from the *New International Version*. 1985: Zondervan: Grand Rapids unless otherwise stated.)

(The group noted that the issue here is short-term, historical time, not eternity.)

Gen. 1:1-5

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light 'day' and darkness he called 'night'. And there was evening and there was morning – the first day.

The group began with this passage. It was recognised this is the start of time: God separates light and darkness to start time and the first day; everything that happens thereafter thus follows within time. While God is not bound by time, He defines it and His plan operates within it. He is not a haphazard God; He is a planner. He doesn't overlap with His actions; He knows how long He has to do something. He predetermines what He wants to do within time. He arranged six days, each with deliberate actions; each day was allocated for something. Time was broken into segments to accomplish objectives. Now that we have better ways of measuring time [clocks, watches], we can [should be able to] balance our relationships.

Commenting on this, Joyce said: "Seeing the significance of attending an event, we struggle with relationships. We want to achieve things; being results oriented will help us to do it in the context of the time we have. When can you do something? So time becomes the factor." Dawson commented further: "We are not results oriented, so we bow to cultural demands. These over-ride our objectives. Relationships may be ignored when cultural aspects or spiritual matters are involved and take precedence!" He explained that, important as relationships are, if something involves the spirit realm, that supersedes the cultural practice or norm. Joyce added: [As we use our time] "We can't think beyond our own situation and how it might impact others."

Eccl 3:1-8

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to uproot; a time to kill and a time to heal; a time to tear down and a time to build; a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance; a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them; a time to embrace and a time to refrain; a time to search and a time to give up; a time to keep and a time to throw away; a time to tear and a time to mend; a time to be silent and a time to speak; a time to love and a time to hate; a time for war and a time for peace.

Significantly, while it was acknowledged that this passage reflects that actions take time, that time must be allocated for them and that there is an appropriate time for each, no-one said anything about worldview implications in the light of our previous discussion about time.

2 Tim 4:6-10; Acts 13:36

For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept

the faith. Now there is in store 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 longed for the appearing.

For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed.

On these two passages, Dawson noted: Paul has finished; his time is up. He found the purpose for which God had for him; his 'work' fitted into the time allocated to him. Therefore, he was a good planner; he wasn't lazy. David also did what was expected of and planned for him. Added George: Most of us don't recognise that we have a time frame to do what we have.

The issue of urgency, of completing an assignment was raised in general discussion. This led to comments on Nehemiah who oversaw the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls in 52 days **(Neh. 3:1-6:16)**. Beki affirmed that, while, there is no hurry in the rural areas, there is still urgency in that context. That style may not fit the city situation. "It's an Issue of priority," said Beki. "When it's time to plant, everyone is up at 4:00 a.m. They even take food to the fields." George commented that this shows the problem is not about incapability, but knowledge; therefore, it involves education. Dawson also noted: "There is an element of 'What are we hurrying to do?' If there's something else to do, then I will hurry too. The problem is trying to take the rural concept into a different [urban] context. So we must synchronise the two; come to the other's level of understanding. Take them from where they are where they need to be. [In the] rural areas, you must wait. You must 'feel' that we are here; know who is in charge here. That's more important than when something is done." He then pointed out that rural people know the importance of time. "For instance," he said, "take buses. You will never find a rural person missing it!"

Speaking to the use of time and its importance in urban areas where there is punishment through the docking of pay, George noted: "People quickly learn that time has value."

Beki raised another important issue: "We are polite; we can't say 'No' – but that's a question of integrity; we need to teach people about this. Saying no is better than saying yes and then not being committed [to do something]." From a different perspective, Dawson commented on time-keeping in the home. Husbands, he noted, are often frustrated because their wives take inordinate time in getting ready (for example, to go to church). "As African men, we need to come out of our comfort zones and think more about our wives and their needs as we allow them time to prepare." Chris related his own experiences with this, adding: "We need to remember they [the wives] are also thinking about sorting out the kids and the house as well

as themselves. We're just thinking about us." Joyce laughed, giving her husband a sly look as if to say, 'Yes – watch out."

3.5.1.2 Organising:

Defining the Problem

Interestingly, there was very little discussion on this topic. Dawson more or less quashed it: "This is more of a skills problem," he suggested. However, further discussion highlighted some difficulties.

Determining what the Bible says

George identified Jesus, in feeding the crowds and breaking them into groups **(Matt. 14:13-21; 15:32-39; Mk. 6:30-44; 8:1-10; Lk. 9:10-17; Jn. 6:5-13)** as examples of organisation. Likewise, Jethro prompted his son-in-law, Moses, to delegate **(Ex. 18:13-27)**. Commenting on this, Dawson observed, "Spiritual maturity and insight comes before the [demonstration of the] skill. He referred to Paul's advice about caring for widows **(1 Tim. 5:3-16)** as another example of being organised. "[You should] always organise to meet a need," he said.

Picking up on this, Beki pointed to the choice of the first deacons **(Acts 6:1-8)** to illustrate the importance of workable structures. "We need to be flexible enough to put a structure in place to meet a need. Conflict often highlights a need; this leads to organising, which, in turn, leads to growth [and the] sharpening of skills." But, he added, "A poor organiser sees that as a threat." To which George suggested: "We should arrange 'organised conflict' to motivate [people]." He then alluded to Joseph's organising Egypt during a drought **(Gen. 41:41-57)**.

In further discussion, it was felt that the element of organising in the Church is generally satisfactory at present, although growth always leads to greater needs and challenges; hence, we need to be prepared. Of course, a critical question here – as previously observed – is, what is 'satisfactory'?

Beki then introduced a different tack. "Jesus was a chief strategist**:** He organised the 12 for a purpose; He had a goal; He was investing His life in the ministry. He did a good job in organising them toward a goal. [So, we] need to define ourselves, our vision our goals. We shouldn't do something just for the sake of doing it. We should be focused." To which Dawson added, "This isn't easy. Look at Peter [disowning Jesus, **Matt. 26:69-75; Mk. 14:66-72; Lk. 22:55-62; Jn. 18:16-18, 25-27**] and doubting Thomas **(Jn. 20:24-29)**. It's difficult."

Joyce then suggested another example of organisation as seen in the [Mosaic] Law, especially its social dimension that allows people to live in harmony. To which Dawson added the setting of tents around the Tabernacle in a particular order **(Num. 2:1-34)**.

3.5.1.3 <u>Leading</u>:

Defining the Problem

This section of the conversation was the longest and became rather animated in places. George began: "Some are born leaders. Even cows lead – and some lead like cows! [Laughter] The issue is how do we lead and why. We deal with the troublesome ones that lead others astray.   [But] we must lead everyone; [we] have to be creative as leaders. [We] need to communicate."

I then suggested that a fundamental set of problems can be seen in the leadership crisis, both at national and church levels, in terms of quantity and quality. To this, George commented: "Qualitatively, young leaders need educating, pruning," to which Joyce added: "We need development of leadership. We are living the same way we did way back, but things have changed. Situations call us to different ways of leading." Why? I asked. George proffered a suggestion: "Colonialism – we weren't encouraged to do so. [We were 'taught'] if I speak, I might be crushed down – so my bright ideas die."

"There is a shortage of naturally skilled leaders," Dawson said. "Also," he asked, "are our objectives right and clear? [President Robert] Mugabe is a good leader: he has taken the nation in his direction, but not necessarily where the nation should go. [It is the] wrong direction; he has failed the nation. Either they have ulterior motives or different objectives."

So how does this apply in the Church context? I asked. Answered Dawson: "We have the Scriptures. If my motives take me to this manual, then I have good leadership. For the Church, I feel that sometimes we work very hard on something God has not ordained. And we waste time and effort. Leadership under God is by calling and anointing. My understanding is that these are the enablement; skills then sharpen. The ability to lead is calling and anointing. We have many well-meaning pastors who are there by default. They can be there for either good or bad motives. This then produces what I am." Joyce chipped in: "The anointing and calling was upon Moses, but the revelation came to Jethro." "That's why Jethro couldn't do the job that Moses was supposed to do," replied Dawson. "He sharpened – or trained – Moses."

Picking up from his secular business experience, George commented: "In business, if you put a C.A. [Chartered Accountant]., a marketer and an engineer together, they will all fight for their interests, but put an MBA [Masters in Business Administration] in there and he can bring them all together. That's the right mix of leadership skill."

Next, Joyce observed: "There's also a crisis in administration even among those who are called and anointed." Both Dawson and George agreed. "But," said Dawson, "we need to be very careful on the analysis. We shouldn't make the mistake of trying to correct this from one angle. If we go for the skills and training but forget the spiritual [element], then we'll miss it. It is God who puts one up and puts one down **(1 Sam. 2:6,7; Ps. 75:7)**. Not everyone can do this; that's why the fivefold ministry [This refers to the five gifts mentioned in **Eph. 4:11**, which some take to be specified offices within the Church] is so important. Pastors come by calling; elders are by appointment. It's very difficult to get these [five] guys."

Beki raised yet another area of concern: "The issue of servant leadership **(Matt. 20:25-28; Mk, 10:35-45)** is looked down upon in today's Churches. We look to the chieftainship approach: we want more power, wealth and so on. There's no [sense of] serving the Church or God. Instead of serving the people, many leaders want to be served. This is duplication of worldly leadership. It's a privilege to be part of what God is doing; to be called. There was nothing superior in me that led Him to choose me. As Church leaders, we have missed God's rule of servant leadership. Jesus washing the disciples' feet **(Jn. 13:1-17)** is missed today. [They say], 'I am the man of God, I need to drive the latest car, have a beautiful house, fly out of the country to attend the latest conference ...'" George nodded in agreement, "Servant leadership comes through being sharpened."

So, what is the cultural problem? I interjected. Joyce offered: "When you have a leadership that is not questioned, you end up with problems." Dawson responded: "This comes from our background – we can't question the spirits. The chieftainship must align with the spiritual dynasty. This leads to superiority and runs away from servant leadership." Beki suggested another view: "Some push people into the deep unknowingly. Sometimes, the people empower the leader so that he ends up being a dictator. A Christian leader should know the extent of their calling; don't allow people to just promote you. This is the wrong motive." Dawson added, "When people lift you up and you don't say anything, that's a problem." Beki came back with yet another possibility: "There's also the issue of excellence and success. Look at John the Baptist. He didn't try to be a 'little Christ'; he was humble. But today, we don't have that attitude; as soon as we encourage someone, they want to rush off to do their own thing. But it's God who promotes people."

Determining what the Bible says

Despite having the most discussion about the topic of leadership, interestingly there was not a concomitant Scriptural input.

Beki pointed to Paul's example, "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." **(1 Cor. 11:1)** A leader is one who takes instructions. But, sometimes, we lose sight of that. We lead without recognising the Chief Shepherd and try to take the glory."

Dawson quoted **Heb. 7:7, 17** *"And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater. … For it is declared: 'You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizadek.'"* Speaking of the authority to lead, he then quoted Prime Minister Tony Blair, "When the people have chosen a leader, they must let him lead." Said Dawson, "When God appoints us into leadership, He lets us lead; but our people want to control us; they don't always *let* us lead. The people must also submit to the Chief Shepherd; then they will submit to the Pastor. In the family, the woman ought to submit to her husband as he ought to submit to his Master."

George had a different perspective again: "When God wants to do something new, He always bears a child; He raises up the right one." He pointed to Joseph in Egypt and Samuel **(Gen. 39:1-6a; 41:41-57; 1 Sam. 1:9-20)**.

Beki then asked, "What are the signs of a true leader?" He answered his own question: "When he gets his instructions from God. Look at Moses on the mountain [with God] versus Aaron with the people **(Ex. 19:1-25; 32:1-35)**. Dawson followed up: "God always works through leaders. The demonic world is well organised. Satan's kingdom is well organised. When something is organised, the objectives will be achieved faster and easier. In a team, there will always be a visionary; the others should submit to him. We shouldn't wait for the congregation to tell us what to do."

3.5.1.4 Planning:

Defining the Problem

Beki jumped in: "The future isn't certain, so we don't bother or see it [planning] as important. The grandmother cannot just rush off and buy things for the new baby because something may happen before it's born. [The attitude in preparing] sermons [is]: 'Ah, we'll see [what to say]; as the Spirit leads.' The situation can change, so putting things in black and white is problematic."

Joyce countered, "Isn't this because of fear, rather than flexibility?" George proffered an answer: "People say, 'Why plan, when God might change things?' But we don't know what God may or may not do, so we need to play our part and prepare."

Joyce suggested another possibility: "Is there also a fear of success?" Responded George: "If you succeed, but the community leader doesn't, you are challenging him and his leadership; eventually he will have to step down. So, you strengthen yourself with witchcraft." Tongue-in-

cheek, I chipped in, "But I'm anointed!" "So, [that means] you are challenging the leader who isn't 'anointed.'" "Yes," continued Joyce, "So we are afraid of success." Dawson agreed, "[There's] jealousy [and] envy. Also there's a fear of failing."

Beki touched on a deeper aspect: "I feel uncomfortable when someone asks me what I'm doing; I feel threatened. [I think] 'He thinks I'm not doing a good job; he wants a successor.' [So] I don't want to tell others in case they destroy me."

George picked up on another sensitive aspect: "Black employers don't employ whites because they feel threatened about succession. Added Beki, "Ndebeles have a problem: When a person is an MD [managing director], it's difficult to employ a relative [because of fear and suspicion]. [But] for the Shona, all the relatives are included; there's a plan for the future. For the Ndebeles, we see it as a threat. [It's] the fear of the unknown; my relative may do something [such as] witchcraft [because of] jealousy." Dawson interjected: "Familiar spirits are not keen on success – especially if it is from witchcraft. Therefore, the wife or children are never told [what he is doing]."

Determining what the Bible says

Dawson, picking up on earlier comments, avowed: "People assume that you know what you're supposed to do, so they keep quiet [and don't ask about planning issues]."

As a Scriptural illustration of wise and unwise planning, Joyce mentioned the 12 virgins **(Matt. 25:1-13)**. "Those who hadn't prepared properly missed out." Beki added the parables of the house on the sand and counting the cost **(Matt. 7:24-27; Lk. 6:47-49)**. George reminded us of the principles in Proverbs: Man can plan, but God brings it to pass **(Prov. 16:9; 19:21; 20:24**; see also **Job 42:2)**. Another example of God's intentional planning and design was noted with the building of the Tabernacle **(Ex. 26:15-30; 35:20-38:31)** and, later, the Temple **(1 Chron. 22:2-16; 28:1-18)**.

Chris noted **Gen 1 and 2** where Creation unfolds progressively, putting everything in place for mankind – the last to be created – to live and feel secure.

Nehemiah, Dawson pointed out, prayed before he went to Jerusalem, obtained letters from the King and, once there, surveyed the city and determined the strategy and what was needed **(Neh. 1:4-11; 2:7-9, 11-16)**.

George stressed the need for education and discipleship to overcome some of the cultural blockages affecting people's understanding of this area. He narrated his experience of learning from his (secular) managers and his resultant promotions. But, because of political philosophy of the day, this was frowned upon and he had several difficulties to work through.

Joyce ventured another sensitive question: "Would we have done the same thing (for a black person)?" Dawson, in responding to George, commented, "We have seen highly educated Christians acting carnal. We need to give them more of the character of Christ than education *per se*." Then, to Joyce he said, "Yes, but blacks don't often support each other. We also need to develop a love and commitment to each other." George quickly interjected: "That leaves our Christianity questionable." To which Dawson replied, "We are battling our inferiority complex. I'll respond positively to a white because my mind-set is [that] he is superior, but to a fellow black brother, I'm not quite so enthusiastic."

By way of application, the group then affirmed that, as a Christian is in Christ, they can do everything through faith in Him **(Phil. 4:13)**, so the fear, envy and jealousy can go. We need to get alongside one another to help [with these issues]; we need to help young Christians to grow in this area (of Biblical education). There is need to teach against jealousy and envy as well on forgiveness. It is important to give practical examples. The spiritual problems always manifest themselves in the physical. We often see the fruit, rather than roots; so we should not be responding to what we see or hear on the surface. The larger part of the minister's responsibility is to seek God's insight and His anointing for that message. Under the anointing, the Holy Spirit will do his work; the minister's job is not just to preach but to pray.

3.5.1.5 Controlling:

Defining the Problem

Dawson opened this discussion: "Control is not a bad word, depending on the motive. If things are done properly, that's OK; you do it for the sake of order. If it's done with jealousy or envy, then your controlling system leads you to excessive control of others."

Beki picked up the issue of supervision: "This is a problem. Look at your typical CV: you have a job description, [you] are evaluated, [you] have to report back. This can be seen as invasion of privacy. Why not just trust me to do my job? [This is particularly bad with] younger people in senior positions [who] have problems with older people. They are labelled *mafikizolo* [an upstart, a new-comer]. 'Who is he; how did he get to this position? Can we take him seriously?'"

Following on, Joyce observed, "We try to keep our position by controlling others. We control through oppression. There is a fear of [losing] my power, position and prestige. We should allow people to develop and grow."

George added, "This goes along with knowing all the activities needing to be done. These expectations then need to be communicated to those concerned. When you keep the

conditions to yourself, and try to shoot down those who question you, you will have problems. Communicate your expectations to make it enjoyable; educate the people about the organisation's goals and direction."

Determining what the Bible says

Significantly, there was not much Scriptural input on this topic. Beki first highlighted the aspect of delegation **(Ex. 18:13-26)** with Moses. "The attitude that, 'I am THE leader; I'm supposed to do the job' is unbiblical and unhealthy. Then there's also [the problem of] discipline. As leaders we shun disciplining people; we don't see it as a means of growth. As Africans, we avoid discipline – because of fear of confrontation. But Kingdom values are at stake."

Dawson agreed: "It's hard, so we tend to delay. Public discipline, especially, is very difficult. We are accused of protecting the person, while we are getting the facts, getting them prepared for restoration."

George suggested a *modus operandi:* "The Pastor counsels, then the Elders facilitate the discipline process. Those who are disciplined often turn out to be very good Christians."

Dawson mentioned, importantly, that discipline should be done in love, not in hatred or anger. Discipline is often misunderstood: 'Hand them over to Satan!' we hear. But what does this mean anyway? Often this is viewed as excommunication (taken from **1 Cor. 5:1-11** – the advanced stage), but there is still the goal of restoration. And there is **1 Tim. 5:19, 20** about not rebuking an elder. Beki added that **Gal. 6:1** also directs us in our approach and attitude to this often awkward subject, while Joyce reminded us that discipline is not a joy but is necessary **(Heb. 12:5-11)**. In the course of comments about people leaving a congregation or denomination before the discipline process is complete and thus transferring the problem elsewhere, I suggested that perhaps transfer letters should be encouraged between denominations and not just within selected churches. At this stage, I was beginning to wonder if anyone in the group would say anything about the standard text on discipline when Beki referred to **Matt. 18:15-17**. I took the opportunity to point out that this passage is itself a process beginning with the personal level as outlined in **Matt. 5:23, 24**, the two forming a 'disciplinary cycle'.

3.5.2 *So What Does Our Afro-Christian Theology of Administration Look Like?*

But, out of all this discussion, what have we produced? Can we summarise these insights into a general statement that reflects a theological understanding of and approach to administration that is true to Scripture, to African (specifically, Shona and Ndebele) culture and

to the task of administration? In short, are we able to articulate now – albeit tentatively and from a limited Shona and Ndebele perspective – an Afro-Christian theology of administration?

Since there was insufficient time to do this part of the exercise at the end of the workshop, I circulated copies of the dialogue to the group and asked them to reflect on it, suggest any changes and then draft their own theological statement. Although this was not ideal – it would have been better to do it as a group session – it allowed them to articulate their theology in a way they are comfortable with. Five of the group responded. As would be expected in such an exercise, they each focused slightly differently on what they perceived to be the issues and each expressed these differently. Nevertheless, given our various discourses, I believe they would all agree with the essence of what the others have said. There are clear similarities, repetitions and nuances of worldview in all the statements. It is also apparent that our workshop dialogue not only helped them to reflect on the Scriptural basis of administration but, in some cases, also allowed them to articulate more coherently.

Thus, to begin with, George stressed the aspect of time. Said he, "Time is God-ordained as He created [things] in the frame of time. He honours and respects it. Time is a highly perishable commodity and, to be done, all things must compete for it. There is an opportunity cost to everything you do as it will be at the expense of other things you would then not do. It can easily be wasted. [While] we are concerned with the event and relationships, time must be [seen as] important. Our not being conscious of time has made us lag behind in development. If we would honour time as God does, we would be more like Him [and] we would do what is expected of us when, where and at the right time. It is true that time waits for no man."

Dawson agreed and went on to suggest more: "Every human being exists within a culture, and it is that culture that shapes the understanding and behaviour of men. Thank God culture is dynamic; otherwise we may be bound in practices that lose meaning in this globalised village. Time is critical in administration, while relationships are equally important in our everyday life. Good administration must seek to pull both ends together, through education and training, so that neither one is over-emphasised at the expense of the other.

"God being the master planner set the theology of administration very well by creating time for us (since He exists outside time). He created the heavens, earth and all that there is in a specific time frame, finished it all, and said, 'it is very good.' Within that work schedule, He had enough time for rest **(Gen. 1 & 2)**. Paul was able to plan and work within his time frame and also finished well **(2 Tim. 4:6-10)**. We can, too.

"Administration can never exist in a vacuum or on one person – hence the difficulties attached to it. It involves other people, other factors in life and projects or work assignments to be done. Therefore, a combination of God's calling and anointing, teaching and training of the leader himself, and teaching and training of the other people he operates with will be the only way to effect the desired goals in administration."

Beki, reflecting his Evangelical stance, proffered the following rather comprehensive statement: "[An Afro-Christian theology] is an administration process that seeks to glorify God both in planning and implementation without compromising the sovereignty of God and human dignity (*imago dei*). It is [an] administration that values Scripture (both the Old and New Testaments) as the final authority for conduct and belief. It is an administration empowered by the Holy Spirit. That is, the administrator depends more on the Holy Spirit than his or her abilities and skills. It is an administration that values *ubuntu* – thus *'umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu'*, which, as an Ndebele proverb is equivalent to, *'I am because we are.'* It is [an] administration process that recognises we are dealing with human beings, not machines, so relationships and valuing of human life supersedes production. The management team in an organisation should be concerned about the welfare of it workforce.

"It is an administration that is conscious of culture and worldview. For example, in Ndebele and Shona culture, going to bury one's relative is more important than a company executive meeting. [Or again,] workers are reluctant to allow a fellow worker to use their car, office or computer because of [the] fear of witchcraft. It is an administration that is globally relevant, that places value on time management, planning and goals. It is an administration that emphasises competence, efficiency, job descriptions, supervision and evaluation."

Also replicating the five-fold grid of our conversations, Chris and Joyce jointly proposed the following: "We need to change (evolve/develop) and be more creative in the way we handle time management and relationships in the achievement of specific tasks before us, as exemplified in Genesis.

"As a Christian community, everything we do and the way we do it ought to reflect the kind of God we serve and worship. Time management and relationships should be held in balance. There is a time for everything **(Eccl. 3)**.

"Without proper organisation, we are unable to meet needs effectively and efficiently **(Matt. 14:13-21; 15:32-29; Mk. 6:30-44; 8:1-10; Lk. 9:10-17; Jn. 6:5-13; 1 Tim. 5:3-16; Acts 6:1-8)**.

"Leadership is the main issue that has much to do with style and motive. Whether born a leader or groomed into it, one must bear the marks of a servant with the chief aim of pleasing God **(Matt. 20:25-28; Mk. 10:35-45)**. The sense of calling and anointing is crucial as it guides and enables the leader to serve his Master without fear or favour of man.

"Planning takes into account the desired results without ignoring the details of how to achieve those results. Man can plan, but God brings it to pass **(Prov. 16:9; 19:21; 20:24; Neh. 1:4-11; 2:7-9, 11-16)**. As Christians, we can do everything through faith in Christ (Phil. 4:13).

"Controlling is a method which creates an environment that is characterised by order and stability. It ought to create room for growth and development of the people involved. It should also be a means of maintaining standards of excellence, discipline and accountability."

3.5.3 *Why Does Our "Theology" Not Match Our Praxis?*

After the theologising discourse – and still as part of the workshop session – we then probed the second question relating theology to practice.

If, as Christians with a working knowledge of Scripture, we should be in a position to reflect some theology regarding our faith, why is it, apparently, that we so often fail to link that understanding with the way(s) we do administrative tasks? For instance, if Scripture exhorts us to steward our time wisely **(Ps. 90:12; Rom. 14:12; Eph. 5:15, 16)**, why do we not do so? If Scripture calls us to work in ways that honour God **(Matt. 5:16; Eph. 6:6, 7)**, why do we continue to do things in slip-shoddy ways that bring chaos and confusion, create umpteen repeated problems and, if we are honest, bring God and His Kingdom into dishonour and disrepute? In other words, why is there such a chasm between faith and practice? Is it merely a matter of not bothering to do what Scripture exhorts us to do? Or is it, in some cases, a matter of ignorance? Our exploration thus far would suggest it is more substantive than this.

Perhaps the classic example in Africa of this conundrum – both in terms of its extent and the embarrassment – is the Rwandan genocide of 1994. When a nation that has known the Gospel for 150 years and claims to be 80% Christianised, butchers 800 000 people in 100 days, some serious questions have to be asked about the internalisation of the Gospel. And particularly since pastors were themselves involved in the killing! Similarly, but perhaps not quite so dramatically, the same question applies to all theologising that does not result in practice or behaviour that honours God. This relates, of course, just as much to our praxis of administration.

Our discourse on this enigma was insightful.

George opened the discussion: "Many people have certificates on their walls, but they don't put the knowledge into practice. We have developed the habit of wanting certificates. Soon after Independence, with affirmative action, young, inexperienced managers with paper qualifications were given heavy perks but couldn't do the job. That's when our economy started going down. The youngsters began writing reports about their seniors who were coaching them; they were fired, leaving the youngsters – without the experience – to do the job." "Yes, added Joyce, "[There was a] crisis of expectations."

Dawson took it further: "The 70's-80s saw rising Pentecostalism. In grappling with the issues of culture, especially those that clash with the Biblical culture, we didn't have the leaders to help us make the transition from syncretism to solid Christianity. We are not dealing with African issues."

Noted Beki, "It's a journey to take someone into discipleship with Jesus Christ. It's part of pastoral work. It's not easy to help people reconcile the Gospel with 'real life'. We see people going to Church in the morning and to Vaspostori [the prophets] or the *n'anga* at night. Perhaps what we're preaching is not adequate. We need to think seriously about our preaching. Are we being contextual? Are we wrestling with daily issues? That's why we see double standards."

To which Dawson asked: "Who is pastoring who, here? When the big leader (for example, Guti, Sengwayo and so on) is genuinely anointed, we need to follow him. When I am succeeding, I may forget that my anointing comes from somewhere. Then I lean on a false pillar – [that's] dangerous. Paul preached Christ crucified, the power of God. But we have deviated from spiritual giftings toward education. Many churches have little impact now because we have left the Biblical approach to ministry. We went off to get our degrees. But there is no impact. Until we connect properly, we can sit, we can talk, we can read books, but we will have no real results."

George raised another dynamic: "Most of us fall short in our prayer life. If we analysed ourselves, how many times this week have we prayed alone? We are busy for the Owner of the ministry, but are we connected to Him?"

For Chris, it is different: "The key is discipleship. Here is we see discipline and accountability. You can't have a leader who says he's not following anyone. Who is checking on you? Who are you answerable to? Look at Jesus: we are who we are today because He spent three years discipling them [the disciples].

George concluded: "Zeal without knowledge is dangerous. We must be sold out to Jesus. Then we can impact the world."

4. <u>Reflections</u>

As we examine these discourses, we note, first, that the theologising exercise was not completed because of inadequate planning and time, as the one-off workshop was insufficient to do justice to the task. Moreover, it is unpolished and imperfect. Initially, at the end of workshop, I was very discouraged because I felt the group had not accomplished what I expected. I had hoped the task would be 'finished'. After some reflection, however, it dawned on me that I had prompted and participated in exactly what Dyrness (1992, p. 31) advocates: a non-technical, non-professional expression, through stories of personal experience and interaction with Scripture, leading to a practical, theological expression of administration. Furthermore, I also realised that, in line with Gehman's suggested methodology, this is a process and not an event. I came to understand, rather, that this exercise is simply the beginning. It remains to be continued, therefore, and refined with further reflection, discourse and narratives by whoever wishes to take it up. This may be a starting point; perhaps, even, a foundation upon which others may build. That said, however, I was also disappointed that there was not more deliberate effort at sound exegesis.

Second, the discourses revealed two interesting dynamics. On the one hand, the theologising process – as informal and unpretentious as it was – rested almost entirely on each participant's knowledge of and ability to recall Scripture. Favourite or well-known passages were presented, rather than a methodical, progressive search through Scripture. Nor was there sound exegesis and, on occasion, the hermeneutic may be questionable. As noted earlier, though, three of the group have had no such training. Nevertheless, the others could have led the way. The result, then, was less than I had hoped. On the other hand, significantly, it was clear that, although these passages were familiar, the participants had not deliberately before now considered them in the context of administration in the way we have been discussing it for this enquiry. As such, this particular dialogue helped them to link the concept to the Scriptures more intentionally and to appreciate their relevance in deeper ways.

Third, this particular discourse – perhaps more than the others – helped the group to identify not only deeper worldview issues not previously considered, but also to connect the related problems to Scriptural principles about administration. Therefore, it was interesting that, in the process of theologising, the group wrestled more meaningfully with their worldview. This highlights the interconnectedness and, in turn, will assist us further as we seek to develop contextually appropriate courses for teaching administration (the topic for Chapter Eight.)

The second question we addressed queried possible reasons for the incongruity between a perceived 'theology' of administration (however rudimentary that may be) and one's actual praxis in approaching the various tasks in this endeavour. The group concluded that education *per se* is not a panacea. Rather, it is a faulty (or, perhaps, incomplete?) Gospel, together with a failure to link it adequately with real life issues for black Africa, that has caused the breach between theology and praxis. This is exacerbated by a general dearth of sound discipleship. Deep worldview issues such as fear, suspicion and jealousy have not been addressed adequately through the Gospel. In the case of administration, the stewardship of time, as well as some issues of leadership and control, have not been appropriately linked to the broader purposes of the Gospel and its impact upon them has thus been minimal.

In wrapping up this particular discourse, it may be worth commenting that the theologising process could have been strengthened by reference to, and interaction with, other theological disciplines – Systematics, Biblical, Black and African, for instance – not only to 'position' the texts and the process, but also to relate these deliberately to Practical Theology with particular reference to the African context. However, Imasogie's (1983: 26-27) comment is apposite here. In calling for a new theological approach more suited to this context, he divides traditional theologians into three groups:

> Each of the [first] two groups of theologians starts with the basic presupposition that all theologies are contextually conditioned. In view of this, one of the groups contends that the failure of traditional theology lies in its inability to reconcile the basic Christian message with the contemporary self-understanding of human existence. This inability is the result of presuppositions that leave no room for the possibility of a new mode of human self-understanding. The other group attributes the irrelevance of traditional theology in meeting the needs of the oppressed to its *de facto* identification of Christianity with the *status quo*. [The third group relates to the quasi-scientific worldview underlying the traditional Western theological approach.]

5. Conclusion

Having explored the nature of administration as well as some Shona and Ndebele worldview dynamics, we then sought to craft a tentative contextual theology and have now reached a natural denouement in our enquiry. It remains, then, to summarise the issues identified, to present some suggested solutions and, in that process, to propose some preliminary course outlines or syllabi for contextually relevant training in administration for Christian ministry. This is the goal for Chapter Eight.

Chapter Eight

INTEGRATING PRAXIS, CULTURE, THEOLOGY & TRAINING: The Way Forward

1 Introduction

Having outlined our purposes and methodology in Chapter One, we began our investigation of administration in Chapter Two by exploring its make-up and functions and its links to management and leadership. We also introduced the idea of the underlying connection with worldview as the basis for this investigation. In Chapter Three, we sought to identify what administration actually entails in terms of tasks and responsibilities, particularly for Christian ministry leaders, and some of the values and judgements behind how it is done. Chapter Four saw us dialoguing with seven individual ministry leaders from a variety of ethnic, church and theological backgrounds to assess their personal views of administration and how they typically approach this endeavour. In Chapter Five, we took the conversations a step further and examined these issues from a mixed group perspective. Having dialogued individually and jointly, we then pointed in Chapter Six to some Shona and Ndebele worldview dynamics to explain or justify the responses we had seen earlier. And, we also introduced the concept of a Christian worldview, both as a contrast to the natural and as a foundation for the next step which, in Chapter Seven, was an attempt to devise a contextually relevant (that is, for Southern Africa and for the Shona and Ndebele in particular) Afro-Christian theology of administration.

Now that we have identified what administration is and some of the operational problems associated with it, together with some theological foundations, we must move to the final stage. Here we itemise our findings, articulate the related problems and propose some suggestions as to how the related difficulties can be minimised or, even, eliminated. While this goal applies to anyone involved in administration, we want to focus more narrowly on suggestions geared specifically to those involved in the training of Christian administrators. This is because only when the training is contextually relevant and appropriate will the training institutions be genuinely equipped to provide what the Church actually needs. Thus, we will recommend in this Chapter a course (or courses) and the topics necessary to produce more contextually competent administrators for Christian ministry.

However, in order to present the correct "solutions", we must first satisfy ourselves that we have correctly identified the actual problem(s). Thus, we will begin by itemising our findings and then summarising the main difficulties, clashes and points of tension as identified and discussed by the research team. In doing so, we can return to our five-fold grid of Time,

Planning, Organising, Leading and Controlling to link similar or related problems together. This will facilitate the problem-solving task and make it easier to propose sound conclusions. We will identify the problems and then briefly comment on them in the light of the now verbalised theology of administration, before moving on to present the proposed solutions.

2   Summarising the Findings

The study proper begins in Chapter Two with a comprehensive explanation of administration. We also pointed out the linkages between management and leadership which are often used interchangeably or synonymously. To refresh our memory, Welch (2005, p. 12) offers a definition that helpfully contrasts administration and management. The latter, he says,

> … is a technical term that describes the leadership given to an organisation and the process for providing the personnel, physical, and fiscal resources to meet defined goals. *Administration* is described as the process of utilisation of the personnel, physical, and fiscal resources in order to meet the organisation's objectives and goals. Managers tell you what to do; administrators tell you how to do it. Managers see that the right work is done; administrators see to it that the work is done right. Managers provide leadership in identifying the objectives of the organisation and setting goals to reach them; administrators supervise in getting the work done to meet those goals. Administration is thus defined as *the art and science of planning, organising, leading and controlling the work of others to achieve defined objectives and goals.*

The importance of administration was likened to the significance of oil in a machine: when applied judiciously and timeously, everything works smoothly, efficiently and effectively. When the oil is forgotten, the machine comes to a grinding halt. Often, regrettably, it is only then that the importance of administration is appreciated. With a view to understanding this central role, a composite word was fabricated: "**Ad***ministr(y)a*tion" signifying, on the one hand, the basal link between administration and ministry, and emphasising on the other the importance of the prior role of administration – that is, coming in front of – the main ministry to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

Furthermore, we also looked at worldview. The concept was introduced briefly here and then later, in Chapter Six, it was considered in more depth. It was determined that worldview, fundamentally, is the way one sees or interprets reality. There are a wide variety of factors constituting worldview including language, social environment, value systems, education and cultural norms. We noted that, specifically, a recognisable people group – such as the Shona and Ndebele – has a worldview distinguishable from other people groups. Moreover, it was also observed that the concept of a Christian worldview both transcends and transforms the natural. Thus, one can be at the same time, African, Shona or Ndebele and Christian, with all three contributing certain dynamics of understanding reality to one's viewpoint. At the same

time, the clash of worldviews between Western and African, Shona and Ndebele and also between these and Christian and non-Christian was recognised.

Then, in Chapter Three, an attempt was made to put some flesh on the earlier definition and description of administration. It was recognised that, for many, identifying what actually constitutes administration is difficult because it includes an amorphous, predictable yet flexible, wide-ranging yet classifiable, selection of tasks and responsibilities that vary with the role and field of work of the administrators. So, to assist the research group to recognise and appreciate what constitutes administration in their ministry context, several common tasks of the local church pastor were itemised. For several in the group, this exposure helped them to understand the breadth and significance of the administrative entity of their work; they realised that administration is also legitimate ministry. And there was the recognition of the need for further education in this area.

At the same time in this process, some key values associated with administration and its implementation were also considered. For these particular Shona and Ndebele ministry workers, we discovered that time, relationships, people (as a utility), team work and results were all rated high and important. This is not only a reflection of underlying worldview factors but also because this group tend to be primarily urban based and, therefore, more process oriented than many of their rural counterparts who would be event oriented.

Having set a foundation, our dialogue process began. This was reflected in Chapter Four where individual approaches, attitudes and preferences for administrative tasks were explored. In summary, it was found that the praxis of administration is shaped by three inter-related dynamics: (1) worldview, (2) temperament and personality and (3) philosophy (and theology) of ministry.

In the discourses, as we explored the first issue of time, we found a general acceptance of its importance on the one hand yet, on the other, apathy about the problems caused by a poor stewardship of it. Also, there is a distinct tension between the Western approach (seen as good stewardship) and the African (more casual). Second, with planning, there was no distinct reason identified for poor planning, although there was general recognition that it is not done very well. Third, the impression came through that the ability to organise effectively is more a personal attribute than a worldview dynamic. Nevertheless, there was a clear emphasis on organising people rather than things. At the same time, organising was seen as part of the leadership function – which not everyone can do well. We also found that organising, leading and managing are not fixed entities with easily defined boundaries, but overlap considerably in both function and skills. For leading, as the fourth aspect, personality,

temperament and skills seem to be more significant than direct worldview factors. This may well be due to its subtle complexities and skills mix. The fifth area, controlling, saw more emphasis on goals and achievement – a reflection of the participants' leadership roles – rather than on people accomplishing them. The stress on relationships tends to diminish or deter discipline and correction, even where such action would actually improve the situation overall. Again, the dichotomy here was not readily recognised and no suggestions were made about bridging this gap.

The discourse continued in Chapter Five as we explored administration as a group. Initially, the group comprised six pastors: three Shona and three Ndebele; three Pentecostal and three non-Pentecostal. Of these, four are Bible college or university graduates and two are not. As the study continued, however, one Ndebele non-Pentecostal pastor dropped out and was replaced by a Shona, postgraduate woman who was involved at that time in a para-church small-and-medium enterprise business management training ministry.

As these discourses progressed, it emerged that ethnic background did not seem to make much difference in terms of approach to the understanding of administration or its praxis. Everyone was largely agreed on the worldview fundamentals. But, this was due basically to the fact that both the Shona and Ndebele belong to the same primary Bantu group. We may well have found more significant differences if the ethnic mix in this regard was more pronounced. At the same time, it was evident that church background and theology also play a significant part in the praxis of administration. Thus, while worldview is definitely a key factor, specific details appear to be governed also by personality and temperament, skills development and theological bent. (This was commented on further in Chapter Six; see "Note on Personality".)

Of note in these conversations was the observation regarding time: that there is no such thing as 'failure' in managing it since the key is to participate in the event; as long as one arrives before that finishes, it is incorrect to say one is late. But, clearly, this breeds a *laissez faire* approach to the stewardship of time and can create problems with the processes of planning and organising. Second, although the difficulties in planning were broached in the individual dialogues, the group had no concrete solutions for the widespread reluctance to strive for effective planning. Still, the link with the spirit world was noted here. In the "old world" things are done in relation to or with the ancestors and not in isolation from them. But the situation has changed now and so adjustment is needed. Successful role models are important here.

Third, while the group felt that personality and temperament are key factors for organising because of the wide range of skills required, many of these are not fully appreciated. This,

then, creates problems in implementation. Our conversations for the fourth dynamic, leading, particularly as we focused on the worldview philosophy of *ubuntu/unhu*, pointed to the fact that many things are done for reasons that are subconscious. There is an underlying philosophy that is taken for granted, is not articulated but assumed. This, in turn, affects decisions as the rationale for them is not always explained. Related to this, we saw again that relationships are key. The fifth aspect, controlling, is also clearly dominated by the focus on relationships. Both worldview factors and personality/temperament affect the ways this is done. The perceived need to maintain a healthy relationship often seems to over-ride the more significant wellbeing of the organisation itself. There is a *laissez faire* attitude toward the larger entity in favour of keeping the individual relationship intact at all costs.

From these interesting conversations on administration, we moved next, in Chapter Six, to the second major aspect of our investigation: worldview and, in particular, that of the Shona and Ndebele. This was placed in the context of their tribal history and background to help explain some of the fundamental worldview dynamics we had identified and discussed earlier. We also examined how one major element of Shona and Ndebele worldview – the philosophical concept of *ubuntu/unhu* – might be used as the basis for modern management and administration, as proposed by Mbigi (1995). Then we sought to contrast these 'natural' worldview factors with the Christian worldview, since that is the primary connection between all of us as participants. From this perspective, the team felt that Mbigi's model did not correlate with a Christian worldview as there are underlying values anathema to Christianity. It was also from the Christian perspective that we explored the praxis of our administration. We did this by analysing two case studies, one from Joyce and one from Beki. While the intention was for the group to explore how the natural and Christian worldview factors come into play in real life situations, we found once again that these are not easily identified or appreciated.

Lastly, in Chapter Seven, we endeavoured to articulate a tentative contextually relevant theological approach to administration. This we did through a workshop in which various administrative elements and issues were discussed in relation to Scripture. In the process, the co-researchers crafted statements proposing an Afro-Christian theology of administration. The key points included:

- The recognition of the value of time and its management, together with a stress on a balance between relationships and the use of time, with the need to change where appropriate;
- The importance of planning and organising, recognising the sovereignty of God, the need for interpersonal skills; for efficiency and effectiveness;
- An acceptance of the authority of Scripture and the leading role of the Holy Spirit;

- The importance of setting goals and ensuring appropriate ways to achieve them;

- An acknowledgment of the *imago dei* and the principle of *ubuntu,* with the concomitant appreciation of the dignity of workers over processes, policies and production;

- The recognition of the centrality of pleasing God; that our work and the way we do it reflects our worship of God and our service for Him;

- The significance of anointing and calling for leadership, the principle of servant leadership; and the need for training;

- The need to create an environment for stability, order, growth and development, where excellence, accountability and discipline are stressed.

3   Identifying the Problems

While summarising the major findings of our investigation, we noted several problem areas and clashes of culture and worldview. These problems and discrepancies are evident not only as Western meets African, but also as Shona meets Ndebele, rural meets urban and non-Christian meets Christian. Interestingly, although the participants readily acknowledged the problems and variances – and complained about their negative effects – there seemed little motivation at first to seek solutions to them. That is, until we began formally identifying them and discussing their wide-ranging impact. Only once this was done as a group was there any meaningfully expressed intention to change attitudes and/or behaviour where appropriate. Only as culture and worldview were examined and it became clear that some elements are indeed problematic was there the recognition of the need for change. In addition, in exploring the theology aspect, it became clearer still that, from a Christian point of view, certain attitudes and behaviours are unacceptable too and should change. Hence, this study has not only identified and confirmed a preliminary thesis but, in the process, inappropriate attitudes and behaviours have also been challenged. Hopefully, this will be extended to a wider network of relationships and, eventually, to the Church at large.

In review, we can note several main problem areas, difficulties, tensions and challenges. It may be useful to refer again to O'Donovan's summary list (2000:21) of the basic differences between Western and African worldviews as a starting point since this is perceived as a generalised area of divergence**:**

African Culture	*Western Culture*
1. Strong community values (group participation, group decision)	1. Strong individualistic values (individual initiative, decisions)
2. Community identity	2. Individual identity
3. Community living style	3. Private living style
4. Extended family emphasis	4. Immediate family emphasis
5. Wholistic approach to life	5. Categorical approach to life

6. Importance of the event	6. Importance of schedules & clock time
7. People-oriented priorities	7. Task- and goal-oriented priorities
8. Real-life (situational) thinking	8. Abstract and academic thinking
9. Preference for real-life learning	9. Preference for academic thinking
10. Spiritual worldview	10. Scientific worldview
11. Emphasis on spoken communication	11. Emphasis on written communication
12. Emphasis on spoken agreements based on relationships between people	12. Emphasis on written agreements based on policies by committees
13. Respect for the elderly	13. Respect for the educated
14. Traditional inherited leadership	14. Elected (democratic) leadership
15. Death is passing into the spirit world (survivors must perform rituals)	15. Death is a practical problem (survivors need counselling, support)
16. Resolve conflicts through mediator	16. Resolve conflicts face-to-face
17. Practical (ritual) response to spirit realities	17. Intellectual response to spirit realities
18. Practical (ritual) approach to religion	18. Intellectual approach to religion
19. Vulnerability seen as weakness	19. Vulnerability seen as a strength
20. Much interest in the spirit world	20. Little interest in the spirit world

From this, we can identify the following as potential points of tension in a cross-cultural context relating to the administrative process (not in any order of priority)**:**

- Wholistic vs. compartmentalised life view

- Punctuality vs. event

- "Personal" vs. communal or group decision-making

- People vs. tasks

- Situational (actual) vs. Intellectual (abstract)

- Spiritual, aesthetic vs. scientific, methodical, reasoning

- Routine vs. creativity

- Relationships vs. discipline and conflict

- Mediation vs. direct confrontation

- Relationships with motivation, and achievement with teamwork

- Oral vs. written/reading communication

- Inherited leadership vs. elected leadership

- Ritual response vs. intellectual response to spirit realities

Although not all these items were explicitly identified in our discourses, we have seen, nevertheless, that they have some influence on the praxis of administration. In addition, the following were overtly identified as problem areas, not only in terms of inter-cultural clashes and tensions, but also inherently as part and parcel of the Shona and Ndebele worldviews**:**

- The recognition (at least in the urban setting) of the importance of time – yet apathy about the problems caused by poor stewardship of it (for instance, the connection between punctuality and relationships). There is also the related notion that one cannot 'fail' in using time – yet this promotes a *laissez faire* approach to its use.

- The recognition that planning is not done well, but no distinct reason(s) were identified. It may be subconsciously linked to the spirit world – thus the ancestors are sometimes involved. While the concept of planning is clearly evident in the village context, it seems the need and ability to transfer these skills to the urban context are not so readily grasped

- The recognition of the need for extensive skills development in organising things (in addition to people) – but, again, the transfer of these is not fully appreciated, which thus presents a major problem for efficient implementation

- Controlling (evaluation, monitoring and correction and discipline) is often ignored or done partially or ineffectively because of the stress on (individual) relationships, very often at the expense of group or organisational well-being

- In all these, two common threads of worldview contradiction were also noted: rural vs. urban; and Christian vs. African Traditional Religion, where practices, traditions, habits, assumptions and expectations are manifestly different

- The specific worldview issues of jealousy, suspicion and fear were identified as major stumbling blocks in several different ways, many of them subconscious

4   Proposing the Solutions

We come now to the second and third major objectives of this study. The possible interconnectedness between worldview and one's practice of administration has been examined. It has been demonstrated, I believe, that such a connection does indeed exist. Moreover, it has also been shown that, in addition to one's natural worldview, the Christian worldview further significantly shapes one's praxis of administration. The narrative approach and interactions, helpfully allowed us to identify points of tension, not only as different worldviews clash interculturally, but also as intra-cultural dynamics play a part. Without such interaction, the linkages – and possible future direction with this whole issue – would remain hidden. It is as people discuss them and possible solutions that the problems can be eliminated or at least minimised. By discussing our constructs of administration from our own social and ministry contexts, we have brought the issues to the fore. In turn, the purpose in highlighting the perceived tensions was to provide the basis for further discussion as well as for opening debate on the problems and proposing possible solutions that are contextually and culturally appropriate, relevant and effectual. So, what is the way forward?

The key problem areas or points of tension have been identified. Without wanting to be too simplistic, these can be summarised as "culture clashes" or clashes of different worlds. Hence, we have the clash between Western and African, between Shona and Ndebele, between rural and urban, and between Christian and non-Christian. For each of these, there is a sense of 'reality' about what administration is and how it should or should not be done. And, I think it would be true to say that, for each, there is "good" administration and "bad" – with the respective concomitant problems. But it is only as alternatives from other contexts

are brought forward for comparison that any sense of measurement can occur. Since it may be neither possible nor necessary to change much of these contexts, there is need to consider what adjustments can be made to accommodate the differences between them.

The primary objective of this study was to confirm the causal link between worldview and administrative praxis. However, since we are dealing here with broad attitudinal and behavioural issues, it is not possible to detail specific, concrete measures to deal with each problem aspect each time it occurs in a particular setting or with an individual. Therefore, it should be noted here that, under the social constructionist rubric, I did not elicit detailed solutions from the group precisely because these can only be discussed or presented in broad terms. While it may have been possible for the group to make some suggestions – thus functioning in a social constructionist way – such suggestions would not have been any more than broad principles, since behaviour and attitude change are personal issues and different people respond differently. Thus, rather than ask them for specifics, I focused instead on the broader and related aspects of education and training. This, after all, was the need the group repeatedly commented on as the problems were recognised through the dialogues. But even then, the specific ideas were not discussed. To that end, one of the social constructionist goals – the community's drive for social change on their own terms – did not occur. The broad needs of training and education were repeated and emphasised several times in both our individual and group conversations, but that was the limit of the team's attempts to address the specific issues raised therein.

Then, too, from a Practical Theology praxis point of view, and given the Christian ministry context, the effort would not be complete, and the point of listening to people's stories would be lost, if there were no moral, ethical or spiritual input as a basis for solving some of those tensions. It is my conviction that, in the context of Christian ministry, until a properly crafted, culturally relevant, clearly understood and articulated theological approach to administration is developed, it will be very difficult, if not impossible for the Church in Zimbabwe to effect meaningful change in the dysfunctional behaviours and attitudes currently experienced in administrative settings. Indeed, the group affirmed this in their recognition of the role of Biblical principles as the guide for proper practice.

While there may be many ways to bring about such change, it is incontrovertible that a major change-agent in this process is training. This is true on both the individual and the collective levels. Beyond that, it is the responsibility of training institutions to lead the way and provide not only the impetus for such development but also the motivation for those receiving such training to pass it on to others in their respective contexts. The concepts and issues have to

be presented, discussed and reflected upon. This must be done not only in the setting of the formal training institutions but also through the Church and in many informal ways. And, after all that talk, it is necessary to act upon it, demonstrate viable principles, reflect changes in behaviour and attitudes and, thus, display improved efficiency and effectiveness. I contend, therefore, that a broad educational and training approach is called for.

From my understanding of the social constructionist and narrative approaches to problem solving, it is the community that should be encouraged to devise its own contextual answers to a problem. However, where this relates to attitude and behaviour that may be motivated in different ways in different individuals, I do not see that it is possible to be specific. In our case, this is simply because no-one in the group has the expertise, the resources or the authority to change the way formal training in administration is conducted. This, after all, is the responsibility of the training institution. All that the community can do is to highlight needs and make suggestions about how this may be done. This is not to say, of course, that they could not design and implement simple training courses, seminars or workshops at the local church level. Indeed, this is the role of the pastor (c.f. Eph. 4:12) – but the pastor must first be trained before the knowledge and skills can be passed on.

The community and the training institutions, therefore, must dialogue to prepare and present courses that "scratch where it itches". On the contrary, one might argue that the community – in this case, represented by the group – may still propose suitable alternative approaches outside the formal context. I do not dispute this. However, at no time in our conversations did the group present any concrete ways this can be done. At the same time, when I asked them for their comments on the suggested courses (see below), not only did they all affirm them as very acceptable but, notably, none made any alternative suggestions. Thus, while the ideas for the courses did not come initially from the group, there was opportunity nevertheless to comment and to present substitutes if they wished.

Out of our various discourses, it seems the solutions could be classified, again without being simplistic, into two major functions: ***Exposure*** and ***Education***. By *exposure*, I mean that many of the perceived problems arise from a lack of understanding and appreciation of another's sense of reality and the rationale for this (world)view. Overcoming this requires some exposure to the alternative(s). Thus, cross-cultural experience is always a valuable learning tool in a variety of deep, often subconscious ways that are sometimes shocking (hence, "culture shock" situations). Among other things, such exposure alerts one to the basic but all-important fact that 'my' way is not the only – or, even, best – way. Indeed, cross-cultural exposure sometimes raises the uncomfortable question of why I do something the way

I do – but then I can't even explain it! That three ethnic groups, including mine, were represented in the research team exposed us all to such alternatives and learning.

Still, exposure to differences by itself is insufficient. Although exposure can be educative, learning there from is not guaranteed. Hence, it must be enhanced by *education* about the other's worldview and culture to explain and elucidate the rationale, logic, value system and assumptions that shape the worldview and lead to the different behaviours. Such education can take many forms.

One such approach is the formal education offered to those aspiring to vocational Christian ministry through Bible or theological colleges and seminaries. The Course Outlines, or syllabi, shown below represent this approach. It is limited in the sense that only a select few are exposed to it in its entirety. That is because not everyone aspires to such formal training, nor do they necessarily qualify. At the same time, having had the privilege of learning, it is incumbent upon those trainees in this formal system to pass on their learning to others so that the whole Body of Christ may benefit.

From a social constructionist and narrative point of view, it might be argued that, precisely because the Bible college is not open to everyone in the community, it is not a relevant solution for the issues raised in this enquiry. I beg to differ. I do not dispute that a community may have many beneficial – and contextually relevant – ways of resolving difficulties. But unless those in positions of leadership and/or influence can correctly diagnose the problems and think creatively of the solutions, as well as motivate the followers, there can be no progress. Such competence is unlikely without at least some type of formal training. The issue is not that a person comes to a recognised institution to undertake a recognised programme of study to receive a recognised piece of paper. Rather, is the training substantive enough for the leader to do the right job right? The where, how and when then become secondary.

This is where alternative approaches come in. Other educational means in the Christian ministry context might be one-on-one or group discipleship, Sunday School, Bible studies, men's/women's/youth/children's ministries, conferences, seminars and workshops among others. The group interaction provides an informal platform for educating others about alternative worldviews, opinions and customs. Yet, in my experience, the cross-cultural discussion must be deliberate; it does not happen automatically simply because two people with different worldviews sit together in a worship service Sunday by Sunday. It is precisely because it does not occur automatically – and, thus, that concrete learning does not take place – that multi-cultural churches still have problems where the various groups

miscommunicate and misunderstand one another. Similarly, in a single worldview context, attempting to help one people group to appreciate another without adequate exposure and education will not achieve much either. This research project has proven the point: without the exposure each of us had to one another, there would have been no learning. All of us are now in a better position, not only to appreciate the other but to understand our own situations as well. At the same time, it remains to be seen whether such exposure will result in behaviour and attitude change in the ways we do administration. I for one have already made some adjustments.

But the crucial question must be asked: What should this education and training comprise to improve the administrative praxis? This is pertinent whether in a cross-cultural situation or not. Apart from relevant information of course, two other critical dimensions must be integrated: skills development and Biblical principles of Christian theology and living. Since administration is obviously and primarily active – although theoretical and philosophical underpinnings are important – the identification of relevant administrative skills is crucial. Hence, whichever educational approach is used, there must be adequate coverage of and coaching in the necessary skills. And, as we have seen, this should also involve adequate discussion and coverage of the relevant worldview factors that impinge on such skills.

Again, from a social constructionist and narrative perspective, it might be argued that the process toward finding a solution is more important that the content; hence, the attempt to devise training courses based on content is immaterial. However, I would argue that education and training *is* a process. It answers the question: How should we (the community) solve our problem(s)? As the community (our group) wrestled with the issues, they repeatedly affirmed the need for more education and training. Their comments were sought and suggestions made, and the Course Outlines were then adjusted accordingly (see Section 7 below). This, then, is part of their process as their social construct.

At the same time, while I accept that the process is important, since it is contextually derived from the community, the content required to bring about behavioural and attitudinal change cannot be dismissed as irrelevant. Strategy and tactics in this context are critical, but what is said or done – that is, the detail, contents – can also help or hinder. What is accepted is that the specifics for the courses were not discussed by the group in detail, nor did they present any details for inclusion in the courses. In that sense, the social constructionist approach has not been followed to the fullest degree.

We should also bear in mind here the crucial distinction between training and education. While the former must include the latter, the latter may not – and often does not – include the

former. Skills development is a necessary component of training. Where this is lacking, all that can be presented is principle and theory. That can very quickly be viewed as irrelevant, even though it may be important. For this enquiry, we were dealing with fish who could not describe the water they are in; under those circumstances, they were not able to devise workable solutions because, in many cases, they were simply unaware of the problem. Now, however, they are all better equipped to do so. That this did not happen in the immediate context of our research might be somewhat disappointing, but it does not negate the social constructionist and narrative principle. It should be noted that, where the suggested courses are concerned, it is assumed that the lecturer would be sufficiently familiar with the community to present the material in a contextually relevant way, to ask relevant questions and to lead the discussions in appropriate ways. Special emphasis would be expected throughout on the worldview dynamics. Hence, in the end, the content would be socially constructed anyway.

The third dimension – that of Biblical principles of Christian theology and living – is patently fundamental for the Christian. Yet, sadly, there are many cases where there is little or no input in this area and the worker is left to bumble along, doing the job as best they can. Asked why, from a Biblical perspective, they are doing (or not doing) something a certain way, there is, at best, an indistinct response and, at worst, no reason given at all. This is not necessarily that individual's fault. If they have not been exposed or educated adequately, we cannot expect them to know any better. To aggravate matters, there is a widely held perception that things administrative and "business" are secular rather than spiritual, and thus have little or no place in Christian ministry. Yet, as we noted earlier, this is a mistaken handicap. It simply highlights the need for greater exposure and education. So, what do we do?

Partly as a result of this enquiry, I now believe it is imperative in this training to include some material on what it means to be a Christian worker in a given context, how one's worldview shapes that approach, as well as to devise a tentative theological approach to that area of ministry. So, quite apart from input on things administrative, there is, perhaps primarily, the need for solid doctrinal teaching. While this is necessarily outside the scope of training in administration, it starts, in my humble opinion, with ensuring that a person understands the correct Gospel correctly. False gospels preached to "itching ears" abound, such that many are confused as to what is the truth. If, then, fear, suspicion and jealousy are crucial issues from a worldview perspective – as is the case with the Shona and Ndebele – and we recognise the transforming role of the Gospel, then we need to "scratch where it itches" and help people understand how the Gospel can transform such negative thinking. What, indeed, has the Gospel to say about relationships (even in the context of doing administration) in the light of these worldview factors?

So, for instance, questions should be raised such as**:** What does it mean for Jesus Christ to be my Lord as well as my Saviour? Indeed, what authority and power does He have; and is He my Lord at all – or have I only come to Him selfishly to forgive my sins? What does it mean for me to be Christian in this work setting? What, from a behaviour, attitude and performance perspective, does God expect of me here? What does God say about this kind of work – what, indeed, is His theological rationale for it anyway? How can I be salt and light here and bring Him the glory He deserves? These and other questions correctly relating our faith to our work will help to ensure an approach that is true to Scripture and that genuinely honours God. In short, we must work hard to break down the barriers caused by the false dichotomy between the 'secular' and the 'sacred' – as if only those in vocational ministry are responsible – and we must ensure that our Christianity is genuine.

That said, it should be clear that a course or courses specifically on administration do not have room for theology (Systematic or Biblical) as well as all the other related (practical) requirements. These must be covered in other courses. Naturally, for the Bible college or seminary, this is exactly what is or should be happening in formal training. But in the informal context – Sunday School, Bible study, training seminars and so on – this cannot be guaranteed. Nevertheless, while it is not my intention here to focus on this aspect of teaching, the point should be made – and forcefully too – that such theological underpinning is a critical component of equipping a Christian to do ministry in the right way and for the right reasons.

5   <u>Improving Our Training</u>

So, constituting the last major goal of this enquiry, we turn now to the role of training institutions in the process of improving the standards and quality of administration and its praxis for the Church and Christian ministry. While the focus here is on the formal, this does not imply that informal approaches cannot be used.

One underlying assumption is that, in the process of effective training, learners are confronted with both the (current) wrong (?) and the (contextually) right ways of doing something. At the same time, they are urged to train others as well so that incorrect ideas, habits, traditions and practices can be changed for the better. Thus, the training institution serves a critical role in providing new information and insights and, in the process, shaping values and praxis.

That said, however, a rough rule of thumb should be noted**:** that a major idea or change can take up to 10 years, on average, to move from seminary to pew. In other words, in general, a principle having been introduced in the classroom may take about 10 years before it is finally accepted extensively and adopted by the average person as the norm. This is because the greater the intended change, the greater the critical mass required, and this takes time to

develop. Obviously, some things are accepted much quicker than this, but in the main, I have found this to be true of major change items. We must be prepared for the long haul!

A related point of note is that extensive experience indicates a frequent gap between what is taught and what actually happens or is actually needed in the field. Part of what is perceived as hypocrisy with Christians is the differential between what they claim to believe and their actual behaviour.   As mentioned previously, the Rwandan tragedy is, perhaps, the quintessential example of this problem. A lesser Zimbabwean example is the *Gukurahundi* massacres of the mid-80s where 20 000 people lost their lives. For many African Christians, accepting the Gospel has not brought resolution to psychological or emotional needs arising from their social context. The early missionaries, in other words, did not "scratch where it itches"; they did not speak to "the deep". This is why we see Christians (including pastors, no less!) in Church on Sunday morning, yet visiting the *n'anga* that same afternoon**:** because the Gospel is not presented in ways that meet their deepest need(s).

While this problem is true in terms of how theology has been communicated, it is also true to a lesser extent in terms of skills development and practical theology. Hence, are we really helping African Christians to "do Christianity" – in addition to being Christian – in ways that are culturally relevant?

With all that in mind, and considering all our conversations, it seems that a consensus by the group would be a proposal of either a two- or three-part approach to training in administration. While recognising the importance of the theological component, that will be put aside as the emphasis here is on the praxis of administration. For some Bible and/or theological colleges this proposed approach would probably entail varying changes in mindset, curricula and, even, in faculty. It should be stressed that this is a mere suggestion, as each institution must fit the course(s) into its own contextually unique curriculum and financial, logistical and personnel resources. This may mean not only changing the topics but even adjusting courses to suit. Hence, this is not intended as an inviolable final solution. The object here is to change attitude and behaviour as and where appropriate.

However, if we are to do any justice to the field at all, it is simply not possible, assuming the five-fold grid of Time, Planning, Organising, Leading and Controlling that we have followed in this study, to expect to cover all the important topics for administration proper, time management, planning and controlling, together with the massive amount of material that could also be covered in leadership and management, as well as their respective theologies in one single course. Thus, at the very minimum, two separate courses should be offered, one for Administration and one for Leadership. Ideally, if training institutions had the space in their

curriculum and the training resources to offer courses in each of the five areas that would provide the broadest of all coverage. But that is, perhaps, luxurious day-dreaming!

Alternatively, and as a compromise between the two extremes – curriculum space permitting, of course – three courses are proposed: two in administration and one on leadership. The actual titles can be crafted to suit the institution, but they could something like: Administration & Control, Planning & Organising and Leadership. The first would be a pre-requisite for the second. The course on Leadership should be required anyway, regardless of what is offered for Administration. Hence, the former are not pre-requisites for it. Given the wealth, breadth and depth of material, there is more than enough to cover. The issue, then – again – is that of deciding not what to include but what to exclude. A closely related aspect is the typical length of a course and/or how many teaching hours it covers. This would vary from institution to institution. Again, the group's comments on this strategy were affirmative and no alternative models were proffered. Both the process and the content were accepted.

A fundamental influence in deciding not only what courses to have but also their approach is the philosophical underpinning of the institution. This ranges from the mission statement and core values, through the underlying philosophies of ministry and training, to curriculum design and the availability of lecturers and other resources. For instance, some institutions focus entirely on the academic, being concerned primarily with education, while others seek a balance for vocational Christian ministry between this, character formation and ministry skills development out of a concern for both education and training. Some institutions focus on training to the detriment of sound education. Some see no value in administration at all and thus have no course on it; still others include "administration" as a topic within a single Pastoral Studies or Pastoral Care course. This says something about their philosophy of pastoral ministry in particular and of practical theology and broader ministry in general. Other institutions, viewing vocational Christian ministry in broader terms than just the pastorate, see the necessity of administration and related fields because of their all-encompassing relevance to ministry. The philosophy of training, then, becomes a critical factor in our approach to what is offered and how. Although this obviously varies from institution to institution, it should still be possible to posit some general suggestions which can then be adapted to suit specific situations and needs.

The first suggestion is a Course Outline for a single course on Administration and then separate ones, Part A and Part B, for the two related courses. The fourth outline is for Leadership. Naturally, the topic titles and details of the contents will vary from lecturer to lecturer. The topics listed are partly the result of my own teaching over the past 16 years and

partly the discoveries from this study and discussions with the group. It should be noted further, perhaps, that the topics listed for the Leadership course represent a mere fraction of the material (and related principles) available. Hence, these topics are not the only ones.

It may be asked at this point why the apparent emphasis on leadership; does this not bring an imbalance to the process? The answer should be evident from the lengthy and wide-ranging conversations we have had on this topic. Leadership is a critical component of administration and, in its own right, has a wealth, breadth and depth of content and principle. It is through leadership that the administrative process is shaped, directed and effected. John Maxwell's well-known maxim (1998) that "Everything rises or falls on leadership" points to this reality. And, as we noted in Chapter Two, management and administration are often seen as synonymous. The effective administrator, whether "in the front" as a manager or "behind the scenes" is bound to have influence at some point as a leader.

Just as the lesson topics must be contextually oriented, so too must the Course Requirements vary depending on the qualification level and each institution's educational philosophy, ministry objectives and policies, with their resultant requirements. Again, those included here are suggestions only. Also, the selected bibliography for each is, necessarily, very tentative as the availability of texts is governed by a range of factors such as size of the library holdings, funding availability, previous curricula and so on. Thus, these syllabi are not meant to be definitive in any sense, but merely a recommendation as to suggested topics, possible assignments and references. The hope is that, in being comprehensive, these courses will allow training institutions to offer substantive input and so strengthen the capacity of those in vocational Christian ministry to do their work effectively and efficiently, to the glory of God.

Each Course Outline comprises six sections: Course Description, Course Rationale (these might be combined); Course Objectives; Course Requirements; Course Schedule; and a Selected Bibliography. Depending on the curriculum design, underlying philosophy and timetable flexibility, I have offered an alternative option of either two or three teaching periods a week for the Course Schedules, giving a total of either 20 or 30 sessions over a 10-week teaching term. (Typically, class periods may vary from 45 minutes to one hour each.) The Course Requirements, usually, would comprise either: a mid-term exam, one assignment and a final exam, through a mid-term exam, an assignment and a final exam, to two assignments, a mid-term and a final exam. Alternatively, if two assignments are offered, the mid-term exam may be dropped. The choice would be affected by such factors as the desired teaching outcomes, the academic level and of the size of the class, among others. If a mid-term exam is offered, it would be given during one of the regular class periods.

1. *Course Outline for Administration (Single)*

(A single course; 2 or 3 hrs/wk; it is recommended that this be offered in conjunction with Leadership)

I.   Course Description:

This single course on Administration focuses on the local church context, but can be adapted to a para-church setting. Besides the nature of administration, it covers issues such as church polities, documentation, time management, planning and meetings. Throughout the course, the tensions between worldviews and the urban-rural contexts will be considered.

II.   Course Rationale:

Much that passes for "ministry" today is just activity – disorganised, unmanaged busyness. This course introduces the student to a few key principles of administration and management to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in accomplishing what God intends.

III.   Course Objectives:

By the end of the course, students should be able to –

(a)   Appreciate some worldview issues impacting the administration process and the tensions created by these and the rural-urban divide.
(b)   Understand and appreciate the value and role of administration
(c)   Recognise some of the benefits and constraints of Church polities
(d)   Compile a basic constitution
(e)   Be familiar with the form & purpose of job descriptions and terms & conditions of service
(f)   Know how to prepare for and conduct effective business meetings
(g)   Appreciate the components of planning and office function
(h)   Understand and effectively implement principles of time management and prioritising

IV.   Course Requirements:

A. *Assignments* –

(a)   Write a constitution for the Institute for Christian Impact. (Length: N/A)

(b)   Explore the contrasts in the underlying worldview factors of administration (time, planning, organising, leading and controlling) between an agrarian setting and an urban, industrial one.

(c)   Can the *ubuntu/unhu* concept reinforce administrative skills? If so, how?

(d)   What is quality from your worldview perspective? From an evaluation of your ministry context, evaluate your own administrative efficiency and effectiveness. Is there need for a better balance between the demands of time and organisation on the one hand and the needs of people each day on the other? How can you more effectively blend love for people with responsible organisation and management of your activities?

(e)   Devise a job description and terms and conditions of service for the full-time post of Director of Music in your church. (Length: N/A)

(f)   Using a week's activities as a base, survey your own management of time. Analyse where, why and what proportion of each day time was wasted. How may these findings help you better manage your time? Suggest your theology of time, showing how this relates to your philosophy of ministry.

Length: 1500 words; Grade: 40%.

B. *Exams* – Final: 60%.

V. Course Schedule:

Topic	*Per./ Wk*	*No.*	*Explanation*
Introduction & The Nature and Definitions of Administration	2 3	1 2	Explanation of Course Outline; Discussion of Administration & Definitions
Biblical Foundations: Towards Developing a Theology of Administration	2 3	1 1	Presentation and discussion of selected Biblical passages relating to time, planning, organising and controlling; Students would be urged to reflect on and develop their own theology of admin.
Discussion: Worldview issues; Urban vs. rural settings; Christian and secular	2 3	1 2	A discussion of pertinent worldview issues such as relationships, *ubuntu/unhu*, fear, jealousy, envy, the role of the spirits, time, the urban-rural dissonance, etc.
Church Polities (brief overview)	2 3	1 2	A brief introduction to the nature and role of church government systems
Major Documents: The Constitution & Statement of Faith	2 3	2 3	Discussion of the myths of constitutions, their primary purposes and key elements (e.g. in a congregational polity setting)
By-laws; Job description; Terms & Conditions of Service; Contracts	2 3	1 2	Discussion of purposes and key elements
Time Management: Measurement & value; stewardship	2 3	1 2	Discussion of the concept of time, its measurement and value; the notion of its stewardship; intro of worldview tensions
Time Management: Principles	2 3	1 2	Discussion of principles of management in culturally appropriate ways (rural; urban)
Time Management: Learning to say "No" politely	2 3	1 1	Discussion of the importance of finding appropriate ways to decline. Theology of ministry plus denominational expectations will need consideration. (This is often a controversial topic to begin with)
Prioritising: Models	2 3	1 1	Covers how to prioritise and highlights the practicality of stewarding our time
Planning (General)	2 3	2 3	A general presentation of fundamental principles
Planning (Personal)	2 3	1 2	Discussion of issues to be considered on a personal level
"Office" Management	2 3	2 3	Irrespective of location or size, some basic principles apply for being organised, with or without a secretary
Successful Meetings: The Roles of Chairperson & Secretary	2 3	1 1	The crucial roles – and related skills – of the chairman and secretary are often overlooked
Successful Meetings: Principles – Agendas, Minutes & Procedures	2 3	2 3	Covers basic principles for effective and efficient meetings
Total:	**2 3**	**20 30**	

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2.   *Course Outlines for (Double) Administration*

(A)   *Administration & Control*

(Part A; 2 or 3 hrs/wk; this is a pre-requisite for the course on Planning and Organising – Part B; also taught in conjunction with Leadership.)

I.   Course Description:

Administration covers four basic areas – planning, organising, leading and controlling – all of which are exercised within time. This course and the next take two of the four components each and focus on their key elements. The course on leadership is the third in the series. This first course deals with two core aspects of administration and control. It covers such topics as a Biblical theology, church polities, documentation, meetings, supervision, standards and discipline. Throughout, consideration will be given to the tensions between competing worldviews and the urban-rural cultural contexts.

II.   Course Rationale:

Administration in general is often misunderstood – even despised – yet it is the fundamental hub to all that happens. Without effective and efficient administration, nothing much of substance occurs. It is vital, therefore, that those in ministry be aware of this importance and some of the basic skills involved. This particular course encourages students to begin developing a Biblically-based theology of administration before looking briefly at some key elements of administration (the focus is the local church). The last segment of the course previews some basic issues of control which, again, is an important component in organisational effectiveness.

III.   Course Objectives:

By the end of the course, students should be able to –

(a)   Understand the concept of administration and its centrality to all that needs to happen for effective and efficient ministry

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(b)   Appreciate some worldview issues impacting the administration process and the tensions created by these and the rural-urban divide.

(c)   Articulate a theology of administration

(d)   Recognise some of the benefits and constraints of Church polities

(e)   Compile a basic constitution

(f)   Be familiar with the form and purpose of job descriptions, terms and conditions of service and contracts

(g)   Know how to prepare for and conduct effective business meetings

(h)   Understand the need for and principles of setting performance standards and measuring competencies

(i)   Confidently determine appropriate disciplining procedures.

IV.   Course Requirements:

A. Assignments – Choose two (2):

(a)   Describe what key components of village life are deliberately planned and how, and suggest why this is so. Then discuss the extent to which the principles here are either carried over to, adapted or excluded altogether in an urban setting.

(b)   Compare and contrast the polity systems in three different churches and assess their strengths and weaknesses for efficiency and effectiveness.

(c)   Draft a constitution for the Institute for Christian Impact.

(d)   Compile a job description, terms and conditions of service and a contract for the full-time position of Music Director in your Church.

(e)   Choose five or six each of vernacular and English proverbs that speak to aspects of administration and discuss (i) The lessons or values they present and (ii) The situations in which they can be used to illustrate a key point about administration.

(f)   Observe two reasonably formal meetings. Describe the processes in each that either ensured or hindered efficiency and effectiveness.

(g)   Outline the policies and procedures in your Church/ministry for control mechanisms. How are workers (full-time or volunteers) monitored, evaluated and reviewed? Discuss the effectiveness of disciplinary procedures.

Length: 1750 words; Grade: 60%

B. Exam – Grade: 40%.

V.   Course Schedule:

Topic	*Per./ Wk*	*No.*	*Explanation*
Introduction & The Nature and Definitions of Administration & Control	2 3	1 2	Explanation of Course Outline; Discussion of Definitions of Administration & Control
Biblical Foundations: Toward Developing a Theology of Administration (proper) and Control	2 3	1 2	Presentation and discussion of selected Biblical passages relating to administration and control; Students would be urged to reflect on and develop their own theology of admin.
Discussion: Worldview issues; Urban vs. rural settings; Christian and secular	2 3	2 2	A discussion of pertinent worldview issues such as relationships, *ubuntu/unhu*, fear, jealousy, envy, the role of the spirits, time, the urban-rural dissonance, etc. as they pertain to Administration and Control.

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Church Polities (a brief overview)	2 3	2 2	A brief introduction to the nature and role of church government systems
Major Documents: The Constitution & Statement of Faith	2 3	2 3	Discussion of the myths of constitutions, their primary purposes and key elements (e.g. in a congregational church polity setting)
By-laws; Job description; Terms & Conditions of Service; Contracts	2 3	1 2	Presentation of purposes and elements of key personnel documents
Successful Meetings: Principles & Procedures – Agendas, Minutes, etc.	2 3	3 4	Covers basic principles and procedures for effective and efficient meetings
Successful Meetings: The Roles of Chairman and Secretary; Skills	2 3	1 1	The crucial roles – and related skills – of the chairman and secretary are often overlooked
Successful Meetings: The Committee Member & Group Dynamics	2 3	1 2	Looks at the team concept, the role of the committee member and being an effective part of the group
Control: Supervision – Some Principles	2 3	2 3	Considers the nature – Biblical and secular – of supervision and some the basic principles
Control: Standards and Measurement	2 3	1 2	Discusses the need to establish clear standards/expectations and how to measure them
Control: Evaluating workers	2 3	1 2	Covers principles and approaches for staff evaluation
Control: Disciplinary Procedures	2 3	2 3	Evaluation and discipline are not always easy or pleasant; how can you make them helpful for both salaried and volunteer staff?
Total:	**2 3**	**20 30**	

VI.   Selected Bibliography

See first Course Outline above.

(B)   *Planning & Organisation*

(Part B; 2 or 3 hrs/wk; pre-requisite: Part A – Administration and Control; also taught in conjunction with Leadership.)

I.   Course Description:

This is the second of two courses dealing with administration. This course covers the fields of Planning and Organising, and considers such topics as general and strategic planning, "office" and personal organisation. Consideration will be given throughout the course to the tensions between worldviews and the urban-rural contexts. (The course on Administration and Control is a pre-requisite.) The third in the series is Christian Leadership.

II.   Course Rationale:

Planning and Organising are often two action areas that are often overlooked or seen as unnecessary or, even, demeaning. Yet, without them, no project can succeed. Worldview factors also play a part in the development of these skills. Knowing why and how to plan and organise ensures the likelihood of success.

III.   Course Objectives:

By the end of the course, students should be able to –

(a) Appreciate some worldview issues impacting the planning and organising process and the tensions created by these and the rural-urban divide.
(b) Develop a contextually relevant theology of administration
(c) Understand and be able to apply the seven steps of the planning process
(d) Recognise the value and place of strategic planning and some of the skills required
(e) Appreciate the nature of organisation and be able to identify the key principles involved
(f) Organise their work place to enhance effectiveness and efficiency
(g) Understand and effectively implement principles of time management and prioritising
(h) Apply principles of delegation correctly to enrich team work and productivity

IV. Course Requirements:

A. Assignments – Choose two (2):

(a) Plan a major event for your Church/ministry. Describe what you would need to do and what steps you would take to ensure success. Discuss how cultural and worldview factors might impinge on this process.

(b) Evaluate the extent to which a major event in your Church/ministry was well organised. Discuss what was done well and why and what, if any, mistakes there were. Do you think there were any worldview or cultural factors that hindered the process? If the event was to be repeated, what would need to be done differently to improve the exercise?

(c) Describe how you would rearrange your "office" (work place) to enhance efficiency.

(d) Using a time log, undertake a week's audit of your time and assess how you used (or misused) this resource. From your analysis, what changes do you need to make to improve your stewardship of time? Briefly describe your theology of time.

(e) In your ministry setting, who is responsible for delegation and how is this effected? What principles are considered in this process and do these include any worldview or cultural factors? Why? Do you consider the process generally to be successful? Why? If not, what should be changed?

(f) With your understanding of the complete administration process, develop a tentative theology of administration that is both true to Scripture and your cultural context.

Length: 1750 words each; Grade: 60%.

B. Exam: Grade: 40%.

V. Course Schedule:

Topic	*Per./ Wk*	*No.*	*Explanation*
Introduction & The Nature and Definitions of Planning and Organising	2 3	1 2	Introduces the course and definitions of the key concepts.
Discussion: Worldview issues; Urban vs. rural settings; Christian and secular	2 3	1 2	A discussion of pertinent worldview issues such as relationships, *ubuntu/unhu*, fear, jealousy, envy, the role of the spirits, time, the urban-rural dissonance, etc. as they pertain to planning and organising
Biblical Foundations: Toward a Theology of Planning & Organising	2 3	1 1	Presentation and discussion of selected Biblical passages relating to planning and organising; Students would be urged to reflect on and develop their own theology of admin. taking their earlier reflections into account

Planning: General – The Need	2 3	1 1	Discusses the basic need for planning & how it fits into the whole process
Planning: General – Principles	2 3	2 3	Covers the seven steps of basic, general planning
Strategic Planning – The Role of the Visionary	2 3	1 1	This considers planning at a deeper level and the need for long-range, visionary thinking
Strategic Planning – Principles	2 3	2 3	Considers the basic principles of advanced planning
Organising – Its Nature & Culture	2 3	1 2	Discusses the nature of organising and some key principles; worldview factors will be considered
Mistakes in Organising	2 3	1 1	Covers some basic mistakes; influence of worldview factors is assessed
Organising: My "office"	2 3	2 3	Irrespective of location or size, some basic principles apply for being organised, with or without a secretary
Time Management: Measurement & value	2 3	1 2	Discussion of the concept of time, its measurement and value; the notion of its stewardship; intro of worldview tensions
Time Management: Basic Principles	2 3	2 3	Discussion of principles of management in culturally appropriate ways (rural; urban)
Time Management: Learning to say "No" politely	2 3	1 2	Discussion of the importance of finding appropriate ways to decline. Theology of ministry plus denominational expectations will need consideration. (This is often a controversial topic to begin with)
Prioritising: Models	2 3	1 1	Covers how to prioritise and highlights the practicality of stewarding our time
Delegation and Decision-making	2 3	2 3	Considers the need, advantages and principles of delegation
Total:	**2 3**	**20 30**	

VI.   Selected Bibliography:

See first Course Outline above

3.   *Course Outline for Leadership*

I.   Course Description

A study of the concept of Christian leadership looking at elements such as core principles, the leader's power, character, style, vision and motivation. Some common hazards will be covered and the course ends with a call to excellence. This course should be taken either in conjunction with Administration or together with Administration & Control and Planning & Organising.

II.   Course Rationale

Character centred leadership is at the heart of Christian ministry. The demands, obligations and pitfalls faced by those with leadership responsibility are enormous. If the Church is to

retain – and, even, regain – its credibility, it is essential that those called to lead are found to be Christ-honouring and capable.

III. Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

(a) Distinguish between secular and spiritual concepts of leadership and why they differ
(b) Understand some key laws of leadership and how they apply
(c) Appreciate the centrality of 'being' rather than 'doing', the importance of a servant's heart and the tension between serving and leading
(d) Identify various styles of leadership and when and how to use them
(e) Identify their own leadership approach and how this impacts working with others
(f) Recognise the importance of vision and creativity
(g) Appreciate the value of change and the demands of growth
(h) Understand the importance of motivation
(i) Appreciate some major hazards facing Christian leaders and how these may be handled
(j) Reject the temptation to mediocrity and to accept, instead, the call to excellence.

IV. Course Requirements

A. Assignments - Choose two (2):

(a) Discuss your predominant leadership style and focus traits. How appropriate are they for the majority of your decisions? What strengths and weaknesses have you discerned?

(b) "At the heart of Christian leadership is the heart." In the light of Christ's call to servant leadership, consider a variety of Scriptural passages to craft your own theology of Christian leadership.

(c) Discuss the links between the philosophy of *ubuntu/unhu* and servant leadership. Why might some Christian leaders appear to contradict this in their leadership approach? What does this say of the followers?

(d) Assess the **perceived** (by both leaders and followers) leadership model in your church or para-church ministry (e.g. the pastor/director-as-chief; the pastor/director-as-CEO, the pastor/director-as-coach, etc.) How does this model fit with that of servant leadership? What problems do you perceive with this model? Relate your discussion to your worldview.

(e) Choose a leadership issue (a principle or a problem) which interests you. Explore its main components, showing its significance and how it may or is impacting your life. Assess the impact worldview/cultural factors involved.

(f) Discuss two danger areas or hazards for leaders experienced in your church/ministry. How were they handled? To what extent did worldview and cultural factors help or hinder the process? Why?

(g) Develop a tentative, contextually relevant theology of leadership.

Length: 1750 words; Grade: 60%

B. Exam – Grade - 40%

V. Course Schedule

Topic	*Per./ Wk*	*No.*	*Explanation*
Introduction & [Christian] Leadership – The Basics	2 3	1 2	An introduction to some basic principles, setting the scene for consideration of the key distinctions between Biblical and secular leadership approaches

Discussion: Worldview Issues; Urban vs. rural settings; Christian and secular	2 3	1 1	A discussion of pertinent worldview issues such as relationships, *ubuntu/unhu*, fear, jealousy, envy, the role of the spirits, time, the urban-rural discord, etc. as they affect leadership
Towards Developing A Theology of Biblical Leadership	2 3	1 2	Presentation and discussion of selected Biblical passages relating to leadership; students would be urged to reflect on and develop their own theology in light of their learning from previous courses
The Christian Leader and His Servant Heart	2 3	1 2	Challenges the student to consider the Biblical basis for servant-leadership and their own typical approach
The Christian Leader and His Heart of Integrity	2 3	1 1	Continues the discussion of the servant-leader's character
The Christian as Leader: Your Style	2 3	2 3	Presents four styles and the basis for choosing which one in decision-making
The Christian as Leader: Your Focus Traits	2 3	1 1	Surveys the person's strengths and weaknesses in their approach to integrating tasks and people
The Christian Leader: Knowing About People	2 3	1 2	Presents some principles on developing people-skills
The Christian Leader and Motivation	2 3	1 2	Covers the notion and techniques of motivating workers
The Hazards of Christian Leadership	2 3	4 5	Several danger areas are presented and solutions suggested
The Christian Leader and Accountability	2 3	1 1	The need for, the myth surrounding and the areas of accountability in the leader's life are discussed
The Christian Leader and Creativity	2 3	1 1	The importance of being creative is looked at, with reference to worldview
The Christian Leader and Vision	2 3	2 2	The centrality of vision is presented, together with a comparison of some common myths
Change & Growth	2 3	1 2	Discuss the nature of change, some principles of effecting it and the growth cycle
Measuring Your Growth	2 3	1 1	Some Biblical criteria for measuring personal growth are considered
The Christian Leader and Excellence	2 3	2 2	Emphasis is placed not only on the "what" but also the "how"
Total:	**2 3**	**20 30**	

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6   The Place of Proverbs

Since worldview is often subconscious or is not directly articulated as such, societies must use tools of various kinds to express important ideas. Proverbs often play such a role. As pithy, easy-to-remember sayings, often learnt from early childhood while exploring the meaning of the world, its ethos and value systems, proverbs convey sometimes complex ideas or difficult-to-describe principles. Every culture has such sayings. They provide valuable insight into how a particular society or people group think and typically respond in given situations. Not only do they conveniently describe but also, importantly, they teach. Thus, I propose here a consideration of some Shona, Ndebele and English proverbs to facilitate a better appreciation of some of the subconscious or unarticulated principles undergirding our respective approaches to administration.

Originally, in an attempt to buttress their points and to shed light on subconscious worldview expectations, I had asked the group in the first conversation for some selected proverbs in

either Shona or Ndebele that dealt with any of the notions discussed relating to the use or abuse of time, planning, organising, leading or controlling.   Interestingly, I had only one response. I suspect that this lack of input reflects not so much an apparent ignorance of such proverbs as it does the inability to readily recognise and recall relevant proverbs outside of an appropriate context in which they would apply and could thus be quoted. After all, proverbs are not typically quoted *ad hoc* but, rather, when a particular context arises to which they apply. Thus, specific situations need to be considered first and then thought given as to whether there is a relevant proverb or not. Unfortunately, as is easy to appreciate, it is very difficult to think of specific administrative situations and any related proverbs in such ways. With that in mind, therefore, I have taken the liberty of choosing what I deem to be some relevant Shona, Ndebele and English proverbs. These were assessed by the group and some minor adjustments made. Interestingly, all of them expressed surprise that proverbs could be used to 'speak' to the context of administration.

It is hoped that, as well as shedding more insight into subconscious thinking and values about the administrative elements, trainers can use them as supplementary, culturally relevant tools to help students learn more compellingly or definitively. In the same way that "a picture tells a thousand words", a proverb can more quickly explain a complex truth – and sometimes, perhaps, more successfully – than an attempted verbal description.

Here, then, are a few selected proverbs that could be used to relate to various facets of administration:

1. *Shona:*
(Taken from Hamutyinei and Plangger, 1974)

Munhu haarasiki kune vanhu

Lit: A person never gets lost amongst people

Meaning: A person who keeps asking for advice can hardly go wrong. When ignorance is admitted, it will finally lead to wisdom

Tiri tose, imbwa haidanwi imwe chete

Lit: We are together; a dog is not called alone

Meaning: At times it is wise to correct someone in the presence of others. By doing so all will know what is expected of them. The reproach of an individual is made for the benefit of all.

Rega kuyera nyoka negavi iyo iripo

Lit: Don't use some string to measure the length of a snake when the snake is actually there

Meaning: A brave person was supposed to show his bravery by measuring the length of a dead snake. One should state facts, even if it means accusing a person of higher status. Call a spade a spade.

Usatanga kumedza, kutsenga kuchada

Lit: Don't swallow before you chew

Meaning: Do not embark on any undertaking without proper and adequate planning. When you start a piece of work, you must already know the end.

Zuva ravira radoka, usiku hairiri usiku shiri

Lit: After sunset, it dawns; birds do not sing at night

Meaning: As birds do not sing at night, that is not the time for working. Do not postpone until tomorrow what needs to be done today.

English equivalent: Procrastination is the thief of time.

Imbwa huru haihukuri nhando

Lit: An old dog does not bark in vain

Meaning: Old dogs know when to bark. An experienced man does not act prematurely or unreasonably. He carefully plans what he intends to do and does it at the right time

Meso ihunza nungo, kubata hakuite muswere

Lit: Looking (on) causes laziness, but (the actual) work will not take the whole day

Meaning: Work is less demanding than it appears. Once it is started, it is half done already.

Tsama haina rwendo

Lit: To meet by chance does not lead to a journey

Meaning: When people meet unexpectedly, they are not prepared for a journey together. Serious undertakings need proper preparation.

Chakaringanwa ibvudzi, upfumi hahuna kuringanwa

Lit: What is shared by everybody is hair; riches are not shared (equally)

Meaning: As human beings, we all share the same nature but we differ greatly in our endowments. People must accept that as a fact of life.

Gudo guru peta muswe, kuti vadoko vakutye

Lit: Big baboon, fold your tail so that youngsters can respect you

Meaning: Even if (because) you are a person in authority, you need to conduct yourself in a dignified way; otherwise people will not respect you.

Tsuro pfupi haitemi uswa hurefu

Lit: A short hare does not cut tall grass

Meaning: It is not wise to attempt what is beyond one's energies or capabilities

Ushe moto, hunogokwa kune vamwe

Lit: Chieftainship is by invitation (from the people)

Meaning: For a leader to be humble and not self-assertive is the beginning of greatness and popularity.

2.   Ndebele:
(Taken from Pelling, 1977)

Abapheki abanengi bayona ububende

Lit.: Many cooks spoil the dish of boiled blood and meat

Background: *Ububende* was made by taking the blood of a slaughtered animal and cooking it with certain parts of the flesh. This was a job for one person only who knew how to cook this; too many people all claiming knowledge and all trying to have a go would result in the dish being spoilt, as their ideas might well differ.

Meaning: Too many leaders will confuse the people.

English equivalent: Too many cooks spoil the broth.

Ikhaba isengiwe

Lit: It (cow) kicks after being milked

Background: After all the time and energy used in milking the cow, it is possible to lose all the milk if the cow kicks over the milking vessel.

Meaning: Don't assume too much too quickly

English equivalent: Don't count your chickens before they're hatched.

Imbila yaswela umsila ngokulayezela

Lit: The dassie lacked a tail through giving instructions to others

Background: A tale in which, on a certain day, all the animals were called to a certain place to choose their tails. The dassie was too lazy to go and instructed other animals to bring him a tail. However, preoccupied with their own business, they forgot; so the dassie went without a tail.

Meaning: Do not rely on others to do things which are your responsibility.

Induku itshaya umviki

Lit: The knobkerrie hits the defender

Background: Boys love to play with sticks and battle with each other. Some will get quite skilled in self defence, but even so there are times when their defence will be broken through

Meaning: One should not be too sure of himself.

(Ingulube) Evuka muva ibanjwa yizinja

Lit: (The wild pig) which rises up last is seized by the dogs

Background: When a herd of wild pigs is being hunted, those that sense danger, get up, and move off will escape, but the one that is slow in moving will be caught by the dogs.

Meaning: Get a move on or you will be caught out. Act promptly or you will lose valuable time.

Inkuzi emnyama iyawona amathole

Lit: A black bull spoils the calves

Meaning: A bad leader wields a bad influence

Inxele kaliwubusi umuzi

Lit.: A left-handed person doesn't rule a village/home

Background: Left-handed people were usually regarded as mischievous and authoritarian

Meaning: A warning to one in authority who doesn't listen to his subordinates.

Kakukho ntombi yagana inyamazana/

Lit: There is no cunning person who licked his own back

Meaning: No one person can know or do everything. If you think you are so clever, watch out!

English equivalent: Too clever by half!

Ungaqali ngembeleko umntwana engakazalwa

Lit: Don't start making the blanket for carrying the child before it is born.

Background: A blanket used for carrying a child on the mother's back should not be acquired too early lest one loses the baby.

Meaning: Don't spend time, money and effort on preparing for something you hope to get unless you are absolutely sure of getting it.

Amagundwane amanengi kawalamlindi

Lit: Many rats have no burrow

Meaning: There must always be a leader in a group, or one to take responsibility. Otherwise, when everyone waits for another to start, nothing is done.

3. *English*:
(Taken from Best, 1984)

A good dog deserves a good bone

Meaning: Someone who has done well deserves due recognition

A miss is as good as a mile

Meaning: It doesn't matter how much you miss a target or goal; it's missed.

A stitch in time saves nine

Meaning: Prompt action now will avoid more work later. Repairing something now is better than allowing it to become worse later.

Alternative: By timely mending, save much spending

A thing begun is half done

Meaning: While there is often inertia in getting started, once the initial hurdle is overcome, the work seems relatively easier

Be sure before you marry, of a house wherein to tarry

Meaning: Ensure, through adequate planning, that the right resources are available to do the job

Care killed the cat

Meaning: While the cat does need attention, too much of a good thing can be counter-productive

Cut your coat to suit your cloth

Meaning: The size and quality of your resources should determine the final outcome. Avoid attempting to do something beyond your means.

Everyone can find fault; few can do better

Meaning: It is easy to criticise but harder to do the job properly

Alternative: Everyone knows best where the shoes pinch

Example is better than precept

Meaning: Showing how something should be done is better than describing the principle

Fine feathers make fine birds

Meaning: When you have the right equipment and resources, you are likely to produce a good product

Kill two birds with one stone

Meaning: Use your resources efficiently

Little boats must keep the shore; larger boats may venture more

Meaning: Some people have more abilities than others and can attempt greater things

Little strokes fell great oaks

Meaning: Big trees can be chopped down a stroke at a time; big jobs can be done stage by stage

Many hands make light work

Meaning: The more people there are to help, the quicker the work is done

(But compare: Too many cooks spoil the broth)

Neither wise men nor fools can work without tools

Meaning: If the right resources and equipment are not available, the work cannot be done

Never a rose without thorns

Meaning: There will always be difficulties of one kind or another in attempting to accomplish
  something worthwhile

Procrastination is the thief of time

Meaning: One who procrastinates never gets the work done in time

Punctuality is the soul of business

Meaning: For the business to succeed and grow, the work or service must be provided
  punctually. Otherwise the customer will go elsewhere.

Small beginnings make great endings

Meaning: Great ventures must start somewhere (usually in small ways). Therefore, do not
  despise small beginnings.

Soft words win hard hearts

Meaning: Take care how you criticise or rebuke.

7   Co-researcher's Observations

Since this enquiry has centred around the exploration of a specific cultural context with a
particular group of people, it is appropriate for those who have discussed "their" issues to
comment on whether they have been identified correctly or not and whether the proposed
solutions are contextually relevant or not. Thus, I asked members of the team for their
observations on my recommendations.

While approving of the proposed course contents, Joyce and Chris helpfully suggested that
there should be more cultural/worldview class discussion to ensure that issues are adequately
covered to "scratch where it itches". They felt that, while some of the assignments would be
valuable, it would be more constructive to include those topics in class discussion rather than
having the students individually explore them in research papers. Joyce further proposed that,
since Mbigi's model ("Dembetembe" – see Chap. Six – by which he suggests the framework of
the spirit world can be used for modern management) is not suitable from a Christian
worldview – as observed in the earlier group discussions – that more research and debate is

required to develop a model appropriate to the Christian perspective. She also suggested corrections to some of the Shona proverbs.

Beki felt the proverbs were helpful, as they would prompt trainers to consider how our culture and tradition can help us learn more widely and profitably. He also felt there was a suitable balance between the cultural and spiritual issues. The proposed courses are likely to produce positive results if utilised to their maximum, although he sees them as being only introductory to the field. "We are dealing with a mind-set that needs to be challenged for a long period of time. One or two courses on Administration and Leadership do challenge one in the right direction, but more will be needed. People should learn to translate what they learn in class into life and ministry skills," he said. He added that this research should challenge and revolutionise African Christian leaders in terms of thinking seriously about administration.

For Dixon, the research was informative and reflected accurate analysis. Having obviously considered this chapter carefully, he had several suggestions and questions. For instance, he sought further clarification on the distinction between exposure and education, which I subsequently adjusted accordingly. He appreciated the link between effective and efficient administration and the true Gospel. And he thought the course assignments and the proverbs would be helpful.

The first of two major concerns he raised had to do with how we help people theologically to deal appropriately with plans and stewardship in a context where someone says, "God has told me we need to do such and such." The tendency in these situations, he said, is to throw all the administrative principles aside, which often leads to chaos and confusion. He stressed the need for this issue to be dealt with in the class setting. The second major concern he had relates to Control where, often again – and as noted in Chapter Six – the factor of relationships is so strong that one may be tempted even to lose their job rather than risk damaging a relationship for the sake of correction, rebuke or discipline. This, too, he said, needs serious consideration in the proposed courses.

In a follow-up interview, Dawson indicated that he also felt the summary and recommendations captured our earlier discussions accurately. He added: "I think the three-fold approach with the courses is sound. Part of our problem is that we haven't been trained in this [administration]. If it is covered at all, it's done together with or under Leadership. So we need more depth. The two fields should be separate. We should have good models of administration, planning and control, separate from leadership." On the use of proverbs as a teaching tool, he said those who teach should make a point of deliberately showing how these

sayings apply, as some are quite obvious but others may only be seen as having significance after some reflection.

Unfortunately for George, although he made several attempts to get his written comments to me, for various reasons, he was unsuccessful. However, he had indicated verbally that, like the others, he felt the conclusions and recommendations are valid. He again expressed appreciation for being part of the project.

8   Conclusion

As this study comes to a close, it remains only to summarise the exercise and check whether all the goals have been accomplished. There were three major objectives.

First, there was a tentative assumption that worldview somehow impacts the way administration is done. A possible connection between the two was thus explored. In looking at this major question, several other, secondary questions were raised. These included: What is administration anyway? What is worldview – both natural and Christian – and, more specifically, for the Shona and Ndebele? And what are the issues arising from these worldviews that impact the praxis of administration?

The original intention was to investigate these issues from a social constructionist, postfoundationalist, narrative practical theology perspective. It has been noted (Chapters One and Seven) that the social constructionist approach was utilised partially rather than fully, since it was necessary to provide a grid or framework within which the group could then meaningfully articulate the two abstract concepts of worldview and administration. Notwithstanding that the framework was not their own social construct, the flexibility of it allowed the group to articulate their understandings of administration in ways that were comfortable – and thus real – for them. Similarly, my specific questions during the individual dialogues gave them opportunity to reflect on and appreciate the connections between their worldviews and administration and the issues arising there from. This then prepared the way for the later conversations as a group, when they were able to interact with each other more meaningfully and from a more deliberate social constructionist approach.

The postfoundationalist approach, likewise, was "soft" rather than "hard" since a basic underlying assumption for all of us is that there is, indeed, Ultimate Truth and Authority (residing in God as Creator), although people may express this slightly differently. This, of course, had implications too for our theological perspective, which is Evangelical. The narrative process was followed throughout, as the co-researchers had ample opportunity to share their own stories. However, while the opening questions at the beginning were broad

and open, the latter ones were narrow and specific, since the discussion shifted to problem issues; as such, they had less "space" in which to express their innate sense of understanding. Later, especially with the group conversations, the questioning was broader and allowed greater flexibility to reflect the co-researchers' social constructs not only with me but also with each other – albeit still within the five-fold framework.

In exploring what administration entails and seeing how it is done – or not – in this particular cultural and social context, it was established that there is indeed a correlation between one's worldview and how administration is tackled. At the same time, it was further discovered that administration, because it involves skills and personal judgement, is also affected by personality and temperament. Thus, there is both a communal or general impact because of worldview and an individual one because of personality. The focus of this thesis has been on the former. While the natural worldview is exclusive to a particular ethnic group, the Christian worldview – also exclusive but in a spiritual sense – helps to build bridges by presenting an alternative value system that supersedes or over-rides the natural. The primary difficulty, as was discovered throughout the dialogues, was that both worldview and administration tend to be somewhat nebulous concepts. As such, most people do not deliberately think about them in the course of doing administration. Therefore, it was difficult to identify and articulate all the issues; many needed to be induced.

Second, since we are dealing here with Practical Theology, another major objective was to articulate a contextually appropriate theological approach to administration. If, indeed, worldview does play an important role in the praxis of administration, then it is important for Christians to be able to articulate such a theological base from a Christian worldview perspective. Thus, the postfoundationalist narrative approach seemed to link well with our endeavour at practical theologising. However, a major barrier in this regard surfaced early in the individual dialogues when it became apparent, in response to theological questions about administration, that none in the group had done such an exercise, nor did they know how to do so. This made it very awkward to use the normal social constructionist approach because it was the co-researchers who were in a "not knowing" position! This forced me to propose a theologising methodology that only was quite specific and narrow but with which the group was basically unfamiliar. This was not their own theological construct.

Although the group chose to accept this, there was not very much flexibility. Clearly, they were at sea with the exercise. Nevertheless, they were able to think through a very basic theological perspective. The methodology and resultant "conclusions" can stand further panel beating and development. The exercise has given them a loose basis from which to expand

and strengthen their theological rationale for and praxis of administration. Of course, this has to be tentative since the exercise was rudimentary and incomplete; yet it provides a foundation upon which to build. Moreover, it must be recognised, that others with either different cultural, theological and, even, ecclesiastical backgrounds would certainly reflect alternative theological constructs. Even other Evangelicals may well 'read' their theology differently. The way we did it is not the only way to do so, nor are our tentative 'conclusions' the only ones. This reflects, at least in part, a social constructionist and postfoundational approach, since the perspective is contextually crafted and, through narrative, reflects a personal articulation of the issues. It should be added that this was the fruit of a particular group of people and cannot be said to reflect the views of all those whom the group represents.

However, one comment is called for in terms of hermeneutic. As outlined in Chapters One (section 2.2) and Seven (sections 2 and 3.1), our theologising is premised on the Scriptures as the authoritative Word of God, from which all life and practice should emanate. Thus, the interpretation of Scripture and its exegesis are crucial components in this exercise. Postfoundationalist, narrative practical theology (and hermeneutic), in this context, would come from an Evangelical background. What this particular exercise demonstrated is the need, in reinforcing the process, to ensure that the participants have the requisite exegetical skills to ensure a sound hermeneutical outcome. Again, therefore, this gets back to, and highlights the importance of, training.

The third major objective of our premise was how training institutions can better identify the relevant issues and present their administration courses in ways that are contextually and therefore practically relevant to enhance the delivery of administration training and, ultimately, its praxis in ministry. This raised the question of how this strategy fits with a social constructionist, postfoundationalist narrative solution. As indicated earlier in this chapter, training is a critical component in the skills development, and behaviour and attitude change process. So, while it is accepted that the specific details (that is, the contents) of this strategy were not contextually derived from the group, the broad principle of such an approach was indeed identified. During the conversations, several recurring problems related to the current Shona and Ndebele social context were recognised in connection with the concept of administration as well as its praxis within Christian ministry. This, in turn, highlighted the need for training. Hence, an attempt has been made to develop some suggested course outlines or syllabi that seek, at least in part, to address these issues specifically from a training perspective. This in no way implies that these courses are the panacea to the identified problems. Nor is this to suggest that training alone is the only solution to the required changes. But at least they provide an opening for further debate. The specifics of teaching

these courses, necessarily, must be left to both the respective institutions, which are responsible for their operational constraints as well as their philosophies of education and ministry, and to the lecturers as they best understand their pedagogical contexts. Therefore, it is argued that, from a social constructionist, postfoundational, narrative point of view, the educational strategy is a legitimate part of the process; other strategies that subsequent communities may suggest are not ruled out.

In their comments on the findings and recommendations, the group overwhelmingly concurred with the general thrust of the research and the summary, as well as the proposed training courses. As they have done throughout the project, they all reiterated their appreciation for being challenged to think more deeply about administration and its implementation. However, perhaps the degree to which we may have succeeded or not will be seen, not only in how this field may be taught in future, but also in the requisite changes the co-researchers make to their own exercise of administration – and the influence they have on others in future.

Furthermore, the question also arises as to how an individual who may not be party to an institutional training intervention can benefit from this research. The answer is straightforward: The worldview tensions having been noted, the individual must be exposed to these and then take deliberate steps to learn about the relevant worldview dynamics and thence make the requisite applications in their context. This exposure and learning will obviously be informal and unstructured, but the results can be just as valuable.

On a personal note, the worldview studies have been a fascinating exercise as they have further broadened my understanding of the epistemological and philosophical bases of many of my students and thus allowed me to make useful adjustments to my own teaching in the fields of administration and leadership. This deeper understanding has also enhanced my interpersonal skills as I find it easier now to appreciate their comments and actions from the context of their worldview. In addition, the narrative approach in this research has been beneficial not only to me but to the whole group as we have had opportunity that we probably would not otherwise have had to discuss these issues collectively. All of us have been forced thereby to reflect on what we do administratively, why we do it that way – or not – and what problems or issues that raises as a result. All of us have a deeper appreciation of both administration and our cultures. We can think more deliberately now about how to do things more efficiently and effectively within our worldview and ministry contexts.

It remains for the courses to be field tested and then adjusted accordingly.

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