



Chapter 14

Raising action-oriented leaders relevant to the time

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Introduction

There exist several instances of dysfunctional institutions, communities, individuals, and leaders in contemporary African contexts. Leadership entails the responsibility of fostering a sustainable impact of existential, ethical, and spiritual transformation within a given community (Mwambazambi, 2013:154). Mwambazambi argues that a fundamental ethical obligation exists to effectuate a comprehensive transformation of Africa's political, economic, and societal structures (Mwambazambi 2013:155; cf. Dames, 2017). Adhiambo (2012:157, 162) argues that African leaders are responsible for their own misfortunes, which may be a contributing factor. According to Adhiambo (2012:157), the concept of servant leadership could potentially provide a remedy for the self-perceived attitudes of superiority. It can be asserted that the absence of servant leadership and the resulting adversities experienced by African leaders are inadequate.

[T]he inability of leaders to maintain sustainable solutions to hunger, poverty and unemployment; mismanagement of resources in Africa; and flaws in systems that encourage favouritism, nepotism, tribalism, political differences, ideological and religious discrimination; a lack of capacity to manage society; poor leadership, poor planning, greed and worship of material things lack or failure to professional ethics; poor delivery of services and rampant human capital flight; as well as negative ethnicity culminating in wars and ethnic clashes. (Adhiambo, 2012:157–158, 164)

The chapter aims to define leadership, followed by a succinct analysis of the intersection between theological curricula and leadership, as well as practical theology and leadership. The final section of this chapter will delve into a comprehensive examination of diverse leadership styles that could potentially apply to our given context.

Defining leadership

The concept of leadership can be defined as a combination of art and skill, involving the collaborative efforts of one or more individuals to establish a common understanding aimed at achieving beneficial results (Elkington, 2013:3; Joynt, 2017:3). The definition encompasses a recognised leadership model known as spiritual-based values leadership. This model posits that leaders attain their leadership status by establishing a set of fundamental spiritual values that define their core character, irrespective of its nature (Fairholm, 2015:13; Joynt, 2017:3). Culture creation is a crucial component of spiritual leadership, wherein the leader replaces the work values of their colleagues with core spirit values that have a significant impact on their behaviour (Fairholm, 2015:19). According to Fairholm (2015:20–22), leaders who operate from their spiritual selves integrate their culture into their work community by fostering unity, building a culture of mutual trust, establishing a work community, cultivating harmonious relationships, constructing broad corporate structures, emphasising transformation, focusing on their co-workers' spirits, exercising spiritual intelligence, and fostering innovation (cf. Joynt, 2017). The implementation of changes necessitates leadership practises such as ethical conduct, service-oriented behaviour towards colleagues, facilitation of leadership development among workers, preservation of profitability, dissemination of information, consideration of colleagues' sensitivities, provision of mentorship and inspiration, as well as empowerment and nurturing of followers (Fairholm, 2015). Additionally, fostering creativity, developing self-control, establishing group purpose, and

replacing follower values from undesirable and destructive to desirable and constructive are also crucial leadership practices.

As Malphurs (2003:63), asserts, the pastoral leadership of a sizable church ranks among the top three most challenging professions globally. Hence, it would be advantageous for church leaders to acquire a more profound comprehension of the intricate adaptive characteristics of the church (cf. Joynt, 2017). The aforementioned awareness will enable the pastor to transcend the limited scope of localised factors that give rise to hardship and instead consider the broader macrocosmic phenomena that intersect, interrelate, and ultimately mould the diverse individuals and families comprising the church community (Elkington, 2013:9).

Leadership theories in general

There are numerous leadership theories present in various literature (Dinh et al. 2014). The comprehensive history and diverse range of leadership philosophies, theories, models, and styles are not within the scope of this chapter. Nonetheless, a (very) brief summary will be provided.

Scholars have developed theories that encompass both micro-level processes, such as perceptions, emotions, and cognitions, and macro-level processes, such as the social-relational context (Joynt, 2012, 2017). Additionally, researchers have explored the leader's role in initiating organisational change and managing dynamic social networks within complex systems (Dinh et al., 2014:36–37). Theories have been classified into four fundamental categories, namely trait, behaviour, contingency, and power and influence (Mind Tools, 2017). Various theories have been formulated over time to explain leadership. These include leader trait theories that were developed before 1940, behavioural theories that were formulated between 1940 and 1960, and situational theories that have been developed since 1960 (April et al., 2013:1–6). Various leadership styles have been identified in the literature, such as situational, transformational, visionary, collaborative, servant, host, agile, adaptive, and resilient leadership (cf. April

et al., 2013). Additionally, other styles have been proposed, including pragmatic, idealist, diplomat, and steward (Murphy, 2015). Although it is important to take note of all these various models and theories, for the sake of this chapter though, it will be impossible to discuss every theory or model in detail. Therefore, I have decided to selectively address some of these (cf. Joynt, 2012, 2017).

Toxic leadership

Rainer (2014) delineates a set of 14 symptoms that are indicative of toxic church leaders. These symptoms include a lack of demonstration of the fruit of the Spirit, a preference for a minimalist structure of accountability, an expectation of behaviour from others that they do not adhere to themselves, a tendency to view almost everyone else as inferior, a display of favouritism, frequent anger outbursts, inconsistency in communication with different individuals, a proclivity to dismiss or marginalise individuals before attempting to develop them, manipulative behaviour, a lack of transparency, an unwillingness to accept pushback or disagreement, a tendency to surround themselves with sycophants, poor communication skills, and self-absorption (Joynt, 2012, 2017). According to Rainer (2014), leaders who exhibit toxic behaviour may be able to evade consequences for an extended period due to their charismatic and affable demeanour. The phrase ‘charming like a snake’ is often used to describe someone who can manipulate others through their charm and charisma.

The inquiry arises as to why leaders who exhibit toxic behaviour are elevated to higher positions within an organisation. As per the assertion made by Murphy and Cecil (2014:14), individuals who exhibit such tendencies are proficient in concealing their actions from higher authorities, thereby enabling them to ascend the organisational hierarchy. Additionally, these individuals are known to accomplish their objectives, albeit at the cost of causing significant damage in their wake. Toxic leaders often exhibit toxic behaviour

without deliberate intent and may not possess self-awareness regarding their toxicity. It is noteworthy that their toxicity is not constant.

Practical theology and leadership

It is imperative to engage in a comprehensive practical-theological interpretation, as suggested by Osmer (2008:11) and Heitink (1999:163–170, 178–179). According to Swinton and Mowat (2016:4), practical theology can be viewed from a theological perspective, whereby it involves the act of ‘performing the faith’ through the practical application of the gospel (cf. Joynt 2017). Osmer’s model of practical theological interpretation comprises four tasks, each with corresponding questions and functions, aimed at reflecting both practically and theologically. These four tasks are: (1) a descriptive [empirical] task that asks ‘what is going on?’ and it requires a posture of priestly listening; (2) an interpretive task that asks ‘why is it going on?’ and it requires a posture of sage wisdom; (3) a normative task that asks ‘what ought to be going on?’ and it requires a posture of prophetic discernment; and (4) a strategic task that asks ‘how might we respond?’ and it requires a posture of servant leadership (Smith, 2010:99–101). Joynt (2012, 2017) in his research, helps us to address the four questions asked by Osmer with regard to the context of leadership in the church or congregation. They are the following:

- What is going on: Is there a trend of clergy members departing from full-time pastoral ministry? Does leadership have an impact on employee turnover? There are several reasons why individuals are transitioning away from full-time pastoral ministry, and inadequate leadership is a contributing factor for those who are leaving despite their calling.
- Why is it going on: What are the leadership factors that are contributing to the departure of clergy members? Joynt (2012) in his research found in his empirical research, in addressing this question, that clergymen

discontinue their full-time pastoral duties due to various reasons. These reasons include their realisation that they were not initially called for the role, having a dual call (either concurrently or sequentially, such as being called as both a pastor and a businessman), or leaving despite being called due to factors such as the leadership style they experienced (Joynt, 2012:217). Furthermore, the phenomenon of clergy attrition is partly attributed to the presence of toxic leadership within religious institutions. According to scholarly discourse, leaders who exhibit toxic behaviour have a significant and long-lasting detrimental impact on the individuals, families, organisations, communities, and even entire societies under their leadership (Lipman-Blumen, 2005:2).

- What ought to be going on: What kind of leadership, whether it be person-based, trait-based, situation-based, or otherwise, is necessary to facilitate clergy retention? Joynt (2012) posits that the implementation of a steward leadership paradigm could potentially enhance clergy retention rates. This is because leaders who adopt this approach prioritise the welfare of each member within the organisation, foster positive team dynamics, and ensure that the organisation's values and objectives remain relevant (Geleta, 2017).
- How might we respond: Robert Elkington poses the question of how to alleviate the present departure from pastoral ministry. Can the development of strategies and mechanisms aid churches and pastors in achieving longevity and health in the context of pastoral leadership? Recommendations comprise providing leadership training in mentoring and coaching, alongside the adoption of six shifts to counteract the departure of pastors who abandon pastoral ministry as a vocation and profession (Elkington, 2013:11). Elkington's proposed shifts in church life include transitioning from a Christendom model to a missional mode, achieving a balanced and harmonious lifestyle instead of high intensity, incorporating resiliency training in ministry preparation, implementing a more effective system of care through denominational resources,

recognising the value of adversity in shaping pastors for more profound ministry outcomes and educating congregations on the significant cost of pastoral attrition (Elkington, 2013:11–12). The aforementioned changes have the potential to serve as crucial factors in the preservation of the clergy.

Raising action leaders

A case for praxis – go and do the following

Leadership can be perceived as an action rather than a specific role or an individual possessing certain leadership traits (Carrol, 2006:129). The practice of servant leadership is deeply ingrained in the practical experiences of various communities. Therefore, the perception of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ within society is that of an institution that embodies servitude, characterised by leaders who prioritise serving others. According to Bam (1984), the purpose of the church is to facilitate the realisation of Jesus Christ in the hearts of individuals and the church as a whole, with the ultimate goal of bringing about the Kingdom (Dames, 2017). Osmer (2008:183) posits that Jesus embodies God's royal rule in the form of a servant, thereby redefining the nature of power and authority. Christ's decision to take on the role of a servant is significant in this regard. The concept of servanthood holds a fundamental position in the mission of the community of disciples and leadership within said community (Dames, 2017:7).

Embodiment of faith

According to Osmer (2008:183–184), the profession in question ought to be viewed as a vocation, one that is firmly rooted in both divine spirituality and humanity. This inquiry raises fundamental questions, such as: What is the primary purpose or vocation of the human species? In what ways does this profession manifest itself in present-day circumstances? What is the function of practical theology in informing and

moulding communities to embody their calling? Dames (2017:1-9), in dealing with the servant leadership topic, specifically the existential service delivery challenge in South Africa and the embodiment of faith and servant leadership, also grapples with these questions mentioned in this section above, which leads me to the next section of this chapter.

Current curricula? Pedagogy? Faith formation? How do we train/equip Christian leaders?

We cannot seek to build ... leadership for a morally transformed society through [for instance] our education system unless we transform the political, economic and social relations. (Howell, 2009:148)

What strategies can be employed to provide leaders with the necessary skills and knowledge across the three public spheres of academia, church, and community? It is necessary to implement a pedagogy of leadership that involves a transformative process, known as agogical, which involves critical thinking to develop suitable theories that serve the entirety of our practices.

Dames and Dames (2014:3) deal with the same question in this regard, namely, what is the appropriate approach to tackling socio-political challenges and driving social transformation within the market, when viewed through the lens of public theology, with consideration for the broader society, academic institutions, and the church? Particularly concerning the domains of leadership and spirituality, as stated by Tracy (1981:5). The discourse thus far highlights the notion that the human concerns presented in this chapter necessitate theological contemplation and intervention regarding the intersectionality among the three spheres of public life. The significance of spirituality in leadership has garnered momentum on a global scale across all societal domains, as evidenced by the works of Gibbs (2005), Nell (2011), Roxburgh (2005) and Dames and Dames (2014). The recent focus on leadership can be traced back to a sense

of disappointment with capitalist markets, hierarchical structures, and enclave ideologies (Crossman, 2010:597; Dames & Dames, 2014:4). Undoubtedly, the ancient church boasts a lengthy chronicle of spiritual practises and beliefs. One example to be considered is the scholarly and monastic legacy of the desert fathers and mothers, as well as the ancient scholars (Hermans & Koerts 2013:2). The pursuit of scientific legitimacy for theology has led to the emergence of a division between the cognitive and the spiritual domains. Presently, spirituality is regarded as an autonomous field of study, distinct from theology. According to Wolfeich (2009:133), the crucial responsibility of practical theology is to provide normative structures for specific spiritual practices. Spirituality plays a significant role in practical theology by invigorating the interplay between theoretical concepts and their practical application.

Both spirituality and practical theology share a common goal of pursuing social transformation (Bell, 2008). The significance of spirituality lies in its potential to facilitate social transformation and political advancement. According to Hermans and Koerts (2013:5), the concept of spirituality can be defined as a means of developing one's ability to distinguish and make sound judgements. Discernment is perceived as the absent conceptual connection that enlightens leadership, particularly in the context of transformational and multicultural leadership (Dames & Dames, 2014:4). The notion of 'growing in discernment' suggests that spirituality is not a fixed construct, but rather a fluid and evolving concept (Doohan, 2007:107). The focus lies not on the act of prayer itself, but rather on the development and advancement of one's prayerful practises. Similarly, the emphasis is not solely on charitable actions, but rather on the progression and enhancement of one's charitable endeavours. Furthermore, the emphasis is not solely on the concept of social justice, but rather on the augmentation of one's dedication and involvement in promoting social justice. An essential element of Doohan's philosophy is the notion that spiritual fulfilment cannot be attained in solitude, but rather through communal

engagement with others. Hoppe (2005:85) integrates comparable notions in her spirituality framework to denote progression towards completeness, specifically: significance, associations, coherence and situational comprehension, and acceptance.

The discussion hitherto indicates that spirituality cannot be relegated to personalised, isolated, and theoretical manifestations of belief, but rather it is evident in communal expressions of faith. The nexus between spirituality and theology, particularly practical and public theology, can be established at this juncture (Dames & Dames, 2014:4). The concept of practical theology involves the application of faith in tangible ways, while public theology pertains to the outward expression of the Christian faith in various spheres, including the church, society, and academia (Tracy, 1981:5; cf. Dames & Dames, 2014:4).

At this juncture, the interrelated fields of spirituality and theology assume significance in effecting societal change within the frameworks of cultural diversity and social inequity. Prominent public theologians, including Beyers Naudé, exemplified their spirituality through public demonstrations against social injustice and oppression. Naudé's decision to resign from the DRC was motivated by his spiritual and moral convictions, which conflicted with the DRC's refusal to heed the call of three black Dutch Reformed family churches to join forces (Naudé, 1985:5–15). The relevance of spirituality lies in its ability to guide both sacred and secular leaders regarding issues of social inequality, ineffective leadership, and the complexities of multicultural societies, as observed in South Africa (Kovacs, 2011:167; cf. Dames & Dames 2014:4).

According to Lingenfelter (2008:16; cf. Dames & Dames, 2014:5), the gospel possesses a transcultural quality, and the teachings and life of Jesus offer Christian leaders the necessary spiritual resources to confront intricate and varied challenges of interpersonal conflicts. These conflicts often arise when teams and followers adopt opposing worldviews. The present situation necessitates the development of a novel leadership

pedagogy that can effectively address the intricate task of constructing a community from a multitude of culturally distinct groups (Lingenfelter, 2008:20; Roxburgh, 2005:20ff.). There is a requirement for a pedagogy of leadership that is transformational, with the ability to surpass social, cultural, racial, and ethnic barriers, thereby facilitating the development of novel habits and identities.

As per Roxburgh's (2005:1–20) findings, the transversal action of leaders involves the aptitude and willingness to acquire knowledge from diverse cultures, establish new trustworthy relationships, abandon obsolete habits and perspectives, and acquire new skills to create a new interracial, intercultural, and ultimately, multicultural society. This society is characterised by cooperation between one's own cultural or ethnic community and that of others (Dames & Dames, 2014:5).

Firet's (1968) work is beneficial for developing an agogical (transformational) leadership methodology. The subject matter pertains to the dynamic and mutually influential connection that exists between leaders, their followers, and the environment in which they operate. The leaders are tasked with the responsibility of embodying and fostering humanity and accountability within this relationship. According to Firet (1968), the development of leadership skills is an ongoing pedagogical process that aims to achieve spiritual growth and maturity. At this juncture, there arises a need for a pedagogical framework that can facilitate the development and alteration of worldviews, and subsequently, the experiences and social interactions of leaders.

The process theology proposed by Epperly (1989:324) sheds light on this particular case. The text presents a mystical perspective on the connection between God and humanity, which can be utilised as a fundamental framework for the development of a systematic and morally sound spiritual growth process. According to Ploeger's (1995:113) theory of human spirituality, this mystical action is a fundamental aspect of it. Process theology is a reflective and formational

approach that aligns with a pedagogy of leadership. It enables individuals to experience and comprehend multicultural, neo-colonial, or racialized realities through their most profound spiritual insights and values, including accountability, responsibility, and solidarity. The implementation of an agological leadership process could potentially be advantageous in this context. Firet's (1968) pedagogical theory, which centres on spiritual development, emphasises three interconnected dimensions: openness to learning, the ability to make wise choices and judgements, and the capacity for innovation. Effective leaders ought to evaluate their openness to others based on genuineness, exercise reliable judgement or perception in intricate circumstances, and demonstrate ingenuity in establishing opportunities and practical applications for others. According to Firet (1968:290), the most elevated manifestation of human creativity, responsibility, and liberty is the spiritual action of leaders. The subject matter pertains to the development of human nature or the emergence of a genuine spiritual guide through an ongoing process of transformation within a wider framework of life perspective (Firet, 1968:246).

Ploeger's hermeneutic inquiry pertains to how leaders construe or construe their contextual and historical circumstances, as well as their present-day existence as lived encounters. This inquiry operates on three levels: personal, interpersonal, and public, as expounded by Dorr (1990). The aforementioned approach is an integrative spiritual hermeneutical approach that intersects and coincides with a comprehensive anthropology and worldview, resulting in the emergence of Ploeger's (1995) hermeneutical communicative action theory, as expounded upon earlier (Dames & Dames, 2014:5).

According to Adhiambo (2012:159), the intricate nature of leadership difficulties in Africa necessitates a multifaceted educational or interdisciplinary strategy. According to Adhiambo (2012:173), religious organisations are expected to cultivate servant leadership by enhancing the physical, intellectual, social, cultural, economic, and moral

development of individuals. Leaders are required to adopt an interdisciplinary, interactive, and contextual approach that incorporates the human, social, and natural sciences to address the present political, social, and economic challenges facing the African continent (Dames, 2017:5). To achieve this objective, it is imperative to foster a novel mindset for servant leadership through the process of informing, forming, and transforming leaders. The church plays a significant role in promoting servant leadership, which could be implemented in Africa to bolster development efforts and ensure that the development strategies formulated by African leaders uphold the dignity of the human person (cf. Dames, 2017:5).

Servant leadership

The term 'servant leadership' was first introduced by Robert Greenleaf in 1970 and is commonly employed in the field of management literature (Magezi, 2015:6). As this chapter primarily centred on the Christian viewpoint, it leads me to a discussion on the concept of biblical servant leadership. The biblical accounts of Matthew 20:20–28 and Mark 10:35–45 depict Jesus Christ as a servant leader. According to Kgatle (2018:3), Jesus discussed the topics of servanthood and leadership in a broad sense during the aforementioned discussion. Given the aforementioned, it is imperative for churches, especially those at the community level, to embrace servant leadership as their preferred leadership approach to effectuate transformations that exemplify the servitude of Jesus Christ (Osmer 2008:192). The concept of servant leadership was initially presented by the author in conjunction with the fourth task of theological interpretation, which pertains to practical considerations. Osmer (2008:176) highlights the significance of developing and implementing effective action strategies that yield desired outcomes in this practical undertaking. In accordance with the aforementioned, Kgatle (2018:3) concurs that the effective implementation of servant leadership is likely to enhance the performance of the organisation. According to Du Plessis and Nkambule (2020:5), effective organisational performance requires the

incorporation of servant leadership principles into managerial practises. This approach enables leaders to make informed decisions when addressing management issues, including strategic management.

In addition, the concept of servant leadership necessitates the presence of various attributes such as bravery, understanding, wisdom, honesty, and benevolence, among others. These traits must be accompanied by a steadfast reliance on and adherence to the divine. Du Plessis and Nkambule (2020) augment the aforementioned traits by highlighting that the foremost attribute of servant leadership is the capacity to induce a transformation of mindset in others. In a similar vein, the participants indicated that they refer to themselves as individuals who provide services to others. According to their perspective, servant leaders must possess divine qualities, and display empathy and compassion towards individuals from all walks of life, including those who are marginalised. In light of the aforementioned, Ottuh (2020:11) posits that it would be prudent for leaders to heed the teachings of John 13 in the Scriptures, as this particular chapter provides a noteworthy illustration of the concept of servant leadership. The Scriptures delineate that the master or leader is anticipated to assume the vanguard position as the servant leader for all and demonstrate leadership through personal conduct. Moreover, the aforementioned passage instils the characteristic of modesty and altruism within ecclesiastical figures, encompassing those who lead the members of the congregation. With regard to the participants, it is anticipated that leaders will assume a crucial function in reforming the mindset of self-centredness, authoritarianism, conceit, and other similar attitudes within the confines of the church and the wider community. According to Osmer (2008:192) and Stenschke (2017:10), for church leaders to embody the qualities of servant leadership, they must prioritise the needs of their followers, and also empower and aid them in the cultivation of their capacities and talents.

The concept of servant leadership involves prioritising the development and well-being of individuals, fostering

a sense of community, and promoting authenticity. This approach emphasises the importance of providing leadership that benefits both followers and the organisation as a whole and involves sharing power and status for the greater good of all involved parties. The servant leadership model places great emphasis on the leader's conduct, specifically in terms of serving, caring, sharing, and developing.

Religious groups in Africa have a responsibility to provide care and protection for impoverished and vulnerable communities, particularly in situations where individuals are marginalised by prevailing social and political structures, resulting in a loss of agency to resist various forms of oppression. The viewpoint of servant churches or religious institutions presents a challenge to the prevailing behaviours of political leaders in Africa who perceive themselves as 'kings and chiefs', as previously mentioned. Religious communities bear a moral obligation to provide education and inspiration, particularly in situations where human dignity is being denied, to empower individuals to advocate for their fundamental human rights (cf. Dames, 2017).

The ethical responsibility of religious communities lies in promoting genuine human and community development or service delivery, which can be viewed as an authentic form of liberation or cultural revolution for African individuals and peoples (Rwiza, 2008:246). According to Van der Ven (1998), development refers to the process of incorporating, expanding, and fulfilling the physical and psycho-spiritual requirements of individuals, communities, and nations within their distinctive historical and geographical context, while also prioritising ecological preservation. Hence, it is evident that any religious community or leadership position in Africa must not engage in a limited spiritual ministry aimed solely at sustaining religious institutions or leadership customs. According to Dreyer (2008), it is imperative for religious communities and their leaders to adopt a comprehensive, all-encompassing, and multidisciplinary approach to address various societal, financial, governmental, psychological, and spiritual concerns simultaneously.

Mobilising educational leaders to promote a novel vision of service ethics. The reconfiguration of theological perspectives on diaconia can also be facilitated for religious leaders through this approach. The field of practical theology has the potential to reform both religious and public practices to promote a novel service ethic that embodies a fresh perspective and sense of responsibility.

Steward leadership

As suggested by Wilson (2016:28), the concept of steward leadership has been in existence since the 1980s and is regarded as a forerunner to the study of ethical leadership (Bachmann 2008:30). Wilson (2016) defines steward leadership as the effective administration and expansion of resources within an organisation, accomplished through the guidance of personnel and activities while serving as a steward-servant who does not own the organisation (cf. Joynt, 2017). The ultimate goal is to fulfil the mission following the owners' objectives (Wilson, 2016:86).

According to Peters (2013), steward leaders are individuals who are driven by principles of justice and dignity and possess the ability to perceive the broader perspective (cf. Joynt, 2017:4). Individuals can transcend conventional self-centred and egotistical tendencies, and instead adopt a leadership style that prioritises the well-being of others (Joynt, 2017:4). The author highlights the importance of achieving outcomes in collaboration with others and notes the individual's proficiency in mobilising networks and resources towards a shared objective.

Joynt (2017:4) posits that involving all stakeholders in the economy and decentralising leadership, with a particular focus on engaging the younger generation, are two pivotal concepts in the realm of stewardship. Due to various factors, steward leaders possess certain characteristics such as recognising that their lives are not solely their own, prioritising their relationship with God as their primary pursuit, having a strong sense of self-identity, viewing those they lead and

serve as fellow travellers, considering all resources as divine endowments, acknowledging the spiritual conflict they face while striving to lead as faithful stewards in a world where others assume the role of master and understanding that triumph commences with surrender (Barnabas Foundation, 2015:3–5; cf. Rich, 2012:9).

According to Rich (2012:iii), a leader's self-identification as a steward leader can serve as an indicator of their attitude towards responsibility, authority, accountability, organisational ownership, and concern for the impoverished. Geleta (2017) posits that steward leadership commences with leaders acknowledging the transitory nature of their role in the broader context and recognising the necessity to function on three levels: personal, team, and global (cf. Joynt, 2012, 2017). At the individual level, it is imperative to promote the well-being of each member within the organisation. At the team level, it is crucial to ensure constructive interaction among team members. At a broader level, it is necessary to ensure that organisational values and missions remain appropriate, as stated by Geleta (2017).

Scholars have drawn comparisons between servant and steward leadership. A commonality between the two models is their shared emphasis on the replacement of self-interest with a focus on serving others as the fundamental basis for exercising power (Kaul 2014:5). The comparison between servant and steward leadership suggests that the former necessitates leaders to prioritise the expectations of others over their interests or benefits. This involves identifying and appropriately placing talent, fostering trust among leaders of different levels, attentively considering feedback and other input, and promoting employee involvement and engagement. On the other hand, the latter requires leaders to assume accountability and delegate responsibilities to employees and/or lower-level managers. This includes providing opportunities for learning and development to employees at all levels and ensuring equity in the work environment (Stewardship Asia Centre, 2016:3).

The concept of servant-steward leadership is exemplified by Jesus Christ, who fulfilled his divine mission by serving both his followers and God's will. This approach is discussed in the International Graduate School of Leadership (2016). The notion is emphasised by John in his recording of Jesus' statement, 'for I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me' (Jn 6:38, New International Version), and by Mark in his recording of Jesus' statement, 'For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many' (Mk 10:45).

Conclusion

An examination of leadership in South Africa through the lens of biblical and practical theological perspectives is well-suited for addressing the intricate interplay between the church, theology, and cultural challenges. Theology in South Africa ought to adopt a mindset of creativity and modesty in addressing issues of racial and cultural discord, while simultaneously cultivating a novel prophetic approach to multicultural leadership. The issue of religious and political leadership not adhering to God's message and fulfilling the needs of the populace should not be juxtaposed. The primary apprehension arises from the leaders' innate inclination, bestowed by a divine entity, to exhibit humbleness while catering to the needs of others. Through normative research, practical theology has the potential to construct a fresh perspective on service delivery. This can be achieved by analysing the history of service provision in South Africa and mobilising educational leaders to instil a renewed vision of service ethics. Religious leaders could potentially benefit from revising their theology of diaconia. The field of practical theology has the potential to modify both religious and public practices to cultivate a novel perspective and a heightened sense of societal responsibility. To achieve the intended objective, it is imperative to address the current void and disjointed nature of South Africa's service ethic.

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