

**HOSPITALITY IN URBAN BAPTIST CONGREGATIONS IN
ZAMBIA AND THE ROLE OF PASTORAL MINISTRY**

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**A mini-Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree Master of Arts in Pastoral
theology at the University of the North-West**

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2007

George Whitefield College, Muizenberg

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the problem behind the protracted crisis of how hospitality ought to be conceived and practiced in the urbanized and pluralistic congregations of the Zambia Society ('the problem of hospitality'). Although the focus is the Zambian context, the study has explored in general the traditional African way of life. Furthermore, to help gain clarity of the internal and external factors perpetuating the problem of hospitality, the study has extensively dealt with activities of the early missionaries, colonialism and the incompetence of the Independent African states. The study reveals that in the aftermath of colonization and missionary era, where African traditional patterns were disrupted, the traditional communalism and hospitality were distorted. It is thus concluded that Africans are at a crossroads and the resulting effects are uncertainty, disillusionment and despair. It is further argued in the study that the socio-economic and political changes have led to changes in people's practices, including that of hospitality. This development has given rise to dominance of the cultural agenda (ethnocentrism). Both the religious and philosophical worldviews are now developed along these lines of cultural idolatry, i.e. what is emphasized above God. As such there is a defective and deceptive view of life in relation to others, as can be noticed in the problem of the practice of hospitality among the Zambians.

In order to counteract this situation the study discourages the pursuit of one thing at the expense of others, especially when its basis is ethnocentric. Instead it proposes a strong theology of others by challenging the church to assess its context, to adopt and apply those aspects found to be in line with Scripture. It is hoped that by so functioning the church in Zambia will be applying a relational theology that prescribes how human beings can live in terms of each other and in the light of the Bible. It is further hoped that the Church would not only transcend ethnicity biasness but it would also redefine a new Messianic community of

believers and how members in that community ought to relate with one another and the rest of the world.

Key words

Hospitality; urban Zambia; congregations; Pastoral ministry

OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie ondersoek die onderliggende probleem agter die langdurige krisis aangaande hoe gasvryheid verstaan en toegepas behoort te word in die verstedelike en pluralistiese gemeentes van die Zambiese samelewing ('probleem van gasvryheid'). Alhoewel die Zambiese konteks die fokus is ondersoek die studie in die algemeen die tradisionele Afrika lewenswyse. Verder, ten einde duidelikheid te verkry aangaande die bydraende faktore (intern en ekstern) tot die probleem van gasvryheid, handel hierdie studie omvattend met die aktiwiteite van die vroeë sendelinge, kolonialisme en die onbekwaamheid van die onafhanklike Afrika state. Die studie bevind dat in die nadraai van kolonisasie en die sendeling era, waar tradisionele Afrika patrone ontstig is, die tradisionele kommunalisme en gasvryheid verdraai is. Die gevolgtrekking is dat Afrikaner by 'n kruispad is en die resulterende effek is onsekerheid, ontugtering en wanhoop. Dit word verder geargumenteer in die studie dat die sosio-ekonomiese en politiese veranderinge tot veranderinge in mens se praktyke, insluitend die van gasvryheid, gelei het. Hierdie ontwikkeling het aanleiding gegee tot oorheersing van die kulturele agenda (etnies-gesentreerdheid). Beide die godsdienstige en filosofiese wêreldbeskouing word nou ontwikkel by wyse van kulturele afgodeties, m.a.w. dit wat bo God benadruk word. Sodoende is daar 'n defektiewe en misleidende lewensuitkyk met betrekking tot ander, soos opgemerk kan word in die probleem van die toepassing van gasvryheid onder die Zambiers.

Ten einde hierdie situasie teen te werk ontmoedig die studie die nastrewing van een ding ten koste van ander, in die besonder wanneer die basis daarvan etnies-gesentreerd is. In stede stel dit 'n sterk teologie van ander voor deur die kerk uit te daag om sy konteks te ondersoek en om aspekte wat in lyn met die Skrif is aan te neem en toe te pas. Die hoop is dat deur so te funksioneer, die kerk in Zambië 'n verhoudings-teologie sal toepas wat voorskryf hoe mense in terme van mekaar en die Bybel kan lewe. Dit word verder gehoop dat die Kerk nie net etniese bevooroordeeldheid sal oorkom nie maar ook die nuwe Messianiese

gemeenskap van gelowiges - en hoe lede in daardie gemeenskap met mekaar en die res van die wêreld behoort om te gaan - sal herdefinieër.

Kern woorde

Gasvryheid; stedelike Zambië; gemeentes; Pastorale bediening

PREFACE

This study was born out of concern for unity among believers awakened during my ministry among the urban Baptist congregations in Zambia. It is my sincere hope that this study will help in the re –interpretation of the understanding of Church from its current position steeped in cultural influence to one of strong Biblical influence. I am thankful and grateful to my God for granting me grace to pen down the contents of this material. Without His enabling grace through the power and work of Holy Spirit this work would never have been completed.

Further gratitude and thanks go to John and Jean Shergolds who through Silverhood Trust granted me a Scholarship to come with my family and study in South Africa. Thank you for your encouragement, prayers and the financial support rendered.

I would also like to thank Dr. Vhumani Magezi for supervising the work and ensuring that I had all I needed in order to complete it. I extend the same gratitude and thanks to my co-supervisor, professor Ben de Clerk of the North-west University for his insightful advice and always encouraging remarks during my entire time of research. His corrections were tough in areas were I sometimes completely missed the mark but they were always accompanied with special gentleness and grace that left me with a “you are able” assurance. Thanks also to Tobie Meyer for agreeing to translate the abstract into Afrikaans.

Finally but not least, I extend my utmost gratitude to my dear wife, Mwenya for *the support, encouragement and patience during the whole period of the study.* Thanks also to my beloved daughter, Lumbanji for understanding even when I used precious family time to complete this study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH	1
1.1 FORMULATING THE PROBLEM.....	1
1.1.1 BACKGROUND.....	1
1.1.2 CENTRAL RESEARCH QUESTION	3
1.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES.....	4
1.3 CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT	4
1.4 METHOD OF RESEARCH	5
THE UNDERSTANDING OF HOSPITALITY AMONG ZAMBIANS	6
2.1 INTRODUCTION	6
2.2 COMMUNALISM: A POTRAIT OF LIFE IN AFRICA	7
2.3 FACTORS OF CHANGE.....	12
2.3.1 MISSIONARIES	12
2.3.2 COLONIALISM.....	15
2.3.3 COMBINED EFFECTS OF THE FACTORS OF CHANGE.....	17
2.4 INDEPENDENCE	20
2.5 LIFESTYLE IN ZAMBIA.....	22
2.6 SUMMARY AND PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION	26
BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF HOSPITALITY	28
3.1 INTRODUCTION	28
3.2 HOSPITALITY.....	29
3.2.1 THE OLD TESTAMENT JEWISH COMMUNITY.....	30
3.2.1.1 LIFE IN THE BET `AB.....	31
3.2.1.2 STRANGERS IN THE BET `AB	33
3.2.2 THE NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY	36
3.2.2.1 LIFE IN THE EKKLESIA.....	37
3.2.2.2 STRANGERS IN THE EKKLESIA	40
3.2.2.2.1 JESUS AND HOSPITALITY	42
3.2.2.2.2 PAUL AND HOSPITALITY	45
3.2.3 SUMMARY AND PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION	47
POSSIBLE LINKS BETWEEN THE QUALITIES OF HOSPITALITY IN ZAMBIA AND THE BIBLE.....	49
4.1 INTRODUCTION	49
4.2 LINKS BETWEEN BIBLICAL AND ZAMBIAN HOSPITALITY.....	50
4.2.1 COMMUNALISM.....	51
4.2.2 FAMILY (<i>BET `AB, OIKOS</i> AND EXTENDED FAMILY).....	53
4.2.2.1 SUPPORT	54
4.2.2.2 COOPERATION	55
4.2.2.3 DUTIES	56
4.2.3 <i>PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS</i>	56
4.2.4 <i>SPIRITUALITY</i>	57
4.3 SUMMARY AND PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION	58
5.1 INTRODUCTION	60
5.2 CHURCH (EKKLESIA).....	61
5.3 FUNCTIONS OF THE CHURCH.....	63

5.4 PRACTICAL GUIDELINES.....	64
5.4.1 CONSCIENTIZATION.....	66
5.4.2 FORMULATION.....	66
5.4.3 EVALUATION.....	66
5.4.4 TRANSCENDING.....	67
5.4.5 INSPIRATION.....	67
5.4.6 INTERNALIZATION.....	67
5.4.7 INSTITUTIONALIZATION.....	68
5.5 SUMMARY AND PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION.....	69
GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....	70
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	73

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH

1.1 FORMULATING THE PROBLEM

1.1.1 BACKGROUND

Welcoming and entertaining guests is a common human practice and is designated by the term hospitality. The Cambridge International Dictionary of English (CIDE 1995:686) describes hospitality as a gesture of “kindly welcoming” someone into one’s home. The Dictionary adds that this entails the provision of food, drink and other comforts to keep the guest happy. In Africa, the family, particularly the extended family, expresses hospitality. Family members are relationally interconnected and they seek the good of others (Magezi 2005:107). This concept of family and home is embedded in communality, which is foundational to hospitality. For Africans, not to belong to a community means you are an outsider or stranger therefore fit for rejection and humiliation (Turaki 1999:300-301). These relationships are fundamental for community building and apart from which there could be no community. Thus Gathogo defines African hospitality as “The willingness to give, to help, to assist, to love and to carry one another’s burden without necessarily profit or reward as the driving force” (Gathogo 2006:39”a”). The concept entails extending generosity freely without attaching any conditions.

Hospitality is a common phenomenon shared by Africans (Gathogo 2006:51”a”). This rich African practice is also foundational for hospitality among Zambians. They greet warmly, visit without being invited, join in meals freely and spend time together in relaxed and unhurried manner (Gathogo 2006:39”a”). Kapolyo (2005:131) added that Children needing school fees as well as those needing to be housed find it among relatives. Their children or relatives care for the old

people. Kapolyo singles out a family funeral time as a prime example time when all these qualities are expressed. Physical duties like baby care, cooking, cleaning, laundry is done by gathered willing helpers. Contributions of money and foodstuffs are also done to relieve survivors of the funeral costs. Furthermore, people sacrifice their time by sleeping at the funeral house until burial takes place. Therefore, Zambians like other Africans, qualities of hospitality are 'deep,' 'sincere' and natural (Healey & Sybertz 1996:168).

However, with the introduction of modernity¹ this natural practice of hospitality is changing. Van der Walt (1994:5) referring to Africa in general, states that Africa has undergone tremendous changes. In the aftermath of colonization and missionary era, where African traditional patterns were disrupted, the traditional communalism and hospitality were distorted. This distortion is evident in the urban areas. Kinoti (1999:73) explains the situation in urban Africa thus: "Africans are at a crossroads" and the resulting effects are "uncertainty, disillusionment and despair." The socio-economic and political changes have led to changes in people's practices. There is preference of self above the others. Competition overrides cooperation. This has led to "criticism, suspicion, lack of trust, lack of communication, unfriendliness and even open hostility" (O'Donovan 1994:269). The urban Baptist congregations in Zambia draw their membership from people of this background.

Zambian Christians seem to struggle to reconcile their traditional communal hospitality ethic with Western individualism. Urban Christians who are largely influenced by modernity struggle to embrace extended family members. They no longer consider it as their responsibility to take care of the needs of the extended family. As such, they do not feel obligated to take into their homes or pay school fees for children needing such help in the extended family. At times a visit to their

¹ Modernity here refers to the way of life in urban areas which has been largely influenced by the Western norms and values. Most of these Western norms and values conflict with the traditional ones. Conflicts can be observed in the way people dress, socialize, relate, and behave, etc., since these factors are influenced by people's cultural norms and values.

homes is strictly by appointment and as hosts; they feel they have a right to refuse a visit if not satisfied with the purpose or terms of the visit. Even a funeral time, which used to bring families together, is now regarded as an option. Urban Christians can choose to attend or make a contribution towards it or simply ignore.

In light of the above scenario, hospitality is becoming a tension area with potential for conflict in urban Baptist congregations in Zambia. There seems to be a clear lack of integration between traditional and modern understanding (and practices) of hospitality among Christians. Hence, there is need to clearly understand this tension and integrate these two forms in a biblically informed manner by pastors. The contention therefore is that without sensitive integration there is little possibility for meaningful congregational unity among the urban Baptist congregations in Zambia. There will be persistent conflict and tension among members based on adherence to either traditional or modern notion of hospitality. Furthermore, there is potential loss of Christian witness by Christians who are influenced by and hold to modern lifestyle. In this regard, Christianity would be viewed as antithetical to Zambian lifestyle but synonymous to Western lifestyle.

1.1.2 CENTRAL RESEARCH QUESTION

Emerging from the above discussion therefore is the following central research question:

How may we integrate the traditional and modern notions of hospitality in urban Baptist congregations in Zambia, which in turn should inform pastoral ministry?

This central research question gives rise to the following problem questions:

1. What is hospitality and how may it be understood (or conceived) within the Zambian context?
2. How should hospitality be understood from a Scriptural perspective?

3. What are the possible links between the understanding of hospitality from a Biblical perspective and Zambian perspective?
4. How may these links inform and be incorporated in congregational, ministerial or pastoral design in order to encourage sensitivity and unity within the congregation where members hold diverse hospitality views?

1.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The study attempts to integrate traditional and modern understanding and practices of hospitality in urban Baptist congregations in Zambia and hopefully in Africa in a biblically informed manner to influence pastoral ministry design. This will be achieved through:

1. Exposing the Zambian understanding of hospitality.
2. Analyzing and exposing the biblical teaching and paradigm of hospitality.
3. Integrating possible links between traditional hospitality in Zambia and Biblical hospitality.
4. Proposing a congregational ministry design, which is informed by this study's findings on hospitality thereby promoting congregational sensitivity, unity and inclusivity.

1.3 CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

The central theoretical argument of this study is that Biblical understanding and paradigm of hospitality provides a foundational and fundamental basis to integrate the traditional and modern notions of hospitality in urban Baptist congregations in Zambia, which in turn should inform pastoral ministry.

1.4 METHOD OF RESEARCH

The research will focus on:

1. Literature study. Literature on Zambian cultural practices from humanity discipline will be reviewed. The literature study will be interdisciplinary but largely dependant on sociological approaches. A critical reflection as well as analysis and logical arguments will be applied in order to understand hospitality in Zambia.
2. Indirect participatory observation through reflection of the Zambian context in my subjective mindset.
3. Hermeneutical approach in order to gain clarity on the link between hospitality by Zambians and biblical hospitality.
4. In biblical analysis, a systematic biblical analysis of hospitality will be employed i.e. both Old Testament and New Testament. In doing so, exegetical methodology will be employed utilizing lexicons such as Louw and Nida (1989) and Newman (1993) and other literatures such as commentaries.

CHAPTER TWO

THE UNDERSTANDING OF HOSPITALITY AMONG ZAMBIANS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this study's pastoral endeavor for a theological ecclesiological design that effectively addresses the problem of hospitality in urban Baptist congregations in Zambia, it is crucial that a fair grasp of the contextual situation is achieved. Taking cognizance of the context holistically helps bring to the fore the underlying and push factors responsible for the cause and perpetuation of the problem. For this reason practical theology attaches great importance to contextual analysis because contextual matters have a bearing on existential issues². These in turn affect the quality of life a person lives. Since the definition of theology entails drawing upon an interpretation of the normative sources of Scripture and tradition, and struggling to discern God's will for their present situation (a critical correlation hermeneutic) (Magezi 2003:9), it becomes a challenge for pastoral theology to give back to people their human dignity in order to help them not just survive, but to live a fully human life despite the prevailing circumstances (Louw 2003:126). It is in this light that this chapter discusses some of the factors that have led to the current lifestyle practices in Zambia and their effects upon the urban congregations in relation to hospitality. But before tackling the Zambian situation specifically, the study unravels the key factors that have contributed to shaping the way people perceive and interpret their world in Africa. In keeping with the focus of the research, the study leans towards those aspects that have exerted a negative effect on the positive values and practices in Africa and Zambia. It is hoped that by engaging the African people holistically, we will have a better understanding of the Zambians to. Thus, the assumption of this chapter

² Louw (1998:3) identified the following existential issues in pastoral care: anxiety (voidness, misery and threat to livelihood), guilty (feelings of disappointment, shame and failure), and despair (helplessness, hopelessness and meaninglessness of life).

is that engaging the different developments that have taken place on the African soil over the last hundred years will, to a certain extent, give us a contextual understanding of the life situation in Zambia. The information gathered here sets a stage for Biblical analysis, i.e. what God says on the issue. Thus, the main research question could be posed: What is hospitality and how may it be understood (or conceived) within the Zambian context? This main research question will give rise to the following questions: What is the understanding of hospitality among Zambians and how is it practiced? What factors have influenced the understanding and practice of hospitality in Zambia? To achieve this, literature on cultural practices of Africans and Zambians from humanity discipline will be reviewed. The literature study will be interdisciplinary but largely dependent on sociological approaches.

What is the understanding of hospitality among Zambians and how is it practiced? In order to answer this question effectively, an overview of the African way of life in general will be given first.

2.2 COMMUNALISM: A POTRAIT OF LIFE IN AFRICA

Commenting on the effects of rapid change Skinner & Mikell (1986:213) observed that time following rapid change is characterized by troubles as new patterns work themselves out, and as local groups formulate variants of dominant cultures. However, this was not the case with traditional African society. There was gradual change at socio – economic and political levels. African lifestyle was communal and so was its view of humankind– a communal being. Of necessity, therefore, this community was based on such aspects as unity, solidarity and communality³. Some describe this lifestyle as *ubuntu* because these are similar aspects that describe the concept of *ubuntu* itself (Walt 2003:140). The cardinal belief of *ubuntu* is the interdependence of humankind. It articulates a basic

³Communality refers to identity based on race, ethnicity, religion, language, or geographical homeland. It connotes certain shared cultural norms and values, but loyalties and obligations toward members of the group are diffuse (Robinson 1986:138).

respect and compassion for others-as its bottom line (Mbigi and Maree (1995:2)). Tutu (1989:69) sees it as a recognition of being bound up in other human beings which is in fact the basis for being human. It requires an authentic respect for individual rights and values and an honest appreciation of diversities amongst the people (Gathogo 2007:171). It may therefore be said that ubuntu is foundational to traditional African lifestyle. This understanding implies that African societies are organized on the basis of duties. The underlying factor is that individuals owe their communities. Therefore, duties which individuals owe to collectivity override one's rights. This eliminates self-centeredness and destructive attitude in social relations because the focus is not always on what society owes one, but rather what one owes others (Van der Walt (2003:141). In general, people and relationships between people are much more important in Africa than material things (O'Donovan 2000:7). This claim is supported by Kaunda's (1966:22-32) description of the characteristics of his people⁴. He states that "In the best tribal society people were valued not for what they could achieve but because they were there. Their contribution, however limited, to the material welfare of the village was acceptable, but it was there presence not there achievement which was appreciated" (Kaunda 1966:23).

It is on the basis of high regard of human beings for their sake that Africans see it a pleasure to take care of members in their community regardless of their situation or position. Thus, "cooperation" and not "competition" was welcomed while "consensus decisions" and not "majority rule" during deliberations was preferred (Mugambi 1995:132). In an African perspective, therefore, an ideal person is one who attaches great importance to interpersonal relationship and co-operation. It is for this reason that Africans especially value characteristics such as friendliness, helpfulness, modesty and compliance. They consider stinginess to be anti-social and one of the greatest imaginable sins (Van der Walt 2003:142). The individual's social commitment to share with others has put

⁴ Kaunda, former president of Zambia, mentions the following characteristics of the Zambian people: (1) we enjoy people for their own sakes, and not because they can mean something for us; (2)we are patient people; (3) forgiving people and (4) an accepting, inclusive people". (Kaunda 1966:22-32)

virtues of sharing and compassion as top priority in Africa. In addition, the aspect of sharing with the others is closely tied to the structure of their economics.

According to Iliffe (1995:35-36), Africa had balanced, self-sustaining economies long before the dawn of colonialism. In spite of the fact that its industrial output or the wealth of consumer goods was by far less than that of modern western economies, Africa did have productive manufacturing and agricultural industries, which included trade with nations outside Africa. Items mentioned for trade include: building materials, pottery and crockery, soap, beads, copper, iron tools, cloth and gold (Iliffe 1995: 34-36). The smooth running of both the social and economic functions was carried under a well organized political structure. According to Boahen (1987:99) African states had no fixed territorial borders. Their political authority and power was in ruling aristocracy of kings and priests. These were imbued with both secular and sacred authority and functioned as supreme rulers (Ray 1976:121). Robinson (1986:137) explains that it was because of conquest, a special relationship with the supernatural, or descent from the original occupants of the land that these rulers were held in such high esteem. As such, these traditional African nobilities expected difference and homage from ordinary people. They could levy taxes, wage war, try cases, punish disobedience, regulate trade, and issue public commands (Ray 1976:121-123). Their directives were carried out with the aid of administrative officials and supportive networks of district rulers and village headmen. This political structure was regulated and maintained through rites of passages like initiation ceremonies system (Shorter 1998:63).

Initiation ceremonies served as schools that ensured the continuity of the African traditional socio-economic and political structures (Kwenda, *et al* 1997:35-36). Under this system boys and girls were divided in age-grades or age-classes through initiation rituals associated with puberty. According to Hackett (1996: 98) the objective of the system was for the initiates to transmit their society's cultural history along with the duties and responsibilities of adulthood. The aim of these

procedures was to stratify the adult population into an age hierarchy with corresponding social responsibilities and duties: "Age led, while youth followed" (Robinson 1986:134); which also explains Africa's hierarchical socio-political structure system.

It can be observed from the discussion above that traditional African society comprised a structure of interdependence and connectedness of persons in all spheres of life. On the social side, there was a strong personal social support structure to meet the needs of the members at all times. Interpersonal relationships and respect for all human beings were especially stressed. People extended generosity freely without attaching any conditions. Among the ways this was expressed was to greet warmly, visit without being invited, join in meals freely and spend time together in relaxed and unhurried manner. Furthermore, children as well as those old people needing shelter found it among relatives. But more than that there was a great deal of material support on auspicious occasions such as betrothals, marriages, initiations, mourning for the dead, burials, and social gatherings. In such situations, people poured in without waiting for invitation cards or any formal invitation. All this has to do with the communality of African society where one person's happiness was happiness for all, and one person's sorrow was sorrow for all (Gathogo 2006:45"a"). It was hardly conceivable for someone to be mean with his or her services, for a hospitable person was one who was generous in providing food and shelter for the needy and services for whoever needed help. This understanding influenced the African economical life.

Similarly, on the economic side cooperation on all kinds of work performed was expected. The strong interpersonal relationship contributed to the promotion of cooperation in works. Besides that, the nature of the social structure which emphasized hospitality by all, also contributed to the promotion of cooperation in works. To achieve the demands of such a generous way of living of necessity required hard work. Thus, since ancient times the concept of hard working was

inculcated in Africans an understanding that it is when you work hard that you will have something to be hospitable with such as food, shelter, clothing and other material things. Hence, through such activities as agriculture work, the building and repair of houses, land cultivation and clearance of bushy areas, hunting, and fishing among other areas, they displayed their cooperation. The supernatural (spirit world) was the tie that bound the life of the African community. This brings the discussion to the consideration of the administrative (political) structure of the community.

The political side of Africa was a stratified hierarchical structure that ensured a smooth running of the affairs of the community. Political authority and power was in ruling aristocracy of kings and priests who were imbued with both secular and sacred authority because they were believed to have had a special relationship with the supernatural and as such functioned as supreme rulers. Initiation ceremonies served as schools that ensured the continuity of the African community system. Some questions can be posed here: What does the information on the African social, economic and political structure systems have to do with hospitality? Is there any connection? Certainly, there is a connection and it lies in the African understanding of family.

Understanding the concept of family in the African context is crucial to seeing the connection between the African societal system and the practice of hospitality. The concept of family, understood as extended family by Africans, was embedded in communality and was foundational to hospitality (Gathogo 2006:39^a), i.e. the willingness to give, to help, to assist, to love and to carry one another's burden without necessarily profit or reward as the driving force. As a community that put strong emphasis on interpersonal relationship and cooperation, it is hardly difficult to notice that hospitality permeated every aspect of the African life. Mbiti (1969:1ff) compares it to African religion which permeates every sphere of African life. People extended generosity freely without attaching any conditions because they felt interdependent and connected to one another.

This linked together the concepts of communality, extended family and hospitality in a very well knit way that a disturbance in any one of these concepts will destabilize the whole. At some point in time this disturbance did happen and disrupted the whole system. It is to the factors that caused this disruption (hereafter referred to in this discussion as factors of change) that the discussion now turns. The following question may thus be posed: What factors influenced change of the African way of life and what effects did this change bring on the people? The study will consider here both the external and internal factors. Under the external factors discussion will center on the role of the missionary and colonial enterprises and its legacy on the African soil. The discussion on the internal factors will be based on life in independent Africa. This approach will help to unravel the extent of distortion caused by these factors at the social, economic and political levels. The assumption here is that this distortion is responsible for the disruption of the African communality system. This has been done by breaking the concept of family (extended family) and thereby distorting the understanding and practice of hospitality on the continent. How did the factors of change disrupt the African way of life?

2.3 FACTORS OF CHANGE

Africa has gone through such profound and rapid transformations over the past century. As such, its people have had neither the time nor the opportunity to resolve the many contradictions that result from the meeting of three cultural heritages on its soil – African, Christian and Western. The past century saw massive global developments that forced Africa to move quickly in the direction of change. One such factor of change was the introduction of Christianity in Africa by missionaries.

2.3.1 MISSIONARIES

Missionary work brought a lot of good to Africa. At the same time there are many scholars who are of the opinion that missionary work had the greatest impact in

the disintegration of African culture and religious structures (Turaki 1993:110-118; Mugambi 1995:77). The impact of this disruption can be seen on the social-economic and political systems as shown by Fowler (1995:33-40) and Neil (1966:1). Fowler (1995:33-40) mentions four in which missionaries contributed to the disruption. Some of these were convictions generally shared by all Europeans. They include convictions regarding individualism, liberating Africa from its barbaric status through European civilization with its social structures, Change Africa's social order by uprooting its pagan beliefs and values, and finally dividing life into circular and spiritual (1995:33-40) . Neil (1966:1), on the other hand, believes that missionaries exerted the most dangerous of all forms of aggression by destroying those religious institutions on which ancient African cultures were founded, and by which they were held together (1966:1).

Missionaries' concept of man as an individual equally influenced their interpretation of the gospel; it took the individualistic characteristics. This concept fitted well with what they saw as their calling – the transformation of individuals (Keteyi 1998:32). However, Van der Walt's (2003:24, 26) comment on this individualism approach is that not only was it a distorted conception of the human person, but it was also the reason missionaries had a generally negative assessment of the traditional African social structure with its strong communal character. They perceived the African social structures as attributes this to the Missionaries' perception of these structures to be "pagan, heathen, savage, primitive and barbaric" (Mugambi 2002:8). Therefore, they condemned everything African in culture – African names, music, dance, art, religion, marriage, the system of inheritance – and completely discouraged teaching of these things in their schools and colleges. Not even the wearing of African clothes to work or school was allowed (Manus 2003:9; Sindima1999:106-107). The aim was to produce as near replicas as possible of European models of Christian life and conduct – in effect, "Black Europeans" (Bediako 1999:234). As a result, African Christians abandoned their traditional beliefs and values and replaced them with "Christian" beliefs and values (Keteyi 1998:35-36).

However, what were deemed “Christian” beliefs and values were in fact the mixture of the gospel and Western civilization, or simply syncretism (Newbiggin 1994:118, 120).

Bediako (1999:228) attributes the mixer to the missionaries’ wrong notion of equating European civilization with Christian civilization. They were convinced of the universal character of European model of social order and way of life and this justified their application of it on Africa, too. The problem was aggravated by the fact that the spread of the church went hand in hand with colonial expansion. The watchword was that *the* church, i.e., one historically conditioned form of the church, had to be transported and planted in other places (Camps 1983:229). The end results were a confusion of the gospel with Western civilization and the gospel’s surrender to modern secularism⁵. Thus, while Missionaries’ Christianity was strong on morality (lying, smoking, drinking, adultery etc) it was weak on social Christian ethics in that it left the issues of political and social order to the secular colonial administration (Van der Walt 2003:230). This denied African converts an opportunity to engage in socio-economic and political life.

It may be a fair assessment from our discussion above that Missionaries did not approve of the communality of Africans. They saw nothing good or appealing in the African values and morals but aspects to be disregarded and replaced by better ones, i.e. the Western values and morals (Keteyi 1998:35-36; Mugambi 2002:8). This meant, as Manus (2003:7) has observed in his example of the Portuguese missionaries, that for an African to be saved not only was he to be as near a replica as possible of European models of Christian life and conduct but he was expected to unlink himself from the extended family ties as well as anything deemed circular. A true Christian needed not entangle himself in the life outside what missionaries prescribed as spiritual. To have any dealings with a circular life was equivalent to being worldly and non-spiritual. One might say that

⁵ Missionaries subscribed to the dichotomy of the secularization of public life and the privatization of religion. The affairs of everyday life, including the political affairs of the state, were viewed as secular affairs while religious faith was seen as a private matter for the individual and the church (Fowler 1995:37).

in the sense of events as considered above missionary activities in Africa robbed Africans of their personal identity and dignity, confidence and pride in their Africanness, which paved way for the feelings of inferiority complex before their missionary colleagues (Manus 2003:9; Bohannan 1971:330-331). This brings us to another factor of change - colonialism.

2.3.2 COLONIALISM

The colonial era was the most decisive for the future of Africa. According to Boahen (1987: 109), measured on the time-scale of history, the colonial period was but an interlude of comparative short duration. But it was an interlude that radically changed the direction and momentum of African history. Khapoya (1994:109) notes that colonialism destroyed indigenous networks of community self-government, reorganized long standing patterns of trade, took over ancestral lands and undermined local belief systems.

At the political level disruption was made by undermining the existing arrangements of "law and order" and replacing them with Western views (Hildebrandt 1981:198). According to Van der Walt (2003: 12), Africa was divided into tribes and where these tribes did not exist, they had to be invented. This led to the closure of ethnic identity and an exacerbation of ethnic rivalries which manifests in tribal conflicts today. Iliffe (1995:200, 231) further observes that Colonial government-appointed traditional rulers were incorporated into the colonial administration and were given a new role. Their new role was to enforce law, collect taxes and to provide cheap labor. As such, Boahen (1987:105) alleges that it was the colonial system that initiated the gap that still exists between the rural and urban dwellers. They did this by dividing first, the urban class into three main subgroups: namely the elite, or as others would term them, administrative-clerical-professional bourgeoisie; the non-elite or sub-elite; and the urban proletariat, or workers. Secondly, the rural population became subdivided into a rural proletariat or landless peasantry, especially in southern and eastern

Africa, and the peasants (Boahen 1987:105). One essential change brought about by this new social arrangement was that status symbol in the community was no longer dependant on birth but on individual effort and achievement (Van der Walt 2003:105). This meant a fundamental shift of the focus of political authority and power from the old ruling aristocracy of kings and priests to ordinary people. But what was the motive behind all these changes?

Firstly, this arrangement made it possible for all Africans to be accountable to the colonial government. But secondly and more importantly were the economic reasons, which was also why they came to Africa in the first place. The major factor in the European powers' scramble for Africa was economic interest. They needed raw materials and markets. African colonies were seen, on the one hand, as sources of primary products (raw materials) and on the other hand, as markets for the surplus products manufactured in the colonial homelands (Mugambi 2002:10). As such, Europeans did not see the need to take into account the existing social, economic and political realities of Africa. Instead, as Khapoya (1994:145 -147) observes, there was massive exploitation of Africa in terms of labor exploitation, resource depletion, the prohibition of inter African trade, unfair taxation, neglect of industrialization, destruction of the existing industries and handcrafts and driving out of Africans from the mining field as it became an exclusive preserve for Europeans. Bohannan (1971:329-330) argues that colonialism focused on the exploitation of the large mineral reserves, alienation of land from native population, establishment of plantation economies and more significantly the establishment of settler colonies governments. Colonialists were more interested in raw material than in the welfare of Africans. These factors led to the commercialization of land and a replacing of African trading systems by European and Indian traders (Iliffe 1995:202-204). The result was that traditional economies dwindled in importance or disappeared all together, as their products were replaced by products from Europe (Mugambi 2002:2); Van der Walt (2003:15)). Boahen (1987:99) further contends that Africa's backwardness in industrial and technological developments is linked to

colonialism. According to him, the 70 year colonial era was one of the most dynamic and scientific periods in world history that witnessed Europe's entry into the age of the motor vehicle, of the airplane, and finally of nuclear power. But colonialism delayed this process by isolating and insulating Africa from these changes. Thus, a completely new social order emerged on the African soil.

In summary, developments of colonialism affected the African communal life in many ways. At the political level it dismantled the hierarchical structure, making it possible for anyone to be able to lead others. This was a direct assault on age and birth status which initially determined who led and who followed. It changed the chain of command and authority. At the economic level traditional crops were replaced by cash crops and changed the system of trade from barter to cash. The effect of this change was observed in the social setting which now became dependent on one's achievements in society and not, as previously, on birth or age or the number of wives and children (Boahen 1987:100). Money economy meant that the status of the individual in society came to be determined by the amount of money or personal property that one had accumulated. Money also became the determining factor of the number of people one could afford to take care of. In short, one might say that the impact of colonialism on Africa had a strong physical impact that promoted division and abuse of people. Division was promoted along the introduced classified social groupings while abuse was done through lack of interest in Africans as people but as tools for wealthy production. At this stage we may pose the question: what then were the combined effects of the factors of change on Africa and its people?

2.3.3 COMBINED EFFECTS OF THE FACTORS OF CHANGE

It may be observed by the foregoing discussion on the distortion of communalism in Africa that the effects were immense. The African structural system was distorted and the entire African lifestyle led into culture-mix confusion (Magezi 2005:121) as the people remained sandwiched between African roots and

Western culture influences. The change in the social setting led to changes in human relationships, but so did the change in economic setting. The introduction of cash economy meant that only a few people could afford a generous life, a situation that directly affected personal relationships. In addition, the absence of traditional rules and morals encouraged freedom and ultimately individualism. Thus, it is no longer easy to answer with specificity and clarity the questions regarding African tradition and the form it does subsist. For as Mugambi (1995:75) rightly asks: "How can Africa's peoples maintain their cultural integrity under the threat of external and internal pressures? Is it possible for Africa to maintain its moral fabric while the survival of its traditional social structures has been severely threatened from within and without?"

Indeed concepts of communality, family and hospitality have waned down on the African continent. The discussion further reveals that practices of discrimination and the constant humiliation and oppression to which Africans were subjected throughout the missionary and colonial period had both physical and psychological effects upon them. For example, Africans had been taught that the image of God was European and the European culture was superior to all others. In addition, Africans had been taught that obedience to the rulers was obedience to God (Manus 2003:7). Even more, blacks were described as "idolatrous, licentious, thieving, lying, lazy, dirty, cannibalistic and beast-like people". They needed to be flogged to get to work more so that they did not even know their true interests (Prior 1997:88). This caused a deep feeling of inferiority as well as the loss of a sense of human dignity. It led Africans to begin to wrestle intently with the issues of identity and dignity. They needed to know who they were and whether everything about them was indeed as wrong as was being assumed. As a result of these developments, some Africans assumed the 'West is best' attitude, with all its core values - Independence, freedom and individuality - as a quest of respect, success in business and education. Others, however, reacted by assuming a deep quest of African personality and African socialism

O'Donovan (2000:14). Thus, a seed of division had been sown on the African soil and among its people through the factors of change.

In conclusion, one might say that the West (i.e. missionaries and colonialism especially) uprooted the cultural, social, political, economic and moral systems of traditional Africa and restructured them to meet the needs of the West⁶. They distorted the concept of family (extended family) which served as the bond that bound the African community together and provided a context in which Africans learned and practiced hospitality. African people, who under the communality arrangement would have been “brothers” and “sisters” in line with the extended family system concept, were now divided between those who belonged (i.e. the insiders) and those who belonged not (i.e. the outsiders or strangers). Thus, if there could be one outstanding effect among the effects of change that would be division. Division occurred everywhere and in everything such as in community structures, people’s relationships, people’s thinking and opinions, etc. As a result, concepts of communalism, family and hospitality assumed different meanings and therefore lost their initial usefulness. Life once lived as a community became more individualistic. The concern for one another with its emphasis on “we” was now replaced by the concern for self as more and more people emphasized the “I”. Even the connectedness and interdependence aspect under which people in communalism system viewed themselves as members of the same family (extended family) was now cut and reduced to Western family pattern (nuclear family). Thus even hospitality which once permeated the entire African life was distorted as free generosity could no longer easily prevail in the new social order.

⁶ Neill (1966:1) has given a summary of the negative impact of the Western powers on Africa as follows: Political aggression has resulted in the disappearance of ancient thrones and kingdoms. Economic aggression has destroyed old and carefully balanced systems of organization, and has resulted in the wholesale disappearance of traditional skills, of arts and crafts which adorned and beautified ancient civilizations. Social aggression has trespassed on the most intimate areas of personal and family life, upsetting the ancient order of relationship between the sexes, between parents and children. Intellectual aggression has paralyzed the creative powers of powerful nations by subjecting the rising generation to alien systems of education, and imposing categories of thought in which eastern and African peoples cannot find themselves at home. And, finally, the missions have constituted a direct threat to those religious institutions on which all ancient cultures are founded, and by which they are held together – the most dangerous of all forms of aggression, since this strikes at the heart of the nations and endangers their very existence as peoples with a history and a destiny.

People no longer as caring for one another as they used to be. Instead, those once perceived as “brothers” and “sisters” (in the extended) were now strangers and outsiders who deserved nothing good. The effort to regain their now embattled historical way of life led Africans to fight for their independence, and they eventually got it. But did life after independence resume to the original African traditional one? How was the lifestyle in the African states during and after independence? This will give a glimpse of the state of affairs in the independent nations of Africa including Zambia and assist towards a clearer perspective of how Zambians may conceive hospitality in that context. What is more, the situation in the independent African States will vindicate the external factors (such as the missionary and colonial enterprises) as the sole players that disrupted African social structures.

2.4 INDEPENDENCE

From the discussion above regarding the factors of change, a number of adverse effects exerted on the African society have been highlighted. However, it will be unfair to completely blame these external factors for the distortion of traditional African structures. This is so because with the dawn of independence Africa had a chance to change its past course by developing systems that fitted its setting but this never materialized. Thus, it is fair to acknowledge that internal factors too played a role in the dismantling of the African social structures. How did the leaders of the newly independent African states deal with the prevailing circumstances? At the social level the social structures of the independent African states remained as stratified by the colonial governments, perpetuating the distinctions between the “have” and the “have not” (Shorter 1991:30). Instead of restructuring them, leaders of the independent African states simply adapted to the existing stratified structures. Out of this system emerged class affiliation whose standard attendants are education, income and occupation. These determined a person’s life chances. As such a new class of well-paid Africans was created but nothing was done to alleviate poverty among the majority of the populace (Robinson 1986: 141, 142). The conflicts engendered in the wake of

these developments fostered competitive structures organized around communalism especially in urban areas.

Urban areas do not have the same image of social relations as communality communities. In the urban areas, food and lodgings are evaluated in terms of money and relations of brotherhood and reciprocity do not operate. According to Balandier (1986:227), what exist are the law of supply and demand and the bondage of paid labor. This can be noticed from its social order of a widened gap between the rich and the poor which favors human exploitation, under-employment, inequitable remuneration and unjust working conditions. People live isolated among strangers, disoriented by the confusion of customs, the novelty of the practices and temptations.

In a similar manner, Shorter (1991:141-142) describes life in urban Africa as a profound cultural alienation and identity crisis. He attributes the causes to the absence of the traditional norms and the social institutions that sanctioned them while the reality principles of modern materialism are only too appealing. As such many people have taken to crime, alcohol, drug-taking and sexual promiscuity as viable strategies of survival, which he believes, is caused by the break down of family life and sexual mores in urban areas. He concludes by equating the urban situation in Africa to "internal colonialism" or "apartheid", except it is not in a the racist sense. This situation has caused many urban dwellers feel resentment as they suffer from the uniformity and comparative solitude of the urban life. Hence, as a way to enable them to deal with the anonymity of urban life they have taken the initiative of forming ethnic associations [(racial brotherhood) (Balandier 1986:228)]. According to Kapolyo (2005:133) the relationships between members of the ethnic ties result not only in words of affirmation but especially in deeds of solidarity that include many attributes of a fully functioning social security system in the West. There is a strong personal social support structure to meet the needs of the members at all times. He commends the sense of solidarity stemming from these fellowships to be so strong that it acts as a big barrier to the

idea of extending the same sense of community to “strangers” (Tribal churches, as the example of one Baptist group will show, thrive on this principle).

It may be observed from the ongoing discussion that the situation did not change at independence. In essence it was only the people but not the systems that changed, resulting in the perpetuation of the abuses formerly done by the external factors (missionary and colonial system). The effects caused by the factors of change were inherited in the independent states. Also inherited by these independent African states were fractured socio- political and economic systems. Therefore, as a way of survival, the African economies became dependant upon and consequently tied up in the rich economies of the West, making the western influence on Africa even stronger. This has given the West an upper hand in deciding the direction and future of the African states in social, economic and political matters. Political independence, therefore, simply ushered in a new form of colonialism – an economic dependence syndrome. This poses a huge challenge to many Africans still tenaciously holding on to their traditional values. The interplay between these two cultural influences has led to a crisis if not confusion in Africa. A brief survey in the Zambian situation may help explain this point. What is the life situation in Zambia like?

2.5 LIFESTYLE IN ZAMBIA

The World Socialist Website site report states that Zambia should be one of the richest countries in Africa, with its massive copper and cobalt deposits. But this mineral wealth has been of no benefit to the people of Zambia, because these resources have been developed purely for the profit of the major corporations and banks. The report further states that because the whole economy is based entirely on copper exports the collapse of copper prices forced Zambia into the hands of the IMF and World Bank, which today virtually run the economy. The privatization system introduced in 1999 under the IMF programmes resulted in mass unemployment. The collapse of the economy justifies the staggering

statistics of the life situation in Zambia as revealed by the Economic Statistics Website on Zambia (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2359.htm>).

The website reveals that about 73% percent of Zambians live below the recognized national poverty line, with rural poverty rates standing at about 83% and urban rates of 56%. Per capita annual incomes are currently at about one-half their levels at independence and, at \$395, place the country among the world's poorest nations. Social indicators continue to decline, particularly in measurements of life expectancy at birth (about 37 years) and maternal mortality (729 per 100,000 pregnancies). The country's rate of economic growth cannot support rapid population growth or the strain which HIV/AIDS related issues (i.e. rising medical costs, decline in worker productivity) place on government resources. The website further reveals that Zambia is also one of sub-Saharan Africa's most highly urbanized countries. Almost one-half of the country's eleven million people are concentrated in a few urban zones strung along the major transportation corridors, while rural areas are sparsely populated. Unemployment and underemployment are serious problems. HIV/AIDS is the nation's greatest problem, with 17% prevalence among the adult population. HIV/AIDS will continue to impact Zambian economic, political, cultural, and social development for the foreseeable future (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2359.htm>). As a result of the prevailing circumstances many people migrate to urban areas with the hope of finding a better life. But Zambia is poor and high urban growth rates mean that there is a high concentration of poverty in the towns and cities. This, as shown by the statistics above, has been necessitated by the spread of capitalism and its attendant social changes.

It is crucial, therefore, to note that the changes that occurred during the missionary and colonial eras did not only survive the independence era but continued to be fanned by pluralistic living and a strong Western economic control of the African states (Maqunus 2003:9), as in the case of Zambia. This development unveils the disorientation that has occurred both in the community

and the people as a result of these external and internal factors. This situation raises many issues that have implications for public policy, human rights, institutional practices, and social services. However, the focus of this discussion is church-based hospitality. Thus, the following question may be posed: In what ways have the effects exerted on Zambia as a nation also affected the church in urban Zambia in relation to hospitality? An example of the Zambia Baptist Association (ZBA) congregations, to which this researcher belongs, will be used to demonstrate the effect in relation to the association itself and to other Baptist groupings.

The Zambia Baptist Association (ZBA) comprises congregations belonging to the Union Baptists (This is one of the many different Baptist groups in Zambia. The Reformed Baptists, conventional Baptist, independent Baptist are among the many others). Its objective is to establish Union Baptist congregations in all urban centers of Zambia. A number of congregations have so far been established across the country. In fact in the Midlands and the Copper belt where population is most concentrated there are more than one congregation planted in one particular town. Many more new congregations could be expected through the ongoing work of "The Good News Ministry", which is a church planting arm of the ZBA. Although the church planting work has been fairly successful in ZBA so far, nevertheless, there is no meaningful fellowship among many of these congregations. This has been caused by the homogeneous unity nature of these congregations which, in a way, make class or tribe determining terms of affiliation and fellowship.

In ZBA, the affluent tend to belong to the English speaking congregations while the less affluent mostly prefer vernacular speaking congregations. This division is not necessarily a language-barrier issue (for most of the people that belong to these vernacular churches are very well educated and have a very good command of the English language) but rather, like among South African people,

it concerns 'Afrocentric' and 'Eurocentric' attitudes⁷. However, unlike South African people where these divisions are based mostly on racial differences thereby causing racism, in Zambia they are mostly tribal based and have led to the formation of tribal churches. Further differences can be observed in the social patterns of these two groups because of their different cultural approaches and inclinations. That African and Western cultures are different is shown by Van der Walt (2003:133) in relation to their ontologies (understanding of reality), their anthropologies (views of man), views of society, theories of knowing (how knowledge of reality is obtained) and axiologies (norms and values) are often diametrically opposed. The contention surrounds the individualistic tendencies of the West (which those in vernacular speaking congregations want to avoid) and the communality tendencies of traditional Africa (which those in the English speaking congregations want to avoid). It is not uncommon, therefore, to notice a healthier relationship existing between congregations with a similar language but of different denominations than that of the same denomination but with a different language. This has robbed members of the same denomination brotherly love and meaningful fellowship of one another. The problem is that the differences are based on cultural, social, economic and political issues instead of on the Bible.

It is not only within the association that relationships are not healthy but those with other Baptist groups are unhealthy too. This is why up to now there is no Baptist Union of Zambia in spite of the large number of Baptist groups in the country most of whom hardly differ from each other in their beliefs and mode of worship. Efforts to try and create one in the past have been hampered by particular Baptist group interests. Most of these Baptist groups were established by missionary organizations from outside Zambia who still dictate the course of direction of these churches because of their continued financial support. This loyalty to missionary organizations for fear of losing outside support has affected fellowship (koinonia) among the Baptists in Zambia.

⁷Eurocentric thinking is an attitude of clinging to the Western way of doing things and especially to Western standards while Afrocentric is an attitude of getting rid of the Eurocentric way of thinking and replace it with a clearly African model (Van der Walt 1997:52).

2.6 SUMMARY AND PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION

From our discussion above it is tempting to come to a conclusion that Zambians perceive and practice hospitality in the same way as ancient Africans. However, a critical assessment of some the issues discussed above may not lead to this conclusion. Taking into consideration the effects brought by the factors of change (both internal and external), a strong Western presence, the duration of time taken and the fact that culture is dynamic, it may be argued that the interplay of these factors is strong enough to alter the traditional conception and practice of hospitality in urban Africa and Zambia. Therefore, this study fails to align with the view that despite the pressures exerted on it over the past years hospitality is still conceived and practiced among Africans as in ancient African culture (Gathogo 2006:39"a"). While it might be fair to claim that traits of hospitality are still present in Africa (especially in rural Africa) it will be an overstatement to claim that they are as good as the ancient ones. From the discussion it has been pointed out that what enabled the ancient African community to practice effective hospitality was the nature of its social order observable in the cluster of communalism, family (extended family) and hospitality concepts. A disturbance in anyone of them would break the cluster and that is exactly what happened especially in the pluralistic urban Africa including Zambia. It may therefore be said that hospitality in Africa and Zambia has been marred and distorted. The question earlier raised may now be posed: What is hospitality and how may it be understood (or conceived) within the Zambian context?

Owing to the factors of change and the continued western influence, especially its emphasis on individual freedom and pluralistic lifestyle, epistemology in this context is heavily contested. Similarly, the effects exerted on traditional African life through the factors of change means that hospitality in Zambia can not be understood in the same way as anciently. Thus, although many scholars still emphasize a strong presence of hospitality traits among Africans, and in this sense they are right, its perception and understanding is certainly different from

the original. This point may be supported by the fact that culture is dynamic and the interplay of cultures in urban Zambia means that a great deal of change has already happened and more is still taking place. Mugambi (1995:78) states that culture obstinacy is suicidal in that it may eventually lead to culture extinction. Since no culture can remain stagnant and survive, it would be right to assume that even the understanding and practice of hospitality among Zambians would be different from the original. It may even be further stated that because hospitality in Africa has been marred its conception and practice among Africans (Zambians inclusive) is hazy. This may also be the reason there is serious contention regarding how it is to be conceived and practiced. It is therefore no surprise that concerns regarding hospitality have implications for public policy, human rights, institutional practices, and social services. However, in keeping with our theological endeavor, the focus of this study is church-based hospitality.

That the church is also affected, as demonstrated by our example of the Zambia Baptist Association (ZBA), makes it more urgent to finding a remedy to the crisis of hospitality among the urban Baptist congregations in Zambia. A theological ecclesiological intervention to addresses the current interplay of the existential issues affecting the fellowship (*koinonia*) of believers in urban Zambia is required. Failure to do so, the church in urban Zambia will continue to be divided on tribe, class, and other exclusive settings that rob the community of faith communion (*koinonia*) and service (*diakonia*) with one another. However, an intervention in the crisis of hospitality will require a theological backing. Thus the following question may be posed: What is the theological basis for the church to be involved with the crisis of hospitality in Zambia? What does the Bible teach concerning hospitality? The response to these questions is the focus of chapter three.

CHAPTER THREE

BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF HOSPITALITY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter two, a consideration how Zambians conceive and practice hospitality was undertaken. For context's sake, both the internal and external factors that have had adverse effects on the African continent were considered. With the example of the Zambia Baptist Association (ZBA) congregations, it was shown how this ripple of change has permeated the church and divided believers into divided settings of belonging. This development has promoted the concept of "stranger" among Christians and ultimately affected their fellowship (*Koinonia*) with one another. In this chapter, therefore, focus will be on what the Bible teaches regarding hospitality. The assumption of this chapter is that by exploring how human beings in the biblical narratives have practiced hospitality in their context the urban Baptist congregations in Zambia will be challenged to emulate them. Furthermore, since the concept of stranger is closely related to the teaching of hospitality in the Bible (Pohl 1999:31) these congregations will be equipped to effectively deal with encounters of strangers whether by being considered as strangers to others or by facing strangers surrounding them. It is hoped that with this transition taking place Urban Baptist congregations would begin to move towards "being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). In order to achieve this, a systematic biblical analysis of hospitality from both the Old Testament and New Testament will be employed. In the Old Testament exposition focus will be on Leviticus 19:18, 34 and its implications especially in the Torah. In the New Testament focus will be on Romans 12:9-13 and its implications especially in Jesus' and Paul's teachings. The two passages are selected simply for reasons of exegesis as points of departure. Exegetical methodology will be employed utilizing lexicons such as Louw and Nida (1989) and Newman (1993), Bible dictionaries and other

literatures such as commentaries. The following main research question will be posed: How should hospitality be understood from a Scriptural perspective?

3.2 HOSPITALITY

According to Louw and Nida (1988:455), the Greek word for hospitality is *philoxenia*. It comprises two other Greek words, *phileo* and *xenos*. *Phileo* denotes love or affection for people who are connected by kinship or faith while *xenos* denotes a 'stranger' but also 'host' (Romans 16:23). The terms host and guest are thus juxtaposed. Both the guest and host become strangers in need of love. Hershberger (1999:19) notes that *xenos* can refer either to the stranger who receives a welcome or to the host who welcomes others. Since *Phileo* and *xeno* stand for love and stranger respectively, *philoxenia* literally means "love of strangers" or "entertaining of the stranger" (Schneider1985:661). Barton (1997:501) thus defines hospitality as "a social process by means of which the status of someone who is an outsider is changed from stranger to guest". Hospitality achieves this by reducing the mutual tension that strangeness produces between natives and foreigners and makes of the alien a friend (Schneider 1985:662).

Imbedded in these facts is the revelation –historical development of God's hospitality to His people. In the Old Testament, God is perceived to be a bountiful host entertaining both Israel and the nations at a great feast in heaven at the end of time. The New Testament reveals Jesus as the envoy extending the divine invitation of this heavenly hospitality. Thus to Paul Christians' practice of hospitality was a response to God's hospitality to mankind in providing Christ as a "paschal lamb" (1cor.5:7) and an outworking of what it means to be members of the "one body of Christ" (Koenig 2000). Therefore, when Paul used the concept and urged Christians to focus more intensely on hospitality towards fellow Christians and non-believers (after God's gift of "hospitality" in his Son), it was these Christ events i.e. the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, that

influenced the intensity of the command. This might be the reason in the Bible there was no segregation in treatment of strangers and the native-born among God's people.

In order to understand the dynamics of hospitality and how it was practiced in the Jewish community it would be prudent to begin by looking at the social setting of that community. This will give a general impression of how life was like among the Israelites. The discussion will commence by looking at the family setting because according to Perdue (1997:253) it is one institution that provided the primary locus for human existence, social interaction, social roles, moral value and religious belief arising from its corporate identity and solidarity. Pohl (1999:41) added that for Greeks and Jews, the household served as a basis for social, political, and religious identity and cohesion. How was the social life in the Old Testament Jewish community?

3.2.1 THE OLD TESTAMENT JEWISH COMMUNITY

Inquiries into the three key Hebrew terms that translate 'family' help reveal some essential aspects of the social organizational structures of the Jewish community. The terms are the *sebet/matteh* (i.e. tribe), the *mispahah* (i.e. clan), and the *bet 'ab* (i.e. father's house or household) (Dearman 1998:117; Samuel 1996:10). The link among these three Hebrew terms is properly shown by Magezi (2005:93) in the story of Achan's sin that culminated into Israel's defeat in the war at Ai (Joshua 7). He shows how the different stages of the search systematically moved from the tribe (*sebet*) to clan (*mispahah*) to the family (*bet 'ab*) until it finally rested on the culprit. He further links the terms by observing Achan's full name address in a descending order from his father's name (*bet 'ab*) to his clan (*mispahah*) and finally to his tribe (*sebet*) (Joshua 7:18). Of these three social units the *bet 'ab* (better rendered as 'family household' or 'extended household' or compound family) carries the main concept of the Israelites' understanding of family. The other two social units, the *mispahah* and the *sebet/matteh* are

contexts in which the *bet 'ab* functioned (Perdue 1997: x ; Schluter 2005:155). For an Israelite, therefore, *Bet 'ab* (household) was the context in which family was understood and lived. This gives rise to the question: How was life like in the *bet 'ab* (Old Testament – Jewish) family system?

3.2.1.1 LIFE IN THE BET `AB

Dearman (1998:117) describes the *bet 'ab* (household) as a multi-generational, patrilineal and patrilocal social unit. Part of its functions was to provide labor for the economic survival of the family as well as its continuity. It was therefore the responsibility of the *bet 'ab* to ensure that identity skills continuity, economic skills, reproduction and education were passed on from one generation to the next. Sanders (1992:119) notes that agriculture, just like the other Mediterranean peoples, was the major economic activity of the Israelites. This involved ploughing, harvesting, shearing the animals and carding the wool. Other works that the Jewish were involved in included: construction, hunting, crafts work, textile and weaving, to mention but a few (1992:121-124). This work required a large work force. Thus, as a way of increasing productivity, the agrarian Jewish community shared an ethic of solidarity grounded in mutual interdependence and cooperation. No one would focus on his own achievements except that which benefited the entire group (Magezi 2005: 104) Fulfilling the demands of the community first was an obligatory duty of all members. Therefore, every individual had to put the concerns and interests of the group above his or her own. This communality tendency meant that the individual's welfare and identity could now only be found in a group as whole (Seltzer 1989:122). The thought of being a lone member of the community was unpractical and unthinkable since everyone was expected to observe a collected, group-oriented mindset (Seltzer 1989:126). All this happened because people felt so strongly connected to each that their individual welfare was inseparable from that of the family. Even their goals and ventures could equally only be conceived in a familial sense. In this way, the social setting of the Jewish community emerged as a caring community with strong interpersonal relationships (Seltzer 1989:126). The social setting

managed to shift an individual's focus, interest and concern from the 'self' to the 'other'. This development made the *bet 'ab* a caring social unit in the Old Testament.

Besides the social setting, the sense of connectedness among the Israelites could also have arisen from their adherence to and observance of the teachings of the Torah (Seltzer 1989:121; Forster 1964:151). It was in the Torah that a detailed account of their ancestral lineage was preserved and could be recounted. This aspect made the Israelites develop a strong sense of blood ties amongst their kinsmen and tribesmen due to their common history (Forster 1964:141). That they could trace a common ancestor was reason enough not only to conceive each other as related but also to live so. This relationship meant that each member had a right to benefit from any other member of the family or community who had something to spare. Wright (1992:768) confirms that the virtues of sharing, meeting needs, equality, and generosity that are found in the New Testament writings have their roots from the Old Testament *bet 'ab* life system. This shows that the Israelites practiced care of one another because they regarded themselves as one people. Still connected to the issue of the Torah, the interconnectedness in the social setting of the Jewish community may have been further reinforced and strengthened by the divine laws that governed it (Novak 1989:226). Perdue (1997:167) observes that there were various laws that bound the Israelites together and strengthened their connectivity. Some of these laws and customs were given to protect and sustain households and ensure their viability. The laws included those that governed care for the poor, widows, orphans, sick and aged (Magezi 2005: 105).

According to Novak (1989:224), the Israelites also had many festivals and celebrations that brought them together at different times of the year. Some of these were joyful events while others were sorrowful. Although all of them involved an element of communal participation, celebrations that marked life procession were remarkable (Sanders 1992:131). These included births, puberty,

marriages and deaths. During such celebrations people poured in to give whatever they have that would help in the success running of the event and ease the burden of those involved (Carter 1987:38).

Thus Israel's communal system approach to care for one another consisted partly in the various laws divinely commanded and in the interconnection and interdependence that existed among the people within their social setting. It was unusually rare, therefore, to encounter someone who focused much on the self 'I' rather than others 'us'; for what affected one member affected the whole group (*bet 'ab*). It can, therefore, be said of the Israelite family that it provided the primary locus for human existence, social interaction, and religious belief arising from its corporate identity and solidarity. A question may be posed thus: Was this life of free generosity and care only exercised for the members of the *bet 'ab*? How did the Israelites regard and treat the strangers in their midst? The importance of these questions lies in their contribution towards developing the theology of the 'other' which is crucial to our discussion.

3.2.1.2 STRANGERS IN THE BET `AB

In the Hebrew language there are generally four different words for foreigners denoting the alien, the resident alien, the resident without rights and the alien temporarily present (Schneider 1985:662). Knauth (2003:27) identifies these terms as: *ger*, *toshabh*, *nokri*, and *zar* and they designate the concept of the "other," "outsider," "foreigner," "alien" or "stranger". Of these four terms, *ger* was the general term within which other terms designating the concepts of the stranger (alien, hired laborer) were a subdivision respective to occupations and means of livelihood (Block 1979:561-564)

According to Feldmeier (1996:254), the first people whose foreignness is mentioned in the Bible are the patriarchs. Since then, they and their descendants have long been strangers in a foreign land. The story of their foreignness is recounted in the book of Exodus. Details of the account include how they were

aliens in Egypt for four hundred years, aliens in the wilderness for forty years, and later aliens in exile. But even after taking possession of the Promised Land, Israel did not cease to be a stranger. Gittins (1989:130) demonstrates the reason for their continued strangeness even after entry in the Promised Land in the theological sense. He explains that Israel dwelt in the land that was Yahweh's land and not a commodity belonging as "real estate" to the people.

Besides being strangers themselves, the Israelites were surrounded by strangers. Details of the Exodus show that there were many non-Jewish people among those that left Egypt (Ex 12:38; Num 11:4). In addition, once they had conquered and occupied the Promised Land, God's people did not eliminate their defeated subjects but they allowed them to live side by side with them. More evidence of the existence of strangers living with the Israelites is given in an account of Solomon's construction of the Temple. A figure of 153,000 foreigners is recorded as the recruited labor force for the construction of the Temple (2 Chron 2:1-2, 17-18). Thus, God's people were strangers among the dominant people in a foreign land (Egypt), strangers along with other groups of strangers both in the wilderness and in exile, and finally, strangers in their own land. Pohl remarks (1999:16); "Israel's covenant identity includes being a stranger, an alien, a tenant in God's land –both dependent on God for welcome and provision and answerable to God for its own treatment of aliens and strangers". The experience of foreignness motivated the people of God to practice hospitality towards strangers living among them.

In the Old Testament narratives, individual families in their homes mainly carried out the practice of hospitality. This can be deduced from stories about Abraham, Sarah, and the angels (Genesis 18). Other stories show how hospitality helped some people get reunited with their beloved ones. Abigail won her husband David (1 Samuel 25:14-35, 39-42) and a Shunammite woman her son (2 Kgs 4:1-17). Rahab's life was spared when Jericho was destroyed (Heb 11:31) while the widow at Zarephath got provisions throughout the drought period (1 Kgs 17:8-

16). However, there were times that communities took responsibility of strangers too.

Among the ways that community participated in the care of strangers were various laws like Gleaning (Lev 19:9, 10), tithes of grain (Deut 14:29; 26:12), Sabbath rest (Ex 12:48, 49), and impartiality in the court (Lev 25:39-46). According to Pohl (1999:29) the theological and moral foundations for hospitality were tied closely to Israel's special relationship of dependence on and gratitude to God. Connected to this was an ideal rooted religiously in the understanding of God as one who "loves the alien, giving him food and clothing" (Deut.10:18). It is not surprising, therefore, that in the Torah alone hospitality is commanded no fewer than twenty-four times (Barton 1997:502). In addition Jewish eschatology played a part in hospitality in that God was seen as a bountiful host entertaining Israel (Amos 9:13-15) and the nations (Is. 25:6-8) at a great feast at the end of time. Nevertheless, the most important reason that the Israelite laws instructed the people of God to practice hospitality to strangers and treat them as one of their kinsmen was that they themselves were strangers in Egypt (Lev 19:34). Thus, there were combined efforts of the individuals and the community at large in meeting the needs of strangers. It is not surprising therefore, that the Bible is rich with accounts of hospitality and encouragement toward its practice. What, then, does the Old Testament unravel about hospitality?

It shows us the way of life of the people of God; that they were united, loving and caring one for another. It also shows us how as a people they worked all things with a common mind and purpose that made community an admirable one. It further gives us information about strangers in Israel and how they were treated by their hosts. Asen (1995:24) classifies strangers in three categories: the Book of the Covenant (Ex 20, 22-23, 33); the Deuteronomical law (Deut 12-26); and the Holiness Code (Lev 17-26). Of these, the Holiness Code is the most important. Its importance is twofold: firstly, it confirms the status of the stranger in the community of God's people (Lev 19:33-34). Secondly, it instructs all God's

people to deal with foreigners as native-born in all things and to love them; a command of which is parallel to a previous admonition to love the fellow Israelite (Lev 19:18, 34). Hospitality among God's people was to be extended freely to all the people regardless of their status. Having looked at the Old Testament's teaching of hospitality, the New Testament teaching may now be considered.

3.2.2 THE NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Examinations of the two Greek words that translate family show that the concept has had its import from the Old Testament. The two Greek words are *patria* and *oikos* both of which designate family. *Patria* signifies family from the perspective of historical descent (e.g. Luke 2:4), while *oikos* (house) signifies family as household in much the same way as Hebrew *bayit* in the Old Testament (Samuel 1996:10). Church is the New Testament term that replaces the Old Testament household (Birkett (2003:19). Thus, unlike in the Old Testament where family membership was dependent on household, clan or tribe Church comprises all those who have become members of God's kingdom.

In the Kingdom it is the people of God who constitute the family, defined by Jesus as those who do the will of the father (Mk 3:33-35). In this sense Jesus renders the family as an inclusive institution replacing the tribe, clan and extended family. Church becomes the "new" family (household of God or the family of God) with God as father (Samuel 1996:11; Dunn 1990:105). Understood in this sense, Jesus taught that the family is not an end in itself, rather that belonging to Jesus and the "new" family of Jesus (the church) is the prior, more profound (because eschatological) reality to which human beings are called and in terms of which human relationships, including familial relationship, are to be judged (Barton 1998:138). Thus, the "family of believers" (Gal 6:10), or "the family of God" (1 Pet 4:17) becomes a familiar picture in New Testament teaching. Both Jews and Gentiles are members of God's household (Eph 2:19). This unravels the New Testament's understanding of church as a spiritual family, the family of God.

Perdue (1997:166) confirms the transposition of historical descent of family concept from the Old Testament into the New Testament by studying the Jewish society and religion over its twelve-hundred-year period. He concluded that the family in this culture continued in largely the same form and with some of the same character for twelve centuries. There is one major difference though. In the New Testament the word family has been spiritualized. This attests to the fact that often times the New Testament family (Church) is represented in a pictorial form (metaphor) when describing those who belong to the community of faith (believers). Some images of Church used in Scripture are: Household, building, family of God (1 Cor 3:9, 10-11; 2Cor 6:18; Gal 4:4-7; 6:10; Eph 2:19-22; 3:14-15; 4:6), bride of Christ (2Cor 11:2; Eph 5:22-32), body of Christ (1Cor 12:12-27), Zion (Rev 21:2), and temple (1Cor 6:19). In other metaphors Scripture compares the church to branches on a vine (Jn 15:5-8), an Olive tree (Rom 11:17-24), a field of crops (1Cor 3:6-9), and a harvest (Mtt13:1-30), new humanity (Rom 5:17-21; 1Cor 15:21-22), and the new Israel or children of Abraham (Rom 9:8, 23-26; 11:17-17) (Ryken 2001:23-25; Fernando 2000:243-244; Dunn1990:105). One striking thing that all these metaphors share in common is that they are all corporate images. They portray the connectedness with which members in the new community of faith (church) ought possess. How, then, do the members in the Church function in relation to each other?

3.2.2.1 LIFE IN THE EKKLESIA

According to Dunn (1990:104) the word Church is derived from a Greek word *ekklesia* and it means an assembly or a calling out. It is one of several Old Testament terms which have been given a spiritual meaning. Its initial usage in the old Testament was a physical gathering of all the people of God, in the presence of God, first at Mount Sinai, and then later at Jerusalem. In the New Testament, where it assumes the spiritual meaning, it denotes a spiritual gathering around Jesus (God's Kingdom). This is attested by the writer of the Hebrews in chapter two where he contrasts the position of the Christian with the

Old Testament Israelite (Birkett 2003:19). The purpose for so gathering is to fellowship. The word 'fellowship', from the Greek *koinonia*, is used in the New Testament to describe the church in terms of community, participation and, of course, fellowship (Kapolyo 2005:132). At the basis of the use of this word group is the idea of a common and shared background. In the Christian (New Testament) sense this stems from our 'being united in Christ...participation in the spirit' (Phill 2:1). The implication of this is that Church (Christian family) is not defined by its boundaries but by its center in the Lordship of Christ (Samuel 1996:11). This affirms the observation that God's family is bound together by the Christ events (Vos 2003:241); thus believers are referred to as the body of Christ. Tied up in this metaphor (and indeed in all other metaphors) is the truth of our 'solidarity', our 'belonging together', as Christians who share the same life, the same privileges and the same responsibilities, as the example of Achan in the Old Testament illustrates (Joshua 7) (Balchin, 1979:31).

Fellowship (*koinonia*) is an essential part of what it means to be a Christian. The apostle John considers it to be the grounds for the incarnation (1 Jhn 1:3-7): Jesus came into the world that he might create a basis for fellowship. In Christ, through the cross, the gentiles are no longer 'foreigners and aliens' (the equivalent terms to *gerim* and *tosabim*, whose only means of sharing in Israel was to reside within an Israelite household). Rather, they have become members of 'God's household' (a term used to describe Israel), indeed 'fellow heirs' (Eph 2:19ff; 3:6) (Wright 1992:768). As such to belong to the church also means accepting the obligations required within that setting. Hence, like the Old Testament *bet 'ab* which was a caring social unity Church too is expected to care and do good within and without the ranks of Christianity (1Tim 5:4-8). There is one striking thing that the all metaphors share in common, i.e. connectedness. As corporate images they show how all believers ought to view themselves in relation to others. They are a picture of what we might call an organic rather than just an organized togetherness. Thus, just as limbs (body metaphor) cannot live by themselves and they are not merely arranged together (Balchin, 1979:31), in

the same way the church ought to function in a unified and interdependent manner.

Therefore, even though there are many and a varied picture of Christian community in the New Testament, the one commonality is that there is a closeness of relationship. Indeed the idea of being a lone Christian appears to be anathema to the New Testament authors (Samuel 1996:11). All the Christian communities of the New Testament are seen to have their only firm foundation in their communal relationship with Jesus Christ as Bonhoeffer (1954:21) has observed: "Christianity means community (fellowship) through Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ. No Christian community is more or less than this." This affirms the observation that God's family is bound together by the Christ events (Vos 2003:241).

One way to know that fellowship (*Koinonia*) is important to God and central to his redemptive purposes is to note the ethical exhortation found in the New Testament, particularly in the Pauline epistles; it is an encouragement to fellowship and unity (Philippians 2:1-4; 1 Corinthians 1:10-11). It portrays how that Christians are not saved as individuals into a vacuum rather than they are brought into a fellowship of believers. Indeed, even the consummation of this world will also be characterized by fellowship for "blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb" (Revelation 19:9) (Samuel 1996:11). Therefore, even though community (fellowship) has been marginalized with the influence of Western society, the Christian message has always been one that, at least theoretically, has built fellowship wherever it has been embraced. Indeed many would argue that at the very heart of God's redemptive purpose for the world is relationship and therefore community. God is relational; fellowship is at the heart of his redemptive plan (perhaps even the goal). He has also called a people who bear his name into a distinctive fellowship, formed not around any human construct but rather around and in their relationship with Jesus Christ. Fellowship is an integral and central part of the Christian story and experience. The

supernatural is the tie that binds the fellowship together and influences its existence. So far it has been shown how the Church as a community of faith (Spiritual family) operates as a caring, loving, inclusive and all embracing institution. By making Jesus the prerequisite of its membership the church nullifies physical birth, tribe or clan as the basis of belonging. What is the New Testaments teaching on hospitality towards strangers?

3.2.2.2 STRANGERS IN THE EKKLESIA

There are four terms in the Greek language that denote foreigner. Schneider (1985:662) identifies the terms as: *allogenes* (*allogenes*), *paroikos*, *proselytos* and *xenos*. One important observation made in regard to these terms is that although *xenos* is used in the LXX for the stranger, it is however, not the chief equivalent of any of the Hebrew terms for stranger, foreigner, outsider, and other. Instead, it is the term *Paroikos* that generally translates the Hebrew *ger* (Asen 1995:32). "Stranger" is defined in a dictionary as "a person not easily explained," "an unfamiliar person," "any person one does not know" and also as "a guest or visitor" (Gittins 1989:113). In another dictionary, the word "stranger" is defined as "one who is neither friend nor acquaintance," along with as "foreigner, newcomer, and outsider". In this sense, the stranger can be understood not only as a person we have never met before, but also as a person we know but consider as outsider (Hershberger 1999:21). Thus, the word 'stranger' can be defined in various ways. Hnuni (2002:334), for example, holds that the term 'stranger' primarily refers to people who are vulnerable, weak, dependent, and marginalized as distinct from the dominant group of a society, both socially and economically. Understanding stranger in this broad sense led Gittins (1989:116) to define strangers as 'others' in terms of health, economic class, family relations, nationality, age, or social status in comparison with the non-stranger, the host who is at home.

In two of the key passages on hospitality in the New Testament (Eph 2:19; Heb 13:14), believers are said to be no longer strangers and aliens but citizens of the

household of God. In addition, believers are “aliens and exiles” in reference to the world (1Pet 2:11). In the early church, therefore, Christian identity was characterized by the stranger, the sojourner, or the foreigner. Both Oden (2001:36 and Ogletree (1985:7) confirm that believers of the first three centuries understood themselves to be aliens and pilgrims in this world and citizens of another. This is not a contradiction as Feldmeier (1996:241) has demonstrated on the use of the term “nation of strangers” in 1 Peter. He refutes the argument that either one belongs to the nation, in which case one is a citizen and not a stranger, or one is a stranger, in which case one does not belong to a nation. He reasons that Strangeness, in this case, expresses an alternative self understanding of a Christian resulting from a relationship with God. He thus acknowledges a tension that describes the Christian self-understanding but not necessarily a contradiction (Feldmeier 1996:251).

Asen (1995:34) adds that the people of God, as citizens as well as strangers, live in the tension between being a part of and apart from the world. Christians are strangers in this society – and this is precisely their vocation; that is what they are supposed to be. Therefore, the specific foundation of estrangement of Christians is that they are passing through this world and moving towards God’s future (Oden 2001:38). According to Feldmeier (1996:262), this means that, foreignness in the world and membership of God’s people are opposite sides of the same coin. As such, non- identity in this society and the stranger-hood of Christians (in 1 Peter) are not to be understood from opposition to society, but from a response to God. Furthermore, the otherness of Christians does not justify the separation of the community from society but the opposite is the case because Christian existence is oriented towards reconciliation and “Christian existence as strangers is a visible foretaste of God’s future” (Feldmeier 1996:259). The Christian understanding is that the fellowship and rich provision lost in Eden are fully restored only in the New Jerusalem, but the present experiences of God’s goodness sustains his people who live according to the promise of a happy future – heaven – a place of unending feasting in God’s vast

abode (Dictionary of biblical imagery 1998:404, 406). Thus, Christians are not simply strangers wandering around on the earth but 'God's elected strangers' (Feldmeier 1996:262). In other words, their stranger-hood is with a specific purpose in this world. In relationship to the world, Christians in their strangeness are called to transform the world through love (Asen 1995:34), and hospitality is a practical way of expressing this love as demonstrated by the ministry of Jesus.

3.2.2.2.1 JESUS AND HOSPITALITY

Hospitality played a significant part in the ministry of Jesus. He often took table fellowship with people, particularly those who he should not be eating with. His ministry was characterized by eating and drinking with "sinners" and through shared meals he offered a welcoming place to sinners and the marginalized (Hawkins 1987:52). There were many cultural reasons for not eating with these people not the least of which was that Jesus was a teacher and should not be eating with these "sinners" (Luke 15:1-2): For by eating with them he was giving them a place of honor. Hawkins (1987:53) notes that the individuals Jesus welcomed to his table lived beyond society's boundaries. They were the excluded and marginalized whom society had not recognized as equals. Hence by offering them hospitality, Jesus was giving these people dignity and recognition as human beings. This practice of open hospitality by Jesus was in contrast to the movements of his day i.e. the Pharisees and the Qumran covenanters, which restricted table fellowship. Thus, impressed by his hospitality character, O'Sullivan (2004:168) perceives Jesus as a gracious host who welcomed strangers, sinners and the least. He commends him as an indiscriminate host who welcomed others outside the boundaries of religious and social approval. Hawkins (1987:58) comments that the non-exclusiveness to table-fellowship is the most radical act Jesus ever showed. Jesus himself told many parables to explain why he ate with such people (Luke 15:4-32) and he also used meals as a means of explaining the Kingdom of God (Matthew 22:1-14). But Jesus is also depicted as a heavenly host.

He is the host alongside God or in his place (Mt 22:2). At this feast which is for sinners, Jesus offers lavish entertainment (Mt 6:41) by serving his guests (Lk12:37), washing their feet (Jhn 13:1) and offers himself as their eternal nourishment (Mk14:22) (Schneider 1985:664). In Matthew 25:34-40, the exhortation is that a generous welcome must be offered to the "least," without concern for advantage or benefit to the host (Lk 14:12-14), reflecting God's greater hospitality that welcomes the undeserving (Pohl 1999, 16). Both invitation and visitation are considered as hospitality and anyone, and not necessarily a fellow believer, could be a stranger representing Jesus. That Jesus is the *xenos in* this passage makes one's relationship with Jesus the deciding factor. Here, all the ethical concepts of humanity regarding kindness to strangers come to fulfillment (Schneider 1985:663). Koenig (1985:89) sees the table and the kingdom of Jesus as virtually synonymous since Jesus saw himself as God's eschatological envoy extending the divine invitation of heavenly hospitality to Israel and the nations. This connection is deduced from the conversions that accompanied shared meals with Jesus (Koenig 1985:51). Thus, Jesus is seen not only as a marginal Messiah welcoming other marginal people but also God's traveling householder, inviting every Israelite to the banquet of the kingdom (Lk 14: 16-24) (Koenig 1985:91). According to Hawkins (1987:59), the reign of God is introduced through a feast and when that reign is fully present, no one will be a stranger excluded from the benefits of communion. This eschatological aspect is what helps explain Jesus' practice of hospitality and table fellowship to which all the gospels testify. Yet, not only was he always a host but Jesus was also portrayed as a humble guest and a needy stranger Mk 12:1; Jhn 8:14-25).

As a strange being, he often received no welcome, experiencing the vulnerability of the stranger and the least (Pohl 1999:17; Jn 1:10-11; Lk 9:58). He came from the unknown God (Jhn7:27) and lived as in a tent (Jhn 1:14). He was subject to such misunderstandings (Jhn 3:4) that, at times, even his own disciples must ask who he is (Jhn21:12). In many other cases, however, he received hospitality by various members of the community (O'Sullivan 2004:165). Jesus regarded

hospitality as important in the parables (Lk10:34-45; 11:5) and in other messages on God's hospitality in which he taught divine generosity (Lk 14:16; 12:37; 13:29). He often showed hospitality to sinners and outsiders by receiving their invitation (Mt 9:10-13; Lk 19:1-10). The example of the life of Jesus tells us that receiving is also a way of showing hospitality. In fact, Jesus welcomed and needed welcome, both in giving and receiving hospitality. Part of what makes the story of hospitality so compelling for Christians is this intermingling of stranger and host roles of Jesus (Pohl 1999:17). He comes to earth both as a host and a guest. Whether purely symbolic or not Jesus eating with people was carried on by the early church. It became a part of the life of the gathered community (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37).

Table sharing continued to be part of regular church practice in the early church. Christians regarded the practice of hospitality as linked to the promises of God and to the possibility of the presence of Christ (Matthew 25, and Hebrew 13:2). "This possibility undergirded the practice of Christian hospitality to strangers for centuries and it sustained much of the practice today" (Pohl 1999:68). Related to this possibility, hospitality practitioners expect that God would judge every one according to one's deeds. Here, we see a kind of reciprocal hospitality between God and his people: God initiated hospitality practice to his people in his love; and in response to this grace of God, his people practice hospitality to others, including stranger and God rewards them in his pleasure (Matthew 25:34-40). Therefore, for the early church, hospitality held a central place because it was regarded as not only a practice but a virtue too (Oden 2001:27). It provided a setting for a communal response to the needs of the poor for food while simultaneously reinforcing a distinct Christian identity (Pohl, 42). As such, hospitality became a special mark of fitness for leadership within the church (1 Tim 3:2; Tit 1:8). This is well depicted in Paul's letters.

3.2.2.2 PAUL AND HOSPITALITY

In his epistles Paul emphasizes the importance of hospitality as a Christian virtue, the practice of which builds up unity and helps meet practical needs. In Romans 12:13 he commands believers to practice hospitality. Peter added that the practice should be void of grumbling (1Peter 4:9). Paul's life as an itinerant apostle reveal that he depended upon the hospitality of others (1 Cor 4:4-14; Acts21:4, 7, 16-17) even though he worked hard to support himself. He mentions lack of hospitality from his enemies as one of the hardships he faced in his ministry (1 Cor 4:1-13; 2 Cor 6:4-10; 11:21-33).

However, Paul understood hospitality as an expression of the gospel. Like Jesus, his perception of hospitality went beyond just meeting people's physical needs. Paul saw the practice of hospitality as an imitation of God's hospitality to mankind in providing Jesus as the atoning sacrifice (1Cor 5:7). Thus, by participating in the Lord's supper, Christians (Faith community) share Christ's eschatological table by eating bread, which is his body, and drinking wine, which is his blood (1 Cor11:17-34). This is also what Kiefert (1991:36) means when he comments on 1 John 4:9 that early Christian hospitality was motivated by the theology of the cross – the "hospitality" that God has shown human beings in His Son Jesus Christ who gave his life to save others. Hence, in Rom 15:7 Paul urges the Romans to practice hospitality to the stranger, because they were – as Gentiles – strangers and outsiders before Christ accepted them. In the same way, Rowilson (1981:37) asserts that the people of God, whether physically (as Israel in Egypt) or spiritually (as the Gentiles outside Jesus), were all strangers once. And this truth reminds the people of God that God accepted them when they were still strangers (Rom 15:7; Eph 4:31). In the Lord's Supper, therefore, there is openness and a realization that at the table there is a basic egalitarianism and an expression of unity of the group as well as commonality.

Clapp (1996:108-110) identifies four ways in which the Lord's Supper shapes Christians into community: Firstly, they are a community formed on the common

good of Christ's Lordship. Secondly, the Lord's Supper forms them into a radically egalitarian community. Thirdly, the Lord's Supper also forms them into a community with the resources to face conflict and to admit failure and fourthly, the Eucharist forms them into a nonviolent community. Thus, Pohl (1999: 157-158) makes a good assessment of the Lord's Table when she comments that the table to which we welcome people is God's not our table. There, each of us is reduced to the most basic human level of requiring sustenance for survival. For around the table someone's gender, race, sexual orientation or physical ability is put to one side and we all simply "survive". Therefore, the invitation to others to sit with us at the table makes it a place of equals, for by the invitation we announce that we are equals. This assists to foster and promote unity among believers that cuts across lines both of social status and purity (Barton 1997:503). For Paul, therefore, hospitality both participated in and anticipated God's generosity and gracious character (Pohl 1999:33).

Paul's teaching on hospitality shows that grace- motivated rather than purpose-driven hospitality is expected for the people of God to practice hospitality. The experience of being accepted by God makes the giver show hospitality by (pure) motivation rather than by obligation (Robinson 2003:67). Christians were to practice hospitality, as redeemed sinners who have already received God's hospitality, to not-yet-hospitality-received-people. This trend runs from the gospels through to the early church. Just as in the gospels where both men and women showed hospitality to Jesus, so in Acts hospitality is offered by both men and women to the apostles and the nascent church. This was because the church in Acts regarded the dawn of Pentecost as an era of salvation that ushered in a new people of God to share in the messianic banquet. They were also influenced by the understanding of the Christians' role in universal mission as well as the self-understanding of the local churches as belonging together to one universal church (Barton 1997:503). Similarly, the writer to the Hebrews, just as Paul to the Romans (12:13), stresses that hospitality is an expression of Christian faith as well as the outworking of Love (Heb 13:2).

3.2.3 SUMMARY AND PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION

It has been observed that Scripture teaches hospitality and is full of encouragement towards its practice. The social setting and the divine commands given to God's people in the Old Testament resulted in strong interpersonal relationships that ensured love, care and concern was enjoyed by all regardless of the person's status in the community. The outworking hospitality effects of this well knit community went beyond friends, relatives and acquaintances to those outside the boundaries of the community. Examples may be seen in the story of Abraham, Sarah, and the angels (Genesis 18) or in the account of the widow of Zarephath and Elijah (1 Kings 17). In all this one cannot miss the fact that the practice was not only exercised among the Israelites but also extended to the outsiders or strangers.

As for the New Testament community (Church), members regarded the practice of hospitality as linked to the promises of God and to the possibility of the presence of Christ (Matthew 25, and Hebrew 13:2). The transformation experienced challenges a Christian not to view others as strangers but instead a Christian ought to conceive himself as the stranger. This attitude change in the way Christians conceive of the "others" undergirded the practice of Christian hospitality to strangers for centuries and it sustained much of the practice today" (Pohl 1999:68). Related to this aspect, hospitality practitioners expect that God would judge every one according to one's deeds. Here, we see a kind of reciprocal hospitality between God and his people: God initiated hospitality practice to his people in his love; and in response to this grace of God, his people practice hospitality to others, including strangers; and God rewards them in his pleasure (Matthew 25:34-40). Therefore, for the early church, hospitality held a central place because it was regarded as not only a practice but a virtue too (Oden 2001:27). It provided a setting for a communal response to the needs of the poor for food while simultaneously reinforcing a distinct Christian identity (Pohl199:42). In his epistles Paul emphasizes the importance of hospitality as a

Christian virtue, the practice of which builds up unity and helps meet practical needs. In Romans 12:13 he commands believers to practice hospitality to which Peter added that it should be void of grumbling (1Peter 4:9).

In conclusion, in the Bible love amongst God's people was to be exercised by everyone. An example in the Old Testament is Leviticus 19 where we find the parallel commands to "love your neighbor as yourself" (v. 18) and to "love the stranger as yourself" (v. 34). Similarly in the New Testament, *philoxenia* expresses *agape* in Romans 12:9 and it is linked to *philadelphia* in Heb 13:1-2. It is to be shown by all (Mt. 12:9), but especially the overseers (1 Tim 3:2). It also ought to be extended to all (Rom 12:13-14) especially to members of the community of faith (1 Pet 4:9; Gal 6:10). These Bible passages contain both the moral and theological principles for practicing hospitality. They not only reveal the biblical teaching of hospitality but also the biblical treatment of those considered as "outsiders" or "strangers", thereby giving three dimensions of practicing hospitality: Hospitality as an expression of respect and recognition, hospitality as a means of meeting the physical needs of people, and hospitality as welcoming people into the community of faith (Pohl 1999:42-3). What links between the biblical teaching and Zambian understanding of hospitality may the urban Zambian church emulate that would eventually culminate in a theological intervention that may effectively addresses the problem? Discussion on the links between the two will be the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

POSSIBLE LINKS BETWEEN THE QUALITIES OF HOSPITALITY IN ZAMBIA AND THE BIBLE.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter two highlighted the basic hospitality information in the light of African context with the goal to unravel the contextual understanding of hospitality among the Zambians. This brought the discussion to a complex end of an inevitable interplay between cultures owing to pluralistic living. Having realized that epistemology in pluralistic setting is heavily contested we appealed to the Christian epistemological foundations, i.e. Scriptures, in keeping with the theological endeavor, which was the focus of Chapter three. This chapter will now focus on the links between Biblical teaching of hospitality and the understanding of Hospitality in Zambia. The main research question being posed, thus: What are the possible links between the understanding of hospitality from a Biblical perspective and Zambian perspective? The assumption of the chapter is that identifying the links between the two will give the Urban Baptist congregations in Zambia helpful insights on identifying the key factors responsible for influencing the virtue of Hospitality. It is hoped that knowledge of these factors will eventually lead the Church to a more effective Biblically-based understanding and practicing of hospitality. In order to have a clear demonstration of this link between hospitality in Zambia and in the Bible a table to compare the two will be employed. The table below will assist in identifying the links as well as the advantages and disadvantages of these links. The first link to be considered is communalism.

4.2 LINKS BETWEEN BIBLICAL AND ZAMBIAN HOSPITALITY

BIBLICAL HOSPITALITY		ZAMBIAN HOSPITALITY	
O/T	N/T	Traditional Africa	Urban Zambia
<i>Bet 'ab</i> (household)	<i>Oikos</i> (household)	Extended family	Nuclear family
Communal	Inclusive	Communal	Individual
group interest ("we"/ "us")	group interest ("we"/ "us")	group interest ("we"/ "us")	Self-interest ("I")
Cooperation & harmony	care	Cooperation	Competition & conflict
Interdependence	unity	Interdependence	Self achievement
group identity	Fellowship	group identity	individualism
Sharing	Sharing	Sharing	Danger of materialism
Meeting others' needs	Serving others	Meeting others' needs	Self serving
Equality	Equality	Equality	Dominance
Generosity	Generosity	Generosity	Personal gain
Affiliation		Affiliation	Ownership
Shared duties	Servant-hood	Shared duties	Individual rights
Group assurance	Personal assurance	Group assurance	Personal gratification
Elevates group	Considerate of others	Elevates group	Elevates individual
Like people	Love people	Like people	Fear people
inclusive attitude	inclusive attitude	inclusive attitude	Exclusive attitude
security	security	security	Loneliness
Dependent	interdependent	Dependent	independent
Strong personal relationship	Strong personal relationship	Strong personal relationship	Casual personal relationships
Uniformity	Unity in diversity of gifts	Uniformity	Individual Differences preferred
Duties to community	Service to others	Duties to community	Rights of individuals
Open in social context	Open in social context	Open in social context	Closed in social context
Peaceful co-existence	Discerning circumstances	Peaceful co-existence	Confrontations not avoided

Dialogue		Dialogue	Monologue
People are important	Both people and things are important	People are important	Things are important
Community centered	Community centered	Community centered	Task oriented
Closed in inter-individual relationships	Open in inter-individual relationships	Closed in inter-individual relationships	Open in inter-individual relationships

4.2.1 COMMUNALISM

It may be observed from the study that communalism is a portrait of life both in the Bible and in Zambia. In both cases it is the basis on which hospitality is grounded and the lens through which it is conceived and practiced. Communalism is driven by the concept that no one is an island in himself or herself, rather each and everyone is part of the whole. People perceived themselves as a group and not as isolated individuals thereby inculcating the aspect of “we” and “us” instead of “I”. It was unusually rare, therefore, to encounter someone who focused much on the self ‘I’ rather than others ‘us’; for what affected one member affected the whole group (*bet ’ab* – extended family). This communality provided the primary locus for human existence, social interaction, social roles, moral value and religious belief arising from its corporate identity and solidarity. The extended family, the clan, and the tribe are, therefore, the contextual link in which urban Baptist congregations in Zambia, just like the Biblical people, ought to emulate to find their definition and directly experience the life of solidarity. It is in this life of solidarity that the attractiveness of communality lies.

Every individual had to put the concerns and interests of the group above his or her own. This communality tendency meant that the individual’s welfare and identity could now only be found in a group as whole. The thought of being a lone member of the community was unpractical and unthinkable since everyone was expected to observe a collected, group-oriented mindset. All this happened

because people felt so strongly connected to each that their individual welfare was inseparable from that of the family. Even their goals and ventures could only be conceived in a familial sense. In this way, communalism emerged as a caring social system that promoted strong interpersonal relationships. The system managed to shift an individual's focus, interest and concern from the 'self' to the 'other'.

This same concept of oneness (*bet 'ab* – extended family) is taken up by the Christian heritage. It includes primarily a participation in the life of the father, the son and the Holy Spirit showing that God is himself a community of three persons (Fernando 2000). At the very center of all that is created is a community who has from infinity past been in relationship with one another. It is from this community that creation comes forth. Thus we may note that right at the beginning, is a beginning born out of community. God creates all things and then comments that "it is not good for the man to be alone; I will find a helper suitable for him" (Genesis 2:18). Thus, in Christian teaching, the theological basis for families is found in the central importance of relationships for persons made in the image of God, who is himself in a relationship (Schluter 2005:154).

The major weakness of communalism, particularly the *bet 'ab* and the extended family, is that it puts too much emphasis on the community at the expense of the individual. This may be deduced from the observation that in its dealings communalism does not encourage individual decision and individual application because it conceives mankind as collective and not as an isolated being. In urban Zambia, some people have thus adopted individualism to counteract communalism. The church must avoid either of these extremes. It ought to find a balance as it strives to implement oneness and a sense of community within its ranks. The other link which is closely related to communalism is that of family.

4.2.2 FAMILY (*BET 'AB*, *OIKOS* AND EXTENDED FAMILY)

There are similarities between how family is conceived in the Bible and in Zambia. As Magezi (2005:105) observes, the Hebrew *bet 'ab* denotes family much in the same sense as the African extended family. This is supported by Nunnally (2000:457), who also holds the view that Jewish family has a lot of similarities with the African extended family. In both instances family combines all the benefits of a fully-fledged social security system without any bewildering red tape. The family is the refugee and the only institution providing some form of social security. All who belong to the *bet 'ab* or extended family share a history of a common biological figure. Their blood, their names and to a large extent their culture can all be traced back to a common ancestor or a set of ancestors. The extended family gives identity and a strong sense of family or clan solidarity. The relationships between members result not only in words of affirmation but especially in deeds of solidarity that include many of the attributes of a fully functioning social security system. But more than that there is a strong personal social support structure to meet the needs of the members at all times. Neither the extended family nor the *bet 'ab* had a term for nuclear or conjugal family. In fact among the Israelites the smallest unit recognized in the language was the three or four-generation family (Hebrew, *bayit*). Larger kinship units were the territorial clan (*mispa*) and the tribe (*sebet*) (Shluter 2005:155). Links may further be noted in observing how these family settings functioned. What is more, the New Testament family *patria* or *oikos* does not minimize the size of family as it borrows the concept from the Old Testament. In fact, it broadens the concept by advocating free admittance of membership. The only requirement needed is faith in Jesus Christ.

The description of family above reveals that there could be a shift in how a family is conceived in Urban Zambia and even in church due to an increasing consciousness on the nuclear family. This limitation in the way family may be conceived in urban Zambia implies a limitation in the way people relate as well as

a limitation in their care, concern and generosity to others. The fact that there is no direct link between nuclear family and the two communalistic families mentioned above indicates that even the functions of the family in the two sets will differ. While *bet 'ab* and the extended family might have similarities in the way the two social units function, the case may not be so with urban Zambia. This situation highlights the fact that urban Baptist congregations ought to evaluate their concept of family by aligning it with that of Scripture. Fortunately, like in the communalistic situation, the church in Zambia could use the traditional understanding of family as link because it has a closer meaning of family to that of Scripture as shown above. What are some of functions of the family and how are they linked in these settings?

4.2.2.1 SUPPORT

In the social domain, both the *bet 'ab* and the extended family had many festivals and celebrations that brought them, as a people, together at different times of the year. Some of these were joyful events while others were sorrowful. Although all of them involved an element of communal participation, celebrations that marked life procession were remarkable. These included betrothals, marriages, initiations mourning for the dead, burials, education of children and many other social activities. During such celebrations people poured in to give whatever they have that would help in the success running of the event and ease the burden of those involved. This is all to do with the communality settings of these communities where one person's happiness was happiness for all, and one person's sorrow was sorrow for all. It was unimaginable in such settings that one could be mean with his or her services. All were expected to be hospitable and a hospitable person is one who is generous in providing food and shelter for the needy and services for whoever needs help. But to achieve the demands of such a generous way of living will of necessity require hard work and cooperation.

4.2.2.2 COOPERATION

Thus, from ancient times the concept of being hard working has been inculcated in the *bet 'ab* and extended family with an understanding that it is when you work hard that you will have something to be hospitable with such as food, shelter, clothing and other material. Even more interesting is an observation that both settings were agrarian communities. Thus, as a way of increasing productivity, the agrarian Jewish community shared an ethic of solidarity grounded in mutual interdependence and cooperation. Since no one would focus on his own achievements except that which benefited the entire group and because the demands of the community superseded those of an individual, people cooperated in all kinds of works. They displayed their hospitality by co-operating in works such as agriculture work, the building and repair of houses, land cultivation and clearance of bushy areas, hunting, and fishing among other areas. This reminds us of the importance of metaphors in describing how the New Testament Church ought to function. To belong to the church also means accepting the obligations required within that setting. Hence, like the Old Testament *bet 'ab* and the African extended family both of which were caring social units Church too is expected to care and do good within and without the ranks of Christianity (1Tim 5:4-8). There is one striking thing that the all metaphors share in common, i.e. connectedness. As corporate images they show how all believers ought to view themselves in relation to others. They are a picture of what we might call an organic rather than just an organized togetherness. Thus, just as limbs (body metaphor) cannot live by themselves and they are not merely arranged together (Balchin, 1979:31), in the same way the church ought to function in a unified and interdependent manner. One way this is achieved is by exercising the spiritual gifts possessed by individual members. Thus the link of cooperation is also related to duties individuals owe to communality.

4.2.2.3 DUTIES

As was observed earlier, communalism carries within itself such aspects as unity, solidarity, communality and the interdependence of man as its core. It articulates a basic respect and compassion for others-as its bottom line. It recognizes that every human being is bound up in other human beings. This understanding implies that both the *bet 'ab* and the extended family are organized on the basis of duties. The underlying factor is that individuals owe their communities. Therefore, duties which individuals owe to collectivity override one's rights. This eliminates self-centeredness and destructive attitude in social relations because the focus is not always on what society owes one, but rather what one owes others. The New Testament widens the meaning even further when it speaks of service to others in a servant hood manner (*diakonia*). Again, the way these duties ought to be fulfilled is best represented by Christians' exercise of their gifts as illustrated by the different metaphors of Church.

4.2.3 PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS

The whole concept of communalism stresses the importance of people. Therefore, people and relationships between people were much more important in both the *bet 'ab* and the extended family than material things. Extra care was employed not to injure relationships and where they get injured every effort was implored to restore it. Sensitivity in maintaining health relationships of necessity means that even in deliberations of matters all ideas needed to be considered before a final decision is made. Each and every person's contribution needed to be appreciated. Thus, both the *bet 'ab* and the extended family exercised consensus and reconciliation in dealing with each another so to as maintain the connectedness and the interdependence among people. This important aim of consensus building rather than dividing the people along the lines of 'winners versus losers is expressed by pluralistic use of words like "we" and "us" as opposed to "I" when referring to something. Thus it did not matter how limited a contribution one offered to the material welfare of the community. What mattered

and was most appreciated was the presence of someone and not necessarily his/her achievement. It is on the basis of high regard of human beings for their sake that both the *bet 'ab* and the extended family considered it a pleasure to take care of members in their community regardless of their situation or position. This concept of having high regard of human beings for their sake was taught in the New Testament too. It is the Basis on which brotherhood and sisterhood concept of believers is based. The ethical attitudes and actions in the God's family are reflected in John's Gospel by words like 'love, Knowledge, service, obedience, friendship, and honor' (Vos 2003:240). These social and ethical demands of *Koinonia* (fellowship) are prominent in the New Testament (e.g. Acts 2:42, 44; 4:34; Rom12:13; 15:20ff; Gal 6:6; etc.).

It may be observed by considering the functions of family both in the *bet 'ab* and the extended family that there was a lot of emphasis on collective responsibility as well as communal consciousness that personal responsibility and self consciousness were neglected. This meant that ownership of property was also communal which may have robbed individuals of personal responsibility and accountability. At the same time, since much time was spent doing communal work and enhancing personal relationships in the community, individuals were robbed of personal development and creativity. This leads to another link, i.e. the spiritual one.

4.2.4 SPIRITUALITY

Both the Old Testament *bet 'ab* and the African extended family had strong spiritual influence. It may thus be said that connectedness and interdependence that existed in these two social settings were as a result of the strong divine intervention in these settings. For the Israelites it was God speaking to them through the Torah while for the Africans (Zambians) it was the command of the God through the ancestors. In either case the strong divine consciousness contributed to their unity as well as to their effectiveness to participating in the welfare of the community and others. It is partly the reason in both settings there

was exercise of free generosity since any act that displeased the deity was met with serious consequences. Divine intervention also served in helping trace the ancestral lineage of the people as well as prescribe the ways that lineage ought to be preserved. This resulted in people developing a strong sense of blood ties amongst their kinsmen and tribesmen. That they could trace a common ancestor was reason enough not only to conceive each other as related but also to live so. This relationship meant that each member had a right to benefit from any other member of the family or community who had something to spare. It thus promoted the virtues of sharing, meeting needs, equality, and generosity that are also commanded in the New Testament writings. Thus all people including the marginalized, i.e. the poor, widows, orphans, sick and aged, were cared for because they all regarded themselves as one people. Thus spirituality is the bond that bound both social settings.

The difference in the divine encounter and intervention between the Old Testament *bet 'ab* and the African extended family ought to be noted. The African extended family had ancestors for mediators between them and God while the Old Testament *bet 'ab* had priests and prophets. When we come to the New Testament family, it is Jesus who becomes the mediator of all mankind and the only one who intercedes between them and God. This New Testament teaching on the exclusiveness of Jesus' mediatorial role poses a huge challenge to both the Old Testament *bet 'ab* and the African extended family. The urban Baptist congregations in Zambia would do well to be mindful of this difference but they should be apt to apply the above mentioned aspects in their function as a church.

4.3 SUMMARY AND PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION

Similarities have been noticed in the Bible and the extended family by considering the social setting of each community. Both settings see every 'neighbor' as part of the large family and therefore treat him or her with lots of hospitality. Furthermore, both settings hold that in society, everyone's

contribution is important and necessary. Virtues of sharing and compassion are regarded very highly and as such the individual has a social commitment to share with others what he/she has. Both settings consider stinginess as anti-social and thus one of the greatest imaginable sins. As a result of the priority of interpersonal relationship, co-operation and sharing emphasized in these settings it not surprising that characteristics such as friendliness, helpfulness, modesty and compliance are especially inculcated. These characteristics also describe an ideal person, i.e. someone who creates hospitable environments that allow room for friendships to grow. Food, shelter, and companionship are all interrelated in these settings. In such environments, weary and lonely people can be restored to life. These characteristics of an ideal person are found in both settings and are even taken up in the New Testament family setting in the command to love one another. Spirituality is the bond that bound these social settings.

Thus far, links that exist between the Biblical and the Zambian hospitality have been noted. Also noted are some of the strengths and the weaknesses that exist within the links. In light of this, the church in urban Zambia has been cautioned against certain pitfalls associated with the links, while at the same it has been implored to adopt and uphold those aspects found in its context and are similar to those of Scripture. The key aspect that arises from the links in relation to hospitality is the closeness of the practice to relationships. In other words the closer people perceive themselves to be to each other the more chances there are for them to be generous to each and vice versa is also true. Therefore, the conclusion would be that any remedy to the problem of hospitality must of necessity take into consideration the relational aspect of the people involved. The identified relational link must serve as the point of contact in effecting the practice. What relational link may the Zambian Church identify that would influence its view of hospitality? What practical steps might aid the Church to arrive at the realization of that relational link? Discussion of these questions will be the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

A PROPOSED INTERVENTION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this study's endeavor for a practical theological remedy regarding hospitality in Urban Baptist congregations in Zambia so far, factors responsible for fanning the problem have been identified by undertaking a contextual analysis of both the African and Zambian situation in chapter two. As a point of departure from the social sciences because the endeavor of this study is theological, the Biblical teaching of hospitality in chapter three was considered. Chapter four proceeded to identify links between hospitality in the Bible and Zambia. The common factor that immersed in all the links was the closeness of relationships to the practice of hospitality. The closer the relationship the more likely the practice is exercised among those involved. Thus, two things will be done in this chapter. First, the relational aspect will be explored by considering what the New Testament teaches on church and relationships within the Church. Secondly, the study will undertake to propose some guidelines that might challenge the current relational position of the urban Baptist congregations in Zambia. It is hoped that this will lead to improved fellowship (*koinonia*) and service (*diakonia*), as well as a better understanding of hospitality among believers in urban Baptist congregations in Zambia. The congregations might move from non-involvement to active participation in the lives of others, which is translation of the gospel into reality (enfleshment of the gospel) (Magezi (2005:123). It is further hoped that individual believers would cease to be individualistic but focus on the whole community of faith which encourages care and support for one another.

5.2 CHURCH (EKKLESIA)

Earlier in the discussion on church (see chapter 3) according to Dunn (1990:104) the word Church is derived from a Greek word *ekklesia*. Clouse (2001:246) added that it comes from the Greek adjective, *to kuriakon*, used first of the house of the Lord, and then his people. It is a noun derived from the verb *ekkaleo* and the closest English equivalent of the word is convocation – a calling together, an assembly. According to Birkett (2003:19) *ekklesia* is one of several Old Testament terms which have been given a spiritual meaning. Its initial usage in the old Testament was a physical gathering of all the people of God, in the presence of God, first at Mount Sinai, and then later at Jerusalem. In the New Testament, where it assumes the spiritual meaning, it denotes a spiritual gathering around Jesus (God's Kingdom). This is attested by the writer of the Hebrews in chapter two where he contrasts the position of the Christian with the Old Testament Israelite (Birkett 2003:19). The purpose for so gathering is to fellowship.

The word 'fellowship', from the Greek *koinonia*, is used in the New Testament to describe the church in terms of community, participation and, of course, fellowship (Kapolyo 2005:132). At the basis of the use of this word group is the idea of a common and shared background. In the Christian (New Testament) sense this stems from our 'being united in Christ...participation in the spirit' (Phill 2:1). The implication of this is that Church (Christian family) is not defined by its boundaries but by its center in the Lordship of Christ (Samuel 1996:11). This affirms the observation that God's family is bound together by the Christ events (Vos 2003:241); thus believers are referred to as the body of Christ. Tied up in this metaphor (and indeed in all other metaphors) is the truth of our 'solidarity', our 'belonging together', as Christians who share the same life, the same privileges and the same responsibilities, as the example of Achan in the Old Testament illustrates (Joshua 7) (Balchin 1979:31).

Church is also represented in an imagery or pictorial form and there are many images used in the Bible that describe what the church (*ecclesiology*) is like. Each of these vivid pictures emphasizes a different aspect of union that exists within the communion of saints (the church). Some images (metaphors) in Scripture representing church include: household, building, family of God (1 Cor 3:9, 10-11; 2Cor 6:18; Gal 4:4-7; 6:10; Eph 2:19-22; 3:14-15; 4:6), bride of Christ (2Cor 11:2; Eph 5:22-32), body of Christ (1Cor 12:12-27), Zion (Rev 21:2), and temple (1Cor 6:19). In other metaphors Scripture compare the church to branches on a vine (Jn 15:5-8), an Olive tree (Rom 11:17-24), a field of crops (1Cor 3:6-9), and a harvest (Mtt13:1-30), new humanity (Rom 5:17-21; 1Cor 15:21-22, and the new Israel or children of Abraham (Rom 9:8, 23-26; 11:17-17) (Ryken 2001:23-25; Fernando 2000:243-244; Dunn1990:105). One striking thing that all these metaphors share in common is that they are all corporate images. They show how all believers ought to view themselves in relation to others (connectedness).

The concept of Church can be further conceived in the spiritual sense as represented in Paul's teaching on the union of believers to Christ (Eph 4:13; Phil 2:1-2). This understanding is rooted in Christ's teaching that places all human relationships in the context of the Kingdom of God. In the Kingdom it is the people of God who constitute the family, defined by Jesus as those who do the will of the father (Mk 3:33-35). In this sense Jesus renders the family as an inclusive institution replacing the tribe, clan and extended family. Church becomes the "new" family (household of God or the family of God) with God as father (Samuel 1996:11; Dunn 1990:105). Understood in this sense, Jesus taught that the family is not an end in itself, rather that belonging to Jesus and the "new" family of Jesus (the church) is the prior, more profound (because eschatological) reality to which human beings are called and in terms of which human relationships, including familial relationship, are to be judged (Barton 1998:138). Thus, the "family of believers" (Gal 6:10), or "the family of God" (1 Pet 4:17) becomes a familiar picture in New Testament teaching. Both Jews and

Gentiles are members of God's household (Eph 2:19). Jesus thus rendered Church a spiritual family, family of God. This is the sense in which the urban Baptist congregations in Zambia ought to conceive themselves. But how is this family of God supposed to function?

5.3 FUNCTIONS OF THE CHURCH

Ryken (2001:61) notes that in biblical times *Koinonia* used to describe human sharing in business, law, citizenship, marriage and friendship. The basic meaning of the word is sharing or having in common because sometimes the term is translated as "fellowship", sometimes as "communion", and sometimes even as "sharing". Thus, as a facet of the church, *Koinonia* encompasses aspects when Christians come together in a sacred assembly, when they are united together in their love for one another, when they are at one in their faith, and when they share their spiritual and material goods with one another, (i.e. within the system). In this way they share a common faith, hope, charity and ultimately a common life. Hill (1988:199) sees this union as what constitutes Christian brotherhood. He points out that the unity that ought to be found among such brothers is that one represented in the different images of the church which is intense connectedness. "There is no union with Christ without communion with the saints" (Ryken 2001:27). These images used for the church helps us to appreciate more the richness of privileges that God has for us by incorporating us into his family. They show how all believers ought to view themselves in relation to others (connectedness). This nature of the representation of the church should increase our love and fellowship for one another. It must further increase our interdependence with one another and our appreciation of the diversity of gifts within the body (Dunn 1990:110-111). How may the church from this theoretical challenge of embodying the New Testament church features to one of practical?

5.4 PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

Jean Vanier (1992:266-7), founder of the L'Arche communities, writes that "Welcome is one of the signs that a community is alive. To invite others to live with us is a sign that we aren't afraid, that we have a treasure of truth and of peace to share." He also offers an important warning: "A community which refuses to welcome—whether through fear, weariness, insecurity, a desire to cling to comfort, or just because it is fed up with visitors—is dying spiritually." This is an awakening call of urban Baptist congregations in Zambia to action and involvement embedded in practical theology hermeneutics.

The apparent challenge is the apathy and indifference that these congregations display one to another in relation to hospitality. Such an attitude should be challenged to change. The New Testament understanding of Church should encourage believers to accept and embrace one another irrespective of the situation because they are connected. Members of other congregations or even denominations should not be viewed as 'them' but 'us'. They are part of us because they are members of the faith community to which we belong also. If the church adopts this attitude, it would identify with the perceived outsiders ('them') and its apathetic attitude will turn to empathy which promotes involvement and action.

Kritzinger (1997:48) gives a helpful diagram to illustrate "emotional distance" in five types of inter-human relationships: with friends, enemies, colleagues, opponents and strangers. It is a representation of the current state of affairs of the urban Baptist congregations in Zambia which needs to be challenged by applying the principles of the functions of New Testament Church as discussed above.

CLOSING UP THE SOCIAL DISTANCE / INTERACTION AMONG PEOPLE

PATTERNS OF ENCOUNTER
1. ENEMIES (= ENCOUNTER AS THREAT)
2. OPPONENTS (= ENCOUNTER AS CHALLENGE)
3. STRANGERS (=NO ENCOUNTER)
4. COLLEAGUES (=ENCOUNTER AS OPPORTUNITY)
5. FRIENDS (=ENCOUNTER AS JOY)

The closer people are to each other in the diagram, the more emotionally laden is their relationship: This means that the people who are emotionally the closest are the friends and enemies. Slightly further away on this emotional scale are colleagues and opponents, and furthest away emotionally are strangers, who literally 'leave you cold'.

How can the apathetic attitude currently prevalent in the church be shifted to that of empathy, which encourages action? The general steps proposed by Van der Walt (1994:373"b") will be followed here.

5.4.1 CONSCIENTIZATION

The urban Baptist congregations in Zambia ought to be made conscious of the different prevailing circumstances in their context that do influence life issues. This might mean gaining information that relate to their daily living, i.e. information to do with the socio-political and economic factors as discussed in chapter two. This means that congregations should not only deal with spiritual matters (proclamation of the gospel only) and leave the socio-political and economic matters to others, but rather that they must get fully involved in knowing more about matters round about them. Even more important and relevant to Baptist congregation is to be conversant with what the Bible, especially the New Testament, teaches regarding Christian relationships. This will make believers to become aware of the fact that their attitudes, behaviors etc. is motivated by differing views. This stage may be viewed as a discovery stage when the congregations become aware of the problem. In this case, they discover that they have a problem in the way they conceive and practice hospitality. This awareness leads them into the next stage of formulation.

5.4.2 FORMULATION

At the formulation stage congregations begin to reflect seriously on their discovered problem. They begin to critique their own convictions regarding the matter with a view of gaining clarity of the full extent of their knowledge of the issue. They formulate what exactly their position on the matter is and why. This means that congregations become full aware of the problem of hospitality and its implications to themselves and to others. This brings them to the stage of evaluation.

5.4.3 EVALUATION

Now that they are fully aware of the problem and its implications these Baptist congregation may begin to evaluate their position and convictions on the matter by matching them with the other values. This entails that congregations will now

begin to evaluate their convictions on hospitality within the discussed parameters of the Bible, traditional Africa and the Westernized urban Zambia. The importance for comparing the values with others is for the sole purpose of weighing the congregations own. This leads to the next stage of Transcending.

5.4.4 TRANSCENDING

At the transcending stage congregations will be able to identify both weak and strong points in their own and other cultures. They will then decide which elements of their own culture are to be retained, which facets of another culture they are willing to accept, and which cultural values from a foreign culture they will respect but not agree with. This stage eliminates biasness and instills an element of objectivity. In Value of the New Testament's teaching of church as a spiritual family, congregations might realize that until now they have had a confined view of Christian relationships which they need to broaden. This will set a stage for inspiration, which is the next stage.

5.4.5 INSPIRATION

At this stage, congregations would have discovered their short comings. They would therefore want to adopt some of the new values perceived to be better than theirs. They may become willing to get involved and experiment with the new perspectives and possibilities. This would entail the congregations' willingness to apply the principle of brother/sisterhood by treating those outside their congregations as their own family members. By so doing they will break the barrier that once separated them from others they once considered outsiders or strangers due to the limited relational view that they previously held. This becomes the door to the next stage of internalization.

5.4.6 INTERNALIZATION

Exited about the newly found values congregations would now like to embrace these values and convictions as their own. This arises from the positive results

yielded by their experimenting of the new values. They discover at this stage that improved relationships with others have helped them to be hospitable to them too. They discover the close link that exists between what the Bible teaches on believers' strong relationships and the virtue of hospitality. As a result, congregations may decide to spread this exiting truth with others. This leads to the final stage of Institutionalization

5.4.7 INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Now congregations are fully convinced of the truthfulness and importance of the newly acquired values to the whole body of Christ (the church). They know that these values need not be confined to a few but rather that they should be shared to all members of the family of faith and even beyond. They may therefore decide to see to it that these values are shared concretely in various situations and societal relationships. A plan to disseminate this information may then be mapped out through these institutions. It might include disseminating information through pulpit preaching, home-based fellowships, seminars and conferences, to mention but a few. This development would result in strong brother/sisterhood relationship among the Urban Baptist congregations in Zambia as espoused by the New Testament church. The boundary of relationships among these congregations would be no other than faith in Jesus Christ. All those who have professed faith in Christ regardless of their status or background would be regarded as family members in this set up. And because Congregations will have adopted this inclusive, all –embracing character they will also be generous a development which would cause the virtue of hospitality to flow naturally among these Baptist congregations and beyond.

It is hoped that by following the stages outlined above transformation and attitude change will occur in the urban Baptist congregations in Zambia which will also affect the way these congregations conceive and practice hospitality.

5.5 SUMMARY AND PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION

It has been observed in our discussion the importance of having a right understanding of the Biblical teaching on the believer's relationship. It has been shown that it is out of the health relationships built by members of the faith community that true hospitality would immerge. This is what Inch (1982:95) meant when he observed that church brings about change simply by being the church i.e. by virtue of being the body of which Christ is the head. Change occurs as the church responds to the invitation to come apart and the charge to go. As a family of the healed⁸ i.e. members who have been accepted unconditionally by grace and have been restored into a new relationship with God, the believers' goal becomes that of service (*diakonia*) within the Kingdom. Peace, reconciliation and forgiveness received become the driving force for all acts and intentions undertaken. This new condition of being opens up new avenues of understanding about what our human vocation is. This kind of life brings about self-fulfillment, family wholeness and happiness (Samuel 1996:11). Nothing less than this would take place where *cura animarum* (cure of souls) manifests. The fellowship of believers encourages mutual affection and care for one another: 'love one another' (Jn 15:12). And as believers care for one another they will 'bear another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ (Gal 6:2) (Magezi 2005:121). Accepting and applying the biblical teaching regarding the believers' relationships will help solve the crisis of hospitality in urban Zarnbian congregations as demonstrated through the guidelines above.

⁸ Healing is that which enables us to be fully human in relation to our society, our environment and ourselves. In pastoral ministry healing is about salvation (Magezi 2005:127)

CHAPTER SIX

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This dissertation examines the problem of hospitality among the urban Baptist congregations in Zambia. Chapter one addresses the research plan and methodological issues, settling for an interpretive and comparative approach in which literature review and theological reflection play a major role. The chapter thus retains a theological method that holds together not only text and context, but also theory and praxis. Or, put differently, a theological method to integrate human experience, social analysis, reflection on the Bible, and practical planning for action.

Chapter two places issues in context, dealing with the factors behind the protracted crisis on how hospitality ought to be conceived among the Zambian. The chapter reveals that in the aftermath of colonization and missionary era, where African traditional patterns were disrupted, the traditional communalism and hospitality were distorted. Thus Africans are said to be at a crossroads and the resulting effects are “uncertainty, disillusionment and despair. It further argues that the socio-economic and political changes have led to changes in people’s practices, including that of hospitality.

Chapter three places the problem of hospitality in the Biblical perspective. It asserts that the Bible identifies “love” as the key motive for understanding and practicing hospitality. An example in the Old Testament is Leviticus 19 where we find the parallel commands to “love your neighbor as yourself” (v. 18) and to “love the stranger as yourself” (v. 34). Similarly in the New Testament, *philoxenia* expresses *agape* in Romans 12:9 and it is linked to *philadelphia* in Heb 13:1-2. It is to be shown by all (Mt. 12:9), but especially the overseers (1 Tim 3:2). It also ought to be extended to all (Rom 12:13-14) especially to members of the community of faith (1 Pet 4:9; Gal 6:10). The chapter argues that these Bible

passages contain both the moral and theological principles for practicing hospitality. They not only reveal the biblical teaching of hospitality but also the biblical treatment of those considered as “outsiders” or “strangers”, thereby giving us three dimensions of understanding and practicing hospitality: Hospitality as an expression of respect and recognition, hospitality as a means of meeting the physical needs of strangers, and hospitality as welcoming strangers into the community of faith.

Chapter four argues for the family metaphor as an appropriate link between the Zambian and Biblical understanding and practice of hospitality. It identifies the family unit or household as a caring unit. Both the Old Testament *bet 'ab* and the African extended family systems are crucial vehicles of this caring community. The group identity discouraged people to act selfishly and focus on the self, the 'I'. The chapter further argues that the close network of the African extended family and community, much like communal Jewish life (*bet 'ab*) that sought a group identity, compelled members to seek the good of the others (group interest). The members helped one another in times of crisis and mourning, thereby bringing valuable support in grief. Thus, as a system there was interdependence and 'being there' for one another. Each person sought the continuity of the group and the good of others in the community. What hurts one person hurts the whole group. Both in the Old and New Testaments, by being part of the family, each member had responsibility for others. Life was not about 'I' but 'us'.

The final chapter proposes some practical guidelines as a responsive paradigm. It hinges on the assumption that for the church (*koinonia*) to be practical and effective conduit of God's love and compassion to all believers it should translate/concretize the gospel to real life situations. The concretization could be possible through the mutual care of the *koinonia*. The guidelines are designed to assist congregations to shift from a stance of apathy towards one of empathy and contextual engagement.

The question posed right at the beginning of this study was: How may we integrate the traditional and modern notions of hospitality in urban Baptist congregations in Zambia, which in turn should inform pastoral ministry? This question has brought a challenge to the Zambian Church of how a diversity of cultures (in other words, a diversity of opinions and moral views) could be accommodated within one politico-social dispensation. We are convinced that integration is possible should the church family metaphor which has been outlined in some detail above be accepted and applied. It is our conviction that one of the greatest needs of Christians in Zambia today is how to develop a strong theology of others, a relational theology and how human beings can live in terms of each other and in the light of the Bible. More research is needed for a theology which transcends an ethnicity and embraces a new Messianic community of believers and that of the world community.

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