

A study of μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 7:1-11:1 from the perspective of discipleship

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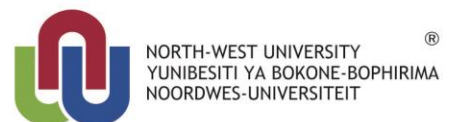
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I would like to thank my study leader, Dr. H Goede, and my family, Sue and Minha.

I hope to become an imitator of Jesus Christ day by day.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this dissertation is to determine whether it is valid to read 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 as a literary unit based on Paul's adoption of the concept of discipleship demonstrated in the Gospels by way of his use of μιμητής in the said pericope. For this, Chapter 2 illuminates the traditional research that 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 have been considered as differentiated because the topic of the former is primarily marriage and that of the latter is the food sacrificed to idols. In Chapter 3, the semantic research of the words μιμητής and μαθητής is processed in order to show that they share common points. In Chapter 4 it is confirmed that the texts on discipleship in the Gospels and 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 share commonalities. Chapter 5 points out that 1 Corinthians 7 uses concepts in common with 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 on the perspective of discipleship such as serving others, the lordship of Christ and the imitation of Paul. Then Chapter 6 summarises and concludes that the aim of the research has been achieved.

Key words: Paul, imitator, discipleship, 1 Corinthians 7:1-11:1

OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie verhandeling is om vas te stel of dit geldig is om 1 Korintiërs 7:1–11:1 as 'n literêre eenheid te lees op grond van Paulus se aanname van die konsep van dissipelskap soos in die Evangelies gedemonstreer deur middel van sy gebruik van μιμητής in die genoemde perikoop. Met die oog hierop word die tradisionele navorsing belig dat 1 Korintiërs 7 en 8:1–11:1 gedifferensieer beskou is aangesien die onderwerp van eersgenoemde hoofsaaklik die huwelik is en laasgenoemde handel oor die kos wat aan die afgode geoffer is. In hoofstuk 3 word die semantiese navorsing van die woorde μιμητής en μαθητής nagegaan ten einde aan te toon dat daar gemeenskaplike punte tussen hulle is. In hoofstuk 4 word bevestig dat die tekste oor dissipelskap in die Evangelies en 1 Korintiërs 7:1–11:1 sekere gemene aspekte het. Hoofstuk 5 wys daarop dat 1 Korintiërs 7 konsepte gebruik wat gemeenskaplik is met 1 Korintiërs 8:1–11:1 rakende die perspektief van dissipelskap soos om ander te dien, die heerskappy van Christus en die navolging van Paulus. Hoofstuk 6 vat die navorsing saam en kom tot die gevolgtrekking dat die doel daarvan bereik is.

Sleutelwoorde: Paulus, navolger, dissipelskap, 1 Korintiërs 7:1–11:1.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Unlike previous studies of μιμητής, this study aims to investigate 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 from the perspective of discipleship. Traditionally, 1 Corinthians 7 has been considered to be unrelated to 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1, and thus each pericope has been researched separately. 1 Corinthians 7, however, exhibits some common elements with 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1, such as the imitation of Paul. This study argues that 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 can be considered as a thematic unit in the light of the discipleship as expounded by Jesus Christ in the Gospels. This assertion is based on the meaning of μιμητής (11:1) as it relates to that of μαθητής, which is used in the Gospels in the context of discipleship. In the expanded pericope of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1, it becomes clear that the command of Paul to become μιμητής refers to and explains the discipleship of Jesus Christ in the context of the Corinthian church.

1.2 MOTIVATION, BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.2.1 Motivation

Firstly, 1 Corinthians 7 seems to form a unit with 8:1–11:1. Generally the topic of 1 Corinthians 7 has been regarded as unrelated to 8:1–11:1 since 1 Corinthians 7 deals with relationships among people in the church, but 8:1–11:1 focuses on food offered to idols. However, the imitation of Paul (7:7, 8, 40; 11:1), the salvation motif (7:16; 9:19–22; 10:33) and the emphasis on the lordship of God (7:32, 34a; 10:31) seem to relate 1 Corinthians 7 to 8:1–11:1.

Secondly, 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 seems to be related to the discipleship of Jesus Christ as expounded in the Gospels. This is borne out by a semantic study of the relationship between μιμητής, ἀκολουθεῖν and μαθητής. Michaelis (1976:668) states that μιμητής can be connected to ἀκολουθεῖν (Kittel, 1964b:213) and μαθητής (Rengstorf, 1976:444), all of which relate to the discipleship described by the Gospels. Kim (2003:224) refers to the fact that ἀκολουθεῖν of the Gospels is replaced with μιμητής by Paul. According to Louw and Nida (1988:470), ἀκολουθέω shares a semantic field with μαθητεύω. And μιμέομαι means “to imitate”. In specific meanings of μιμέομαι, a derivative of ἀκολουθέω occurs, namely ἐξακολουθέω, which means “to follow in a bad direction”. This evidence bears out that μιμητής is related to ἀκολουθεῖν. Balz and Schneider (1990:50) refer in Volume 1 to ἀκολουθέω as a word for discipleship by a follower of Jesus. This is because the word is used when someone becomes a disciple of Jesus (Luke 9:57-62). Also in Volume 2 (Balz & Schneider, 1990:428) μιμέομαι means “to imitate and follow” someone.

From the above it becomes clear that the meaning of μιμητής is closely related to that of the discipleship of the Gospels. Several commentaries imply this view, but do not treat the relationship between the two concepts directly. For example, Fee (1987:490) summarises Jesus' attitude of satisfying not His own interests but those of others when commenting on Paul's call to μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 11:1. However, if a comparison with the discipleship of the Gospels were added here, the meaning of μιμητής could not be limited to the concept of the self-sacrifice of Jesus and Paul. Barnett (2011:191) emphasises that μιμητής means "the one who seeks to save others" as Jesus did. Paul is likely to focus on saving others, but the message of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 based on the concept of discipleship in the Gospels also brings other topics to the fore, such as the idea of the lordship of Christ. This study endeavours to test whether such relationship does exist and, if it does, whether it adds to the meaning of μιμητής in the pericope.

1.2.2 Background

1.2.2.1 Studies which separate 1 Corinthians 7 from 8:1–11:1

1 Corinthians 11:1 is regarded as a central verse in this study, being the conclusion of Paul's reply to the letter from the Corinthian church. Several μιμητής researchers agree with this opinion. In his wide-ranging study of μιμητής, De Boer (1962:154-169) refers only in passing to 1 Corinthians 7, and he treats 8:1–11:1 as one discourse unit. He stresses that the point of μιμητής in the pericope is to commit oneself for other people's salvation. Considering 1 Corinthians 11:1 as the conclusion of 1 Corinthians 8–10, Clarke (1998:346, 347) argues that the pericope emphasises the importance of building up the weak and that Paul's intention is that the believers ultimately become imitators of Jesus Christ through him. Plummer (2001:221) regards 1 Corinthians 11:1 as the conclusion of Paul's reply to the problem of food offered to the idols. According to his study, although the attitude of the strong toward the food is proper, they should give up their rights like Paul did. Plummer explains that Paul wanted the churches to participate in his ministry as he endeavoured to preach the gospel and save souls. Similar to Plummer's research, Ellington (2011:303) examines how to interpret συγκοινωνός αὐτοῦ (9:23) in the context of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1. He notes that the example to be followed is to participate in the power of the gospel and to try to save other people. The advice regarding the problem of the food offered to idols aims at the believers becoming participators of the gospel and imitating such participators. Kim's research (2003:193), however, takes a quite different approach from other μιμητής studies. He shows interest in the debate whether Paul's imitation of Christ refers to the teachings and actions of the historical Jesus, or is explained only as self-sacrifice represented by the cross. He insists that Jesus' suffering on the cross and the teachings and life of Jesus can never be separated because this historical Jesus is the one who died on the cross and rose again (Kim, 2003:224).

Traditionally almost all the μιμητής studies, including the above studies, exclude 1 Corinthians 7 from 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 based on two reasons. The first reason is that the words περί δὲ (7:1, 8:1) indicate a structural break between the two parts, and the second reason is that they are not related contextually. However, this investigation includes 1 Corinthians 7 based on a thematic perspective, namely that 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 share the theme of 1 Corinthians 11:1 as a core verse. There are three pieces of textual evidence.

- Firstly, in 1 Corinthians 7 Paul asks people to become like himself (7:7, 8, 40), which echoes the μιμητής of 1 Corinthians 11:1. Apparently, the request for the imitation in Chapter 7 are different from that of 11:1. The latter is a divine command, but the former is optional. Considering Paul's foundational intention of Chapter 7, however, it is possible to say that the two parts share a commonality, namely the priority of serving God through imitation.
- Secondly, the salvation motif appears in 1 Corinthians 7:16, and plays an important role in showing how to follow Paul's imitation of Christ in 1 Corinthians 8–10 (9:19-22; 10:33).
- Thirdly, the lordship of God (7:32, 34a) is emphasised, which recurs in various forms in the larger discourse unit, most notably in the repeated use of κύριος. For these reasons, 1 Corinthians 7 can be included as part of 8:1–11:1.

1.2.2.2 Paul's adoption of the concept of the discipleship of the Gospels

Tanner (2013:46-48) regards discipleship as a total commitment, explaining that the cost of discipleship is to lose one's life for Jesus' sake. On the basis of the Gospels, he argues that becoming a disciple of Jesus means to be willing to suffer for Him and to serve Him (Tanner, 2013:60). When expounding several pericopes of the Gospel of Luke, Hays (2009:47) emphasises that the reason why Jesus' disciples should hate wealth and family is that it is the way to imitate Christ and follow His teaching on the final judgement. Of course, the argument of the imitation of Christ here seems to attempt to align it with Paul's idea, while the statement that disciples should hate their family and wealth because Jesus did so looks like simplifying the example. It is much better to focus on the expectation of the eschatological judgement than to accept the idea of imitation. These investigations show what discipleship is in the perspective of the Gospels. In the summary of his article Samra (2003:234) argues that not only in the Gospels, but also in the letters of the New Testament, "[d]iscipleship is the process whereby someone becomes more like Christ". The meaning of discipleship contains "becoming a disciple" (salvation) and "being a disciple" (sanctification) in the process (Samra, 2003:220). According to Samra (2003:222-224), the idea of discipleship was required to change because of Jesus' physical absence after His ascension. This is the reason why the word for disciple was replaced with μιμητής in the Pauline epistles. Kim (2003:224) also states the opinion that Paul dropped the Gospel tradition on discipleship because Jesus was no longer on earth. In another of Paul's letters

(Phil. 3:17), it is noted that the implication of “absence” in the word μιμητής is confirmed (Jensen, 2010:27). I agree with the opinion that μαθητής was changed to μιμητής because of Jesus’ absence.

However, the two words are not semantically equal and Jesus’ ascension is not the only reason for the replacement. Firstly, μαθητής and μιμητής have distinctly different meanings from the perspective of the quality of a relationship. The word μαθητής implies a much closer relationship with a teacher than μιμητής (Rengstorf, 1976:441, 442, 460). This meaning of μιμητής with a relatively distant relationship seems to reflect the absence of the earthly Jesus. Another difference is that the “a principle of tradition” of μαθητής is not used in the New Testament (Rengstorf, 1976:453), contrary to the assertion of Samra (2003:224). Instead, it has the meaning of a witness for Jesus Christ. Secondly, Paul’s usage of μιμητής is the result of Jesus’ earthly absence, but also of the difference of the ministry area and culture between Jesus’ ministry and Paul’s work in Gentile regions. Although the region of Jesus’ ministry was also influenced by Hellenism (Stambaugh & Balch, 1986:88-91), the weight of its influence cannot compare with that in the Gentile regions like Corinth (Stambaugh & Balch, 1986:157-160). It is natural that the greater is the influence from a culture, the greater is the difference in thought and practice. This is the reason why the Corinthian believers struggled with the problem of food offered to idols. In this sense it is important to note that the meaning of μιμητής indicates diversified translations to the new situations (Ehrensperger, 2003:253). This means that Paul used the concept of μαθητής in the Gospels, applying it to the Gentile circumstances in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1.

1.2.3 Problem statement

This study investigates whether there is a common theme of imitation and its reference to discipleship in the Gospels in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1, leading to a reading of the text as a literary unit rather than two separate units.

1.3 THE RESEARCH QUESTION(S)

In the light of the above, the research question is: Is it valid to read 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 as a literary unit based on Paul’s adoption of the idea of discipleship as elucidated in the Gospels by way of his use of μιμητής in the pericope?

Sub-questions arising from this research question are:

- What is the state of research on the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1?
- What is the state of research on the interpretation of Paul’s use of μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1, and its relation to discipleship in the Gospels?

- What then is the relationship between 1 Corinthians 7 and 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 from the perspective of discipleship?
- What conclusions can be drawn from the results of the research?

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 Aim

The main aim of this study is to determine whether it is valid to read 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 as a literary unit based on Paul's adoption of the idea of discipleship as elucidated in the Gospels by way of his use of μιμητής in this pericope.

1.4.2 Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- determine the state of research on the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1
- determine the state of research on the interpretation of Paul's use of μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 and its relation to discipleship in the Gospels
- determine the relationship between 1 Corinthians 7 and 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 from the perspective of discipleship, and
- summarise the results of the research and draw valid conclusions from it.

1.5 THE CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

The central theoretical argument of this study is that it is valid to read 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 as a literary unit based on Paul's adoption of the idea of discipleship as elucidated in the Gospels by way of his use of μιμητής in this pericope.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

This study is conducted from a Reformed perspective. The following methods are used to answer the various research questions:

- In order to determine the state of research on the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1, a literary analysis, including examining the Biblical text, is conducted to determine and evaluate existing viewpoints.
- In order to determine the state of research on the interpretation of Paul's use of μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 and its relation to discipleship in the Gospels, a semantic analysis

(Van Rensburg & De Klerk, 2015:157-200) and a literary analysis are conducted to determine and evaluate the relationship between the topics.

- In order to find the grounds for linking 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 to discipleship in the Gospels, an exegetical analysis (Van Rensburg & De Klerk, 2015:43-156) is conducted.
- In order to determine the relationship between 1 Corinthians 7 and 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 from the perspective of discipleship, the collected data are selected and categorised through analysis, interpretation, and synthesis.

1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The emphasis of the study is on a literature review and textual analysis, hence the ethical risk will be minimal to low. All sources used are referred to, and every effort is made to articulate the viewpoints of various scholars in as balanced and fair a manner as possible. No inflammatory or stereotypical language is used. This study does not include any interviews, nor does it engage in empirical studies of either a quantitative or qualitative nature.

1.8 CHAPTER LAYOUT

1. Introduction
2. Current research on the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1
3. Paul's use of *μιμητής* in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 and its relation to discipleship in the Gospels
4. Grounds for linking 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 to discipleship in the Gospels
5. The relationship between 1 Corinthians 7 and 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 from the perspective of discipleship
6. Summary, conclusion and further research

CHAPTER 2

CURRENT RESEARCH ON THE INTERPRETATION OF 1 CORINTHIANS 7:1–11:1

2.1 INTRODUCTION

1 Corinthians is generally divided into two parts (Trail, 1995:272). The split occurs at chapter 7. In 1 Corinthians 7, Paul starts his reply to the Corinthians' letter, and it is inferred from Paul's frequent usage of *περί δὲ* that he answered each issue of the Corinthians in turn. According to Trail (1995:272, 341), almost all scholars agree that 1 Corinthians 7 and the pericope of 8:1–11:1 are two separate pericopes since each part treats a different question: 1 Corinthians 7 answers questions relating to marriage, while 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 answers questions about food offered to idols. In this chapter the current state of research regarding the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 will be investigated before seeking to incorporate the seemingly different pericopes into one thematic pericope.

2.2 AN UNDERSTANDING OF 1 CORINTHIANS 7 BASED ON PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Through the topic of marriage, 1 Corinthians 7 shows the proper attitude of believers, namely to serve the Lord regardless of their circumstances. Generally, research on 1 Corinthians 7 is divided into two groups. One group relates chapter 7 to chapters 5 and 6. According to this reading, although chapter 7 begins a new section, namely Paul's reply to the letter from the Corinthians, it is difficult to read it apart from chapters 5 and 6. Barnett Barnett (2011:107, 108) especially regards 1 Corinthians 7 as a conclusion to 1 Corinthians 5–7, calling them Paul's 'Holiness Code'. It continues the theme of sexual immorality in the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 5, 6) (Barnett, 2011:109; Marshall, 2015:842). The other group considers chapter 7 as Paul's reply about the topic of marriage as requested in the letter from the Corinthians. To sum up, the first opinion is categorised according to theme and the second focuses on the form of Paul's reply. In this study the latter view is preferred.

2.2.1 1 Corinthians 7:1-7

In verse 1, Paul refers to the letter from the Corinthian believers in order to introduce a new topic. According to some commentators, “καλὸν ἀνθρώπῳ γυναικὸς μὴ ἄπτεσθαι”¹ (v.1) is considered to be a quotation from the Corinthians’ letter (Garland, 1983:351; Blomberg, 1994:133; Thiselton, 2000:498; Smith, 2010:70, 71). Called “the Corinthians’ slogan”, it is inferred from this sentence that there might have been some ascetics among the Corinthians who insisted that the only way for Christians to remain holy was sexual abstinence in an immoral city like Corinth (Robertson & Plummer, 1929:131; Thiselton, 2006:101). Initially Paul agrees with the statement of these Corinthian believers. However, he orders that each person should have their own spouse to avoid sexual immorality (v.2). This part could be mistakenly understood that the single believer should find a wife or husband, but Paul is addressing married couples, advising them of the necessity of maintaining sexual relations with their spouses (Hays, 1997:114). There might have been ascetics who were against all forms of sexual relationships, even between husband and wife (Valentine, 2013:583), yet Paul advises them to fulfil their duties in the husband-wife relationship (v.3, 4).

2.2.2 1 Corinthians 7:8-9

In verses 8 and 9, Paul gives advice to widowers and widows. According to Fee (1987:287, 288), ἀγάμοις should be translated as widower/widow because it does not mean “unmarried” but “demarried”. Here “unmarried” means “never married before” and “demarried” means “formerly married but no longer”. Since advice is later given to unmarried women, it is appropriate to understand verses 8 and 9 as being addressed to those who once were married but do not have a spouse now (Fee, 1987:287, 288). Paul advises those who were married but are now single again not to marry, like himself, if they can control their sexual urges (v.8). Therefore, it would be better to get married if one could not control oneself and this is a better option than to burn in passion (v.9) (Fee, 1987:288-300; Hays, 1997:119; Valentine, 2013:584, 585).

2.2.3 1 Corinthians 7:10-11

In the Gentile context, Paul prohibits married persons to divorce, using Jesus Christ’s authority (v.10, 11) (Instone-Brewer, 2001:105). The separation of a married couple has been forbidden since God’s creation (Gen. 2:24), and Jesus also taught the same (Matt. 19:8). The heart of Paul’s instruction here is that the divorced must remain demarried. However, if they want to remarry, they should remarry their former spouse (v.11a).

¹ “It is good for a man not to touch a woman.” (NASB)

2.2.4 1 Corinthians 7:12-16

Verses 12-16 deal with an issue that might have frequently occurred in Gentile churches such as the Corinthian church: the relationship between believing and unbelieving spouses. Paul considers that the conversion of the head of a house would not necessarily lead to the conversion of the whole family and as a result the condition of such a mixed marriage lasted for a certain period (Hodge, 2010:3). Because this was an extremely unlikely scenario during Jesus' earthly ministry, Paul states first that this is not a command from the Lord (v.12a) (Bruce, 1977:267, 268; Thiselton, 2000:525). Paul starts his instruction with the example of a believing husband and an unbelieving wife (v.12b). In this case, the believing husband should never attempt to divorce the unbelieving wife and *vice versa*: a believing wife should not attempt to divorce an unbelieving husband who is willing to live with her (v.13). This instruction is also based on Paul's principle: stay as you are. However, in the case of the unbelieving spouse leaving, Paul advises to let them do so, and the believing spouse is not under any obligation (v.15a). Verse 16 is key to understanding verse 15b, "ἐν δὲ εἰρήνῃ κέκληκεν ὑμᾶς ὁ θεός"². In this verse, peace refers to what one can enjoy as a result of being called a Christian, i.e. the inner peace of a Christian. It should be understood that the phrase "God has called us to peace" is the reason for the advice in verse 16: do not divorce.

2.2.5 1 Corinthians 7:17-24

In this section, Paul once more suggests the principle "stay as you are" and specifically applies it: "Εἰ μὴ ἐκάστω ὡς ἐμέρισεν ὁ κύριος, ἕκαστον ὡς κέκληκεν ὁ θεός, οὕτως περιπατεῖτω" (v.17).³ He engages the topics of circumcision and slavery according to this principle. Barrett (1968:159) understands these topics as diversifying the principle as applied to marriage to other relationships. However, according to Hays (1997:126), these topics serve as reinforcement of the marriage issue. That is, verse 18-23 supports Paul's teaching on marriage: the married believers do not divorce and the single believers do not search for a partner in haste. Considering the fact that most of chapter 7 deals with the marriage issue, I agree with Hays' opinion. Any believer called as circumcised should not attempt to become uncircumcised and *vice versa* (v.18). The calling in verse 18 means the salvation by faith in Christ. The reason why Paul views those who attempt this in a negative light, is that for a Christian who has received a new life in Christ, it means nothing to be circumcised or not circumcised – what is important, is to follow God's commandment (v.19)

² "But God has called us to peace." (NASB)

³ "Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk." (NASB)

(Thiselton, 2000:551). Each person remains in the condition he/she is called (v.20) for Christians' natural positions become ineffective in faith (Conzelmann, 1975:126). Each Christian is called in their social environment when they are saved. The believer who is called as a slave should not worry about his/her slavery, for it does not matter whether he/she become free, if possible (v.21). Paul teaches that one's circumstances mean nothing – what is significant is the fact that each believer has been called in Christ. Thus he insists that those who were called in the Lord are the Lord's freedmen and at the same time Christ's slaves (v.22). Therefore Christians should not become slaves of men (v.23). The condition when they are saved is assigned by God and His will is to accept their own circumstances and to focus on serving the Lord in their given position (v.24).

2.2.6 1 Corinthians 7:25-38

Before discussing the situation of the unmarried, Paul gives his own opinion, since Jesus does not give any command on this matter (v.25). The reason is differences in context between Jesus and Paul, and thus Paul gives advice on new situations based on the teachings of Jesus. In Paul's advice of remaining as they are (v.26), as to the meaning of τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην, some commentators understand it as the eschatological second coming of the Lord (Blomberg, 1994:151), while others interpret it as the hardships that the churches went through at that time (Barnett, 2011:126). However, the meaning of τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην is better interpreted as the present necessity, namely "the urgent imperative of proclaiming the gospel and doing the work of the Lord" (Hays, 1997:129). This interpretation helps to understand verses 32-34 better. Paul wants his "remain as you are" principle to be observed by Christians (v.27). Thus it is better for the married not to attempt to divorce and for those who are without a spouse – for whatever reason – not to attempt to get married. However, this is not a command but only a suggestion. To get married or not is a matter of *adiaphora*⁴, so each one has a choice (v.28a), which should be exercised based on his/her service to Christ.

2.2.7 1 Corinthians 7:39-40

To summarise his reply to the Corinthians' question on marriage, Paul advises that the marriage is valid as long as the spouse is alive, and the second marriage is possible only after the spouse's death. However, this possibility is limited by the phrase "μόνον ἐν κυρίῳ"⁵ (v.39), which means that one should marry a believer except in the case of verses 12-16 (Thiselton, 2006:120).

⁴ "indifference" (Reese, 1955:348)

⁵ "Only in the Lord" (NASB)

However, in the last verse Paul emphasises that his opinion, that a widow is happier if she stays single, is also trustworthy according to the Spirit of God (v.40).

2.2.8 Conclusion

1 Corinthians 7 is Paul's answer to the Corinthians' question on marriage. The key to the answer is to stay as you are from the perspective of present necessity. As a Christian, it is improper to seek short-lived value in this world, but proper to be faithful to the Lord. In this context, Paul prefers celibacy. However, marriage is not a subject of truth but rather of individual choice. In this pericope Paul is more concerned about how Christians can glorify God and serve the Lord in their position than with marriage itself.

2.3 AN UNDERSTANDING OF 1 CORINTHIANS 8:1–11:1 BASED ON PREVIOUS ΜΙΜΗΤΗΣ RESEARCH

In 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1, Paul tries to persuade the Corinthians to abandon their rights to eat, but instead to deny themselves for the sake of those who are weak (Hays, 1997:144). Paul answers the issue of eating food sacrificed to idols as it was one of the questions put to him in a letter from the Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians 8, Paul points out that the knowledge that the Corinthians boast about is in vain if they lack love for others. The so-called strong believers eat the food sacrificed to idols with the theological knowledge that an idol is nothing (Thiselton, 2000:622). However, Paul argues that their knowledge, when not accompanied by love, has a harmful effect on the so-called weak believers. In 1 Corinthians 9 Paul shows how to express love for others through his own example. His method of showing love to others is to abandon his claim to what is rightfully his. By the renunciation of his rights, he has become all things to all men for the sake of their salvation (9:22) and has done all in the interest of the gospel (9:23). In 1 Corinthians 10 Paul urges the Corinthians to remain humble before God's grace instead of growing arrogant, warning of the danger should they forget the grace of God and return to worshipping pagan idols. In addition, it is noted that the concern for the weak is expanded to include interest in the salvation of everyone, including the Corinthians themselves. In conclusion, Paul invites the Corinthian believers to live a life that imitates Christ as he is doing (11:1). Generally speaking, 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 falls under one of the so-called μιμητής pericopes in the Pauline epistles (1 Cor. 4:16; Phil. 3:17; 1 Thess. 1:6; 2 Thess. 3:7, 9)⁶. The reason is that the

⁶ The so-called 'authentic' Pauline epistles are Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians and Philemon. The rest have been regarded as 'inauthentic' (Isaak, 2015:60). However, I consider them all to be authentic Pauline epistles.

imitation of Christ in 1 Corinthians 11:1 is regarded as the theme of this pericope (Kim, 2003:219). Paul's purpose in writing 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 is that the believers in Corinth become imitators of himself and Jesus Christ.

I will now deal with the elements of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1.

2.3.1 1 Corinthians 8

In Corinthians 8, dealing with the issue of foods sacrificed to idols, Paul emphasises the idea of love for others. Although he admits that the strong believer is free to eat this food, he argues that the freedom might be abused if no consideration is given to the weak believers. In Corinth, one of the important cities of the Roman Empire, idolatry was part of the city culture, like other cities at the time (White, 2013:538-540). In other words, to worship heathen gods not only had obvious religious significance, but also affected a large part of everyday life (Barnett, 2011:136; White, 2013:539, 540). It was part of accepted social life to serve pagan gods and eat food sacrificed to them. Therefore not participating in the meal meant isolating oneself from the community (Cheung, 1999:35). In this sense the problem of eating food offered to idols must have been a very sensitive issue for the Christian congregation of Corinth (Hays, 1997:134). It is clear that there was a serious dispute regarding this issue in the Corinthian church between the strong members who ate the sacrificed food and the weak who refrained from doing so. Paul says that the solution to this problem lies in self-discipline for the sake of the well-being of others, that is, for the sake of love towards the weak brothers and sisters (Fee, 1987:363; Blomberg, 1994:163).

2.3.1.1 1 Corinthians 8:1-3

It is recognised that the question of eating idol sacrifices was raised by the strong (Barnett, 2011:137). The purpose of their letter was to ask Paul to agree with their position in the dispute with the weak (Hays, 1997:136). In verse 1, Paul points out that the Corinthian believers' knowledge of the food offered to idols has limited use, even though they are confident that their knowledge is reasonable. "Ἐ γνῶσις φυσιοῖ, δὲ ἀγάπη οἰκοδομεῖ"⁷ (v.1) indicates that knowledge without love is not useful to the community. Thus Paul criticises the Corinthian believers who considered themselves knowledgeable, for their lack of love.

There is an ambiguity in understanding the second verse as it may be understood in two ways. First, considered in relation to verse 1, verse 2 could be understood as pointing out the limitation

⁷ "Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies." (NASB)

of knowledge when love is missing. Knowledge with love constitutes true knowledge, and conversely, when knowledge is lacking love, it cannot function properly. Second, in relation to verse 3, 'εἰ δὲ ἀγαπᾷ τὸν θεόν, οὗτος ἔγνωσται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ'⁸, 'καθὼς δεῖ γινῶαι'⁹ refers to the true knowledge of God (De Wet, 2009:313). The one who knows God without love does not have knowledge of the true God. True knowledge is fulfilled by love rather than by theological knowledge (Barnett, 2011:137, 138).

2.3.1.2 1 Corinthians 8:4-13

In verses 4-6 Paul seems to quote information contained in the letter sent by the Corinthians. The part that an idol is nothing and that the eating of sacrificed food is not a problem, would be attributed to the strong believers (Fee, 1987:376; Barnett, 2011:145). In this part an opportunity to verify the Corinthian believers' theological knowledge could be provided.

The strong believers of the Corinthian church took their position on the eating of food offered to idols based on their knowledge of God as the one and only God. For the twofold reason that there is no God except one and so-called gods are nothing in the world, it does not matter that believers eat the food sacrificed to idols. From verse 7 Paul commences his reply to this opinion held by certain Corinthians. Pointing out that not everyone has the appropriate theological knowledge, Paul argues that these Corinthian believers follow an erroneous principle. If every believer had proper knowledge of God, as the Corinthians said, there would indeed not have been a problem with eating sacrificed food. However, at that time, considering the fact that the Corinthian church was located in this famous pagan region, and also considering the believers who were converted from among the Gentiles and joined the church (Hays, 1997:141), they likely had an idea that idols existed because their idolatry was "woven into their consciousness and emotion" for a long time. It could not have been easy for them to eat the idol food without hesitation (Fee, 1987:379). Even if they joined the church and obtained appropriate theological knowledge, there was the possibility that they could not match the knowledge to their idea about idols due to their habitual idolatry. Fee (1987:381) argues that the weak believers "could not cope with the dissonance between their heads and their hearts". The argument of the strong that everyone had the knowledge was nothing but a limited assertion referring to a fragmentary knowledge without inner conviction (Barnett, 2011:142). Thus some believers became weak in their conscience and felt defiled when confronted with the problem of eating food offered to idols since not everyone had

⁸ "But if anyone loves God, he is known by Him." (NASB)

⁹ "As he ought to know" (NASB)

proper knowledge. To the believers who claim that everyone has knowledge, Paul indicates that they in some respects do not yet know what they ought to know. Even if the problem of eating food were not influential enough to affect the believer's spiritual relationship with God (v.8) (Murphy-O'Connor, 1979:298), Paul asks the strong to be careful not to let the weak stumble in faith (v.9). Verse 10 describes how the knowledge without love and concern for others causes the weak brothers and sisters to fall. Moreover, the strong should take into consideration the fact that Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself for the weak brothers and sisters and saved them (v.11). Intellectual arrogance without concern for the weak in faith is the same as being sinful before Jesus Christ, who died for them (v.12). Paul's own determination not to cause his brother to stumble, shows the weight of it (v.13).

2.3.2 1 Corinthians 9

1 Corinthians 9 was written for the purpose of presenting Paul's example to the Corinthian church. However, at one time there was the opinion that it was written for the purpose of Paul's defence of his apostleship (Barrett, 1968:200; Fee, 1987:392). Since 1 Corinthians 9 points out both the Corinthian believers' lack of love and Paul's defence of his apostleship, most scholars tend to combine the two opinions (Hock, 1980:60, 61; Hays, 1997:146; Cheung, 1999:142; White, 2013:535). However, Marshall (1987:174) holds that the Corinthian believers basically recognised the rights of Paul the apostle, because Paul's argument could be understood only in the case that they tried to give a donation and he refused it. In this sense it is better to argue that Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 9 to show his own example to the Corinthian believers, not just to defend his apostleship (Kim, 2003:208; White, 2013:536).

In addition, chapter 9 features an expansion of Paul's concern for others. He wants the target audience of the gospel to be enlarged to include all people, saying that the goal of giving up his rights as an apostle is to proclaim the gospel without hesitation. This may show pre-emptively Paul's vision for the Corinthian church as expressed in 1 Corinthians 10:32-33. In 1 Corinthians 9 Paul emphasises that his life's purpose is evangelisation and to this end he disciplines himself like an athlete struggling for victory.

2.3.2.1 1 Corinthians 9:1-2

Paul's questions in verse 1 might imply expected positive responses. Paul wishes the Corinthians to recognise that he also has freedom as they do, even though he is the apostle who planted the church in Corinth and was the starting point of the faith of the Corinthians. As a founder of the Corinthian church, Paul argues that the church is the very seal of his becoming an apostle (v.2). Verse 2 might be translated: "How did that seal become stamped on you, if not from my preaching the gospel?" (Paretsky, 2013:626). It would be understood not only that there are questions about and criticisms regarding his apostleship, but he also lays the foundation for his subsequent

argument, referring to his position and rights as the founder of the Corinthian church (White, 2013:25). As an apostle and founder of the church, Paul's example seems to be the most effective way to persuade the Corinthians (cf. 1 Pet. 5:3).

2.3.2.2 1 Corinthians 9:3-12

From an analysis of the text, it is possible to deduce who criticised Paul at that time. When the flow of 1 Corinthians is considered, it would appear that his critics modified Paul's gospel according to certain Hellenistic ideas. Focusing on wisdom consistent with the ideas of Hellenism might cause the Corinthian believers to mistake themselves for the wise. This seems to be the result of the ministry of Apollos (Fee, 1987:8). Due to an overvaluation of wisdom, Paul could not help contrasting the worldly wisdom with the wisdom from God in the first half of the letter (1 Cor. 1:17-31), and consequently arguing with the strong who asserted their claim to knowledge in the second half. They are also the ones who asked questions about why Paul did not receive financial support as other workers did (Barnett, 2011:148). The questions beginning at verse 4 are regarded as the contents of the criticism: the right to eat and drink (v.4), the right to take a believing wife along on a journey (v.5), and the right not to work for a living (v.6). Although they are presented differently, all the rights converge into one, namely the right to receive financial support from the church. Paul states that self-support is not common practice, citing the examples of a soldier, the owner of a vineyard, and the shepherd of a flock (v.7). This statement is verified by the Law, as Paul quotes Deuteronomy 25:4 (v.8). In addition, if other workers have the right to receive financial aid, Paul as the founder and spiritual father of the Corinthians (1 Cor. 4:15) argues that he is even more entitled to such claim (v.12a). Yet Paul does not enforce his claim because he wishes that there should be no obstacle in the way of the gospel of Jesus Christ, even though waiving a right equated to a kind of insult at that time (Thiselton, 2006:140). Concerns for the weak raised in chapter 8 begin to show signs of expanding the target audience from verse 12 onwards.

2.3.2.3 1 Corinthians 9:13-18

The socio-historic context of verse 13-15 is not clear, i.e. whether it refers to Israelite or Hellenistic practices, but it does not matter since they share a common thread in the sacrificial food (Blomberg, 1994:174, 175). In the case of the Israelites, a priest would receive a portion of a sacrifice and in such a way the workers in the temple made a living from their service. Paul also refers to the fact that Jesus Christ had already ordered that the ministers of the gospel make a living by proclaiming the gospel (v.14, cf. Matt. 10:10). However, in choosing not to use these rights, Paul apparently refers to a different reason from that mentioned in verse 12. The new reason is that he does not want to boast about his preaching of the gospel and the rewards he garners from it. He worries that people might misunderstand the intention of the gospel if he

received a reward for preaching it. His proclamation of the gospel is his calling (v.16). However, Paul affirms that there is a reward, namely preaching the gospel without compensation (v.17, 18).

2.3.2.4 1 Corinthians 9:19-23

In this part Paul explains the reason why he gave up his rights. He wants to be a slave to all people in order to win over many people for the gospel. In other words, Paul might be confident that he could save more people when he becomes a slave for others than when he does not (Robertson & Plummer, 1929:191). If Paul did not add a description, the meaning of his making himself a slave to everyone would be vague (v.19) (Parker, 2012:214), but through a number of examples his meaning becomes clear. Paul states that he has adapted to different situations in order to save as many people as possible. Those four examples are the Jews, those who are under the law, those who are without the law, and those who are weak.

Firstly, Paul became like a Jew in order to win over the Jews (v.20a). Secondly, he became one under the law to those under the law to win over those under the law (v.20b). Those under the law seem to be those among the Gentiles who keep the law and are God-fearing (Hays, 1997:153, 154). Thirdly, the apostle became like one without the law to those without the law, although he is under Christ's law, in order to win over those people. Those not having the law refer to all people except the two cases mentioned above, namely the Gentiles, the basic object of Paul's ministry (v.21). Fourthly, for the sake of the weak, he became weak. This refers again to the issue of eating food offered to idols, which was the starting point of the discussion (v.22). Fee (1987:430) argues that one should be careful not to identify the weak of 1 Corinthians 9:22 with the weak of chapter 8. However, considering that the two groups are included in one issue, as well as Paul's goal with the discussion, the weak of verse 22 of chapter 9 could be seen to refer to the weak in faith who suffered under the problem of eating sacrificed food. The reason why Paul adapted to different cultural backgrounds was to preach the gospel effectively. Thus, the motive that Paul tries to do all things to save a lot of people is to become *συγκοινωνὸς αὐτοῦ*¹⁰ (v.23). Two interpretations of the meaning of *συγκοινωνὸς αὐτοῦ* are generally put forward. One is that Paul expects to receive the blessings of the gospel by struggling to preach it, that is to be blessed with the benefits of the gospel (Barrett, 1968:216; Fee, 1987:432). The other interpretation is that Paul has become a participant in the spreading of the gospel. Plummer (2001:226-230) and Ellington (2011:304) criticise the former opinion, which is supported by Fee, and agree with the latter.

¹⁰ "a fellow partaker of it" (NASB)

2.3.2.5 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

In verse 24 Paul uses a metaphor taken from the world of sport – perhaps the Isthmian Games, where he might have been a spectator – to emphasise that Christians should do their best to receive the prize from God as the winner in the race does (Stambaugh & Balch, 1986:158). The image of only one who receives the winner’s prize (v.24) is focused not only on the one who wins the prize, but also on the attitude of all the participants desiring to win. Or it means that believers should make every effort to save other people, as the runners in the race do in order to win. Verse 25, as supplemented by verse 24, says that what is needed to save souls is strict training. Needless to say, Christians should put in much more effort to receive a crown that will last forever than runners do to receive a perishable prize. For that reason Paul is focusing on a clear goal, like a boxer (v.26). Contextually, his definite aim must be the salvation of people. To this end, Paul beats his body and disciplines himself, also through the hardships of his ministry and, in the context of chapter 9, his self-support. The reason why he leads such a life is that he does not want to be disqualified (v.27).

2.3.3 1 Corinthians 10–11:1

If Paul taught the Corinthians through his personal example in chapter 9, then in 1 Corinthians 10 he wants the Corinthians to know that they should not follow the poor historical examples of the Israelites. The fact that Israel disobeyed God and worshipped idols can be applied even in the case of the Corinthian congregation who disobeyed God’s command of love and practised idolatry. In that sense the goal of chapter 10 is to show how to avoid being disqualified in the race of chapter 9 (Barnett, 2011:168). Fee (1987:477) implies that Paul hopes that the thinking of the strong Corinthians, who regard the sacrificed meal in the temple as *adiaphora*, will be changed and that they will abandon their worshipping of idols. In other words, Paul wants the believers in Corinth to follow the general principle of a God-centred lifestyle (v.31). Specifically Paul admonishes them not to seek their own profit but other people’s (v.33). Finally, Paul orders them to imitate Jesus Christ, whom he himself imitates (11:1).

2.3.3.1 1 Corinthians 10:1-14

In this part Paul testifies that the Israelites that were delivered from Egypt were baptised in the cloud and the sea (v.2), ate the spiritual food (v.3), and drank the spiritual drink from the spiritual rock, Jesus Christ (v.4). The reason why God destroyed the Israelites that were enjoying such blessings was that God was not pleased with most of them (v.5), which seems to express the sum of their disobedience. Through the example of the Israelites that perished even though they went across the sea and ate the spiritual drink and food by God’s help, Paul argues that no miraculous thing, including the sacraments, can guarantee the spiritual safety of the Corinthians

(Fee, 1987:443, 444). The judgment record of the Old Testament regarding the Israelites functions as examples to warn the Corinthian congregation against disobedience to God (v.6).

Paul divides the misdeeds of the Israelites into four categories and warns the Corinthians not to imitate them.

- Firstly, do not be idolaters (v.7). Hays (1997:163) considers verse 7 as referring to a kind of festival before an idol. Quoting Exodus 32:6, he posits that Paul tries to identify eating sacrificed foods with Israel's idolatry, which aroused God's jealousy.
- Secondly, do not commit sexual immorality (v.8). The events in the quoted Numbers 25:1-9 point out the relationship between sexual immorality and idolatry, and are similar to what occurred in the temples in Corinth (Thiselton, 2006:151; Barnett, 2011:172).
- Thirdly, do not test the Lord (v.9). According to Barnett (2011:172), testing the Lord means that the Israelites had doubted God's power as mentioned in Numbers 21:4-7 in spite of God's mercy and constant provision. It implies the Corinthians' challenge to Paul's prohibition regarding the eating of food offered to idols (Fee, 1987:456).
- Fourthly, do not grumble (v.10). Numbers 14:2-4 shows that the Israelites rebelled against Moses and Aaron and wished to return to Egypt. Paul might consider the grudges against Moses to be similar to those of the Corinthians against himself based on his prohibiting policy regarding the weak people eating sacrificed food (Hays, 1997:165).

Verse 11 shows that the aim of the four examples of disobedience is to admonish the Corinthian congregation. The warning that those who think they stand should be careful lest they fall (v.12) might be shocking to the strong Corinthians, in view of Grosheide's statement that the words of "to stand" and "to fall" should be spiritually accepted regarding "eternal salvation" (1953:226). The Corinthians will be helped by God when they meet general trials (v.13) (Fee, 1987:460; Hays, 1997:166), but they should avoid idolatry because there is no support from God when one tests Jesus Christ, as the Corinthian believers are doing (v.14).

2.3.3.2 1 Corinthians 10:15-22

Paul calls the Corinthian believers sensible people and asks them to judge for themselves what he says (v.15). Here the word $\phi\rho\nu\acute{\nu}\mu\omicron\iota\varsigma$ ¹¹ seems to have a slightly sarcastic meaning. Perhaps Paul infers that if they were sensible, they would comprehend and follow his admonition willingly

¹¹ "Wise men" (NASB)

(Hays, 1997:166). Presenting three examples of meals, namely the Lord's Supper (v.16-17), the Jewish meal associated with a sacrifice (v.18), and the pagan meal (v.19), Paul is making the point that those who participate in the meals have a relationship with the divine being. After making it clear that those who participate in the sacrifices to idols are those who have a fellowship with demons (v.20), Paul concludes in verse 21: "οὐ δύνασθε ποτήριον κυρίου πίνειν καὶ ποτήριον δαιμονίων, οὐ δύνασθε τραπέζης κυρίου μετέχειν καὶ τραπέζης δαιμονίων."¹² Then Paul urges the Corinthians not to participate in a meal consisting of food offered to the idols as it represents idolatry, by reminding them of the Israelites' destruction through the judgement that resulted from God's jealousy, which was aroused when they started worshipping idols (v.22). Paul is about to proceed to the conclusion of the long discussion by pointing out the substantial dangers in the practice of eating food that has been sacrificed to idols.

2.3.3.3 1 Corinthians 10:23–11:1

Paul wants to finalise the discussion regarding the eating of sacrificed foods that he began in chapter 8. It is important to know that Christians have the freedom to do everything so that everything is permissible, but it should be also realised that not everything is beneficial or constructive (v.23). In other words, although all Christians have the freedom to do everything, it might be limited by others' benefits. It depends on whether the freedom works for the profit of others, not for oneself (v.24) (Mackie, 2013:319). This is the essence of Christian freedom. Paul is applying this decisive principle to the problem facing the Corinthians. Verse 25 says: "Πᾶν τὸ ἐν μακέλλῳ πωλούμενον ἐσθίετε μηδὲν ἀνακρίνοντες διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν."¹³ As pointed out by several scholars, it seems that the sacrificed meat was taken from the temple and sold at the market (Barnett, 2011:136). Thus Christians could unknowingly buy sacrificed meat and eat it, leading to a troubled conscience, because the food out of the temple was also considered as divine (Cheung, 1999:33). Paul distinguishes this situation from eating sacrificed foods in the temple itself. He considers eating the sacrificed food in the temple as practising idolatry, but not buying food coming from the temple at the market and eating it. This is because "τοῦ κυρίου γὰρ ἡ γῆ καὶ τὸ πλήρωμα αὐτῆς"¹⁴ (v.26). Simply put, Paul asks Christians to carefully consider the conscience of the weak, which might be in conflict when they see the source of the food. Paul

¹² "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons." (NASB)

¹³ "Eat anything that is sold in the meat market without asking questions for conscience' sake." (NASB)

¹⁴ "For the earth is the Lord's, and all it contains." (NASB)

provides another important application. When Christians are invited by unbelievers to dine with them, they are asked to eat the host's food without questioning its origin (v.27). Perhaps, if someone informed them that the food had been sacrificed, Christians should not eat the food for the sake of the informer and the conscience (v.28). Although there is some debate as to whose conscience Paul is referring to (the informer's or the guest's) (Fee, 1987:483-485), what is important is Paul's emphasis on the principle of giving up the Christian freedom to eat the food for the sake of others. In other words, Christians have a right to enjoy the freedom so that they are able to eat the foods from God in gratitude (v.30), which is a balanced instruction between love and freedom (Kim, 2003:225). However, God's kindness for other people should also be practically considered (Barnett, 2011:189). In verse 31 Paul replaces the slogan that not everything is permissible (10:23) with that of "πάντα εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ"¹⁵ (10:31) This slogan implies that renouncing the right to eat the sacrificed food for the sake of others, glorifies God (Kim, 2003:201) and the appearance of the glory of God depends on loving each other. The life that glorifies God requires from Christians not to cause other people to stumble, namely Jews, Greeks and all who are in the church of God (v.32). Paul once more presents his own life as an example in order that the Corinthian believers should live for the salvation of others and not their own profit (v.33). He is willing to show his life as a role model because he considers himself to follow Christ's self-sacrificial life (11:1) (Hays, 1997:180).

2.3.4 Conclusion

To conclude, in 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 Paul's point is that Christians should live self-sacrificing lives and renounce their rights in the church of God. Specifically speaking, he firstly wants the Corinthian church to maintain its unity as the body of Christ. Secondly, Paul's advice is orientated by the progress of the gospel, so that giving up one's rights is not a goal in itself but a tool for evangelism. In conclusion, Paul teaches that this is a way to imitate the life of Jesus Christ.

2.4 CONCLUSION

The aim of chapter 2 was to examine the current state of research on the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1. This pericope is divided as follows: One section deals with the topic of marriage (1 Cor. 7) and another with the eating of food offered to the idols (1 Cor. 8:1–11:1), matters that were raised in correspondence from the congregation in Corinth. The first section emphasises that Corinthian believers should seek devotion to Christ regardless of their

¹⁵ "All to the glory of God" (NASB)

circumstances, including marriage. The second section shows that imitating Christ means to love others. In conclusion, previous research on 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 largely focused on these two questions posed to Paul by the Corinthians, and thus the larger literary unit is divided into two separate pericopes.

CHAPTER 3

PAUL'S USE OF ΜΙΜΗΤΗΣ IN 1 CORINTHIANS 7:1–11:1 AND ITS RELATION TO DISCIPLESHIP IN THE GOSPELS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the dissertation is to determine whether it is valid to read 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 as a literary unit based on Paul's adoption of the concept of discipleship as it occurs in the Gospels by way of his use of μιμητής in this pericope. In chapter 2 the state of research on the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 was examined. It was noted that 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 have generally been regarded as separate pericopes. In this chapter, the meaning of μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 11:1 and that of discipleship in the Gospels will be studied, and the relationship between the key words will be researched through semantic analysis and literary analysis. This research will follow the synchronic and diachronic approaches expounded by Van Rensburg and De Klerk (2015:157-200).

3.2 METHOD FOR WORD STUDY

This word study will be conducted according to the following 10 phases (Van Rensburg & De Klerk, 2015:158-171).

Phase 1: Consult Louw and Nida Volume 2. The entry associated with the target word according to Louw and Nida Volume 2 is written down.

Phase 2: Interpret the data from Volume 2. The information on the target word provided by the index from Volume 2 is explained.

Phase 3: Focus within context. It is decided which domain(s) indicated by Louw and Nida is (are) most relevant in the context.

Phase 4: Consult Louw and Nida Volume 1. This phase aims at discovering the related reference of the semantic domain(s) and sub-domain(s) selected in phase 3.

Phase 5: The relative position of the semantic domain. The semantic domain of the target word is placed in the context of neighbouring semantic domains.

Phase 6: Contrasting with direct adjacent semantic domains. In this phase it is important to contrast the relevant semantic domain with the directly adjacent domains. The aim is to find a unique aspect indicated by this semantic domain.

Phase 7: Contrasting with sub-domains. After investigating the sub-domains of the related semantic domain, the different sub-domains are contrasted with one another to find a unique aspect indicated by the meaning of the concerned sub-domain.

Phase 8: Contrasting the meanings of the words within the sub-domain. After analysing the relevant sub-domain, the differences between the meanings of the different words are contrasted with one another in order to discover an accurate definition of the meaning of the target word.

Phase 9: Diachronic word study. From phase 1 to phase 8 the steps represent a synchronic study. Now it is necessary to attempt a diachronic study to provide balance to the investigation.

Phase 10: Final definition of meaning. The information derived from phase 1-9 provides a final definition of the meaning of the target word.

In this investigation, the lexicon of Louw and Nida (1988) will be primarily used for the synchronic word study while the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Kittel, 1964a) as well as the New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (Brown, 1978) will be used for the diachronic word study.

3.3 THE MEANING OF ΜΙΜΗΤΗΣ

In the case of μιμητής, the second volume of Louw and Nida (1988:164) presents only one possible meaning, and thus phases 1-5 of the method are not required.

3.3.1 Phase 6: Contrasting with direct adjacent semantic domains

According to the second volume of Louw and Nida (1988:164), μιμητής indicates an imitator in domain 41 (“Behavior and Related States”). The first volume of Louw and Nida (1988:504) points to the specific meaning of μιμητής by comparing the neighbouring domains. The adjacent domains are as follows: domain 38 (“Punish, Reward”), 39 (“Hostility, Strife”), 40 (“Reconciliation, Forgiveness”) and 42 (“Perform, Do”). From these neighbouring domains two deductions can be drawn.

Firstly, the flow of the domains presents a gradual change from a bad relationship to a good relationship. Secondly, after the change from hostility to reconciliation, the fact that a behaviour is performed is interesting. Such performance relates to the change in status of the relationship. As a result μιμητής refers to a kind of behaviour which manifests after the restoration of the relationship between persons. Therefore, μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 11:1 may indicate the imitator’s preparedness to behave in a certain manner within this renewed relationship.

3.3.2 Phase 7: Contrasting with sub-domains

According to Volume 1 of Louw and Nida (1988:509), μιμητής occurs in sub-domain D (“Imitate Behavior”). The other sub-domains within domain 41 are: A (“Behavior, Conduct”), B (“Custom, Tradition”), C (“Particular Patterns of Behavior”) and E (“Change Behavior”). Again, considering the flow of the sub-domains, sub-domain D, together with E, indicates the execution of the behaviours described in sub-domains A-C, moving from established patterns of behaviour to changing or changed behaviour.

Firstly, it is important to distinguish between sub-domain D (“Imitate Behavior”) and E (“Change Behavior”). These sub-domains represent the execution of the behaviour, while sub-domains A, B and C describe the behaviour. Sub-domain D (“Imitate Behavior”) points to performing a traditionally patterned behaviour, while sub-domain E (“Change Behavior”) points to a shift in direction away from the traditional behaviour.

Secondly, there is a clear object to imitate. Sub-domain A and B are common nouns and do not refer to behaviour in specific circumstances. When these general behaviours are continually repeated in specific situations, they become patterned, as indicated by sub-domain C (“Particular Patterns of Behavior”). Sub-domain D (“Imitate Behavior”) and E (“Change Behavior”) both imply the patterned behaviour in the specific situation. However, sub-domain D tends to follow the patterned behaviour while sub-domain E turns the behaviour to a particular direction. Following the patterned behaviour might refer to turning a direction or keeping to a traditional pattern. In this sense, the meaning of “imitator” presupposes the existence of patterned behaviour and a change or maintenance of such behaviour.

3.3.3 Phase 8: Contrasting the meanings of the words within the sub-domain

Μιμητής occurs as entry 41.45 in sub-domain D (“Imitate Behavior”) of domain 41 (“Behavior and Related States”). There are five other entries in the sub-domain, namely μιμέομαι (41.44), συμμιμητής (41.46), περιπατέω τοῖς ἴχνεσιν, στοιχέω τοῖς ἴχνεσιν, ἐπακολουθέω τοῖς ἴχνεσιν (41.47), ἐξακολουθέω (41:48), and προσποιέομαι (41.49). A more exact understanding of the meaning of μιμητής can be gained by contrasting these entries. All these entries refer in general to “to imitate”. However, in the case of ἐξακολουθέω, it refers to the imitation of wrong behaviour (cf. 2 Pet. 1:15, 2:2), while προσποιέομαι refers to imitation with the goal of indicating a presumed intent.

The meaning of μιμητής can provisionally be formulated as follows: μιμητής refers to a positive change of behaviour away from patterned behaviours based on a positive change or improvement in a relationship. In the New Testament this relationship involves the Triune God and the believer. Thus only those who are reconciled with God through Christ can imitate Paul and Christ himself

(Bauder, 1978:492). In other words, μιμητής in the New Testament primarily points to following the patterned behaviour according to the tradition that originated from Jesus Christ.

3.3.4 Phase 9: Diachronic word study

This study will show how μιμητής or the related words were used in Greek literature from the classical Greek authors up to the early Church Fathers.

3.3.4.1 The non-Biblical use of μιμητής

According to Michaelis (1976:659, 660), μιμέομαι first occurred in the 6th century B.C. Initially it referred to man's imitation or mimicking of animals, e.g. weaving from spiders or building from swallows. Art was also considered as the imitation of reality, albeit a diminished reality according to Plato's concepts of idea and phenomenon. Accordingly, things referred to by the word group μιμέομαι were regarded as poor imitations and unoriginal. By contrast, within the ethical sphere, the word group was used positively to denote the imitation of a good example.

It is especially important to know that the term "imitation" was often used cosmologically in Greek thinking, following the philosophy of Plato. He considered reality to be a poor imitation of the idea, or "transcendent universal form" (De Boer, 1962:4). Conversely, Aristotle accepts it positively (Kim, 2011:152). He thinks the imitation is natural and manifests some potential (De Boer, 1962:5, 6). Thus a person who worships a god, imitates that god, although in an imperfect manner. De Boer (1962:4, 5) and Michaelis (1976:663) argue that the cosmological concept of μιμέομαι is not related to the imitation of God and Christ in the New Testament since the statements in the New Testament clearly have an ethical characteristic contrary to the cosmological concept.

3.3.4.2 The use of μιμητής in the Jewish world

The word group of μιμέομαι occurs extremely infrequently in Jewish literature. The idea of imitating God is irrelevant and does not exist in the Old Testament (De Boer, 1962:4; Michaelis, 1976:663, 664). In the Septuagint the concept of imitation is unfamiliar and there is no the idea of the imitation of God (Michaelis, 1976:663). However, the word group was used to a considerable extent in later Jewish writings. In the case of Philo, it indicates "the conscious imitation of a model" or "simply comparison" (Michaelis, 1976:665, 666). Similarly Josephus uses the term for "the conscious imitation of the qualities or acts of others" or "only a comparison" (Michaelis, 1976:666). Under the influence of Greek philosophy, it refers to cosmological ideas, "a simple comparison or likeness" (De Boer, 1962:13) and progress regarding human development (Bauder, 1978:491). Among these meanings, the latter was most common (De Boer, 1962:13). It implies that "one person, being under the influence of another, or at least in acquaintance with another, seeks to become like that person in a certain respect" (De Boer, 1962:13).

3.3.4.3 The use of μιμητής in Paul's letters

Apart from 3 John and Hebrews the word group of μιμέομαι is mainly used in Paul's letters in the New Testament (Michaelis, 1976:666). The word group refers to the imitation of something or someone with spiritual development as the goal. However, there are various objects of imitation in Paul's letters (De Boer, 1962:14). The meaning of the words in Paul's letters is more or less abstract in the sense that the content to imitate should be provided (Bolt, 2013:29). Fortunately, Paul provides the content of a definite salvific goal (Ellington, 2011:303; Johnson, 2013:317). It is likely that, through the admonition to imitate, the apostle wants to express "a way of life rooted in the image of Christ crucified" (Kim, 2011:151) rather than an identical reproduction (cf. Bennema, 2014:262).

There are three contrasting views of imitation in Paul's letters. Clarke (1998:331, 332) summarises these as follows: Firstly, Paul uses the idea of imitation as a means of demanding obedience. Secondly, Paul's usage of imitation is just a rhetorical tool to strengthen his authority. Thirdly, the imitation focuses on acting like the apostle, who shows self-sacrificing humility, and his purpose is the spiritual growth of believers. It is important to note that the concept of imitation in Paul's writings moves towards positive results in terms of the development of believers' conduct and spirituality.

3.3.4.4 The use of μιμητής in Early Christianity after the New Testament era

In the Christian communities after the New Testament period, the concepts expressed in the word group had become much more accepted (Michaelis, 1976:673). The Apostolic Fathers tended to connect the imitation with suffering represented by martyrdom (De Boer, 1962:15), based on the suffering of Christ. It is also interesting to note that "no one has followed Paul's example and called for the imitation of himself" (De Boer, 1962:15). It indicates that the meaning of imitation became concentrated on suffering in imitation of Christ because of the difficult circumstances endured by the believers.

3.3.5 Phase 10: Final definition of the meaning

From the data analysed above, a probable definition of the meaning of μιμητής as it is used in 1 Corinthians 11:1 can be formulated.

Μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 11:1 refers to an imitator. It has the concrete content of the imitation which can be deduced from the context of Paul's admonitions to the believers (1 Cor. 7:1–11:1), namely a way of life characterised by sacrificing oneself for the sake of others. Also, the believer is only capable of such imitation after he or she has been reconciled with God (Agan, 2013:806). This indicates that Paul demands of the Corinthian believers to be more mature in faith, turning their wrong behaviour into behaviour that imitates himself and Christ. The imitation that Paul calls

the Corinthians to, has maturity in faith as the end-goal. Thus the process of imitation is aimed at the development of a believer or congregation and results in positive growth (Sanders, 1981:361, 362) based on the traditionally patterned behaviour (1 Cor. 15:1). In conclusion, “imitator” in 1 Corinthians 11:1 refers to the converted Christian who endeavours to follow the example of self-sacrifice for the sake of others as exemplified by Paul and Jesus Christ (Laurence, 1986:289).

3.4 THE MEANING OF ΜΑΘΗΤΗΣ

The noun “discipleship”, namely being a disciple, does not occur in the New Testament. Thus, the representative Greek word regarding discipleship, μαθητής, will be studied to determine the meaning of being a disciple. Additionally, other related words namely μαθητεύω (the verb form of μαθητής) and ἔρχομαι (used to refer to the same meaning as μαθητεύω in the context of Luke 14) will also be investigated.

3.4.1 Μαθητής

3.4.1.1 Phase 1: Consult Louw & Nida Volume 2

The entry under μαθητής in Volume 2 of Louw and Nida (1988:155) reads as follows:

Μαθητής, οὖ μ

Follower	36.38
Pupil	27.16

3.4.1.2 Phase 2: Interpreting the data from Volume 2

The entry in Volume 2 of Louw and Nida (1988:155) can be summarised as follows: The word μαθητής is used in two different semantic domains in the New Testament, namely semantic domain 36 “follower” and semantic domain 27 “pupil”.

3.4.1.3 Phase 3: Focus within context

In the New Testament μαθητής refers to a disciple in general (Müller, 1978:487). However, in this investigation μαθητής in Luke 14:26-35 is selected to describe the meaning of μαθητής in the pericope that deals with the concept of discipleship. In this pericope it is not immediately apparent which of the two meanings we are dealing with: disciple or pupil. Therefore it will be necessary to examine both entries.

3.4.1.4 Phase 4: Consult Louw & Nida Volume 1

Sub-domains 27.16 and 36.38 in Volume 1 of Louw and Nida (1988:328, 471) are the following:

27.16 μαθητής, οἷ m: a person who learns from another by instruction, whether formal or informal – ‘disciple, pupil.’ ‘No pupil is greater than his teacher; but every pupil, when he has completed his training, will be like his teacher’ (Luke 6:40).

36.38 μαθητής, οἷ m: a person who is a disciple or follower of someone – ‘disciple, follower.’ ‘The next day John was there again with two of his disciples’ (John 1:35).

3.4.1.5 Phase 5: The relative position of the semantic domain

At this stage it is noted that there is a difference between the two domains. In Luke 14:26-35 μαθητής tends toward semantic domain 36 because it implies a certain action to become a μαθητής, but it also bears the intellectual aspect of μαθητής in domain 27 as is shown in Jesus’ teaching through parables in Luke 14:15-24. In this sense, both semantic domains will be investigated. The definitions which semantic domains 27 and 36 provide for μαθητής are a “pupil” and “follower” respectively.

3.4.1.6 Phase 6: Contrasting with direct adjacent semantic domains

3.4.1.6.1 Semantic domain 27: Pupil

Semantic domain 27 (“Learn”) is followed by 28 (“Know”). This link indicates that the process of learning is required to become a pupil, and that knowledge is required to be a pupil. A pupil refers to the one who learns something in order to obtain knowledge.

3.4.1.6.2 Semantic domain 36: Follower

Semantic domain 36 (“Guide, Discipline, Follow”) is preceded by 35 (“Help, Care for”). It is followed by 37 (“Control, Rule”). There are two observations.

Firstly, the flow of the semantic domains from 35 to 37 is intensified in a hierarchical sense.

Secondly, semantic domain 36 has a possibility to aim toward semantic domain 37 (“Control, Rule”).

Therefore the meaning of μαθητής in Luke 14:26-35 may indicate the one who is following someone, who is guided and disciplined in a certain direction. In the process a hierarchical order

would be strengthened so that a master-disciple relationship might become a lord-servant relationship (2 Pet. 1:1)¹⁶.

3.4.1.7 Phase 7: Contrasting with sub-domains

3.4.1.7.1 Semantic domain 27: Pupil

Μαθητής is in sub-domain A (“Learn”) in Volume 1 of Louw and Nida (1988:328). This sub-domain has a comprehensive meaning. The other sub-domains show the content, specific object, and attitude comprising the learning process. In that sense sub-domain A may include the rest of the sub-domains. Thus μαθητής indicates the one who learns something in a general sense.

3.4.1.7.2 Semantic domain 36: Followers

According to the first volume of Louw and Nida (1988:465), μαθητής occurs in sub-domain D (“Follow, Be a Disciple”). This contrasts with sub-domains A and B, which relate to aspects of being a master (“Guide, Lead, Discipline and Train”) and sub-domain C, which relates to the state of being a disciple (“Obey, Disobey”). One concludes that μαθητής is the one who obeys a master’s instruction and is being guided, led, disciplined, and trained by his master’s teaching.

3.4.1.8 Phase 8: Contrasting the meanings of the words within the sub-domain

3.4.1.8.1 Semantic domain 27: Pupil

According to Volume 1 of Louw and Nida (1988:328), μαθητής in semantic domain 27 (“Learn”) is in the entry 27.16. In sub-domain A there are 26 entries, which are divided into several parts. From 27.1 to 27.22 except for 27.17, the words are related to learning something. In 27.17 the word has a causative form so that it indicates causing someone to learn something. The rest of the sub-domain refers to the meaning “uneducated”.

Except for 27.17 and the rest of the meaning “uneducated”, the words referring to learning something can also distinguished. The word μαθητής (27.16) in semantic domain 27 indicates to learn something from another by instruction. The word παραλαμβάνω (27.13) refers to getting information from someone. However, the word might be more specific than μαθητής because it tends to focus on a tradition. Additionally, some refer to learning something from personal experience (27.14) or reflection (27.15). In semantic domain 27 μαθητής refers to one who learns something from someone by instruction. It is different from the word in the causative form and the

¹⁶ In Volume 1 of Louw and Nida (1988:472) δοῦλος is one of the words in semantic domain 37.

words eliminating transmission by someone. Here μαθητής indicates simply a student being taught by a teacher.

3.4.1.8.2 Semantic domain 36: Follower

In Volume 1 of Louw and Nida (1988:470, 471) μαθητής occurs as entry 36.38 in sub-domain D (“Follow, Be a Disciple”) of domain 36 (“Guide, Discipline, Follow”). There are twelve other entries in the sub-domain, namely μαθητεύω, ἀκολουθέω (36.31), παρακολουθέω (36.32), ἐξακολουθέω (36.33), πείθομαι (36.34), ὀπίσω (36.35), ἀπέρχομαι εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω (36.36), μαθητεύω (36.37), υἱός (36.39), τέκνον (36.40), μαθήτρια (36.41), συμμαθητής (36.42), ἀρνέομαι (36.43).

These entries are divided into four categories. The first is “to follow” or “be a disciple”. The second is “to cause someone to become a disciple”. The third is “fellow disciple” and the final category is “to refuse to follow”. The second and third categories refer to a task or status after becoming a disciple. The final category is contrasted with the first, which is the main focus of this investigation. Thus it should be noted here that there is a difference between the meanings in the first category. Among them πείθομαι is noteworthy. It may indicate that the initiative of the relationship between a teacher and disciple comes from the disciple (Acts 5:36). In contrast, μαθητής indicates that the initiative comes from the teacher (Matt. 4:19; 9:9).

Before a diachronic word study is commenced, the meaning of μαθητής can be formulated as follows: a disciple refers to one who follows a teacher. The teacher takes the initiative in calling a disciple and guides, leads, disciplines, and trains the disciple. The important aspect is that the master’s teaching is not limited to helping or caring for his disciple, since the disciple is in the process of intensified training under a hierarchical relationship, including guidance and discipline.

3.4.1.9 Phase 9: Diachronic word study

3.4.1.9.1 The non-Biblical use of μαθητής

In the Greek world μαθητής primarily indicates an apprenticeship, which refers to “a direct dependence of the one under instruction upon an authority superior in knowledge” (Rengstorf, 1976:416), except in the case of an indirect dependence to “a thinker long since dead” (Müller, 1978:484). In philosophy the word is used to point out a student of a teacher and also to show loyalty to a philosopher (Rengstorf, 1976:416). Finally, in a broader sense, μαθητής is used to refer to an “intellectual link between those who are considerably removed in time” (Rengstorf, 1976:416). Here it is noteworthy that μαθητής is explained with regard to μιμεῖσθαι when it is said that “Socrates is the true μαθητής of Homer” (Rengstorf, 1976:417).

Μαθητής can be understood in two senses. One refers to “an external connection with the goal of picking up certain information or aptitudes under expert direction” (Rengstorf, 1976:417). The

second sense is “a materially grounded fellowship which arises under a goal which is certainly directed by an individual, but towards which all who participate are equally striving” (Rengstorf, 1976:417). The former might indicate a pupil and the latter a disciple. When it is noted that Socrates avoids the use of the word μαθητής, he may understand the word as a pupil (Rengstorf, 1976:418; Müller, 1978:484). To sum up, when μαθητής refers to a pupil or disciple, a pupil might demonstrate a functional relation while a disciple implies a close fellowship. As a result, the difference between pupil and disciple might depend on the relative closeness between pupil/disciple and teacher/master.

There were two forms of master-disciple relationships in antiquity – one in the field of philosophy and the other in the sphere of religion. In the philosophical field, Socrates avoided the use of the word because it corresponded to its use by the Sophists, who asked money in return for their teaching of knowledge. In spite of his refusal, μαθητής is likely to be the receiver of a kind of fellowship including transferring knowledge in the school of Plato (Rengstorf, 1976:419, 420). The characteristic of Plato’s academy is similar to that of the mystery religions. For religion a fellowship of members is more important than conveying information. In ancient society a μαθητής used to regard his leader as a god. The disciples of a religion considered their leader’s messages as truth and in turn proclaimed them (Rengstorf, 1976:421-423), specifically in the case of the Neo-Pythagorean, Apollonius of Tyana, whose disciples were in some respects considerably similar to the disciples of Jesus Christ in the New Testament (Rengstorf, 1976:422, 423).

3.4.1.9.2 The use of μαθητής in the Old Testament and Judaism

In the Old Testament there might be few instances of the relationship between a disciple and teacher. However, the instances that have been regarded as referring to a teacher-disciple relationship rather correspond to a lord-servant or recipient-assistant relationship (Müller, 1978:485). This is because the religion of Israel is derived from revelation (Rengstorf, 1976:427-431).

In Judaism, תלמיד, which refers to μαθητής, means the member of a school and tradition, emphasising the dominating status of the Torah. In this regard Judaism and the Old Testament have nothing in common with each other except for the absolute authority of the Torah. Judaism was rather influenced by Hellenism and accepted the Hellenistic teaching style so that תלמיד indicates a disciple in a teacher-disciple relationship (Rengstorf, 1976:430-440). This is contrary to Jesus’ disciples, of whom is required “the unconditional sacrifice of his whole life” (Müller, 1978:488).

3.4.1.9.3 The use of μαθητής in the New Testament and the early church

The word μαθητής occurs only in the Gospels and Acts. In most cases Jesus' μαθηταί refer to "the men who have attached themselves to Jesus as their Master" (Rengstorf, 1976:441). This assumes that the disciples had close contact with Jesus although there is an exception in Acts 6:1.¹⁷ In the relationship with His disciples, Jesus took the initiative to call them and they are bound to His person, unlike the rabbis, whose followers concentrated on the Torah, not the rabbi's person (Ladd, 1975:108). Jesus' disciples are required to show total commitment (Tanner, 2013:46), including radically severing their human relationships and instead suffering with Jesus (Winbery, 1988:104, 117; Hays, 2009:54). Of course, they also share in his work. For Jesus Christ the disciples are witnesses and students of Himself. However, Jesus Christ might place emphasis on his disciples being witnesses (Müller, 1978:490) rather than mere students of tradition. In the case of Paul, he is likely to recognise the existence of tradition (1 Cor. 15:1-3).

In the early church μαθητής is used in reference to intellectual cohesion without straightforward teaching so that this usage is connected with the appearance of the idea of imitating Christ (Rengstorf, 1976:460). This concept already occurs in the Pauline epistles. Specifically Paul states that he becomes an example for those who would believe later (1 Tim. 1:16).

3.4.1.10 Phase 10: Final definition of the meaning

Μαθητής in Luke 14:26-35 indicates a follower/disciple of Jesus Christ. The disciples are the people who have a close relationship with Jesus (Winbery, 1988:104; Kim, 2003:224). However, they do not take the initiative in being disciples. Only Jesus has the authority to call His disciples. They are in the process of intensified training under a hierarchical relationship, including guidance and discipline. As followers of Jesus, the disciples are more proper as witnesses of Him rather than members of a tradition (Laurence, 1986:287).

3.4.2 Μαθητεύω

3.4.2.1 Phase 1: Consult Louw & Nida Volume 2

The entry under μαθητεύω in Volume 2 of Louw and Nida (1988:155) reads as follows:

Μαθητύω

Follow

36.31

¹⁷ In this verse, it is not clear whether all the disciples had such close contact with Jesus.

3.4.2.2 Phase 2: Interpreting the data from Volume 2

The entry in Volume 2 of Louw and Nida (1988:155) can be summarised as follows: The word μαθητεύω is used in only one semantic domain in the New Testament, namely semantic domain 36 (“Guide, Discipline, Follow”). However, there are two sub-domains for the word.

3.4.2.3 Phase 3: Focus within context

As noted above, μαθητεύω has two meanings. Thus each meaning has its own context. In the case of “Follow” (36.31), it occurs in Matthew 27:57. The sub-domain 36.37 “Make Followers” is found in Matthew 28:19.

3.4.2.4 Phase 4: Consult Louw and Nida Volume 1

The sub-domains 36.31 and 36.37 in Volume 1 of Louw and Nida (1988:470, 471) are the following:

36.31 μαθητεύω, ἀκολουθέω: to be a follower or a disciple of someone, in the sense of adhering to the teachings or instructions of a leader and in promoting the cause of such a leader – “to follow, to be a disciple of”. “And he was also a disciple of Jesus” (Matt. 27:57). “At once they left their nets and followed him” (Mark 1:18).

36.37 μαθητεύω: to cause someone to become a disciple or follower of – “to make disciples, to cause people to become followers”. “Go then, to all peoples and make them (my) disciples” (Matt. 28:19).

3.4.2.5 Phase 5: The relative position of the semantic domain

The word μαθητεύω has two meanings, but it occurs in only one semantic domain 36 (“Guide, Discipline, Follow”).

3.4.2.6 Phase 6: Contrasting with direct adjacent semantic domains

See 3.4.1.6.2 above in reference to the study of μαθητής.

3.4.2.7 Phase 7: Contrasting with sub-domains

See 3.4.1.7.2 above in reference to the study of μαθητής.

3.4.2.8 Phase 8: Contrasting the meanings of the words within the sub-domain

See 3.4.1.8.2 above in reference to the study of μαθητής.

3.4.2.9 Phase 9: Diachronic word study

According to Rengstorf (1976:461) μαθητεύω cannot be found in the Septuagint, Philo or Josephus. However, μαθητεύω has an evident kinship with μαθητής. The word is both a transitive (Matt. 27:57) and an intransitive verb (Matt. 13:52; 28:19; Acts. 14:21). The usage of the word as a transitive verb implies that “one can become a disciple of Jesus” based on a calling to discipleship (Rengstorf, 1976:461).

3.4.2.10 Phase 10: Final definition of meaning

The meaning of μαθητεύω in Matthew 27:57 refers to the following of Jesus Christ as a disciple (see 3.4.1.10 above). The word has another meaning in Matthew, namely to cause others to follow Jesus Christ voluntarily, according to Volume 1 of Louw and Nida (1988:471). This implies that there is a possibility to become a disciple of Jesus on the basis of a calling to discipleship although one has never seen Him.

3.4.3 Ἔρχομαι

3.4.3.1 Phase 1: Consult Louw and Nida Volume 2

Ἔρχομαι

Go, Come	15.7	
Come	15.81	
Become	13.50	
Happen to	13.117	
ἔρχομαι εἰς	result in	89.43
εἰς τὸ χεῖρον ἔρχομαι	become more sick	23.150
ἔρχομαι ἐν ἐνδύνασιν προβάτων	pretend to be good	88.233
εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἔρχομαι	(a) Learn about	27.4
	(b) Come to understand	32.17

3.4.3.2 Phase 2: Interpreting the data from Volume 2

The entry in Volume 2 of Louw and Nida (1988:105) can be summarised as follows: The word ἔρχομαι is primarily used in two different semantic domains in the New Testament, namely semantic domain 15 (“Linear Movement”) and semantic domain 13 (“Be, Become, Exist, Happen”). Additionally, four ἔρχομαι units occur. Dependent on consisting elements, each unit is included in different semantic domains, as follows: Semantic domain 89 (“Relations”), 23 (“Physiological Processes and States”), 88 (“Moral and Ethical Qualities and Related Behavior”), 27 (“Learn”), and 32 (“Understand”).

3.4.3.3 Phase 3: Focus within context

In the investigation of the word ἔρχομαι, the context is Luke 14:26-35. In the pericope ἔρχομαι denotes to follow Jesus Christ or be a disciple of Him. Jesus' disciple is one who comes to Jesus. However, considering that semantic domain 13 has the meaning of change, it is necessary to investigate this domain.

3.4.3.4 Phase 4: Consult Louw and Nida Volume 1

Sub-domains 13.50 and 13.117 in Volume 1 of Louw and Nida (1988:155, 162, 183, 193) are the following:

13.50 ἔρχομαι: to come into a particular state or condition, implying a process – “to become”. “She did not improve in health, but rather became worse” (Mark 5:26).

13.117 ἔρχομαι: to happen, with the implication of the event being directed to someone or something – “to happen to”. “The things that have happened to me really helped the progress of the gospel” (Phil. 1:12).

3.4.3.5 Phase 5: The relative position of the semantic domain

Semantic domain 13 likely indicates a change of condition. However, considering the concept of discipleship, the meaning of domain 13 seems to be relevant figuratively.

3.4.3.6 Phase 6: Contrasting with direct adjacent semantic domains

3.4.3.6.1 Semantic domain 13: Be, Become, Exist, Happen

Semantic domain 13 (“Be, Become, Exist, Happen”) can be specified through the relationship with semantic domains 12 (“Supernatural Beings and Powers”) and 14 (“Physical events and States”). Semantic domain 13 might be characterised as natural occurrences that originated from the supernatural of semantic domain 12. And semantic domain 14 is likely to be the result of semantic domain 13. As a result, semantic domain 13 might be understood that the supernatural brings about change in the state of believers in the reality of their daily lives.

3.4.3.7 Phase 7: Contrasting with sub-domains

3.4.3.7.1 Semantic domain 13: Be, Become, Exist, Happen

Compared to sub-domains A (“State”), C (“Exist”) and D (“Happen”), sub-domain B (“Change of State”) of semantic domain 13 is focused on an event of change, according to Volume 2 of Louw and Nida (1988:154-157).

3.4.3.8 Phase 8: Contrasting the meanings of the words within the sub-domain

3.4.3.8.1 Semantic domain 13

In Volume 1 of Louw and Nida (1988:154-157), sub-domain B (“Change of State”) of semantic domain 13 might be similarly summarised in three categories. The first category primarily indicates “to become” or “to change”. The second category points out that a subject causes an object to change. The third category refers to the inability to change. In this sub-domain ἔρχομαι occurs in the first category. It is noted that the distinguishing point is that an object voluntarily becomes or changes into a particular condition.

3.4.3.9 Phase 9: Diachronic word study

In general ἔρχομαι is used of “the occurrence of natural events or fateful happenings, or of the rise of states of mind” (Schneider, 1976:666). It is particularly significant that the word is used in a cultic sense, namely requesting the coming of a deity (Schneider, 1976:666).

In the Septuagint the word ἔρχομαι is applied for cultic usage although its meaning is local (Schneider, 1976:667; Balz & Schneider, 1990:667). Thus it refers to “prayer which comes to God, prayer for the coming of the divine mercy” (Schneider, 1976:667). Additionally ἔρχομαι refers to “the coming of God, of His Word, of His angels and prophets to men”, including “the coming of the Messiah” (Schneider, 1976:667). Not only that, but ἔρχομαι also indicates the coming of Satan, ages, “eschatologically decisive days” (Schneider, 1976:667).

In the New Testament and Greek literature the word refers to “coming” and “going” (Schneider, 1976:667). Here “coming” often has “the sense of appearing, of coming forward publicly, of coming on the scene” (Schneider, 1976:667). It is also used of “decisive events, of happenings, of natural phenomena, also of conditions etc.” (Schneider, 1976:667).

Although the use of ἔρχομαι varies in the New Testament (Schneider, 1976:666-675), this part will focus on the coming of men to Jesus (Schneider, 1976:669, 672, 673). In the Synoptic Gospels specifically the coming of men to Jesus includes a cultic action. However, the coming to Jesus should meet “the final demands of Jesus” (Schneider, 1976:669) and the demand is discipleship. This involves “full surrender to Jesus”, implying a “joyful and willing coming to Jesus which rests on a clear resolve of the will” (Mark 8:34) (Schneider, 1976:669). The Gospel of John implies that the coming of men to Jesus is the same as inner readiness to become His disciple (John 1:47), although there are various layers of those who come to Jesus (John 4:30, 40; 6:5; 3:2) (Schneider, 1976:672; Balz & Schneider, 1990). In addition the disciples who come to Jesus are those who are born of the Holy Spirit (3:8), that is they are Christians (Müller, 1978:490). In this sense people do not have the decisive power to come to Jesus Christ but God has (6:45).

3.4.3.10 Phase 10: Final definition of meaning

In the context of the Gospel of Luke 14:26-35, ἔρχομαι first of all refers to coming close to Jesus Christ. The coming of men to Jesus Christ indicates the decision of bearing burdens in order to be His disciple (Luke 14:26, 27). Additionally, the word also has the meaning of “to become”. This implies a change of condition or state. In this sense those who come to Jesus Christ should be changed in state or condition. This might entail the change of a way of life.

3.4.4 Conclusion

From the investigations above it appears that the meaning of discipleship, namely being a disciple of Jesus Christ, is to follow Him and keep a close relationship with Him. On the basis of the relationship the disciple undergoes the process of intensified training in order to be a witness of and to Him. Also, the disciple of Jesus Christ refers to coming to Him. It indicates a sense of one’s decision of full surrender to Him. In addition to being a disciple, the meaning of discipleship also refers to causing others to be His disciples.

3.5 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ΜΙΜΗΤΗΣ AND DISCIPLESHIP

The similarity and difference between the two concepts should be noted from the above studies.

The differences are as follows:

- Firstly, μαθητής is more focused on the direct relationship with Jesus than μιμητής.
- Secondly, μιμητής focuses on maturity after becoming a Christian and μαθητής focuses more on a person under Jesus’ special training for a certain purpose.
- Thirdly, μιμητής is concerned with communal issues (Sanders, 1981:361, 362). The evidence points out that one of its objects of imitation is a Christian community (1 Thess. 1:7; 2:14).
- Fourthly, the aim of μιμητής is to save people and serve others based on the lordship of Christ. On the other hand, μαθητής rather emphasises total commitment to Jesus Christ.
- Fifth, μιμητής has various objects of imitation, unlike μαθητής as used in the Gospels.
- Sixth, the meaning of μαθητής places more emphasis on witnessing to Jesus Christ than μιμητής does (1 Cor. 15:1).

The similarities are as follows:

- Firstly, both ideas refer to those who believe in Jesus Christ. In other words, the terms have the same ultimate object to follow and imitate (Martin, 1999:43).
- Secondly, Jesus Christ takes the initiative in making disciples and imitators (Agan, 2013:806).
- Thirdly, the two key words indicate both general meaning and specific meaning. Here, the general meaning refers to all who believe in Jesus Christ and the specific meaning points out “a select few”, e.g. the Twelve, Timothy, Titus and others (Samra, 2003:226).
- Fourthly, the terms all look related to the hierarchical concept.
- Fifth, the concepts entail denying oneself and living in self-sacrifice.
- Sixth, the meanings are based on maturity (Samra, 2003:220).
- Seventh, the two terms have a common goal of saving and serving people.

Although there are similarities between the two words, according to Copan (2007:322, 323), μιμητής is never understood as a replacement of μαθητής, but is also simply to be classified under discipleship. This argument disagrees with Kim (2003:224), who asserts that a disciple according to the Gospels was replaced by an imitator in the Pauline epistles. Based on definite evidence (Copan, 2007:319-322), it seems clear Copan’s argument is more reasonable. Nevertheless, considering the different circumstances in the Gospels, including John’s statement of the dwelling of the Spirit and Word (John 14:15-17; 8:31) (Müller, 1978:490), I argue that it is not an exaggeration to say that imitator is used in the Pauline epistles in the place of disciple (Stanley, 1959:859, 860).

In conclusion, there are differences between μιμητής and μαθητής, but these differences derive from the differences in contexts between the Gospels and the Pauline letters. It is thus asserted that μαθητής was replaced by μιμητής based on contextual differences.

3.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the meaning of μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 11:1 and that of discipleship in the Gospels were studied, and the similarities and differences between the words discovered through semantic and literary analysis.

From the conclusions, it is submitted that μιμητής is Paul’s version of μαθητής. In other words, it is likely that μαθητής is adapted to μιμητής in Gentile regions after the ascension of Jesus,

maintaining that μαθητής and μιμητής have the same essential meaning. It can therefore be claimed that the concepts of μιμητής and μαθητής are closely related to each other.

CHAPTER 4

FOUNDATIONS FOR LINKING 1 CORINTHIANS 7:1–11:1 TO DISCIPLESHIP IN THE GOSPELS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3 it was shown that the word μαθητής over time contextually adapted and changed into the word μιμητής, and that the two words share some commonalities but differ in other respects. In this chapter the pericopes in the Gospels related to the concept of μαθητής will be studied and compared with the use of μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1. Through the investigation, the researcher is looking for evidence that 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 is thematically linked to discipleship in the Gospels.

4.2 DISCIPLESHIP IN THE GOSPELS

Discipleship might be considered as one of the most significant concepts in the Gospels. Thus words related to the concept of discipleship occur frequently. The number of occurrences of μαθητής, μαθητεύω and ἔρχομαι in the Gospels is as follows: 233 (μαθητής), 3 (μαθητεύω) (Hoffmann *et al.*, 1999:391) and 2 (ἔρχομαι) (Matt. 16:24; Luke 9:23). The many occurrences of the words primarily related to the concept of discipleship support the conclusion that instructions on the relationship between Jesus and His disciples also occur frequently in the Gospels. The concept of discipleship is found in several pericopes within the three Synoptic Gospels and the Gospel according to John. Here a selection of these pericopes associated with the concept of discipleship will be investigated, compared and summarised. The concept of discipleship primarily relates to the requirements of being a disciple of Jesus, and thus focuses on the traits that are proper for His disciples.

4.2.1 The Gospel of Matthew

Matthew 9:9-13 tells how Matthew became Jesus' disciple and implies several characteristics of a true disciple. In this text the word ἀκολουθεῖν (v.9) is used as a synonym for μαθητεύω. Matthew 10:32-42 lists several conditions and simply indicates who is fit to follow Jesus Christ. The word ἀκολουθεῖν (v.38), which is also used as a synonym for μαθητεύω, refers to confessing Him (v.32), loving Him more than family (v.37), losing one's life for His sake (v.39) and receiving Him (v.40, 41). In this manner, the pericope shows the requirements for true discipleship according to the Gospel of Matthew.

4.2.1.1 Matthew 9:9-13

This pericope records Jesus' calling of Matthew, a tax collector. After calling Matthew, Jesus visited his house and dined with many tax collectors and sinners (v.9, 10). When the Pharisees rebuked Jesus, He responded that the goal of His ministry was to save true sinners rather than the self-righteous who failed to show mercy to sinners (v.12, 13).

The characteristics of Jesus' disciples are as follows: Firstly, obedience to Jesus' calling, as revealed in Matthew's reaction by following Jesus. Secondly, a humble attitude, which is revealed when disciples consider themselves as sinners that are in need of compassion (Osborne & Arnold, 2010:333).

4.2.1.2 Matthew 10:32-42

Chapter 10 in the Gospel of Matthew forms part of the so-called Mission Discourse (Osborne & Arnold, 2010:369). The characteristics of discipleship according to the pericope are as follows: Firstly, Jesus' disciples begin to participate in His ministry within a Jewish context (10:5-15). Secondly, the ministry will be expanded to the field of the Gentile mission (10:18). Thirdly, the disciples will, like Jesus Christ, experience persecution and rejection because of their proclamation of the gospel, yet they do not need to fear (10:17-31). Fourthly, discipleship is required under these circumstances of rejection and persecution (10:32-42). For the purposes of this study, the focus will be on the last part (10:32-42) of Matthew 10.

In Matthew 10:32-42 Jesus concludes his Mission Discourse by asking His disciples for a bold confession in the midst of their suffering caused by their proclamation of the gospel. His request occurs in the context of the requirements for being true disciples. For his disciples, as for all Christians, witnessing to Him is not optional (v.32, 33). Also, being a follower of Jesus Christ is definitely accompanied by persecution and suffering, even in close family relationships (v.34-37). The reason for this is the priority of Jesus Christ in the lives of his followers over all else (Keener *et al.*, 1997:210). Putting it differently, Jesus' disciples are those who are willing to devote their lives to Him (v.38, 39). Matthew 10:32-42 is placed in the context of Jesus' commission to evangelise. Thus, the focus of discipleship in this pericope is on the proclamation of the gospel in spite of persecution.

4.2.2 The Gospel of Mark

Mark 8:22–10:52 forms the central part of the Gospel of Mark (France, 2002:320). The important purpose of this section is for Jesus Christ to prepare the disciples for the sufferings that will lie in wait for them. Thus Jesus focuses on teaching His disciples rather than performing miracles. In this sense, the section is called the "discipleship section" of the Gospel (France, 2002:321), in which Jesus wants His disciples to understand how to follow Him when they are faced with

persecution. A number of pericopes are discussed to show the characteristics of discipleship according to the Gospel of Mark. In the case of Mark 8:34-38, Jesus Himself indicates the requirements for following Him. Here ἀκολουθεῖν (Mark 8:34), being a synonym for μαθητεύω, shows the relevance of the pericope to the concept of discipleship. In Mark 10:23-31 Jesus' reaction to Peter shows the extent of discipleship: be prepared to leave everything. In the sense, this text refers to the requirements for being His disciples, which means that it is relevant to study the concept of discipleship.

4.2.2.1 Mark 8:34-38

This instruction in discipleship occurs in the context of Mark 8:27-33. When Jesus went out to the villages of Caesarea Philippi, He revealed his identity as Christ and taught His disciples about His coming death and resurrection (v.27-31). At that time, Peter's rebuke directed at Jesus based on his Jewish interests exposed the disciples' lack of understanding of the kingdom of God. Thus Jesus proceeds to teach His disciples so that they may understand.

Firstly, Jesus requires of them to deny themselves and bear their cross in order to follow Him (v.34). Jesus is saying: "Don't imagine that to follow me is merely to come along as a passive spectator to healings, miracles, and wise teachings" (Healy, 2008:168). If they were true disciples of Jesus, they should be prepared to participate in His suffering on the cross and to follow Him continuously (Tanner, 2013:46). Jesus' disciples are those who share in His passion and follow His way.

Secondly, Jesus instructs that whoever tries to save his own life, will lose it, but whoever loses his life for the sake of Jesus and His gospel, will gain it (v.35). Although the instruction seems to be a paradox, it has a positive meaning. God has such authority over the lives of His disciples that allegiance for the sake of Jesus and His gospel is the only way to achieve the fullness of life (Healy, 2008:169). Likewise, in Mark 8:36-37 it is confirmed that devoting one's life to Jesus Christ is most valuable because it exceeds "the reach of human valuation" in the world (France, 2002:341). For Jesus' disciples the commitment to Him is the wisest attitude for their lives (Tanner, 2013:49).

Thirdly, Jesus teaches them not to be ashamed of Him in this sinful world (v.38). Proclaiming the gospel publicly in this sinful world might be met with oppression and persecution. However, Jesus' disciples do not have any other option but to actively proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of God. This means that Jesus seriously cautions them not to lessen the value of the gospel (Healy, 2008:170). In God's time He will appreciate the present persecutions of the disciples, and those who paid a costly price in order to follow Jesus will be successful (Tanner, 2013:54).

As a result, Jesus wants to teach them that as His disciples they share in His suffering; they are devoted to Him and they must eagerly proclaim the gospel despite persecution.

4.2.2.2 Mark 10:23-31

In Mark 10:17-22 a rich young man asks Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus then orders him to sell all his possessions, distribute them to the poor, and then come back and follow Him. When the man went away aggrieved, Jesus begins to teach His disciples about discipleship. Those who are wealthy find it very hard to enter into the kingdom of God: It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle (v.23-25). For Jesus the requirement for being His disciple is to lose all earthly possessions for His sake and the sake of His gospel (v.29). However, His true disciples will gain a hundredfold compensation in the present age and eternal life in the age to come (v.30). This means that true disciples will become like family members in a believing community and can share a life with each other (France, 2002:408). All people who want to properly follow Jesus Christ are required to accept this revolutionary attitude of the kingdom of God, although it is contrary to all conventional wisdom (v.31) (France, 2002:408, 409). To sum up, Jesus' disciples are the ones who give up all in this life for His sake and the sake of His gospel.

Throughout this "discipleship section" in the Gospel of Mark, it is noted that discipleship is related to taking up one's cross and following Jesus (Meyer, 2002:231).

4.2.3 The Gospel of Luke

In the Gospel of Luke, the pericopes of Luke 9:57-62 (cf. Matt. 8:18-22) and 14:25-35 are related to the concept of discipleship. Luke 9:57-62 describes the types of obstacles or stumbling blocks one encounters in following Jesus Christ. Luke 14:25-35 refers to the requirements for becoming Jesus' disciple. In this pericope Luke uses the word ἔρχομαι (v.26) as a synonym of μαθητεύω. In this sense the two pericopes are relevant to the concept of discipleship.

These pericopes are located in the so-called journey part of the Gospel of Luke (9:51–19:28). The story of the journey to Jerusalem shows Jesus' instruction for His disciples' preparation for their future ministry and the sufferings emanating from the ministry (Du Plessis, 1995:62).

4.2.3.1 Luke 9:57-62

On the way to Jerusalem three persons are encountered who are would-be disciples of Jesus. Using the conversation between Jesus and the three persons, Luke states the requirements for becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ. The first person says to Jesus that he will follow Him wherever He goes (v.57), but Jesus replies that He has no place to stay (v.58). This means that Jesus cannot rely upon the generosity and hospitality of others, and thus He does not have any expectations. Jesus implies that His would-be followers should also not wait for earthly comfort

(Stein, 1992:300). The second person is asked by Jesus to follow Him, but the would-be disciple says he must first bury his father (v.59). However, Jesus rejects his request and emphasises the priority of following Him and proclaiming the kingdom of God over family (v.60). Jesus implies that his followers' commitment to Him takes precedence over familial duties (Craddock, 1990:144). Although Jesus does not reject a man's basic duty to bury the dead, He implies that the pressing duty of His followers to proclaim the gospel takes priority (Nolland, 1993:542, 543). The third person suggests to Jesus that he wants to say goodbye to his family before following Him. Again Jesus rejects the suggestion and points out the correct attitude of those who are competent to serve in the kingdom of God. According to Craddock (1990:144), Jesus means that "I expect more from you than Elijah asked of Elisha" (1 Kings 19:19-21). Although Elijah granted Elisha's request, Jesus denies the man's request. This is because Jesus presupposes a redefined family relationship in the perspective of the kingdom of God. Elijah accepted earthly kinship, but Jesus instructs His disciples based on the new family tie of the kingdom of God.

In these short conversations one finds the requirements for would-be disciples of Jesus: They should be free from attachment to earthly things and persons (Craddock, 1990:144), and display a forward-looking attitude.

4.2.3.2 Luke 14:25-35

This pericope points out the requirements for being a disciple of Jesus Christ, by means of two parables. Although Luke 14:25-35 carries the same essence of discipleship as Luke 9:57-62, there is a difference in emphasis between the two pericopes. Luke 9:57-62 focuses on the priority of service in the kingdom of God and Luke 14:25-35 underlines the importance of calculating the cost of discipleship in advance and persevering until the task is completed. The structure of the pericope is as follows: demonstration of the requirements (v.26, 27), the tower parable (v.28-30), the king parable (v.31, 32), repetition of the requirements (v.33) and conclusion (v.34, 35).

Jesus considers loving one's family less than Him and carrying one's cross as the prerequisites for discipleship (v.26, 27) (Stein, 1992:396). Without these no person becomes a disciple of Jesus Christ. The parable of the tower shows that one who starts to build the tower must complete it (v.28-30). This means that one who is about to become a disciple of Jesus Christ should examine whether he is able and willing to pay the cost of discipleship and whether he has the resources to continue it to fulfilment (Craddock, 1990:182). The parable of the king emphasises the importance of proper consideration before commencement of the task (v.31, 32). This points out that one should estimate the cost of being a disciple of Jesus Christ before determining to follow Him. As a result only those who fulfil the requirement of disengagement from their own possessions can be disciples of Jesus Christ (v.33). Referring to the characteristic of salt that

loses its taste over time, the conclusion points to persons who try to fulfil the duty of discipleship without committing to disengagement and carrying their cross (v.34, 35) (Nolland, 1993:765).

From this teaching one can conclude that discipleship requires a calculation of the cost – which could amount to paying with your life – as well as the willingness to pay such cost and perseverance in fulfilling the calling of Jesus.

4.2.4 The Gospel of John

The Gospel of John might have a slightly different emphasis in respect of discipleship from that of the Synoptic Gospels, which emphasise the disciple's total commitment to Jesus. When it comes to discipleship, the fourth Gospel has a definite topic, namely loving one another. This topic is demonstrated as follows: abiding in Jesus Christ and following His example.

4.2.4.1 Abiding in Jesus Christ

The relationship of disciple-master in the Gospel of John primarily indicates a commitment to a person (Winbery, 1988:104). Thus in this Gospel the relationship of His disciples to Jesus is expressed in the word μένω (“abide”). The nature of the relationship becomes clear in the image of the vine and branch (John 15:1-8). According to the imagery, the only way for the branches to bear much fruit is to abide in the vine, Jesus Christ. And bearing fruit means to be His disciple. Jesus explains the meaning of bearing fruit and of becoming His disciple in John 15:9-17 as on the one hand abiding in the love of Jesus (v.9, 10) and on the other hand obeying the commandment to love one another as Jesus loves them (v.12) (Peterson, 2013:29). According to Painter (2014:256), “[d]iscipleship is marked by the recognition of life as the gift of unmerited love, a recognition that involves living out of the love, which is the foundation of Christian identity according to the Fourth Gospel”. In other words, loving one another is a characteristic of Jesus' disciples (John 13:34, 35).

4.2.4.2 Following the example of Jesus Christ

4.2.4.2.1 John 13:1-17

In John 13:1-17 Jesus washes the feet of His disciples as a sign of love for them. Through the example of foot-washing He states the principle that if they are His disciples, they must follow His example and serve one another with a humble attitude, as He has served them (Michaels, 2010:735), regardless of their position (v.13-17).

4.2.4.2.2 John 17:11, 21-23

John 17 relates Jesus' prayer for His disciples, then and now and in the future. In the prayer Jesus asks them to be united as the Father and the Son are One (v.11, 21-23). Here the content of

following the example of God and Jesus Christ is the unity of the church. John 13 and 17 show that one of characteristics of discipleship is to follow Jesus' example in a creative way. This means that to follow Jesus' example refers not only to the original act such as washing His disciples' feet, but also to creative acts applying the principle Jesus instructed.

In summary, the Gospel of John considers discipleship as loving other people. It is derived from abiding in Jesus Christ and maintaining the unity among believers.

4.2.5 Conclusion

It is noted how the concept of discipleship is treated in each of the Gospels. From the study some key themes can be summarised as follows: loyalty to Jesus Christ, suffering with Him, devoting one's life to Him, proclaiming the gospel eagerly in spite of persecution, giving up ownership for His and the gospel's sake, being freed from excessive devotion to earthly things and relationships, willing to pay a costly price, fulfilling His calling, abiding in Jesus Christ and maintaining unity among believers.

4.3 COMPARISON OF 1 CORINTHIANS 7:1–11:1 AND THE GOSPELS ON DISCIPLESHIP

Although Paul had never seen Jesus Christ in person, he had experienced the resurrected Jesus Christ in the light on the way to Damascus and received a commission from Him (Gal. 1:11, 12). In addition Paul must have received the tradition transmitted by the apostles or Christians who were converted prior to his own conversion (1 Cor. 15:3). In that case Paul certainly must have recognised the concept of discipleship as taught by Jesus Christ and recorded in the Gospels. For this reason it is necessary to compare the instructions from Jesus in the Gospels with Paul's answers to the letter from the Corinthian community in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1.

4.3.1 Characteristics of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 in the perspective of discipleship

In this section 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 will be examined with regard to the principles of discipleship that emerge from the instruction in die Gospels. These principles are summarised as follows: love, following Jesus, salvation, lordship, priority and unity.

4.3.1.1 Love

As indicated in the Gospel of John (see 4.2.4 above), one of the main concepts of discipleship is to love others. This thought is also present in Paul's teachings in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1.

In 1 Corinthians 7:1-6 especially Paul instructs the Corinthian believers to consider their own spouses. In the midst of the effect of asceticism, the advice that husband and wife should fulfil their duty towards each other as spouses is an expression of love for one another. Loving their own spouse means that protecting a spouse from the temptation of Satan depends on whether

one performs one's duty as a spouse. In this sense, to perform a duty faithfully as a spouse and to keep him or her holy, may be equal to loving one's spouse.

Regarding the issue of divorce from an unbelieving spouse, Paul advises them to stay as they are because through their love their spouse might be led to Christ (1 Cor. 7:16) (Hodge, 2010:24).

Also, Paul urges the Corinthian believers to love their weak brothers and sisters in faith. Regarding the issue of eating food that has been offered to idols, Paul asks the strong in faith to consider the weak. If the freedom of the strong to eat the food causes the weak to sin in idolatry, it is equivalent to sinning against Jesus Christ because the action of the strong might cause those weak in conscience to be strengthened to eat the food offered to idols (1 Cor. 8:7-12). For that reason, Paul decides to even stop eating meat if it caused his brother to fall into sin (1 Cor. 8:13). Consequently, Paul asks the Corinthian believers not to seek their own rights and benefit but the good of others (1 Cor. 10:24). And to give up your rights for the sake of others means to love them.

4.3.1.2 Following Jesus

4.3.1.2.1 Following His example

As stated in Chapter 3, the representative meaning of μαθητής is one who follows a teacher. Within discipleship the concept of following a master is an essential feature. As already pointed out in the study, μαθητής does not occur in the Pauline epistles; instead, the concept of μιμητής emerges. That is, μαθητής was adapted to and replaced by μιμητής for contextual reasons.

In 1 Corinthians 7:7-8, to those who are about to give up their married life because of the effect of asceticism, Paul says that he wants all people to be like him if they have the proper gift from God for the sake of the present necessity of the kingdom of God (7:26), as well as the sufferings and concerns surrounding married life (7:28, 32-34). Imitating Paul, who remained single, meant following his example, if possible.

In contrast to the optional command of 1 Corinthians 7:7-8, 1 Corinthians 11:1 is an absolute command to imitate Paul and Jesus Christ. Besides the attitude of staying as you are about the issue of marriage in 1 Corinthians 7, the renunciation of reasonable rights and self-denial for the sake of others' salvation account for Paul's demands to imitate himself and Jesus Christ. In this way, the idea of imitation reflects the requirements for being a disciple of Jesus as demonstrated in the Gospels.

4.3.1.3 Salvation

As mentioned in the section on the Gospel of Mark (see 4.2.2), proclaiming the gospel and saving people are the most important roles of Jesus' disciples. Thus one of the purposes of Jesus' calling is that the disciples become witnesses to Him (Matt. 9:35; 28:19-20).

In the specific circumstances at Corinth, a believing spouse should endure their married life to the full because their perseverance might provide an opportunity to save the spouse (1 Cor. 7:12-16). In addition Paul proposes as the reason for staying single that believers should address the present necessity of proclaiming the gospel (1 Cor. 7:26).

1 Corinthians 9 documents Paul's personal example in saving others. Paul renounced his proper right to receive support from the believers and decided to work for a living so as not to hinder the gospel of Christ (1 Cor. 9:6, 12). He also declares that he can become all things to all people so that he might save some people (1 Cor. 9:22). In this sense, it is noted that Paul's life orientates to the purpose of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.

4.3.1.4 Lordship

After the resurrection, according to Matthew 28:18-20, the ministry of Jesus' disciples is based on Jesus' authority as Lord. Proclaiming the gospel amounts in essence to the declaration that Jesus Christ is Lord.

4.3.1.4.1 Obedience to the instructions of the Lord

In the word study in chapter 3 it was pointed out that μαθητής has a hierarchical character (see 3.5). Thus μαθητής might be defined as the one who obeys a master's instruction. In this sense Jesus' disciples are the ones who should obey His instructions. In reality the idea of obedience to Christ is one of the basic elements regarding faith in the New Testament and serves as evidence of a disciple's acknowledgement that Jesus Christ is Lord.

In 1 Corinthians 10 Paul uses the negative history of Israel with regard to idolatry as an example in instructing the Corinthian believers. By God's anger, they were felled down in the desert on the way to the land of Canaan because they had disobeyed God's command not to serve idols. Paul admonishes the Corinthian believers not to do what the Israelites did. In other words, Paul is saying that if the Corinthian believers disobeyed God's command and served idols, it would mean that they did not accept Jesus as Lord.

4.3.1.4.2 Live according to Jesus' calling

In the Gospels Jesus' disciples are required to devote their lives to Jesus Christ. For this reason His disciples should live according to His calling and will. One characteristic of Jesus' disciples in

the Gospels is that they are all called by Jesus Himself. The initiation of discipleship comes from Jesus Christ, not from would-be disciples. However, Jesus calls each disciple in his own circumstances, and He demands of each disciple a life according to His calling.

1 Corinthians 7 repeatedly demands the attitude of staying as you are. On the issue of marriage under the influence of asceticism, Paul insists that all believers should live their life on the basis of their calling from Jesus Christ. The believer's life in faith depends on Jesus' calling. Thus those who do not have the gift of celibacy need not follow the example proposed by Paul. The calling from Jesus Christ is different for each person (1 Cor. 7:20) so that it is desirable that one's own calling be displayed (cf. Matt. 10:40-42)¹⁸. Additionally, Paul emphasises that Christians should get married to believers because Jesus Christ is the Lord of marriage (1 Cor. 7:39).

Paul's tent-making ministry described in 1 Corinthians 9 is also a demonstration of his specific calling. In the context Paul does not insist that all workers for the gospel should work for a living. He also states that the Lord approves of those who make a living from proclaiming the gospel (1 Cor. 9:14). The reason for his working for a living originates in his own commission from Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 9:17).

4.3.1.5 Priority

The renunciation of and freedom from excessive devotion to worldly things and relationships are related to the topic of priority. This means that Jesus Christ takes precedence over all else. Thus Jesus' disciples are the ones who love Him more than anything or anyone, to the extent that they regard proclaiming the gospel as important in spite of persecution or even death. Moreover, when Jesus sends His disciples to preach the kingdom of God, He commands them to travel light (Matt. 10:9, 10). This indicates that His disciples should rely on the provision of God more than on any other means of support. Disciples in mission have to put their trust in Jesus. This also means that the disciples should maintain a simple life with regard to priority (Matt. 6:19-34) (Keener *et al.*, 1997:204).

In 1 Corinthians 7 Paul advises the Corinthian believers to imitate the example of celibacy (1 Cor. 7:7, 8). Although it is optional, the definite ground for the request is that Jesus Christ has priority over everything. Based on the priority of Jesus, Paul advises those who are married to Gentile spouses to remain married for the sake of the salvation of their unbelieving spouses (1 Cor.

¹⁸ In Matthew 10:40-42 those who indirectly support the followers of Jesus in the proclamation of the gospel will receive their reward, although they are not tied to the stricter requirements of proper discipleship.

7:12-16). In his own case, he puts a greater emphasis on proclaiming the gospel than on married life (1 Cor. 7:26, 32-35).

On the issue of food sacrificed to idols, Paul changes the Corinthians' slogan that everything is permissible (1 Cor. 10:23) into "πάντα εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ"¹⁹ (1 Cor. 10:31). This means that Christians should place more weight on the priority of Jesus Christ than their own freedom. In other words, the purpose of everything that Christians do should be the glory of God.

4.3.1.6 Unity

As revealed in the study of the Gospel of John (see 4.2.4.2.2), the unity of Jesus' disciples is important. Thus Jesus prays for them to protect their unity (John 17:11) (Sloyan, 1988:198). In this context Jesus' disciples are the ones who keep the unity of the believing community.

Paul's aim in writing the letter is also that all the Corinthian believers should be united in the same mind and the same judgment (1 Cor. 1:10), without divisions. The problems highlighted in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 derive from their divisions. In the case of 1 Corinthians 7 there might be a division between those who are ascetic and those who are immoral. And in 1 Corinthians 8–10 the eating of food sacrificed to idols created divisions among believers. As a result Paul's concern for the community at Corinth is the unity of the believers, thus sharing a common point with Jesus' prayer for His disciples.

4.3.2 Similarities and differences between 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 and the Gospels on discipleship

As analysed above, 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 reflects the concept of discipleship as stated in the Gospels. However, any comparison should take into account different contexts, contents and topics. In this section the relationship between 1 Corinthians 7:1–11 and the Gospels on the basis of discipleship will be examined by way of similarities and differences.

4.3.2.1 Similarities

- Firstly, Paul applies the concept of discipleship as described in the Gospels to 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 in order to solve the divisions in the church at Corinth and to redirect the believers' interests to the original purpose of the church. Paul seeks the unity of the Corinthian

¹⁹ "All to the glory of God" (NASB)

community, and his endeavour is supported by Jesus' emphasis on the unity of His disciples in the Gospel of John.

- Secondly, the requirements for being a disciple and for an imitator are very similar. The words μαθητής and μιμητής are virtually used as synonyms of each other in the New Testament. They have the same ultimate object to follow and imitate, namely Jesus Christ.
- Thirdly, the Gospels and 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 are primarily focused on the proclamation of the gospel and the salvation of other people.
- Fourthly, the Gospels and 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 demand self-sacrifice or self-denial from disciples or imitators.
- Fifth, Matthew presupposes Jesus' absence from the early church after His ascension (Matt. 10:17-20) (Evans 2012:222) and John recounts Jesus' prophecy of His absence (John 13:33), which absence continued in the congregation in Corinth.

4.3.2.2 Differences

- Firstly, 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 is more concerned with discipleship as it relates to communal issues than the Gospels.
- Secondly, the aim of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 is to lessen tensions among believers and to shift their focus to saving souls as the original purpose of the church. The Gospels emphasise total commitment to witness to Jesus Christ.
- Thirdly, 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 recognises Paul as a valid example to imitate besides Jesus Christ. However, the Gospels has only one Teacher, Jesus Christ.
- Fourthly, contexts differ. Considering the Jewish context in the Gospels and the Gentile context in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1, this is the reason why Paul advises on problems that were not discussed by Jesus, such as the issues of Gentile marriage and eating food offered to idols. The focus on discipleship remains, however.
- Fifth, in the Gospels the proclamation of the gospel is related to the coming of the kingdom of God (Mark 1:15; Luke 9:60-62). On the other hand, in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1, enthusiasm for the salvation of other people accounts for a deserving alternative given to the Corinthian believers instead of divisions.

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter it was investigated whether there were grounds to link the concept of discipleship in the Gospels with the concept of imitation in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1. In the Gospels discipleship refers to the requirements for being Jesus' disciples. Although there are diverse qualifications, as already mentioned above (see 4.2.5), they can be summarised into six key elements: love, following, salvation, lordship, priority and unity.

These elements are also demonstrated in Paul's message to the Corinthian believers in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1, in spite of some differences. They are similar to what Paul requires when he teaches them on some issues causing conflict between them. First of all, the aim of Paul's reply (1 Cor. 7:1–11:1) is to solve the problem of divisions in the congregation. Thus all his advice is directed at the unity of the community, focusing on Christ as Lord. On the marital issue (1 Cor. 7), Paul asks the Corinthian believers to love their spouses as a way of preventing temptation from Satan and endeavouring to save them if they are unbelievers. Paul also emphasises that proclaiming the gospel takes first priority for Christians. On the issue of food offered to idols (1 Cor. 8:1–11:1), Paul urges them to serve the weak and be interested in their salvation. In the context, renunciation of one's rights for the sake of others means to love others and struggle to save them. It also means lives that are Christ-centred and directed at the glory of God. Ultimately this is the proper manner in which to imitate Paul and Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 is thematically connected to the concept of discipleship in the Gospels, considering that 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 uses ideas of discipleship that are similar to those in the Gospels.

CHAPTER 5

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN 1 CORINTHIANS 7 AND 1 CORINTHIANS 8:1–11:1 FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF DISCIPLESHIP

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 4 discipleship in the Gospels and in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 was compared. It was established that the concept of discipleship in the Gospels has points of similarity with the concept of discipleship in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1. Consequently, based on these similarities, this chapter will investigate the exact relationship between 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1.

5.2 FINDING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN 1 CORINTHIANS 7 AND 8:1–11:1

Possible connections between 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 will be determined in two ways: firstly, in terms of the characteristics of the structure of the periscopes, and secondly, in terms of material aspects of the texts.

5.2.1 Structural considerations

In terms of structural considerations, two characteristics are of importance.

5.2.1.1 Unit based on Paul's reply to the Corinthians

In the first verse of 1 Corinthians 7, Paul turns to the letter that the Corinthian believers wrote to him. It seems that in this letter they raised certain questions and issues with Paul. Considering this structural marker, the section from 1 Corinthians 7 is marked as the start of a new section, with the previous section ending at the end of chapter 6. There are several opinions as to where Paul's reply to the Corinthian believers' letter ends. However, 1 Corinthians 11:1 is widely considered to be the "full stop" of Paul's response (Trail, 1995:272, 341). Therefore it is not unreasonable to treat 1 Corinthians 7–11:1 as one unit, namely Paul's reply to the Corinthian believers' letter.

5.2.1.2 Περί δὲ

Traditionally it has been thought that Paul begins a new teaching in 1 Corinthians 7, although the message of 1 Corinthians 7 might be considered as part of the argumentative flow of 1 Corinthians 5–7 (Barnett, 2011:107). The important evidence supporting the conventional view is the occurrence of περί δὲ. In 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1, περί δὲ might function to structurally separate 1 Corinthians 7 from 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1.

First of all, περί δὲ occurs in the first verse in 1 Corinthians 7. It functions as a marker to indicate the beginning of a section. This phrase occurs again in 1 Corinthians 7:25, where Paul turns in his discussion to the unmarried, as opposed to the married in the foregoing verses, both dealing with the broad topic of marriage. However, in contrast to the occurrence in 1 Corinthians 7:1, περί δὲ in 1 Corinthians 7:25 seems to be of less importance since it is not a decisive element indicating a structural division.

Another important occurrence of περί δὲ is in 1 Corinthians 8:1. In this verse Paul switches from the broad topic of marriage in 1 Corinthians 7 to the issue of food sacrificed to idols. The phrase περί δὲ in 1 Corinthians 8:1 seems to be a more decisive turning point than in 1 Corinthians 7:25, to the extent that the former has been regarded as a crucial element in separating 1 Corinthians 7 from 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1. On the grounds of the evidence of περί δὲ, it is noted that Paul might use the phrase for switching between broad topics for the believers.

5.2.1.3 Conclusion

Although 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 are both included in Paul's reply to the Corinthian community, the two pericopes have been regarded as distinctive because each treats different topics, namely the topic of marriage in 1 Corinthians 7 and the topic of food offered to idols in 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1. The existence of περί δὲ also supports the conclusion that the two pericopes must be completely separated. However, even though περί δὲ in 1 Corinthians 7:25 is considered to be a minor element, the fact that it is used in the same broad topic of marriage might weaken the argument of the division between the two texts by περί δὲ. Nevertheless, it is difficult to argue in favour of a connection between 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 based on structural considerations.

5.2.2 Substantial considerations

5.2.2.1 Traditional view

1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 have traditionally been treated as completely separate literary units based on the fact that they deal with different topics (Trail, 1995:272, 341). On the surface these topics are so divergent that most scholars have assumed that Paul taught separate instructions to the Corinthian community. Apart from being included in Paul's response to the Corinthian letter, 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 do not seem to share any points of similarity.

5.2.2.2 Unity based on the topic of sexual holiness

There is the opinion that 1 Corinthians 7 should be understood as part of the argumentative flow dealing with sexuality (1 Cor. 5-7), despite the fact that it is included in Paul's reply to the Corinthian believers (Fee, 1987:267). Similar to Fee, Barnett (2011:107) says that 1 Corinthians

7 “completes Paul’s ‘Holiness Code’ begun in chapter 5”. This means that the sequence of Paul’s reply to the Corinthians might not reflect the order of their questions, but rather reflect his own intention to focus on the issue of sexuality. According to this viewpoint, Paul might be attempting to synthesise sexuality with his response to the Corinthian church, although 1 Corinthians 7 is not structurally related to 1 Corinthians 6.

5.2.2.3 Unity based on the topic of discipleship

As indicated, 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 form part of the second main part of 1 Corinthians, namely Paul’s reply to the Corinthians’ letter. Even though there are diverging topics within Paul’s answer to the Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 11:1 might be the key verse indicating the broad topic of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1. In other words, there is reason to consider 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 as a literary unit based on the topic of discipleship. This conclusion is supported by the argument that 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 was written as an extension of Paul’s adoption of the discipleship of the Gospels, as shown in the previous chapters. This means that 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 share a conceptual foundation, namely discipleship, despite their diverging topics. Put differently, Paul’s advice in 1 Corinthians 7 aligns with the advice of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1, not in terms of the topics addressed, but in terms of the call to believers to be followers and imitators, regardless of the practical problem situation.

Six elements are derived from the study of the characteristics of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 in the perspective of discipleship discussed in chapter 4 (see 4.3.1). The six elements will be used in a comparison of 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 in the next section after merging them into three broad elements. Common ideas that 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 share are as follows: serving others, the lordship of Christ and the imitation of Paul.

5.2.2.4 Conclusion

Traditionally, 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 have been regarded as separate literary units. Regarding the topic of sexuality, 1 Corinthians 7 might be considered to be related to 1 Corinthians 5 and 6 rather than 8:1–11:1, although 1 Corinthians 5 and 6 do not focus solely on sexuality. However, based on the common concept of discipleship described herein, the views discussed in 5.2.2.1 and 5.2.2.2 are rejected.

5.2.3 Connections between 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1

Regarding the topic of discipleship, it will be investigated how 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 are related to each other in three aspects. These three aspects are derived from the six elements identified in chapter 4, namely love, salvation, lordship, priority, unity and following Jesus (see 4.3). Serving others includes the elements of love and salvation. The lordship of Christ includes

the elements of lordship, priority and unity, while the topic of following Jesus is based on salvation and relates to the imitation of Paul in comparing 1 Corinthians 7 with 8:1–11:1.

5.2.3.1 Serving others

1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 share the idea that believers should serve others for the sake of weak Christians as well as for the sake of unbelievers' salvation. Ellington (2011:305) insists that "[o]ther than his death for others, 1 Corinthians does not offer traits of Jesus to imitate". As Ellington states, the most noticeable topic in the pericope of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 is self-sacrifice and a voluntary renunciation of freedoms or rights for the good and salvation of others, including the weak, in the Corinthian church. Through his personal and historical example, Paul motivates the Corinthians to endeavour to proclaim the gospel, exercise self-restraint and serve fellow-believers who are weak. In the context of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1, the command to imitate Christ in 1 Corinthians 11:1 means to serve others and to strive for the salvation of others as Christ sacrificed Himself for the salvation of mankind.

5.2.3.1.1 Serving for the sake of the weak believers

In Corinthians 7 Paul does not directly demonstrate his own instruction to help the weak believers, which is different from the definite argument for the weak Christians in 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1. However, Paul offers an implied serving of the weak Christians. In 1 Corinthians 7:1-6 Paul recommends that the married Christians fulfil their own duties as spouses so that Satan cannot tempt spouses because of their lack of self-control. Paul implies that those who lack self-control should be assisted by their spouses in overcoming the temptation of Satan. In other words, Paul advises the believers on marital and sexual matters in order to advance the wellbeing of the believers and prevent them from sinning.

In Corinthians 8–10 those who should be served are the weak Christians in Corinth. In the context of this section, it is noted that there is a division in the community between the so-called strong and weak on the issue of eating food offered to idols. Paul warns the strong Corinthian Christians not to cause the weak believers to stumble on the obstacle of eating food sacrificed to idols. Because eating food sacrificed to idols might cause the weak to fall into idolatry, the strong are required to give up their freedom to eat the food for the sake of the weak. This means that the mature Christians should help the weak believers to grow into maturity and in doing so attain the aim of the eschatological salvation.

5.2.3.1.2 Serving the unbelievers

The concern for unbelievers in 1 Corinthians 7 is also clear in 1 Corinthians 7:12-16. Paul explains and responds to the Corinthian believers' situation as a church located in a Gentile area. Consequently there are believers whose spouses have not been converted yet. Here Paul

stresses the Christian attitude of serving others while striving for the salvation of these others. Although Grosheide (1953:166) insists that a divorce for peacekeeping is allowable for believers, who are called to peace, it is a better interpretation to understand “God has called us to peace” as a reason for the advice given in verse 16, namely not to divorce. Of course remaining married does not guarantee the unbelieving spouse’s salvation. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile because the believers’ utmost responsibility to others is to save them (Barnett, 2011:118). The unbelieving spouse’s salvation not only shows up “in the intimate and quotidian context of marriage and household” (Hodge, 2010:25), but is also realised by the believing spouse’s positive witness (Plummer, 2001:234). For Paul, even marriage to an unbeliever carries hope because “[m]arriage is one of those commitments that remain in force” and at the same time, it is “a sphere in which God’s holiness and transforming power may operate” (Hays, 1997:122). This hope lies in the passion for the salvation of persons, which was Paul’s most intense passion.

The topic of serving others is also found in Paul’s advice to the unmarried: that it would be better to remain unmarried because of the present necessity (v.25, 26). The “present necessity” can be understood as “the urgent imperative of proclaiming the gospel and doing the work of the Lord” (Hays, 1997:129). Paul’s understanding of marriage is also used as a basis for arguing the difference between an unmarried and a married person, namely that the married one is concerned about the things of the world while the unmarried person can only have concerns for the Lord, which is connected with the present necessity (v.25, 26). Of course, it is impossible to apply a uniform standard and evaluate the married and the unmarried. Only Paul’s intention here is to encourage Christians to develop more into the ministry of the Lord and evangelise the unbelievers.

In the text of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1, the topic of serving the weak Corinthian believers is extended to the topic of saving unbelievers. This is demonstrated clearly in Paul’s personal example in 1 Corinthians 9. Even though Paul has the right to receive financial support, he does not make use of it in order not to cause any hindrance to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The reason why Paul refrains from exercising his right is the Christological application to serve others (Jensen, 2010:25). Christ’s crucifixion for all humankind is not only the decisive motive for imitating Him, but also the basic principle to be applied in specific everyday life situations, namely a self-sacrificing life. Paul’s tent-making ministry should therefore be understood as his application of Christ’s sacrifice in order to serve others for the sake of their salvation.

5.2.3.1.3 Conclusion

In 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 Paul emphasises service to the weak in faith so that they may not stumble, and even to the unbelievers for the sake of their salvation. Although serving others is not the overall topic in 1 Corinthians 7, contrary to 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1, the text also shows concerns for others such as a vulnerable spouse in temptation and an unbelieving spouse.

5.2.3.2 The lordship of Christ

The lordship of Christ means that Jesus is the Lord of all and that Christians are required to have a Christ-centred mind and way of thinking, which translates into Christ-centred words and deeds. For Paul, the topic of the lordship of Christ is important because it directly relates to the salvation of believers (Rom. 10:9). The topic is also demonstrated in the issues raised by the Corinthian community. Broadly speaking, the topic of the lordship of Christ is divided into two parts: firstly, Christ as Lord of the lives of believers and secondly, Christ as Lord of the church.

5.2.3.2.1 Christ as Lord of the lives of believers

In 1 Corinthians 7, Paul describes “staying as you are” (v.17 20, 24) as one of the proper attitudes of serving the Lord Jesus. Although on the surface Paul deals with the topic of marriage, the core message is to recognise one’s own circumstances and serve the Lord with every effort in those circumstances. In this sense the suggestion “stay as you are” denotes the lordship of Christ because “to stay as you are” means to admit the fact that the Lord placed one in those circumstances. Paul’s intention is that each believer has their own calling from the Lord and should live according to such calling (v.18-22). For this reason believers should be aware not to have other lords in their lives (v.23).

Paul also states several times that celibacy is good (7:8, 26, 38, 40). However, obviously what Paul does not mean is that believers who remain celibate are by definition better at serving the Lord than believers who are married. He is saying that the unmarried have more opportunity for serving the Lord than the married (Grosheide, 1953:179), for the married have other interests. In the case of a woman whose husband is dead, she must marry a believing man in the Lord if she wishes (v.39). In the two cases Paul implies that serving the Lord Jesus takes precedence over the freedom to get married to anyone.

The topic of Christ’s lordship is clearly displayed in 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1. On the issue of food sacrificed to idols, when some Corinthian believers asserted their right to eat such food, Paul recognises their argument, but advises them to consider the weak Christians and give up their rights for their sake. In his argument, Paul refers to Jesus Christ as κύριος (8:5, 6) or Lord. Additionally, after demonstrating his own example (1 Corinthians 9) and Israel’s historically poor example (1 Corinthians 10), Paul states the principle in 1 Corinthians 10:31 to conclude the debate. Even though 1 Corinthians 10:31 does not seem to directly indicate Christ’s lordship, the verse implies a movement from anthropocentric thinking to theocentric thinking and from rights-orientated to service-orientated (Hays, 1997:178, 179). Hays’s point is that because the glory of God is held to be the standard for the life of all Christians, it might be an expression of Christocentric thinking, which in turn implies the lordship of Christ. Therefore, 1 Corinthians 10:31 implies the topic of the lordship of Christ.

5.2.3.2.2 Christ as Lord of the church

The concept of the lordship of Jesus Christ is used in the New Testament to focus on the unity of the church (Eph. 4:4, 5). When one considers the issues of the Corinthian community in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1, it is clear from the whole epistle that the topic of the unity of the church is especially significant. Kloha (2013:277) argues that “[t]he confession of Christ as Lord led to a new way of living in the world”. This is closely related to the divisions in the Corinthian church because of issues such as marriage and food offered to idols. Paul regards the believers’ new way of life by accepting Christ as Lord as a solution to the problem of divisions in the congregation.

Firstly, in 1 Corinthians 7, when Paul counsels several groups divided by differences of opinion among ascetics and liberals, on how they should conduct themselves in respect of marital and sexual issues, he offers advice rather than commanding them (v.6, 12, 28, 37) (Fee, 1987:267). However, underlying Paul’s advice is the lordship of Christ. In the conflict between the two groups, Paul’s point is that it does not matter whether they get married or not. Whether single or married, all should in faith recognise Christ as Lord and serve Him. Similarly, in the case of a woman whose husband is dead (v.39), it might be a significant way to express Christ as Lord in the community when she remarries only in the Lord.

Secondly, Paul’s Lord-centred thoughts are clearly developed in 1 Corinthians 8:4-6. Wright (2013:22) argues that 1 Corinthians 8:4-6 is derived from Deuteronomy 6:4-5, known as the Shema, which emphasises loyalty to the One God, and Paul uses the revised Jesus-centred Shema “as the foundation for the community which must live as the kingdom people in the midst of the pagan world”. For Paul, the one who prays the redefined Jesus-centred Shema remains loyal to Jesus Christ and will overcome all foes, including death itself because He already accomplished the mission of redemption by His own resurrection. Yet there is a calling that the church must perform, namely to safeguard the unity by not claiming one’s rights, but by being concerned about and taking care of the needs of others (Wright, 2013:25). Keeping the unity of the church in this manner is a way to understand “the identity of the One God, One Lord” (Wright, 2013:25).

Thirdly, in 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1, Paul projects the relationship with the weak believers on the issue of eating food offered to idols onto the relationship with Jesus Christ (8:11, 12). Moreover, he points out that the relationship is based on the glory of God (10:31). According to Paretzky (2013:625), the division of the Corinthian church stemmed from the dependence on human teachers’ wisdom, and the solution was to restore the relationship with Christ the Lord. To put it concretely, it was required of the Corinthian believers to be crucified with Christ (Parsenios, 2010:316-332). A Christ-orientated life is the solution for the Corinthian church in conflict.

Fourthly, one of the causes of divisions in the Corinthian church is that they follow a different lord (1 Cor. 1:13, 14) (Kloha, 2013:279). It is necessary to understand 1 Corinthians 10:14-22 from this perspective. Why does Paul urge them to avoid idolatry (1 Cor. 10:14)? Idolatry means to deny the lordship of Jesus Christ, which corresponds to having fellowship with demons instead of with Jesus Christ as Lord. Accordingly, Paul instructs believers on the meaning of the Lord's Supper. Those who participate in the body and blood of Christ become one body (v.16, 17) and they must not serve other lords (v.21).

5.2.3.2.3 Conclusion

In 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 Paul deals with the topic of the lordship of Christ in order to change the Corinthian believers' attitude towards the Lord's calling and to solve the problem of divisions in the church.

5.2.3.3 The imitation of Paul

In 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 Paul calls upon the Corinthian believers to imitate himself in two respects: in 1 Corinthians 7 to remain single for the sake of Jesus Christ, and in 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 to live a self-sacrificing life for the sake of others. These calls have different characteristics, the one in 1 Corinthians 7 being optional and the other in 1 Corinthians 11:1 being absolute.

5.2.3.3.1 Optional imitation

Paul deals with the topic of marriage in 1 Corinthians 7. Some Corinthian believers might think that marriage is an obstacle to being holy before God so that they probably wanted to give up their own marital life (Hays, 1997:114). And the unmarried people were likely to reject marriage on the basis of a negative view of it. In the circumstances Paul points out that such an understanding of marriage and sex is biased and should be corrected. In that sense, Paul teaches that it does not matter whether they get married or not: the point is to serve the Lord Jesus regardless of their circumstances. However, in his instructions, Paul advises the Corinthian believers to remain single. The advice in favour of celibacy seems to be a preference based on one's own gift rather than a commandment (v.7). This means that married life and single life are both good, but in Paul's case he prefers to live alone. Thus Paul three times urges the believers to imitate him (v.7, 8, 40), suggesting that they remain unmarried as he is. Although it is not an absolute command with divine authority, Paul advises so because he values the Corinthians (v.28).

What is important here is the reason why Paul suggests that they live alone. The three advices (v.7, 8, 40) do not refer to a definite reason and simply refer to the state of celibacy. Thus it is required to investigate the entire 1 Corinthians 7, which supplies three reasons for Paul's advice.

- Firstly, each believer's calling from God (v.17-24), since not everyone has been called to marriage. There are, however, persons who received the gift of celibacy. Thus each should live according to his own calling. If a person finds his own calling to be celibacy, he is happier if he remains as he is (v.40).
- Secondly, there is the existence of the present necessity (v.26). As already mentioned in section 2.2.6, τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην can be understood as the present necessity, which means "the urgent imperative of proclaiming the gospel" (Hays, 1997:129). Paul considers the single life to be better than married life because those who live alone might spare time and energy for proclaiming the gospel.
- Thirdly, those who get married will experience troubles in this life (v.28). What these troubles are, is not clear from the text. However, it is clear in Paul's mind that marriage will become an obstacle and obligation that prevent believers from serving the Lord without distractions (v.32-35) (Hays, 1997:128).

To sum up, Paul advises believers to remain single if they are called to celibacy because it is more blessed according to their own calling. Also Paul prefers celibacy to marriage for the sake of effective evangelism and service to the Lord.

5.2.3.3.2 Absolute imitation

In 1 Corinthians 11:1 imitation of Paul means that the Corinthian believers must follow his example as one who imitates Jesus Christ. Though Paul does not mention the details of what they have to imitate, most scholars have accepted that the content of the imitation is to be found in Paul's answers on the matter of food sacrificed to idols. Firstly, imitate him in giving up their rights (8:13; 9:12). Secondly, imitate him in doing all things for the sake of saving others (9:23). Finally, imitate him in helping others come to the Lord, and not offending them (10:32, 33). The relinquishing of his right and freedom is something in which Paul imitates Jesus Christ, who sacrificed Himself on the cross for the salvation of others, and what the Corinthians should imitate too.

As a result the commandment to imitate Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:1 means self-sacrifice and the renunciation of one's own rights for the sake of serving others as Jesus Christ did.

5.2.3.3.3 Conclusion

Since the imitation of Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:1 is associated with the imitation of Christ, it implies a divine command. This is why the calls to imitation in the two chapters are different in nature. What is important to compare in these two calls to imitation is Paul's intention. The reason why Paul asks them to imitate himself as an unmarried person in 1 Corinthians 7 is to devote their lives to the ministry of evangelism in the assigned circumstances. Therefore the words "a single

life” are not a matter of truth or not, but the intention underlying it is exactly same as the imitation of Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:1, to devote oneself to Christ and follow His will.

5.2.4 Conclusion

On the surface, 1 Corinthians 7 is about marital issues and 8:1–11:1 about eating food that has been sacrificed to idols. In this sense they are generally regarded as two separate pericopes and this way of understanding also teaches good lessons. However, there are common thematic grounds in 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1, namely serving others, the lordship of Christ and the imitation of Paul.

5.3 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the relationship between 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 was investigated. It was noted that the two pericopes had some elements in common.

Firstly, 1 Corinthians 7 on the issue of marriage indicates some elements related to discipleship, counselling the Corinthian believers to stay as they are and to endeavour to serve the Lord regardless of their circumstances.

- Paul asks them to have concern for their own Christian spouses, so that they may not be tempted by Satan. Also, if they have unbelieving spouses, they should attempt to save them.
- Paul’s request of “staying as you are” means that Christians should accept the calling from the Lord and live according to the calling. Additionally, the reason why Paul prefers celibacy is that it enables believers to devote all their time to serving the Lord.
- Paul proposes to the Corinthian believers that they imitate him in his celibacy, although it is an optional recommendation.

Secondly, 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 on the issue of eating food offered to idols confirms that those who claim their right to eat the sacrificed food based on their knowledge of their freedom in Christ are wrong. Paul points out that the Corinthians’ knowledge is not true if they do not love the weak, who Christ also died for.

- The strong in the Corinthian church are required to give up their rights for the sake of serving the weak believers and evangelising unbelieving people.
- They must act according to the glory of God by accepting the lordship of Christ and living according to the will of God.
- Paul commands them to imitate himself as he does Jesus Christ.

To summarise, the common ground between 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 is established by the following topics: serving others, the lordship of Christ and the imitation of Paul.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

6.1 INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in chapter 1, the aim of this study was to determine whether it was valid to read 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 as a literary unit based on Paul's adoption of the concept of discipleship as it appears in the Gospels by way of his use of μιμητής in the said pericope. The following method was applied in order to achieve the goal. In Chapter 2 it was noted that traditional perspectives regarded 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11 as separate units. In Chapter 3 it was discovered that the key words μιμητής and μαθητής shared some essential common points. In Chapter 4 it was noted that pericopes containing certain key words also exhibited points of commonality. As a result it was recognised that 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 could indeed be linked by the concept of discipleship in the Gospels. Subsequently, in Chapter 5 it was investigated how 1 Corinthians 7 was connected with 8:1–11:1 in the light of discipleship. In the final chapter the study will be summarised and concluded, and further research proposed.

6.2 SUMMARY

6.2.1 Chapter 2: Research on the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1

The aim of Chapter 2 was to examine current research on the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 and to show that the traditional interpretations of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 have considered 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 as distinct pericopes. This conclusion was drawn based on the topic of each of the pericopes: 1 Corinthians 7 deals with the topic of marriage, while 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 deals with the topic of eating food offered to idols.

1 Corinthians 7 consists of Paul's response to the Corinthians' question on marriage. He advises them to remain in the status they are in in view of the present necessity, which emphasises the importance of evangelism. For this reason celibacy is recommended. However, Paul indicates that marriage depends on an individual decision, although he personally prefers to remain single. Paul's intention is that Christians should endeavour to serve Jesus Christ regardless of their own status or circumstances.

In 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 Paul urges the believers at Corinth to show concern for one another and be united as one body of Jesus Christ. In Corinthians 8 Paul points out that the reason for the division in the community is a lack of love for others. In Corinth, where people worshipped pagan idols and ate food sacrificed to them as a matter of routine, the issue of eating food sacrificed to idols must have been very sensitive for the Christians. In that situation Paul accepts

the argument of the strong believers that they have a right to eat the food offered to idols, but he contends that their argument is unsound if no consideration is given to the weak believers. In that sense Paul teaches them to give up their own rights for the sake of serving others, and points to his personal example (1 Cor. 9) and Israel's example (1 Cor. 10). However, it is allowable for Christians to eat food bought at the market or provided by the host, although the food was offered as a sacrifice to idols, but then only in consideration of others' profit and conscience. Even though the strong do indeed have a right to do anything, concern for the weak and a mind for saving people based on their own willing abandonment of reasonable rights, is the way to imitate Jesus Christ.

Based on the above, the traditional interpretations have considered 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 as unrelated because each pericope treats different topics raised with Paul by the Corinthians, namely the topics of marriage and food offered to idols.

6.2.2 Chapter 3: Paul's use of μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 and its relation to discipleship in the Gospels

The meanings of μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 11:1 and discipleship in the Gospels were studied and compared in Chapter 3. This research indicates how the two concepts are connected to each other semantically.

Based on the study, μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 11:1 refers to an imitator. It has the concrete content of the imitation, which can be deduced from the context of Paul's admonitions to the believers (1 Cor. 7:1–11:1), namely a way of life, characterised by sacrificing oneself for the sake of others. Also the believers are only capable of such imitation after they have been reconciled with God. This indicates that Paul demands of Corinthian believers to be more mature in faith, turning their wrong behaviour into behaviour imitating himself and Christ. This imitation has maturity in faith as end-goal. Thus the process of imitation aims at the development of a believer or congregation and results in positive growth based on the traditionally patterned behaviour (1 Cor. 15:1). In conclusion, "imitator" in 1 Corinthians 11:1 refers to the converted Christian who endeavours to follow the example of self-sacrifice for the sake of others as exemplified by Paul and Jesus Christ (see 3.3.5).

Μαθητής in Luke 14:26-35 indicates a follower or disciple of Jesus Christ. The disciples are the people who have a close relationship with Jesus. However, they do not take the initiative in being disciples. Only Jesus has the authority to call His disciples. They are in the process of intensified training under a hierarchical relationship, including guidance and discipline. As followers of Jesus, the disciples are proper witnesses to Him rather than merely members of a tradition (see 3.4.1.10).

Μαθητεύω in Matthew 27:57 refers to following Jesus Christ as a disciple. The word has another meaning in Matthew, namely to cause others to follow Jesus Christ voluntarily. This implies that there is a possibility to become a disciple of Jesus on the basis of a calling to discipleship although one has never seen the Lord (see 3.4.2.10).

Ἐρχομαι, in the context of the Gospel of Luke 14:26-35, first of all refers to coming close to Jesus Christ. The coming of men to Jesus indicates the decision of bearing burdens in order to be His disciples (Luke 14:26, 27). Additionally, the word also has the meaning of “to become”. This implies a change of condition or state. In this sense those who come to Jesus Christ should be changed in a state or condition. This might also refer to a change in the way of life (see 3.4.3.10).

Considering the definitions of the three words (μαθητής, μαθητεύω and ἔρχομαι), the meaning of discipleship refers to following Jesus Christ and maintaining a close relationship with Him. And Jesus’ disciples are subjected to the training to be witnesses of and to Him. To be a disciple refers to a decision to devote oneself to Him, and also to cause others to become His disciples.

When the two ideas are compared, the differences and similarities between them can be explained. The differences are as follows: Firstly, in the relationship with Jesus Christ, μαθητής refers to the direct relationship with Jesus, but μιμητής tends to indicate a way of life rather than the relationship. Secondly, μαθητής has the purpose of becoming a witness under Jesus’ special training, while μιμητής is aimed at the maturity of Christians. Thirdly, μιμητής is the preferred word when used in relation to the issues of the Corinthian church. Fourthly, μιμητής is the person who endeavours to serve and save people, giving up his own rights, while μαθητής is a person who devotes himself to Jesus Christ. Fifth, μιμητής has various objects of imitation, unlike μαθητής as used in the Gospels. Sixth, whereas μιμητής indicates a tradition (1 Cor. 15:1), μαθητής emphasises witnessing to Jesus Christ.

The similarities are as follows: Firstly, μαθητής and μιμητής both refer to those who are converted in Jesus Christ. Secondly, if Jesus Christ does not call initially, nobody can be disciples and imitators. Thirdly, μαθητής and μιμητής refer to a select few people as well as all Christians. Fourthly, μαθητής and μιμητής imply a hierarchical relationship. Fifth, μαθητής and μιμητής both require denial of oneself and a self-sacrificing life. Sixth, the two concepts are both connected with growth in faith. Seventh, they share topics of service and salvation.

Considering that the differences originate from the distinctions between the Gospels and the Pauline letters, and that the similarities indicate that these words share essential points of commonality, it can be argued that μιμητής took the place of μαθητής in the circumstances of Jesus’ absence after his ascension and the Gentile situation in Corinth.

6.2.3 Chapter 4: Grounds for linking 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 to discipleship in the Gospels

Apart from the relationship between keywords as discussed in chapter 3, in chapter 4 the texts in the Gospels associated with discipleship were studied and compared with 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew 9:9-13 shows obedience to Jesus' calling and a humble attitude as requirements for discipleship through the story of Matthew, a tax collector. In Matthew 10, known as the Mission Discourse, Matthew 10:32-42 focuses on the importance of a commissioner to proclaim the gospel. Jesus' disciples are the ones who endeavour to evangelise in spite of affliction. By debating with Peter in Mark 8:34-38, Jesus reveals that disciples are required to share in His suffering, be devoted to Him and eagerly proclaim the gospel despite persecution. The story of a rich young man in Mark 10:23-31 demonstrates that Jesus' disciples abandon all for His sake and the sake of His gospel instead of seeking earthly possessions. With regard to Jesus' instructions for His followers' readiness for their ministry and persecution, the Gospel of Luke 9:57-62 and 14:25-35 indicate who Jesus' disciples are. Jesus emphasises that disciples should be free from bondage to wealth and ties to persons, and show undivided attention to the kingdom of God, in Luke 9:57-62. Also in Luke 14:25-35 He teaches that disciples are required to estimate the cost of discipleship, namely their whole life. In addition, discipleship requires one to pay such cost willingly and be patient in achieving His commission.

The Gospel of John emphasises a different aspect of discipleship from the Synoptic Gospels. Instead of the disciple's total commitment to Jesus Christ, John uses other topics such as abiding in Jesus and following His example. The topic of abiding in Jesus is well expounded in the vine and branch imagery in John 15:1-8. The other topic of following the example of Jesus shows that His disciples should serve one another with a modest mind according to His example of washing the feet of others (John 13:1-17). John 17 refers to the unity of the church as following the example of God and Jesus Christ.

In the study of the Gospels on the topic of discipleship, six essential elements can be discovered: love, following, salvation, lordship, priority and unity. These topics are also found in Paul's instructions in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1.

- Firstly, on the topic of spouses' responsibility to and separation from an unbelieving spouse, Paul explains that love for spouses can be expressed as keeping spouses from temptation by Satan and as an endeavour to save spouses. In addition, Paul teaches the Corinthians to give up their rights for the sake of the weak, with the intention of loving others.
- Secondly, following Jesus Christ in the Gospels is shown to be the same as following the example of Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1. In 1 Corinthians 7 Paul is an example of celibacy,

which is focused on proclaiming the gospel. 1 Corinthians 11:1 requires Christians to imitate Paul's self-sacrificing lifestyle as he does the life of Christ.

- Thirdly, the topic of salvation is comes to the fore in the issue of an unbelieving spouse and the present necessity (1 Cor. 7:26). Those who are married to unbelievers are advised to be patient for the sake of saving the unbelieving spouses. The present necessity of proclaiming the gospel is also the reason for Paul's request for celibacy. Paul's personal example of doing all things for saving people in 1 Corinthians 9 shows that he lived the gospel-orientated life.
- Fourthly, the lordship of Christ is demonstrated in obedience to the Lord and a life according to the Lord's calling. Referring to the poor example of the Israelites, who disobeyed God's commandment (1 Cor. 10), Paul warns the Corinthians not to worship idols because serving idols amounts to denying Jesus as Lord. Also the attitude of staying as you are in 1 Corinthians 7 means that Christians should recognise their own circumstances as being from the Lord, and live according to the calling of the Lord. Paul's tent-making life in 1 Corinthians 9 is such a life in accordance with the calling of the Lord.
- Fifth, Paul's advice on celibacy has the intention that life for the sake of evangelism takes precedence over married life, although his advice is subject to individual choice. The instruction regarding food offered to idols also means that building up the weak and saving unbelievers is more important than seeking one's own rights. This is the way to imitate Jesus Christ.
- Sixth, the purpose of Paul's writing demonstrated in 1 Corinthians 1:10 is to restore the divided church to one community. The issue in 1 Corinthians 7 derived from a division between the ascetic and the immoral. And the eating of food sacrificed to idols in 1 Corinthians 8–10 generated separations within the church. According to Paul, the responsibility of the community in the midst of such divisions is to form one body of believers.

When comparing discipleship in the Gospels with 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1, one observes similarities and differences. The similarities are as follows: emphasising the unity of disciples and believers; sharing common requirements of being a disciple and an imitator; focusing on evangelism; demanding a self-sacrificing life and premising the absence of Jesus Christ. The differences are as follows:

- difference in terms of concern for communal issues, namely 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 deals with the issues arising in the established congregation at Corinth, while the Gospels focus on the disciples who would someday build and serve churches;

- difference between Paul's purpose, namely resolve the divisions in the Corinthian congregation, and Jesus' purpose, namely His followers living devoted lives as witnesses to Him;
- difference in the plural objects to imitate (Paul and Jesus) and the singular object (Jesus) to follow;
- differences in the contexts of Paul and Jesus Christ, namely Paul primarily preached the gospel in the Gentile context and Jesus did so in the Jewish context, which implies that certain issues in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 were not relevant to Jesus' ministry;
- differences in the goal of Paul's and Jesus' evangelism, with evangelism in the Gospels primarily focusing on the coming of the kingdom of God, and evangelism in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 purposed as a solution for the divisions in the Corinthian congregation.

As a result, the similarities are primarily related to the heart of discipleship and 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1, while the differences might originate from changes in circumstances. As an exception, one part of the Gospels indicates the absence of Jesus Christ and is similar to the meaning of imitator in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1. In conclusion, there is a mainly thematic connection between discipleship in the Gospels and 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1, although they are separated in terms of circumstances.

6.2.4 Chapter 5: The relationship between 1 Corinthians 7 and 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 from the perspective of discipleship

On the basis of the findings in chapter 4, chapter 5 focused on how 1 Corinthians 7 is related to 8:1–11:1. When searching for connections between 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1, structural and substantial matters were considered.

As for structural matters, the format of Paul's reply to the Corinthian community is contained in 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1. However, it is not to be denied that they are thematically unrelated, since they treat different topics. Additionally, the use of *περί δὲ* cannot support the argument that the two pericopes must be completely separated. This is because *περί δὲ* in 1 Corinthians 7:25 provides evidence of reducing the strength of the argument of the division between two texts by *περί δὲ*. Thus the structural considerations on the relationship between 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 cannot be supported.

When substantial matters are investigated, there are three options. Firstly, the traditional view holds that 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 are entirely separate. Secondly, the view based on sexual holiness indicates that 1 Corinthians 7 has a relationship with 1 Corinthians 5 and 6, not 1

Corinthians 8:1–11:1. However, there is a weakness in that 1 Corinthians 5 and 6 do not solely deal with the topic of sexuality. Thirdly, in the case of the view based on the topic of discipleship, when the view can be supported by the conclusions of Chapter 4, it is noted that 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 use the common concept of discipleship in spite of their different topics.

On the basis of the third view, three connections between 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 were discovered: serving others, the lordship of Christ and the imitation of Paul. The three points are grounded in the six elements indicated in chapter 4. Firstly, in the issue of eating food offered to idols (1 Cor. 8:1–11:1), Paul persuades the Corinthian believers to serve the weak in faith by giving up their right to eat such food, and to provide support to the unbelievers for the sake of their salvation. As a result, it is noted that the two texts have the common topic of serving others. Secondly, the topic of the lordship of Christ indicates that Jesus Christ is Lord over the lives of believers and the church. All believers have their own calling, including celibacy, from Christ as Lord so that they should live according to His calling based on the standard of the glory of God. The debates on marriage and the eating of food offered to idols, which originated from divisions within the community, are also resolved in order to seek the unity of the church under the lordship of Christ. Thirdly, the topic of the imitation of Paul is also demonstrated in the two texts. Although the characteristics of each text show a difference between optional and absolute, they share a common point, namely devotion to Christ. Paul certainly prefers staying single for the sake of proclaiming the gospel and serving the Lord despite the fact that his advice is optional (1 Cor. 7). On the other hand, the imitation of Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:1 points out that the self-sacrificing life for serving others is what every Christian should pursue at all costs.

6.3 CONCLUSION

The content of Paul's instruction to the Corinthians did not derive from his own understanding of the teachings of Jesus. On the contrary, his teachings were grounded in Jesus' teachings as expounded mainly in the Gospels. In his turn, Paul used Jesus' teaching to teach the Corinthians. Yet Jesus' teaching was directed at people in the context of the Gospels, while Paul had to account for the context of the believers in Corinth. Thus Paul could not directly apply Jesus' instructions to resolve the issues raised by the Gentile church. He rather adapted the core values of Jesus' teaching to the Corinthian context, as he did for other congregations in their particular contexts in his other letters. This is indicated by Paul's use of *μιμητής* rather than *μαθητής*, as the Gospels do. In this sense it is reasonable to assert that the concept of discipleship as expounded by Jesus in the Gospels is reflected in Paul's advice to help the Corinthian believers. Paul certainly accepted the requirements for a disciple given by Jesus Christ and demanded from the Corinthians to fulfil the same qualifications since he had already satisfied them. This is the reason why the core of discipleship in the Gospels is maintained in Paul's teachings and why thus, the

issues of marriage and food, which are seemingly not related, were influenced by the same idea of discipleship.

How has this study then answered the research questions in Chapter 1?

6.3.1 What is the state of research on the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1?

1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 is considered to consist of two pericopes, 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1, based on the view that they are thematically differentiated: the former dealing primarily with the topic of marriage and the latter dealing with the topic of food sacrificed to idols (Chapter 2).

6.3.2 What is the state of research on the interpretation of Paul's use of μιμητής in 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 and its relation to discipleship in the Gospels?

This question was answered in two ways. Firstly, in the semantic analysis, the two keywords, μιμητής and μαθητής, were compared and it was confirmed that they shared essential points (Chapter 3). Additionally, it was clear that the pericopes on discipleship in the Gospels and 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 also had shared commonalities (Chapter 4).

6.3.3 What then is the relationship between 1 Corinthians 7 and 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 from the perspective of discipleship?

It was noted that 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 have common elements on the perspective of discipleship, namely serving others, the lordship of Christ and the imitation of Paul, although they seem to deal with different topics (Chapter 5).

6.3.4 What conclusions can be drawn from the results of the research?

The results of the study show that the basic research question of this dissertation, namely whether it is valid to read 1 Corinthians 7:1–11:1 as one literary unit on the grounds of Paul's use of the concept of discipleship as demonstrated in the Gospels, can be answered positively.

6.4 FURTHER RESEARCH

In this dissertation the concept of discipleship in the Gospels was used for considering 1 Corinthians 7 and 8:1–11:1 to be one thematic pericope. Although the present study offers a contribution in terms of Paul's adaptation of discipleship to the church located at Corinth, more research is needed, namely to find and study other cases where Paul uses the concept of discipleship in 1 Corinthians and the other Pauline letters. Such an investigation will further cast light on how the early church located in Gentile regions was influenced by the concept of discipleship in the Gospels, and how that concept was adapted.

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