Chapter Two

DESCRIBING THE PROBLEM: The Dimensions of Administration

1.   What Does Administration Look Like?

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

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

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

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

Robbins (1976: 7-8) states:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.1.1   *Some Definitions*

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

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

Robbins (1976: 6) comments:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

But, he also defines it in terms of functions:

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

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

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

1.1.2   *The Overlap with Management*

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

Some definitions of management are:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

He continues by saying that,

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.1.3 *Some Questions of Cultural Perspective*

1.1.3.1 Western or African?

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

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

1.1.3.2 Local or Universal?

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

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

1.1.3.3 Relative or absolute?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.2 <u>Administration in the Christian Context</u>

1.2.1 *The Spiritual Gift*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.2.2   *Secular Influence?*

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

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

Chapter Three

ADMINISTRATION IN ITS CONTEXT – Values and Tasks

1. What Do (Christian) Administrators Actually Do?

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

1.1 The Participants

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.2 The Interview Structure

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

1.2.1   *Attitude & Activity Questionnaire*

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

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

1.3 **The Dialogue:**

1.3.1   *Task Questionnaires* (Appendix 1) –

1.3.1.1 Rating of Issues.

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

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

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

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

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

Interpretations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.3.1.2 Identification of Tasks.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Interpretations:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.3.1.3 Delegation and Enjoyment.

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

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

Interpretations:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.4 *Reflections on the Dialogue* –

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Appendix 1: Task Survey/Questionnaire

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

Administration Activity/Attitude Questionnaire for Pastors

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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