PMB 1395/41

JESUS CHRIST:

THE REVELATION OF "*FA'AALOALO*"

"A Christological Perspective of the Samoan concept of 'fa'aaloalo'"

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the Bachelors of Divinity

Malua Theological College, Samoa

September 2006

This Thesis is dedicated to my beloved parents :

Vui Mata and Koleta Maria Kupa

and to the memory of:

my grandfather:

the late Rev. Kupa Euta (F.S)

and to my spiritual father:

the late Rev. Elder Fareti Timaloa (F.T)

ABSTRACT

Understanding the concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** in the Samoan culture has baffled the western world since the arrival of Christianity in 1830. Its complexity and its difficulty is one that I understand to be the key to a flourishing Christian life especially to my beloved Samoan people.

This research is therefore a reflection on the ***fa'aaloalo*** concept, which is revealed through the Samoan culture. There is an understanding that ***fa'aaloalo*** is the foundation upon which all Samoan cultural concepts are based upon. This is an attempt to illuminate this concept in light of the acts and nature of Jesus Christ.

Fa'aaloalo upon careful research shows significant Christian elements within its culture. His revealing nature through Jesus Christ the plumbline, as revealed through his grace, and through human experience of the Samoan culture deems ***fa'aaloalo*** as a manifestation of God through Jesus Christ.

Consequently, it is a call to the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa to take a proactive stance and consider the social and global changes, and to take a step back and look at the big picture of how the Church is progressing.

The appreciation of culture and to understand its significance in the development of the Church is crucial to its survival. In the end, we will see the preservation of not only fa'aaloalo in our Samoan culture, but also the revival and continual growth of the CCCS and the spiritual life of its people.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I would like to thank the Lord for his love and guidance and the strength that he has given me throughout this year to complete this research paper. The warmth and the love of God which has enabled to finalise this project and am happy to put forward and to share with my beloved Samoan people.

The source of my strength and motivation to complete this research was aided by my supervisor Michiko Ete-Lima. I thank you very much Michiko, you helped me in more ways than imaginable, and your strength, encouragement and your will for my success has made this project successful and meaningful, not only to the Samoan people, but the many peoples around the world who are baffled by this wonderful concept of the Samoan culture.

My heartfelt gratitude to the Principal Rev. Prof. Otele Perelini and the wonderful staff of Malua Theological College, for the sharing of their knowledge and wisdom whilst in training at the College, all your valuable contributions have all aided in the success of this paper.

A special note of mention to Rev. Levesi and Sala Afutiti, and their children Tusipepa, Seipua and Levesi Jr for their love and spiritual guidance throughout my years in Malua, the memories of you all will be treasured in my heart forever.

I would like to thank my friends here in Samoa and also in New Zealand for their support and words of encouragement during this great experience. I extend it also to those who contributed their experiences of ***fa'aaloalo*** to this research, and how this wonderful concept is blended throughout the lives of our beloved Samoan people.

My thanks especially to my colleagues from 'Vasega Fa'aiuaso 2005', thank you for your help and motivation through this research, your valuable friendship and fellowship throughout our four years, will be cherished in my life forever. To my soul mates Imoamaua and Amelia, Joachim. Kesniel. Johanna, and Boarneges Setefano, to Vaalele and Tupulagafou Tapaleao

and their daughter Meresianasisi, Neli and Grace Alo, and their children Joshua and Abigail. All your love and support and tolerance during our years in Malua have strengthened me, and built me up to realize my potential to study and glorify the Word of God.

I cannot forget my family in Malua, the Single Students, the heart and soul of Malua, le ***Aiga Pa'ia***, thank you my brothers for all your support and strength that you all gave me, the fun, the happy and the sad times we shared, may the strength and fellowship of the ***Aiga Pa'ia*** be with you all forever.

Great and heartfelt thanks to my sisters and brother, Lagi and husband Andrin, and my beautiful niece Nardingail, Helen, Joseph and partner Twin. Thank you for remembering me, being there, and praying for me whilst in Malua pursuing academic studies.

I would especially like to thank my beloved parents Vui Mata and Maria Koleta Kupa for their never-ending patience, love and prayers for me. I am forever grateful for the support that you showed throughout my life and especially during this research.

To the support and prayers of my families here in Samoa, American Samoa, Auckland, New Zealand, and in Sydney and Brisbane Australia, I dedicate this work for you all for the endless prayers and contributions to my time in Malua and for this research.

To my beloved church, the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Onehunga, Auckland, for the motivation given to be to strive for the best, and to always trust and have faith in the Lord, and lest not forget the Penieli Youth for their inspiration, love, and motivation, I will always remember you.

May the Lord bless you all abundantly

Faafetai, Faafetai, Faafetai tele lava…

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INTRODUCTION

"A CHRISTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE SAMOAN CONCEPT OF *FA'AALOALO*"

I remember distinctly as a young boy being scolded by my mother, because I had failed to say ***tulou*** and bow my head whilst walking in front of grown-ups. It always intrigued me that my non-Samoan friends could easily pass others and not carry out this deed, and still yet not be berated by their elders. It later became clear to me that this mere act of bowing and saying ***tulou*** is just one deed which stems from this Samoan concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** or respect. Clearly in the ***Fa'a-Samoa***[1] there is a notable presence and demand for ***fa'aaloalo***. In essence, it is the foundation and the core upon which all Samoan cultural traditions are based. Growing up in a family very deeply entrenched in the Christian values and customs; I was introduced at a very early stage of my life to Jesus Christ. Later on I attended Malua Theological College in Samoa where I was given a theological understanding of Jesus Christ. I then became acutely aware of how this concept ***fa'aaloalo*** is evidently present in the demeanour and life of Jesus Christ. Thus, through my life experience as well as my theological education, it became evidently clear to me that Jesus Christ displayed strong characteristics that were akin to this Samoan concept of ***fa'aaloalo***. It is this acute awareness and curiosity that has led me to attempt at this topic of a ***'fa'aaloalo Christology.'*** This thesis is therefore an attempt to formulate a ***'fa'aaloalo Christology.'***

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[1] ***Fa'a*** means 'to do' and so literally ***Fa'a-Samoa*** means to do what is Samoan or the Samoan way of life.

SCOPE AND AIM

The search for a ***fa'aaloalo*** Christology is the endeavour to give awareness to the Samoan people the important role that the ***Faa-Samoa*** plays in the CCCS. It purports to encourage the embracing of the Samoan culture in the life of the CCCS. It gives Samoans a sense of national identity.

With the establishment of this ***'Fa'aaloalo Christology'***, it relays the obvious sense of belongingness to the Samoan person. It gives an obvious appreciation of the Samoan culture and how it serves the work of God. So in allowing our Samoan concepts to flourish within in own lives and in our homes, we feel a sense of oneness when being able to relate our cultural identity and that of our Christian identity.

METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The fundamentals of this thesis is found in the experiences of the Samoan people in villages, also scholarly discussions with Samoan historians who have good standings in Samoan society. The informal discussions took place in an informal environment where it allowed thoughts and expressions to be heard freely and in an open arena. Relevant literature was also employed to aid in the production of this thesis.

Chapter One of this thesis will focus primarily on this concept of ***fa'aaloalo.*** It will firstly look at the origin of this concept. It will also discuss the impact of ***fa'aaloalo*** on the lives of the Samoan people by discussing in detail a few major Samoan cultural concepts and practises which are deeply founded on ***fa'aaloalo.*** This chapter will also look at critical relationships in the ***Fa'a-Samoa*** that are heavily influenced by the concept of ***fa'aaloalo.***

This chapter will also outline some of the ways in which the concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** has been misused. Chapter Two will look at the life and work of Jesus Christ. This chapter will focus particularly on the nature and ministry of Jesus which clearly displays this concept of ***fa'aaloalo.*** The final chapter will then attempt to view the work and nature of Jesus with the Samoan concept of ***fa'aaloalo.*** It's in this process of assimilation that the development of a ***'fa'aaloalo Christology'*** will be seen. The existence of a ***'fa'aaloalo Christology'*** attempts to bring to the realisation of the Samoan person the reality of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CONCEPT OF *FA'AALOALO* IN THE SAMOAN CULTURE

Chapter One serves to explicate and expound on the Samoan concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** (respect). This chapter will therefore, firstly attempt to etymologically define and provide interpretations and views of the term ***fa'aaloalo.*** Secondly, it will attempt to highlight the critical Samoan cultural concepts and practises which are founded on this ***fa'aaloalo*** concept. The third section will then provide an account of crucial relationships in the ***Fa'aSamoa,*** including the relationship of people and God which are heavily reliant upon the ***fa'aaloalo*** concept. The fourth and final section will provide a realistic reflection on how this ***fa'aaloalo*** concept can be misinterpreted and abused.

1. ETYMOLOGICAL DEFINITION OF THE TERM *FA'AALOALO*

The most commonly used English translation or definition of ***fa'aaloalo*** is 'respect.' However, 'respect' does not adequately express the full meaning of the Samoan term, ***fa'aaloalo.*** It is therefore essential to look at the etymological composition of the term ***fa'aaloalo*** to provide a more holistic and authentic understanding.

1.1 The Meaning of *fa'aaloalo*

Fa'aaloalo is the amalgamation of the causative prefix[2] ***fa'a*** and the noun ***alo,*** repeated. ***Fa'a*** denotes the action of 'doing something' or 'putting something together' and ***alo*** means

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[2] Rev. George Pratt. *Pratt's Grammar & Dictionary of the Samoan Language, - 4th Edition, Reprinted 1977,* (Apia: Malua Printing Press, 1977), 76.

'face.'[3] So literally translated, the concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** can mean to 'put face to face,' or the action of a face to face relationship.

Aumua Mata'itasi Simanu also expresses this view when she states that ***fa'aaloalo*** derives from the term ***alo***, which means the frontal part of one's body, or countenance. This is to include all aspects of one's body, from the head right down to one's toes. She also adds that the countenance includes the way in one gives expression through their face, their bodily movements and gestures all constitute to what is meant by ***fa'aaloalo.***[4]

This meaning is similar to that held by Mary Autagavaia (200:51) as cited by Louis Van Kessel in his research when he stated that '***fa'aaloalo***' means having the courage to 'show face' to each other, a quality viewed by the Samoan people as very important, because respect is a two way process, because no one knows everything, but no one knows nothing either.[5]

The term ***fa'aaloalo*** can also be seen as a compound word deriving from the Samoan word meaning love (***alofa***), because it involves the act of facing one another, and it this face to face interaction that there is the sharing of the goodness of life, through the sharing of the love that the other has to offer.[6]

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[3] Rev. George Pratt. *Pratt's Grammar & Dictionary of the Samoan Language, - 4th Edition, Reprinted 1977,* (Apia: Malua Printing Press, 1977), 27.

[4] Aumua Mata'itusi, Simanu, *A text for the Advanced Study of Samoan Language and Culture* (Auckland: Pasefika Press, 2002), 122. 135-145.

[5] Mary Autagavaia cited by Louis van Kessel. *Contribution of Supervision to Intercultural Understanding.* Lecture to ANSE-Summer University "2003 Intercultural Dialogue in Supervision", Salgotarjan. 28th July 2003.

[6] Rev. Dr Taipisia Leilua. *Personal Interview,* 20th March 2006.

In essence, ***fa'aaloalo*** is respect that is held by a person. Yet it goes beyond the normal respect and is referring to a holistic sense of ***fa'aaloalo***. It means that a person gives their total and utmost respect that is inclusive of their total persona.

1.2 Interpretations of *fa'aaloalo.*

The interpretations offered by different people relating to ***fa'aaloalo*** are wide and varied, yet they all give account of how significant and pertinent this concept is to the life of every Samoan person.

David Lui, in a keynote address[7] suggests that ***fa'aaloalo*** is the foundation of good relationships. The protocols and etiquettes that define the acceptable behaviours and standards are effectively founded upon this concept of ***fa'aaloalo.***

This is reiterated by Dr. Lau Asofou So'o, who compares it to a code of conduct that dictates what you are supposed to do in terms of relationships with other people. It is showing respect to others, but respect alone does not define its profoundness.[8]

Agafili Tutolova'a adds that the deeper meaning of this word means 'happiness' because when we speak of this face to face interaction, it expresses happiness through the sharing of life, love, and respect for one that is opposite to you. This is expressed through the language

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[7] David Lui, http://www.mhc.govt.nz/publications/2003/A%20Samoan%20Perspective%20-/20Email.doc *Family – A Samoan Perspective,* Keynote presentation to the SF National Conference, Christchurch Convention Centre 13-14th September 2003. (30th March 2006)

[8] Dr Lau Asofou So'o, *Personal Interview*, 14th April 2006.

or the choice of words, pitch and tone of voice, bodily gestures, facial expressions all account for what is considered to be respectable behaviour.[9]

Paulo Koria further stated that ***fa'aaloalo*** may be simply defined as the principle, an attitude, a cultural value, a principle of social behaviour, a traditional custom and even an institutional practice and every Samoan person is nurtured by this concept.[10]

The impact that this concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** can have on society was readily seen in the events that occurred in American Samoa. Sunia mentions in his book, about a comment made by the governor of American Samoa (Governor H. Rex Lee), who noted that the Samoan culture aspect of ***fa'aaloalo,*** especially hosting people or visitors, stated Samoan hospitality meant that all are welcome, so he passed a law in American Samoa that only people who pay a return fare to American Samoa can enter the territory. He adds that "if people around the world knew of Samoan hospitality and ***fa'aaloalo*** then there would be so many people here living a free life off the Samoan people."[11]

In essence the above interpretations alludes to the fact that ***fa'aaloalo*** is an important concept in the ***Fa'a-Samoa*** that readily dictates a Samoan person's character, nature and relationships. It serves as a critical factor in the Samoan persons' world view and perception. That is, Samoans look at everything through the lens of ***fa'aaloalo***. How activities are

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[9] Agafili Tutolova'a, *Personal Interview*, 28 March 2006. This view also expressed by Aumua Mata'itasi Simanu in her book titled, *O Si Manu a Alii,* (Auckland: Pasefika Press, 2002), 122.

[10] Paulo Koria, "Moving Towards a Pacific Theology: Theologising with Concepts," *The Pacific Journal of Theology, Series II, Issue 22*, (1999):5-6.

[11] Fofo. I. F. Sunia *Lupe o le Foaga*, 1997. (Reprint. Tafuna: Department of Education Printing, 2000), 125.

arranged, how one speaks to another, how the people are classified, how people relate to each other and their actions is determined by this concept of ***fa'aaloalo.***

2. ***FA'AALOALO*** IN CRITICAL SAMOAN CONCEPTS AND PRACTISES

It is fair to say that ***fa'aaloalo*** is the heart of the ***Faa-Samoa*** or the Samoan way of life. To adequately account for the pertinence of ***fa'aaloalo*** in the ***Fa'a Samoa*** an outline of how it impacts on different concepts and practises of the ***Fa'a Samoa*** is critical.

The diagram below highlights the different concepts and practises that this section will be focussing on.

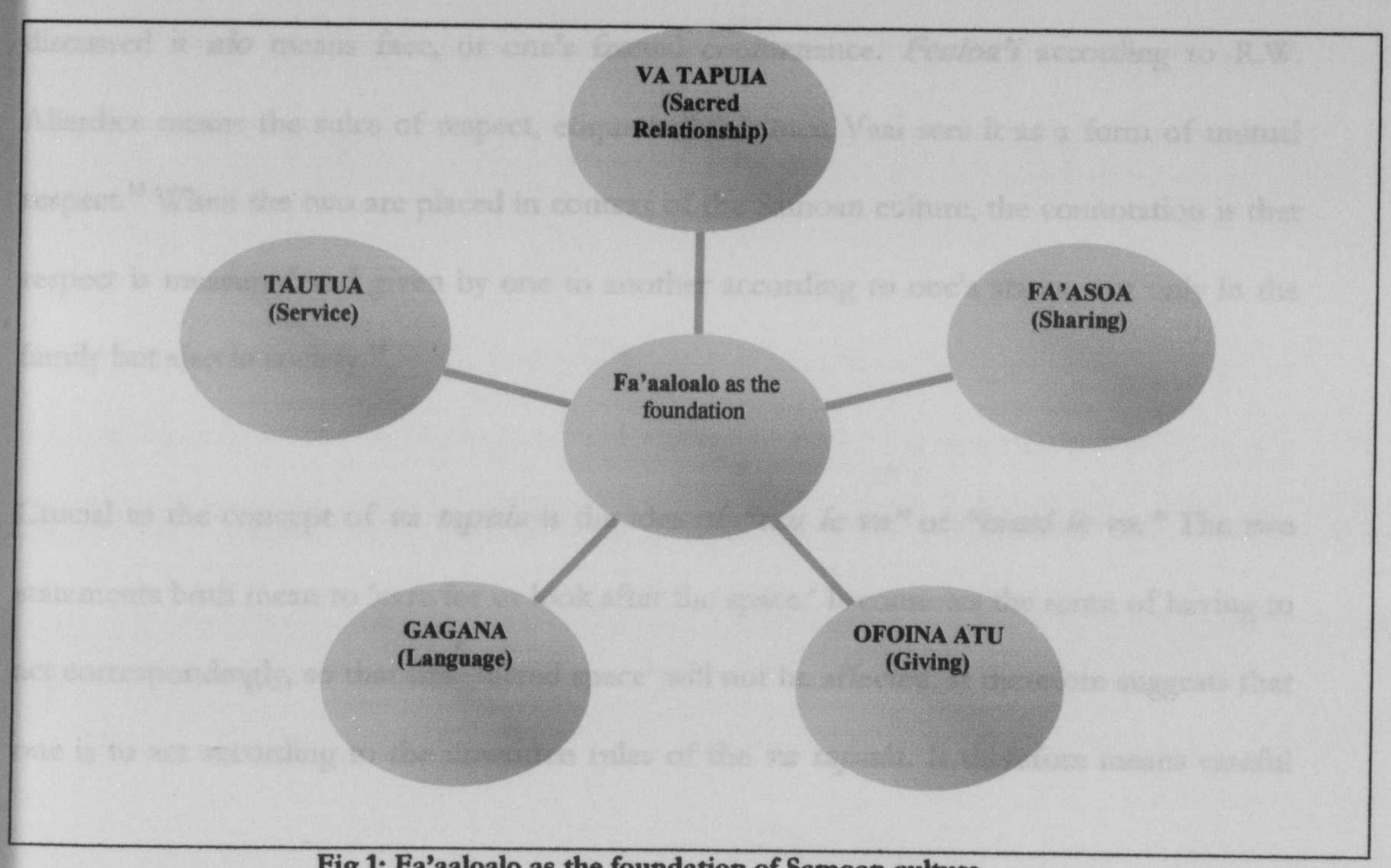


Fig 1: Fa'aaloalo as the foundation of Samoan culture

2.1 *Fa'aaloalo* and the Va-Tapuia

Critical to any relationship in the ***Fa'a-Samoa,*** is this concept of ***Va-Tapuia. Va*** means distance or space and ***tapuia*** finds it's origin in the root word, ***'tapu'*** meaning sacred. So literally translated it means the 'sacred space' that exists between people. It readily means that this 'sacred space' is not to be trespassed or violated for it would mean shame borne by the party who breaches.

This concept of ***va tapuia*** is also referred to as the ***va fealoa'i.*** This alternative term, ***va fealoa'i,*** readily relates the concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** when viewing it's etymological origin. The term is the combination of the two words, ***va,*** meaning gap or space, and ***fealoa'i,*** which derives from the root word ***alo.*** This is the same root word for ***fa'aaloalo.*** And as earlier discussed it ***alo*** means face, or one's frontal countenance. ***Fealoa'i*** according to R.W. Allardice means the rules of respect, etiquette;[12] Saleimoa Vaai sees it as a form of mutual respect.[13] When the two are placed in context of the Samoan culture, the connotation is that respect is measured and given by one to another according to one's status, not only in the family but also in society.[14]

Crucial to the concept of ***va tapuia*** is the idea of ***"teu le va"*** or ***"tausi le va."*** The two statements both mean to 'care for or look after the space.' It connotes the sense of having to act correspondingly, so that this 'sacred space' will not be affected. It therefore suggests that one is to act according to the unwritten rules of the ***va tapuia.*** It therefore means careful

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[12] R.W. Allardice, *A Simplified Dictionary of Modern Samoa,* (Auckland: Polynesian Press, 1989), 100.
[13] Saleimoa Vaai, *Samoan Faa-Matai and Rule of Law,* (Suva: Quality Press Ltd, 1999), 275.
[14] Simanu, 121-122.

observance of this 'sacred space' and the failure to do so would mean a breakdown in the fabric of good relationships.

Critical to this ***va tapuia***, is the sense of ***fa'aaloalo.*** It is the ***fa'aaloalo*** nature that is due or possessed by a person which allows them to perform and act accordingly within this ***va-tapuia*** or 'sacred space.' When a person does not possess this element of ***fa'aaloalo,*** then they easily abuse this 'sacred space' and they easily fail to recognise the importance of staying within the confines of this 'sacred space.'

2.2 *Fa'aaloalo* in the *Tautua* (Service)

Another very important Samoan concept where ***fa'aaloalo*** is perceived as critical is that of ***tautua. Tautua*** is a term that means service or 'to serve' or can be used to refer to the servant or the one who serves. So it doubly acts as a noun when referring to the 'servant' and as a verb when referring to the service.

The term is a combination of the two words, ***tau*** meaning 'fight' and ***tua*** meaning 'back' or 'behind.' So literally, the word means to 'fight from the back.'[15] It connotes the sense of not just merely 'serving' but serving with much vigour and zeal. It further indicates that the person who is to ***tautua*** or serve does it from the behind the scene. They have no intention of getting recognition for their services.

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[15] ***tautua*** The etymology of the word is traced back to the battlefields of the olden days, when the hero, singled out in the front, leads his men into battle. All the followers are fighters from the back of the hero. When the battle starts again, those at the rear would strive to get to the front to prove eligible in the art of war.

The types of ***tautua*** that exists in the ***Fa'a Samoa*** also hints at the prevalence of ***fa'aaloalo*** in this concept. There is firstly the ***tautua tuavae,***[16] which means that the person who serves will do so with speed and efficiency. They will duly follow whomever they are serving and will look after their well-being. The ***tautua tuavae*** is also one who will perform a task without having to be asked to, and will never question any instructions given to them.[17]

Secondly is the ***tautua matavela.***[18] This type of ***tautua*** in its literal sense means 'service through burnt eyes.' It is descriptive of ones demeanour when serving another with much ardour and zeal. In particular it is referring to the sweat and the burnt eyes that could result from the performance of a ***umu*** (underground oven). The uniqueness of this kind of ***tautua*** is noted by Michiko Ete-Lima when she writes.

> This describes a unique type of service that is performed with much dedication and honour. What is notable about this servant-hood role is that the duties are performed in silence **(*aunoa ma se leo*)**. There is no noticeable sign of frustration or complaining as service is given, despite the degree of difficulty and hardship that is endured.[19]

And finally there is the ***tautua toto;*** which is the most demanding of the three types. It is this ***tautua*** that represents the total sacrifice made by the person who serves. It literally means service through blood. This service is performed through courageous and non-fearing acts. In some instances it could mean death for the person who is to ***tautua.*** A person will ***tautua*** despite the difficulty of the act or performance.[20]

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[16] ***Tuavae,*** literally means heel, which indicates that the person who serves will be light on their feet.
[17] Simanu, 109.
[18] ***Matavela,*** literally means eyes that are burnt.
[19] Michiko Ete-Lima, *'Jesus Christ the Feagaiga and Nofo-tane: A Christological Perception of the Samoan Tama'ita'i,* (MTh Thesis, Pacific Theological College, 2001), 27.
[20] Simanu, 110.

In the three types of ***tautua*** mentioned above, there is the obvious presence of the ***fa'aaloalo.*** In essence, to 'serve' or ***tautua,*** one needs that sense of ***fa'aaloalo,*** because a person needs to truly forfeit their own personal agenda and put those they are serving first and foremost. It is difficult to perform any service sufficiently or adequately without having this element of ***fa'aaloalo.***

2.3 *Fa'aaloalo* in Giving

Another very important concept in the ***Fa'a-Samoa*** is that of 'giving.' The idea of giving is seen in some of the unique Samoan practises which in the end is viewed as practising ones ***fa'aaloalo.*** Any act that involves 'giving' is inextricably linked to the element of ***fa'aaloalo.*** That is, the giver would be viewed as a person who possesses the nature of ***fa'aaloalo*** or is displaying the essence of ***fa'aaloalo.***

This section will discuss two types of 'giving' unique to the ***Fa'a Samoa,*** namely the ***'oso' or 'fa'aoso'*** and ***'taulaga.'***

2.3.1 *Oso and Fa'aoso.*

A ***oso*** is a gift that someone will bring with them when they return from any travel, be it near or far. It is not uncommon for a person to say to one who is going into town or overseas, ***"sau ma aumai se oso"*** meaning "come back with a gift." The person who is travelling will naturally return with such a gift and to not do so would be considered ill-mannered or thoughtless. The Samoan term of ***"leai se mafaufau"*** or "one who doesn't think" would often be said of a person who does not return with a ***oso.***

The magnitude of the ***oso*** is especially evident when there is a group or community who are travelling elsewhere or overseas. The community who are contemplating travelling to another village or country will take months out in preparation for this trip. The major part of the preparation is the gathering of gifts that they are hoping to take with them to their hosting village or community. These gifts normally consist of money, fine mats and other valuable assets. For the travelling community, to be hosted and not give anything would be viewed as disgraceful. There would be shame upon their community for failing to act out the normal Samoan tradition of a ***'oso.'***

The ***fa'aoso*** refers to the gift that is given to the traveller by those who were hosting. When someone resides with you in their travels, it is expected that you will give them a ***fa'aoso*** to take with them in their return home.

The enormity of this ***fa'aoso*** is also apparent when there is a group or community who make the journey. The hosting group or community will be expected to give over to the travellers gifts which are of great value. When the hosting community is one overseas, monetary form of ***fa'aoso*** is preferable for its practicality and need. Many of the communities which have travelled overseas will return to Samoa with a substantial amount of money.

In both these situations of taking or bringing a ***oso*** and in giving your guest a ***fa'aoso*** to take with them in their return home, is an action that displays ones sense of ***fa'aaloalo.***

2.3.2 *Taulaga.*

This term means a sacred offering. There is no other clearer portrayal of a Samoan person's nature to give freely without any hesitation, than in their ***taulaga*** made to the Church. This section will only discuss the ***taulaga*** that is made in the Congregational Christian Church in Samoa (CCCS) to serve as an illustration.

In the CCCS there are four annual offerings that Church members make contributions toward. The first annual offering occurs in the first week of September, called the ***Taulaga Talalelei.***[21] This fund is for the purpose of allocation to assist and aid missionaries around the world who are serving time in the field. The final three donations remaining are annually offered in the month of November. Firstly there is the ***Taulaga Au Taumafai***[22] which is an offering by church members given to the Christian Endeavour branch where monetary offering go toward the printing of materials for the yearly programme, and generally for the matters concerning the welfare of the Christian Endeavour group.

The ***Taulaga Au Leoleo***[23] (The Watchers Prayer Union), another branch of the church who attend in groups for Prayer Meetings. This Watchers Prayer Union is a feature in every local parish. Each local parish are supposed to meet weekly, with the focus being on prayer, and the strengthening of prayer in the spiritual lives of its members.

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[21] Meaning "The Offering for the Gospel" held on the first week of September of every year. All of the 300 or so congregations in Samoa and abroad make offerings to this donation. It is also a remembrance offering to the missionaries who brought the Gospel to the shores of Samoa.

[22] Offering for the 'Christian Endeavour Group'. This group is set up in the CCCS to enhance the spiritual relationship of its members. Services are held weekly whereby the church members advocate in leading services through Bible Study.

[23] *The Constitution of the Congregational Christian Church in* Samoa - May 21-23, 2001, (Apia: Malua Printing Press, 2001), 12.

The final ***taulaga*** is the ***Taulaga Samoa***, which is an offering of a voluntary amount by each congregation which assists the CCCS in all areas of development and maintenance of the Church in general. Financial aid is given for the parishes who request for the building of Church buildings and the purchase of land.

The generous giving of the people is evident in the total amount that is received by the CCCS each year. For example, in the year 2005, the total of the amount gained in the ***Taulaga Samoa*** was $7,232,504.44 Samoan Tala. (Refer to Appendix).

These ***taulaga's*** mentioned above are those which are collected for the purposes of the general administration of the CCCS. Different from those ***taulaga's,*** are the ones for local congregations which meet their own individual purposes.

The main one would be the ***alofa***[24] which is the offering given to the local church minister normally on a fortnightly basis. The people pay the minister's stipend, pay their household bills, and provide him with a house and car, basically taking care of his needs.[25]

Feiloa'iga Taule'ale'ausumai. In her article she states:

> "in Samoan Conference based churches like the C.C.C.S and the Samoan Methodist Churches, individual parishes pay ministers independently. The size of the congregation determines the size of the ***alofa***, or love offering, made to its pastor…..people seek to give to give as much as possible at any given time. Some ministers of the bigger inner-city parishes are reputed to

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[24] This is the Samoan term for 'love' but used in this context to refer to the minister's stipend.
[25] Cluny MacPherson and David Pitt, *Emerging Pluralism: The Samoan Community in New Zealand*, (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1974), 53.

> receive salaries of well over $75,000 per annum, plus additional grants to cover accommodation and vehicle expenses."[26]

It is apparent that the 'giving' made to the church is colossal and would be a main feature in any of the families' budget. However, despite the financial hardships that could be encountered by families, there is still that willingness to 'give' without hesitation. For many Samoan people this act of giving to the church is in some way the display of their ***fa'aaloalo*** attitude towards God.

In effect, it is feasible to state that it is this concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** which has affected the 'giving' nature of the Samoan person.

2.4 *Fa'aaloalo in* Sharing

The ***Fa'a-Samoa*** views the concept of ***fa'asoa*** or sharing as critical. Again, not unlike other Samoan concepts, the English translation (sharing) does not fully give a satisfactory definition of ***fa'asoa,*** but it does hint at some of its aspects.

To ***fa'asoa*** is to distribute amongst the community in an equitable manner whatever may be received by the family or community. Whenever a person receives a blessing or a gift in the form of money, food or any other goods, it is considered proper for that person to ***fa'asoa*** their blessings. To hold on to it would be viewed as selfish and not the Samoan way of

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[26]Feiloa'iga Taule'ale'ausumai, "New Religions, New Identities: the Changing Contours of Religious Commitment". *Tagata o te Moana Nui: The evolving Identities of Pacific People's in Aotearoa (NZ),* Cluny McPherson et.al. (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 2001), 184.

doing things. The concept of ***fa'asoa*** makes communal living practical. It allows those in the community to appreciate others and to develop a common concern for one another.[27]

It is noted by Lalomilo Kamu that 'sharing' is an honour, and is prevalent in the life of the Samoan people.[28] He further adds that sharing "is an expression in action of the sharing of life's gifts and is symbolic of a caring people. It is a part of Samoan life, in which all Samoans are expected to participate, not just the affluent individuals, families, or villages."[29]

What makes the concept of ***fa'asoa*** so significant and outstanding in the Samoan culture is that people share in accordance to ***fa'aaloalo.*** In their sharing they do it with the very intention there is due consideration for others in the community. When one is to distribute they must consider their ***'va tapuia'*** with others in the community and act accordingly to that ***'va tapuia.'*** That is, they must consider their unwritten code of the relationship with the other person.

Take for example if a fisherman was to return from a fishing expedition with a great multitude of fish, then instantly the food is distributed to the members of the village, always beginning from the person with the highest status, right through to the common people of the village. When one is to ***fa'asoa***, the greatest act that one can do because of ***fa'aaloalo*** is to distribute all the fish, even though if there is nothing left for the fisherman. As long as he has distributed it to everyone, the fisherman is satisfied in the knowledge that all in the community have been given a share of his catch.

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[27] Talia Tapaleao. *Samoa Founded on God – Faavae i le Atua Samoa,* (B.D Thesis, Pacific Theoloigcal College, 1991), 78-79.

[28] Lalomilo Kamu, *The Samoan Culture and The Christian Gospel,* (Apia: Methodist Printing Press, 1996), 52.

[29] Kamu, 53.

2.5 *Fa'aaloalo* in a persons' movements

There is a common Samoan saying that ***'e iloa le tagata Samoa i lana savali'*** meaning that "you can tell a Samoan person by the way they walk." It suggests, that the way one carries oneself is indicative of whom one is and the possession of this attribute of ***fa'aaloalo.*** Consequently, a step in the wrong direction or failure to carry out the proper act is a sign that a person is not ***fa'aaloalo.***

One action that is considered a clear indication of the possession of the nature of ***fa'aaloalo*** is when one passes in front of any person, they must immediately bend and utter the word ***tulou***, meaning 'excuse me.' This act is indicative of the person's humble and indeed ***fa'aaloalo*** nature. It is in the bowing that they are lowering their bodily position so that they do not appear upright, which is a sign of pride and wanting to be higher than the other person.

This lowering of a person's body is also seen as critical when addressing or taking a message to another person who is seen as senior in position. For example, when you are to deliver a message, and the recipient of the message is seated, then you must bend down so that you are lower than the recipient of the message. It could mean that you sit down and give the message. To stand upright and say the message is considered impolite and offensive.

In the act of eating, it is not correct in the ***Fa'a-Samoa*** to walk at the same time. ***'Ai savali'*** meaning, to eat and walk is considered improper and rude. So whenever a person is casually eating a packet of chips, they are supposed to sit down and do so. Also, a person taking a

quick drink will always be seen crouching when so doing. It is most inappropriate to be standing straight and drinking.

A further act which is considered an indication of one's possession of ***fa'aaloalo*** nature is the folding of one's legs in a proper manner. It is very disrespectful to extend one's feet toward another person in any situation whether it is at home and especially in any communal gathering.[30] If a person cannot help but extend their feet, then they must keep them hidden under a mat or position them away from another person.

The above actions are indicative of how the concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** runs deep in the ***tu ma aga*** (practises) of the ***Fa'a-Samoa.*** In many of the above actions, it is in the lowering of one's person so that they do not come across as prideful and in effect full of genuine respect.

2.6 *Fa'aaloalo* in the Language

The Samoan language is made up of two kinds. There is the formal and the informal language. The formal language is sometimes referred to as the Chiefly or the polite language, and the informal is sometimes known as the ordinary language.[31]

The formal language is taught to the Samoan person from a very young age. They will attend the ***aoga faifeau***[32] whereby the terms for the formal language will be taught to them. For

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[30] Simanu, 139.
[31] G.B.Milner, *Samoan Dictionary*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1986), xxvii – xxxi.
[32] This is the pastors school which normally runs after school at the manse. The children from the age of 5 upwards will be given classes for secular subjects and will also be taught the formal language.

many of the ordinary terms, there will always be a 'formal' equivalent that the person must know. These formal terms are known as ***upu fa'aaloalo.***[33]

The type of language that is used is determined by the relationship and the context of where one is speaking. For example, if a person is addressing the pastor of the village, then they are expected to use the formal language. However, if you are talking to a friend or colleague than the ordinary language is acceptable. If one is to be speaking in public, it is advisable to use the formal language. A failure to use this formal language in the right context would normally be viewed as disrespectful.

At times, the use of an ordinary term and not the ***upu fa'aaloalo*** may really sound abrasive and offensive to the listener. However, when the very same comment is made but with the ***upu fa'aaloalo,*** the hearer receives this message clearly and is not insulted by it the very same comment. The use of the ***upu fa'aaloalo*** has alone indicated to the hearer that the statement is made with the best of intentions and indeed with a humble heart.

In essence, ***fa'aaloalo*** plays a significant role in the Samoan language. The knowledge and use of the ***fa'aaloalo*** words is critical to verbal communication in the ***Fa'a Samoa.*** In effect the language used speaks loudly of a persons ***fa'aaloalo*** nature.

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[33] *Upu fa'aaloalo* literally means 'words of respect', or 'polite words' and in the Samoan language there are words which have a synonymous double, which is used when in conversation with someone else, it could be your sister, someone older than you, a chief, a minister, or when using Samoan Oratory, these 'words of respect' or 'polite words' are used in exchange of the usual everyday Samoan language.

3. *FA'AALOALO* IN SIGNIFICANT SAMOAN RELATIONSHIPS

3.1 The *Feagaiga* (Covenant)

A very important relationship in the ***Fa'a-Samoa*** is the ***feagaiga,*** or the relationship between the brother and the sister. This is a unique relationship in the ***Fa'a Samoa,*** and in its practise there is a certain presence of this concept of ***fa'aaloalo.***

The ***feagaiga*** is an unwritten covenant that determines the deeds and acts of both the brother and the sister. The brother is to perform tasks and duties for the sister that denotes her status not unlike that of the princess in the family. The sister holds an elevated position in this relationship and is considered to be the ***ioimata***[34] or 'pupil' of the brother's eyes. In the brothers' responsibilities to his sister, Bradd Shore noted:

> The relationship between a boy and his sister is ideally characterised by: (1) the rendering of respectful service by the brother to his sister, whom he should serve at meals, eating only when she has finished; (2) avoidance of casual or lighthearted conversation, particularly when it includes bawdy banter or references to boy or girl friends; (3) rigid separation of sleeping quarters, the sister traditionally sleeping in the large ***fale tele*** 'round house'; (4) protection of the sister by the brother from the sexual aggressiveness of other boys.... [35]

It is evident from the above account that in all the duties carried out by the brother there is a blatant presence of ***fa'aaloalo.*** For example, he must serve her with the due respect and the conversations cannot be offensive or vulgar. These acts can only be authentic if the brother acquires the quality of ***fa'aaloalo.***

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[34] ***Ioimata*** is the term for the 'pupils' of the eyes. It is symbolic of how the sister is to be the 'center' or the 'core' of the brother's life. Just as the pupil is important to ones person, it is comparable to how the sister is important and significant to the brother.

[35] Bradd Shore, "Incest Prohibitions and the Logic of Power in Samoa," *The Journal of the Polynesian Society,* 85, no 2 (June 1976): 283.

The concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** is also evident in the role of the sister. She is expected to be actively involved in the making of critical family decisions as in the selection of a ***matai*** (chief). It is further noted that the sister acts as the peacemaker in the family. She is given the responsibility of ensuring that the family live in unity.[36] She is often referred to as the ***pae***[37] and ***auli*** (iron) highlighting her role as the one who brings peace and harmony. The term suggests that the sister has the responsibility of smoothing out matters and issues in the family.

Consequently, if the sister does not possess this attribute of ***fa'aaloalo*** then her roles and duties will prove difficult and challenging. The general expectance of the sister to be the one who brings peace and amity will almost be impossible if she does not carry out her duties with a sense of ***fa'aaloalo.***

Consequently, ***fa'aaloalo*** is a critical factor in this unique and special Samoan relationship in the ***feagaiga.***

3.2 The *Matai* and the *Taule'ale'a*

Another very important relationship that is found in the ***Fa'a Samoa*** is that of the ***matai*** (chief) and the ***taule'ale'a*** (untitled man). In this relationship there are ample illustrations of the ***fa'aaloalo*** element between the ***matai*** and the ***taule'ale'a.***

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[36] Ete-Lima, 25.

[37] ***Pae*** is the term given to the act of 'smoothing' out the pebbles known as ***paepae.***

In the young man's role as the ***taule'alea*** he has the responsibility of listening and obeying the instructions of the ***matai.*** It is the young man who will actively carry out the instructions of the ***matai.*** Indeed the ***tautua*** (service) that was outlined in the above section would be duly carried out by the young man. Firstly, in his ***tautua tuavae,*** when an order or an instruction is given by the ***matai*** to the ***taule'ale'a,*** he expected to be light on his feet and carry out this command in an instance. A delay or procrastination of the order would be viewed as disobedient and shameful for the ***taule'alea'.***

Secondly, in his ***tautua matavela,*** the ***taule'ale'a*** is expected to carry out any instruction with dedication and commitment. A high expectation is placed upon him to carry out his duties faithfully.

Thirdly, in his ***tautua toto,*** the ***taule'ale'a*** will perform his duties to the utmost of his abilities. If such responsibilities means his suffering and even death, then so be it. This is all part of his tasks in his role and capacity as ***taule'ale'a.***

This ***tautua*** of the ***taule'ale'a*** would prove difficult if not impossible without the element of ***fa'aaloalo.*** It is this nature of ***fa'aaloalo*** that allows the ***taule'ale'a*** to serve his ***matai*** ardently. It is in his deep respect of their relationship that provides the ***taule'ale'a*** with the mindset of honouring and fulfilling the expectations of his role.

This mindset of ***tautua*** with ***fa'aaloalo*** is not exclusive to the ***taule'ale'a.*** The ***matai*** also has responsibilities and duties that he must adhere to and perform accordingly in his capacity as ***matai.***

Faitala Talapusi explains that "a ***matai*** gives ***tautua*** to his family, and likewise his family to him. Part of the responsibilities of the ***matai*** as a ***tautua*** is in the role of advising and assisting his family members.[38]

He assists by giving his family words of encouragement, highlighting his role as a leader, director, overseer in his family. The same responsibility and leadership is given to the ***matai*** when he is involved in activities of the village and the Church. Because of these roles, duties and functions towards his family, the village and the Church, he becomes a leader who serves.[39]

There are three main roles to which a ***matai tautua*** takes on in Samoan society. Firstly he is the family representative at village councils. If any member under his jurisdiction fails to comply with village law, he or she is responsible for their actions. He speaks on behalf of the family, and will take responsibility for any penalties. Whatever penalty that has been handed down by the council it has to be fulfilled or eviction of the family from the village and the loss of the ***matai's*** title.

His role as a representative of his family, leads to his role as a redeemer of the family. A role that is magnificently illustrated by a uniquely Samoan act of confession called the ***ifoga.***[40] It is an act of reconciliation between two parties due to an event of seriousness. If a family member commits a serious crime, the matai of that family will kneel in front of the victims

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[38] Faitala Talapusi, *Eschatology In One Polynesian Context: Samoan Mythological View,* (Ph.D Dissertation, Montpellier University, France, 1989 – Unpublished), 173.
[39] Saifoloi, Saifoloi, *Jesus: A Tautua of God – Towards a Samoan Christology.* (B.D. Thesis, Malua Theological College, 2000), 15.
[40] ***Ifoga*** literally means the act of bowing.

house, covering his head with an ***ie toga,***[41] begging for forgiveness. This is a process that aims to foster good relations with the family affected by the event. In an event of a successful ***ifoga***, the family will forgive the offending family and the ***matai*** performing the ***ifoga***. The ***ifoga*** is seen as an act to seek forgiveness and foster relations through reconciliation, and despite the ***matai's*** dignity, he has to lower himself by performing this shameful act of ***ifoga***.[42]

The final role of the ***matai*** through his ***tautua*** is his representation through his role as a priest. He leads the family prayer evening and morning devotionals to God. In the absence of the ***matai*** it is the ***feagaiga*** that takes over the role.

Evidently, the expectations and the tasks that are pertaining to the ***matai*** allude to the great need for the element of ***fa'aaloalo.*** To successfully maintain and advise the ***aiga***, a person needs deep and total respect. To be willing to take the blame for any family fault needs a person with the attribute of ***fa'aaloalo*** or deep respect for the family and community to perform it.

3.3 The Samoan People and God

To the Samoan person, God is perceived as the Creator and Sustainer, and so they give Him the utmost respect, humility and honour as their Almighty God. This is evidenced in the

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[41] ***ie toga*** is the Samoan fine mat which is used in high regard for different aspects of Samoan, traditionally worn by daughters of high chiefs, during funerals, and Weddings.
[42] Saifoloi, 16.

Samoan expression used in Samoan Oratory, *"Ia tatou ave le mua i le Atua"*,[43] which is literally translated as 'let us give the first to God'. To the Samoan people this means that in all they did, the best or their first priority was to God.

The relationship of the Samoan people to God is best displayed in their treatment of the pastors and the Church institution as a whole. According to the Samoan people, a pastor is the visible representative of God or the ***sui vaaia o le Atua.***[44] Therefore giving of money to the Church through ***taulaga***, and looking after the needs and well-being of the ***faifeau*** is man's ***fa'aaloalo*** to God.

Peter Hempenstall expresses this view in his article regarding the Samoan perception of God. This view could in fact be a possible reason why the Samoan people give so much when referring to God and the Church. He states that:

> "Samoans accepted Jehovah and His Son Jesus Christ as the gods of a superior material culture. So decidedly superior was the material culture of these new gods, that within the space of a few years their incorporation into the Samoan pantheon was almost universal. Nativistic cults sprang up in which the worship of Jehovah was conducted in accord with ancient practice – except that such things as books and blunderbusses were substituted for the sacred objects of the primitive gods."[45]

Hempenstall gives clear evidence of ***fa'aaloalo*** through the Samoan concept to which they gave to their pre-Christian gods, into the manifestation to the Christian God Jehovah. However, this form of ***fa'aaloalo*** applies to all aspects of God, whether it is to the clergy, Church buildings, and offerings were all considered to be out of ***fa'aaloalo*** to God Almighty.

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[43] In Samoan Oratory, preceeding the speech of any nature, one must always first acknowledge God, and praise God, giving Him the priority.
[44] Literally means 'replacement overseer of God'.
[45] Peter Hempenstall, "On Missionaries and Cultural Change in Samoa", - *Journal of Pacific History, (Vol 39, Issue 2, September, 2004)*, 246.

Taule'ale'ausumai adds that 'as far as families (Samoan) are concerned, the minister's blessings are a blessing from God and convey providence and good fortune.[46]

Hempenstall goes on to cite examples through the journals of ***Misi Mali*** (Missionary Murray) when he describes the giving nature of the Samoan people deriving from this Samoan perception of God. He records in his article:

> Murray describes the opening of the first chapel at Leone, Tutuila in 1838. Not less than 4,000 persons were present and 2,300 pigs, and other food in proportion was provided for the occasion. At the opening of the church at Sa'anapu in April 1937, which was also attended by thousands of people, 4,000 loaves of bread, 600 pigs, 80 bullocks, and comparable quantities of fish, taro, breadfruit, and so on were presented. All this food is still regarded as an offering to God.[47]

Hempenstall adds "it is interesting to note that the term ***taulaga*** which is still applied to these presentations to the Christian God was formerly used to refer to a sacred offering made to the primitive gods."[48]

There is a strong sense of ***fa'aaloalo*** to God by the people. As noted previously, this is still evident in Church offerings in CCCS parishes today. Families would give the best they can provide for the use of the Church, whether it be used for the Church's missionary program, the betterment of the CCCS Education system, the development and maintenance of

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[46] Feiloa'iga Taule'ale'ausumai, "Pastoral Care: A Samoan Perspective", *Counselling Issues in South Pacific Communities,* Dr Philip Culbertson ed. (Auckland: Accent Publishers, 1997), 220.
[47] Hempenstall, 246.
[48] Hempenstall, 247.

Church land and properties throughout the Pacific, all church offering is regarded as 'for Jesus and His Church'[49]

4. THE MISUSE OF THE '*FA'AALOALO* CONCEPT'

For the purposes of gaining an authentic perception of ***fa'aaloalo,*** criticisms of the different concepts closely related to ***fa'aaloalo*** will be presented. The following section acknowledges these weaknesses which this paper hopes to address and in some way resolve.

4.1 Abuse of the *Va Tapuia.*

As noted previously, this 'sacred space' is an integral concept in the assurance of healthy relationships between people. However, this concept of 'sacred space' which determines the way one behaves, speaks and acts towards the other, could easily be manipulated by one party so that it entails the abuse of the other.

In the event of the ***feagaiga relationship*** there could easily be a situation where the sister will make unreasonable demands from her brother, simply because of her status as the ***feagaiga.*** And in the brother's knowledge of his sister as the ***feagaiga*** and indeed trying to ***'teu le va'*** he will act according to her wishes, despite their unreasonableness.

This ***va tapuia*** can also be readily abused by the ***matai*** (high chief) of any ***aiga*** (family). The ***matai,*** in his status as the high chief can easily command and demand from other members

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[49] 'For Jesus and His Church' is the motto of the CCCS Training Centre, Malua Theological College. *The Constitution of the Congregational Christian Church in Samoa - May 21-23, 2001*, (Apia: Malua Printing Press, 2001), 2.

of the family an unreasonable amount of money to go towards a family ***fa'alavelave***[50] or special occasion. In trying to keep with this ***va tapuia*** and in acting out their required services, the family members will act as commanded, even though they may be struggling financially.

I can readily recall the many situations in my family where ***fa'alavelave's*** would mean that we as children would be denied our regular treats because the finances were needed elsewhere. The author believes that this is not an uncommon situation in many Samoan families.

The ***faifeau*** or pastor can also abuse or misuse this concept of ***va tapuia.*** In his role and status, there is an expectation that those in his parish would heed and pay attention to his every word and command. It is in the keeping of this ***va tapuia*** that the parishioners would tread carefully and act according to the ***faifeau's*** wishes. At times, the ***faifeau*** would ask of the Church members a certain amount, which to some Church members is not correct and is not justified. However, the parishioners would not hesitate to act correspondingly to the ***faifeau's*** commands in the fear that they would not be adhering or caring for the unwritten code in that 'sacred space.'

4.2 Misuse of *Tautua*

As above mentioned, the ***tautua*** given in the ***Fa'a-Samoa,*** is one that is done with unprecedented measure. The person will perform their service to the best of their capability. This is evidenced in the ***tautua toto,*** whereby the services will be acted upon, no matter

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[50] ***Fa'alavelave*** literally means accident or trouble. In this context it refer to special occasions, such as birthdays, weddings, funerals, or other special occasion.

what the cost may be. However, the problem arises when the service that is commanded is unethical and unreasonable.

It could be that a person in the position of authority would give a command that they know is for self-glorification. It does not serve the good of the family, but moreover it is for their own selfish good.

The person who carries out the action of ***tautua*** can readily use this as a personal means of gaining notoriety and not so much for the purpose of genuinely serving. In the end it is a selfish motive.

4.3 The Exploitation of Giving

The key to giving was with an authentic and genuine desire to aid those who are in need. Moreover, giving was for also for the purpose of supporting a worthwhile cause which in return serves the community. As mentioned above, giving in the ***Fa'a-Samoa*** is so that the recipient will benefit from what was given.

In more recent years, the concept has attracted much criticism because it is no longer giving from the heart, but giving because of the view and perception of others. For example, in the situations of ***taulaga's,*** it has become a competition where people give to compete, and frown upon those who give very little. The extreme is seen in cases where people go to the extreme of families forsaking food, or even taking loans in order to make a ***taulaga*** so that they will not gain such criticism.[51]

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[51] Anonymous adherent of the C.C.C.S in New Zealand, *Personal Interview*, 15 May 2006.

Those in position of decision making continue to use the argument or saying 'the more you give, the more blessings you receive'. In doing so, they are giving to God, and fulfilling their sense of ***fa'aaloalo*** to God. So the people continue to give more and more.

This criticism is shared by many people not only in the Samoan New Zealand Conference based churches, but also the church based within Samoa itself. The ***fa'aaloalo,*** to which people have of God through their giving and in church matters, is evidently getting out of control, and competitive. Jemima Tiatia shares this view and goes on to add that, "this practice has placed financial strain on the parishioners, providing young people with a motive to reject their traditional churches."[52]

4.4 Unethical *Fa'asoa* (Sharing)

As noted above, sharing is essential in the ***Fa'a-Samoa.*** It is a means whereby the community will be well kept. However, it is evident that it could prove to be a case of where 'the richer get richer and the poor get poorer.' It appears that when things are divided amongst the people, the larger share will go to those who are in position of authority. The effect is obvious. Those who are placed in the lower scale of the community will receive less. For example, the ***faifeau*** will get the best portion of any received gift and yet the ***faifeau*** is probably the wealthiest person in the village. And yet those people who are in need and in the lower end of the economic bracket would not be provided for.

There may also be instances where there is unfair distribution by the decision-makers due to their obvious favouritism. There would probably be no voice heard from the relevant

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[52] Jemima Tiatia, *Caught between Cultures,* (Auckland: Christian Research Association, 1998), 143.

community due to their deep respect for those in position of authority. They will give the ***fa'aaloalo*** to those in authority, and so will not willingly speak out for those who have not received a fair share in the distribution.

5. Summary

The chapter has focused primarily on the Samoan concept of ***fa'aaloalo***. The aim was to try and relay the significance of the concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** in the ***Fa'a-Samoa***. It was done first by etymologically defining ***fa'aaloalo***, and to give the various perceptions and interpretations of ***fa'aaloalo.*** Secondly, there was a discussion of the impact of ***fa'aaloalo*** on Samoan concepts and practises. The third section related the crucial Samoan relationships which are heavily reliant on this concept of ***fa'aaloalo.*** Finally, this chapter attempted a realistic review of how the concept can easily be misconstrued by the people, thus serving a selfish end.

The next chapter will review the existence of a very strong sense of ***fa'aaloalo*** in the life and attributes of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER TWO

THE '*FA'AALOALO*' NATURE AND ACTS OF JESUS CHRIST

This chapter will canvass the nature and deeds of Jesus that illuminate the Samoan concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** that was outlined in the previous chapter.

It will therefore firstly review the relational Jesus. Secondly, this chapter will look at the servant-hood nature of Jesus. The third section will focus on the giving nature and acts of Jesus. Finally, this chapter will deliberate on the sharing attribute and ministry of Jesus. (see Figure 1).

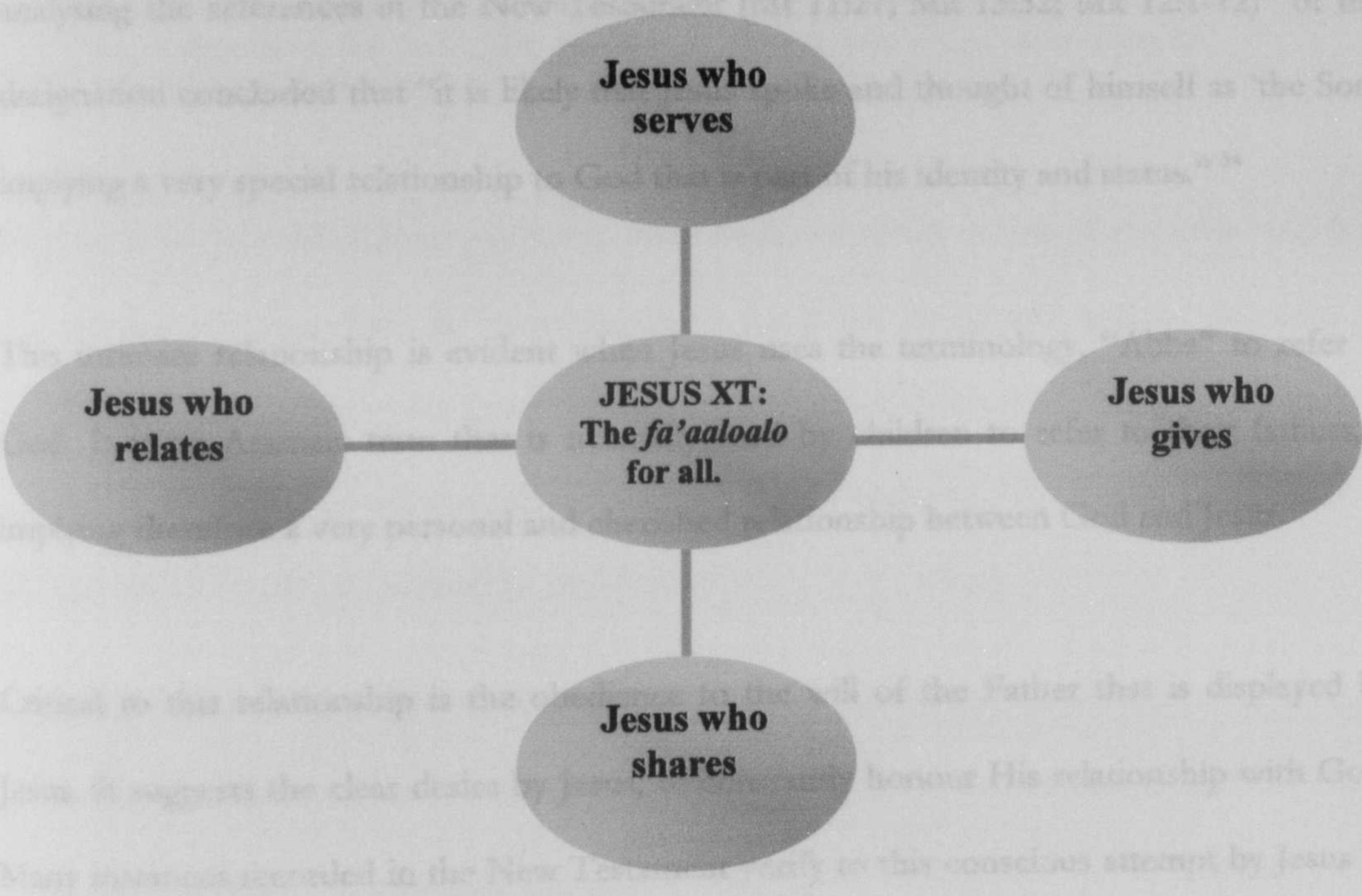


Fig 1.

1. JESUS WHO HONOURS RELATIONSHIPS

This section will outline the relationship of Jesus to God and to humanity. In so doing, it will become apparent that Jesus viewed His relationship with God and humanity as critical in his ministry. Furthermore, it will also highlight how Jesus readily honoured the protocols of His relationships.

1.1 Jesus the Son of God.

A very unique relationship is that of Jesus as the 'Son of God.' This very designation of Jesus the 'Son of God' suggests a very close and intimate relationship. Raymond Brown in analysing the references in the New Testament (Mt 11:27; Mk 13:32; Mk 12:1-12)[53] of this designation concluded that "it is likely that Jesus spoke and thought of himself as 'the Son,' implying a very special relationship to God that is part of his identity and status." [54]

This intimate relationship is evident when Jesus uses the terminology, "Abba" to refer to God. It is an Aramaic term that is normally used by children to refer to their fathers, [55] implying therefore a very personal and cherished relationship between God and Jesus.

Critical to this relationship is the obedience to the will of the Father that is displayed by Jesus. It suggests the clear desire by Jesus, to constantly honour His relationship with God. Many instances recorded in the New Testament verify to this conscious attempt by Jesus to obey the will of God.

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[53] It would be noteworthy to mention all quotations from the Bible will be taken from the New Revised Standard Version (N.R.S.V).
[54] Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to New Testament Christology*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1994), 89.
[55] Marcus Borg, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*, (New York: Harper San Francisco, 1995), 36.

The Gospel of John gives account of these numerous occasions where Jesus would often utter that it is God's will that He is fulfilling and not His own. (John 4:34, 5:30, 6:38, 7:18, 8:29, 9:4, 14:31, 15:10, 17:4, 19:30). Jesus is insistent upon the fact that it is not His Will that he acts, but rather by the will of God.

This obedience to act according to the will of God is duly noted by Edward W. Bauman when he writes,

> "A man does not obey because he "ought to" (moral law) or because it is more reasonable (philosophical ethics). He obeys because he has become a new being, a new person who wants to live the kind of live ***intended*** by God. Jesus, therefore, simply describes the new life, painting a picture for those who wish to know what it is like.[56]

Furthermore, John MacQuarrie suggests that obedience serves as one of the main motifs in the ministry of Jesus. That is, Jesus obediently fulfils the divine will, and is "delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). He will not enslave himself to any idol, but acknowledges only the Father's authority. This Christ finally does in giving himself utterly in the passion and death.[57]

Jesus Christ's obedience to do the Will of God was also evident in the temptation scene (Luke 4:1-13) where he remained steadfast and not easily falling prey to the temptations of the devil. Jesus was able to use Scripture, which dictates the sacred protocol to deny temptation. Jesus knowing well that he was the Son of God in no way showed his fear

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[56] Edward W. Bauman, *The Life and Teaching of Jesus*, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952), 186.
[57] John Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology (revised)*. (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1998), 313.

whilst being tempted by Satan. He could have easily defeated Satan but his obedience to do what was asked of him by the Father, showed not only his obedience, but also his faith in the Father and His Will. He does not do anything according to his own will, but to the will of the Father.

The climax of Jesus' willingness to act upon the Will of God was his glorious Death and Resurrection. His death on the Cross can be said to be the totality of His obedience to the Will of God.

His obedience resurrected him, and in a sense, Jesus obeyed death. There is a certain Jewish tradition that states that once a person dies, then he becomes succumbs to the power of Satan, where he will remain there for three days. So in this sense, the death and resurrection of Jesus was a proving point for Him that He truly is the Son of God.

Evidently, Jesus is one who is willing to honour that special relationship with God. In every situation recorded, there was never a moment that Jesus would go against the protocol of this relationship. There were intimations at the end of his earthly ministry that this could perhaps have happened, yet in the end Jesus was willing to stay firm and honour His relationship with God. ***"Abba, Father, everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will"*** (Luke 22:42).

1.2 Jesus and Humanity

It is throughout the Gospels we see countless examples of Jesus' relationship with humanity, and it is through Jesus Christ that God reveals his mutual relationship with humanity. Karl Barth expresses this view and states:

> 'in his person, Jesus Christ is at once as true God, humanity's faithful partner and as true human being, God's faithful partner, both the Lord abased to community with humanity, and the servant exalted to community with God … both unconfused, but also undivided, wholly the One and wholly the Other.' [58]

It seems that the Trinitarian relationship of God, Jesus Christ and Man, sees Jesus Christ as the Mediator between God and Man. In essence as God, Jesus Christ unites himself with humans and as a human Jesus exalts to a unity with God.

It is also in the concept of 'self-giving' that we gain insight into the relationship of Jesus and humanity. According to John Macquarrie, 'absolute self-giving' is one of the prominent 'motif' in the life of Jesus. It is in effect, how Jesus manifests the essential activity of God on the human level.[59] Here, that absolute self-giving, which is of the essence of God, has appeared in history in the work of Jesus Christ, and this is a work 'on behalf of' man, a work of grace.[60]

Indeed, the ministry of Jesus was solely for humanity. There was never a hint of self-glorification or selfish motive in the ministry of Jesus. The entire reason behind the works and acts of Jesus was for the benefit of the people.

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[58] Karl Bath, *Theologian of Freedom*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 50.
[59] Macquarrie, 313.
[60] Macquarrie, 320.

The relationship of Jesus and humanity is also evident in the salvation provided by Jesus.

Wolfhart Pannenburg states that,

> "Jesus himself is the ultimate destiny of man for God, man's destiny to be raised from the dead to a new life, had been fulfilled. Thus the revelation in Jesus of man's ultimate destiny in Jesus himself became the basis for the perception of his divine authority. So, the revelation of salvation for men may not be separated from God's revelation in Jesus".[61]

In the ensuing sections there is ample evidence of the relational Jesus to humanity. In his servant role, Jesus acted and served those who were needy. Furthermore, Jesus was a 'giving' Jesus and of course the ultimate act of 'giving' was in the 'giving' of His life for the salvation of humanity. Jesus in his compassion would share with those who asked of him.

In this relationship with humanity, Jesus did honour that. Jesus knew that in this relationship, difficulties would arise and would not be easily maintained. However, despite the hardships endured by Jesus in his relationship with humanity, Jesus endured and honoured it to the very end. According to Daniel Williams it is in the selfless life of Jesus Christ that we are shown true love and this becomes the basis of an ethic for human relationship.[62]

2. JESUS WHO SERVES

The servant nature of Jesus became a prominent image of who he was. It was also seen as the central reasoning to his earthly ministry. This is evident in the writings of the Gospel writers Matthew and Mark when they write, "*...the Son of man came not to be served,*

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[61] Wolfhart Pannenburg, *Jesus, God and Man*, (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1968), 191-193.
[62] Daniel Day Williams, *The Spirit and the Forms of Love*, (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1968), 243.

but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.[63] Apparent in this statement is Jesus identifying Himself to be a servant.

William Barclay perceives this role of servant role of Jesus as a 'crucial element of total commitment and total responsibility to God.'[64] In this commitment Jesus devotes his life to the Father. This title is specifically fitting for Jesus because the keynote and essence of his life was obedience to the will of God.[65]

Jesus Christ is seen as the one who committed himself to doing things that showed his humility to serve others regardless of his messianic status. He willingly fulfilled all his duties, despite the difficulties and no matter how daunting the task proved.

The servant role of Jesus is not only seen as relational to God, but also to his relationship with man. It is evident in the Footwashing[66] that took place in John 13:1-17. This clearly indicates that the relationship of Jesus and his disciples is that of a mutual service. Each becomes a servant to one another. Here Jesus compares himself to a role of a slave, humiliating himself indicates that this is necessary for the relationship and mutual service. Jesus is unique here, because all knew that He was Lord, but he did not exist as one.[67] He assumed the role of a servant, and it is here that the servant Jesus reveals the true God whose nature is love.

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[63] Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:48, *The Holy Bible,* New Revised Standard Version.
[64] William Barclay, *The Works of Christ,* (London: SCM Press, 1992), 24.
[65] William Barclay, *Jesus as they saw Him,* (London: SCM Press, 1991), 62.
[66] 'Feet washing' was a service and duty of the slaves to their masters, in fact to any visitor to one's house.
[67] John 13:5, *The Holy Bible,* New Revised Standard Version.

An ancient Jewish tradition shows that the Footwashing event in John 13 reflects the Holy Sacrament of Baptism. C. H. Dodd[68] also agrees that the foot-washing mirrors the sacramental act of baptism, and is seen as an act of 'bathing' and 'washing'. The foot-washing by Jesus affirmed the necessity of baptism for all, and the adequacy of baptism as practiced in the Church.

Schnackenburg,[69] who once advocated the baptismal interpretation of the Footwashing, subsequently abandoned it; he wrote, *"the fact that this giving of himself in death and the saving activity of that death are represented in this 'washing'."*[70] Schnackenburg is showing that this 'act of humbleness' by Jesus is essentially a symbolic action in which Jesus makes his offering of himself in death graphic and effective, not in a sacramental manner, but by virtue of his love, and truly illuminated the fact of his humility and humbleness as a servant of God.

The servant nature of Jesus is made clear in the Gospel writers accounts, with the healing of the paralytic (Mt 9:2, Mk 2:3), the raising of Jairus' daughter (Mt 5:22-43, Lk 8:41-56), the feeding of the multitude (Mt 15:29-38), and his association with the sinners and outcasts (Lk 15:1-1ff). These are only but some of the accounts of the servant nature of Jesus.

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[68] C.H. Dodd, *Interpretation – John*, as cited in Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 43: Philippians*, (Texas: Word Books Publisher, 1998), Online, Logos Library System.
[69] Rudolph Schnackenburg, *Jesus in the Gospels – A Biblical Christology*, as cited in George R. Beasley-Murray, *Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 36: John*. (Texas: Word Books, Publisher, 1998), Online, Logos Library System.
[70] Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 43: Philippians*, (Texas: Word Books Publisher, 1998), Online, Logos Library System.

2.1 Serving in the Parables[71]

Parables serve as good illustrations of one's context and perception. C H Dodd states that, ***"At its simplest the parable is a metaphor or simile drawn from nature or common life."***[72] It would be feasible therefore to consider one of the main parables that Jesus relates with regards to ones servant nature.

The parable of the Servants who were given talents by their master to use and to take care that is recorded in Matthew 25:14-30, relays the fact that a good servant is one who works with much fervour and dedication. In this parable, Jesus presents three scenarios involving three servants with three different amounts of talents, the duty given to them by their master was in actual fact to be caretakers of the talents and if not maintain the amount, then increase according to the people. In the end, some worked ardently to increase their talents and yet another did nothing to these talents.

This parable stresses the importance of working honestly and faithfully. It is also made clear in this parable, that whoever works arduously will benefit in the end, due to their hard work and dedication.

2.2 Jesus teaches on a Servants Role (Luke 17:7-10)

Luke records an interesting statement made by Jesus with regards to a servants' role. In this passage, it appears that Jesus clearly makes known what a servants' duty is. They are to

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[71] The term parable derives from the Greek term παραβολη (parabole)C.H. Dodd defines a parable and its characteristics by saying "At its simplest the parable is a metaphor or simile drawn from nature or common life."

[72] C.H. Dodd, *Interpretation – John*, as cited in Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 43: Philippians*, (Texas: Word Books Publisher, 1998), Online, Logos Library System.

dutifully serve their master and in the performance of their responsibilities, they are not to be expectant of even a thank you from the master. Moreover, the servants once having done so, would admit that they are ***"unprofitable servants and that they have done what was their duty to do."*** (Luke 17:10).

Jesus intimates that a servant must possess the nature of true humility. In their humility, the servant is not to expect any recognition for their work done, but openly confess that their actions or performance was carried out with a genuine heart to serve.

Jesus portrayed in his personhood and indeed related in his parable and teachings the picture of a true servant. It is one who one who works diligently; displays the nature of humility: is obedient to their superior and shows patience in whatever they do and in whatever circumstance.

3. JESUS WHO GIVES

Giving is a significant theme in Jesus' Ministry. Jesus taught that giving to those in need is so significantly important. Giving was especially highlighted in his work to those who were not privileged enough in society to receive anything from anyone but Jesus Christ himself.

3.1 Giving in the Parables.

The parables, once again discloses the attitude and the nature of Jesus with regards to 'giving.' The parable in Mark commonly referred to as the 'The Widows Offering (Mk 12.41-44), gives us a clear understanding of this important character in the life of Jesus Christ. The parable illustrates that 'giving' is an act that is to be performed wholeheartedly. The offering

of the two coins, may have seemed so little in comparison to the rich servants, however it was so significant because it was all that she possessed, and she gave it all up for the Lord. The actions of this widow were pleasing in the eyes of Jesus as he called his disciples to observe. This emphasised that Jesus places value on our authentic giving, with the correct motive and means and not for the sake of show or pride. This is a great encouragement to those who have few material possessions, but a have great desire to give to Him.[73]

3.2 The Ultimate Act of Giving

The ultimate act of giving that Jesus did with obedience to His Father, was his sacrifice on the Cross where it was to be the great moment of epiphany. In our everyday lives, we are reminded of the actions of Jesus Christ in his death at the cross to save humanity from sin, and His personification of the divine Word.

The apostle Paul states that Death is the payment for all sins, and yet Jesus Christ died to save us from this harsh penalty. Jesus chose to be obedient to his Father's Will and die on the Cross for the sake of the World. He was the one who gave his life as a ransom for others (Matt 20:28), and for him to shed his blood for the forgiveness of the worlds sins (Matt 26:28).

Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews demonstrates Jesus' sacrifice very clearly. Jesus is a merciful and a faithful high priest in the service of God to make expiation for the sins of the people. (2:17). He has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself (9:26).

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[73] William MacDonald; edited with introductions by Arthur Farstad. *Believer's Bible commentary: Old and New Testaments [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System.* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), c1995 by William MacDonald, [Online] Available: Logos Library System.

Two words are used of such a sacrifice. One is *propitiation*, and it has to do with establishing a right relationship between God and the sinner. The giving sacrifice turns away God's wrath, and the punishment so richly deserved by the sinner is not meted out. The way is then open for a right relationship. *Expiation* is more concerned with seeing that amends are made for the offences committed. Through the sacrifice of Christ, amends that the sinner cannot make for himself are made for him.[74]

John Stacey also states that Christians assert that three things are true about the Sacrifice of Christ that he gave for the world:

1. Christ's act was an act of self-offering, the sacrifice, a once for all offering, the sacrifice not of a reluctant beast, but of voluntarily surrendered human personality. It was an offering of willing obedience.
2. It was a sacrifice to supersede all sacrifices, a once-for-all offering (Heb 7:27, 9:26).
3. It resulted in forgiveness for the sinner, and reconciliation with God. One liturgical formula through which Christians have recited their faith since the 6th Century, the ***Agnus Dei***, addresses Jesus as 'the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world'. They are taken away because, by the sacrificial act of the Cross, they are forgiven. And a forgiven sinner is one reconciled to God. The relationship, broken by sin, is restored.[75]

Jesus Christ performed the ultimate act of giving through his sacrifice for the sins of the world. It was his obedience to the Will of the Father that he gave all that he ever had. It was

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[74] John Stacey, *Groundwork of Theology, rev.ed.* (London: Epworth Press, 1994), 136.
[75] Stacey, 136.

the sacrifice of his life for the benefit and well-being of others. There was no hesitation in this ultimate act of giving. It was the display of genuine giving, with no selfish ambition, but moreover the desire that others will truly benefit for this unparalleled act of giving.

4. JESUS WHO SHARES

The sharing nature of Jesus is widely accounted for in the New Testament writings. This section will relate the three main types of 'sharings' that Jesus did, as evidenced in the New Testament. Firstly there will be a discussion on Jesus who shared his time. Secondly, there will be a deliberation on Jesus who shared his resources. Finally, there will be an attempt to look into Jesus who shared his life.

4.1 Jesus who shared his time.

It can be argued, that the entire earthly ministry of Jesus, was in itself an authentic performance of Jesus sharing his time with humanity. In his epistles to the Phillipians, the apostle Paul writes, ***"Your attitude should be the same as Christ Jesus, who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness."*** (Philippians 2:5-7). This passage readily suggests that even though Jesus is himself God, he was still willing to become human. Moreover, Jesus in his ministry was effectively sharing time with humanity.

A very poignant story related by John in his gospel, tells of Jesus willingly sharing his time with the Samaritan woman.[76] The idea of a Jew and Samaritan talking was a very unusual

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[76] John 4:1-32, *The Holy Bible*, New Revised Standard Version.

event as Jews and Samaritans did not have a very good relationship. Furthermore, a man talking to a woman, let alone a loose woman was considered improper. However, Jesus saw beyond these cultural and sexist barriers and willingly took time out to talk and to share with the Samaritan woman.

Jesus further shared his time with sinners as is recorded in the Synoptic gospels (Matthew 9: 10,11; Mark 2: 15,16; Luke 5: 30-32). It is without a doubt that these were precious moments that Jesus shared with the sinners. The time that Jesus shared with the sinners is perhaps symbolic of Jesus sharing his time with humanity, who are all sinners and are all in need of his saving grace.

4.2 Jesus shares his resources

The life and ministry of Jesus unquestionably reveals the fact that Jesus shared his resources. In his healing ministry, Jesus was able to impart this gift of healing. The bringing to life of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:21-43) was evidence of this.

Perhaps the most notable account of Jesus sharing his resources is the feeding of the multitude as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels (Mt. 14:17-21; Mk 6: 30-44; Mk 8: 1-21; Lk 9:10-17). As is recorded by the synoptic writers, Jesus performed a miracle when he used five loaves and two fish to feed a crowd of five thousand. The synoptic writers all record the fact that the disciples had requested for the crowd to be sent away so that they make seek their own food. The disciples were clearly concerned, because in their human reasoning, it was impossible to feed the multitude with their limited resources. Yet, Jesus was adamant that the crowd would be fed and insisted that they feed them. In his insistence, Jesus then

performed a miracle where it is made clear that Jesus willingly shared the food with the crowd.

Another instance in the gospels accounts whereby Jesus was undoubtedly sharing his resources was that seen in the Last Supper (Matt. 26:17-30, Mk. 14:22-24, Lk. 22:19, 20). Exemplified in the Last Supper is the willingness of Jesus to share his bread and his wine. He invites his disciples to participate in this act of the 'breaking of bread' and to fellowship with him. He took the cup and the bread of the Passover and transformed them into memorials and made it symbolic of his own blood and body, for he wanted the disciples to remember him. The Last Supper was clearly an instance whereby Jesus not only shared the food and wine physically, but symbolically Jesus was alluding to the ultimate sharing that he will eventually perform. As was evident in Jesus' words when he spoke, "This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." (John 6:51) Truly, Jesus shared his life for all humanity.

4.3 Jesus shares his Life.

The ultimate act of sharing that was displayed by Jesus, was the sharing of his Life for the salvation of all humanity. There is truly no greater example of sharing than that which was performed by Jesus Christ on the Cross. He endured hardship, pain and trials in his earthly ministry and suffered the ultimate humiliation of death by Crucifixion because of his divine compassion for mankind. [77] This is further highlighted in the words of Jesus himself when he spoke saying, *"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)*

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[77] Refer to John 3:16, *The Holy Bible*, New Revised Standard Version.

Evidently, the parables, the teachings and life of Jesus all serve to highlight the fact that sharing was indeed prevalent in the nature and ministry of Jesus.

Summary

Chapter Two focussed on four notable elements that were prevalent in the nature and ministry of Jesus. Firstly, it was apparent that there was a genuine willingness of Jesus to honour and maintain his relationships, namely with God and humanity. Secondly, Jesus clearly conveyed his servant nature in his life and works. Thirdly, Jesus was a person who gave generously of himself. And finally, there is an obvious element of Jesus' willingness to share.

The relating of these elements in the nature and ministry of Jesus is pertinent for the validity of any Christological perspective. The following chapter will attempt to formulate a Christological perspective of the ***fa'aaloalo concept.***

CHAPTER THREE

A CHRISTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE SAMOAN CONCEPT '*FA'AALOALO*'

Introduction

This chapter will attempt at the construction of a ***fa'aaloalo Christology.*** This will be done by the amalgamation of this concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** and the life and ministry of Jesus and discussed in the previous chapters. It will canvass those critical areas of the ***fa'a-Samoa*** which are founded on this concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** and how they are evident in the life and ministry of Jesus. Secondly, this chapter will present how this ***fa'aaloalo Christology*** may serve as an agent in the positive development of the lives of the Christian people in Samoa.

1. JESUS IS *"FA'AALOALO"*

This section, will at a synthesis of the concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** and the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. This will be done by reviewing the four attributes in the ***fa'a-Samoa*** which are founded on ***fa'aaloalo*** and how they are evident in the life and works of Jesus. So firstly, there will be a discussion of the relational Jesus Christ who honoured the ***va tapuia.*** Secondly, Jesus will be seen in the light of one who is to ***tautua.*** Thirdly, Jesus will be seen as the one who gives wholeheartedly. And then finally, Jesus is considered as the one who does the ***fa'asoa*** or shares.

1.1 Jesus who honours the *va tapuia*

The ***va tapuia*** or that 'sacred space' intimates a particular space or gap which should not be interfered with in any relationship. It is a 'space' with an unwritten code of how one is to maintain and honour this space. It readily means that one is to act according to this unwritten code, for to act inconsistently would ultimately mean shame or condemnation on the breaching party. Moreover, the failure to honour this ***va tapuia*** would mean a break down in the relevant relationship.

Jesus honoured this ***va tapuia*** between Himself and God. As was clearly seen in Chapter Two, Jesus kept to the will of God. The will of God being the unwritten code which governed their relationship. There was no way that Jesus would either disturb or intrude on this ***va tapuia*** between Him and God. Undoubtedly, honouring this ***va tapuia***, proved difficult and unbearable at times. However, despite that Jesus was always willing to honour that ***va tapuia.*** This is evident in his utterance on Mount of Olives, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet my will but yours be done." (Lk 22:42)

In many of the relationships in the ***Fa'a-Samoa*** the honouring of this ***va tapuia*** would ensure that there is order in the community, because people know how they are to act within any given relationship. This is particularly so in the relationship of the ***feagaiga*** and in the relationship of the ***Matai*** and ***tautua***.

It is viable to contend that Jesus Christ is not unlike the brother and the ***tautua*** who act within the confines of their relevant relationships. Jesus did indeed show in many instances His conscious observance and maintenance of the ***va tapuia*** between Him and God. The

observance of the ***va tapuia*** was no where else more clearer than in the death of Jesus Christ.

In this act of observance, Jesus displayed that he was honouring his ***va tapuia*** with both God and humanity. In the end, Jesus was fully conscious that strict performance of this act was needed for that ***va tapuia*** between him and humanity and moreover between him and God. It was also in this very act that the ***va tapuia*** between humanity and God was founded and based. For it is in the death of Jesus that humanity is forgiven of their trespasses and it was in the death of Jesus that humanity were given eternal life and were brought closer to God.

In essence, the death of Jesus was his observance of his ***va tapuia*** with God and humanity and by the same token it was the establishment and the foundation of the ***va tapuia*** between humanity and God.

As was noted in the first chapter, ***va tapuia*** can only be observed if the people involved acquire the nature of ***faa'aloalo.*** This nature or attribute is essential for any person, because its the element of ***fa'aaloalo*** that allows them to perform accordingly. It is this genuine and deep respect that would inspire the person to act within the ***va tapuia.***

Thus, it is feasible to suggest that Jesus was a person who was filled with ***faa'aloalo*** as was evident in his constant observance of the ***va tapuia*** between him and God and him and humanity.

1.2 Jesus who performs the *Tautua*

As noted in Chapter One, this term ***tautua*** connotes a service that is done with much zeal and fervour. This kind of service was evident in the ministry of Jesus and indeed in His own sayings. For example Jesus spoke, ***"the Son of man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many"*** (Matthew 20:28, Mark 10:45). The gospel of John indirectly indicates this servant nature after the Footwashing Scene with his disciples in the Final Discourses, Jesus states that ***"Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messenger greater than the one who sent him"*** (John 13:16). It is also in these Final Discourses after the Last Supper as recorded by Luke that Jesus utters these words to the quarrelling disciples as to who is greater, ***"But he said to them, the kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest amongst you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the one who serves."*** (Luke 22:25-27).

The First Chapter further alluded us to the fact, that in the ***Fa'a-Samoa*** there are notably three kinds of ***tautua*** or services rendered. There is the ***tautua tuavae, tautua matavela and tautua toto.*** It is the contention of the author that the life and ministry of Jesus displayed all these types Firstly, in there are many instances in the New Testament where Jesus was evidently practising ***tautua tuavae,*** or service with much speed and efficiency. Indeed, in the healing ministry of Jesus, He served those in need with much efficiency. He carefully looked out for the well-being of those whom he was serving. His whole ministry was for the purpose of serving others in whatever difficulty or problem that they may be encountering.

The efficiency of the service of Jesus is well noted in the healing of the woman with the blood clot (Mk 5:25-29). When she touched Jesus, there was an instant healing in her life. So too was the healing of Jairus' daughter who was immediately brought back to life at the touch of Jesus (Mk 5:21-43). When Mark gives account of the healing for Jairus' daughter, it is clear that Jesus did not hesitate when he was requested by Jairus to come over to his home and heal his daughter. Once the request by Jairus was put forward to Jesus, it appears that Jesus went immediately as recorded by Mark, "So Jesus went with him." (Mk 5:24)

Secondly, there is the ***tautua matavela*** where one serves with much dedication and honour without expressing resentment. This attribute was evident in the life and ministry of Jesus, whereby he served others to the best of his capacity. There is no doubt that Jesus worked ardently in his ministry. Indeed nearing the end of his earthly ministry, Jesus was still arduously working to serve humanity. His service was one that was always done with dedication. Luke records an instance whereby Jesus physically shows signs of torment where he 'sweats' as if like drops of blood falling to the ground. (Lk 22:44) This is similar to the demeanour of the person who performs a ***tautua matavela*** who sweats and shows physical signs of anguish. Yet despite this, they still perform their tasks and responsibilities with much fervour and zeal.

The third kind of service, ***tautua toto*** is unequivocally featured in the life and ministry of Jesus. ***Tautua toto*** is almost explanatory of the servant life of Jesus. Indeed the passion narrative of Jesus is aptly described as ***tautua toto.*** We have previously discussed the ***tautua toto*** as 'service through blood' meaning the performance of duties to the ultimate point where death is inevitable, the ***tautua*** will fulfil all duties requires as per instruction from his

matai. This sentiment is expressed through the life of Jesus Christ. He was the humble servant who fulfilled the Will of the Father. There was never a point when Jesus deviated from the Will of God. It was this obedience and faith of Jesus Christ in God the Father that took him to the Cross. The blood that was shed on the Cross as an oblation for the sins of the world is seen as the ultimate act of service of the ***tautua toto*** (Jesus Christ) to his ***matai*** (God).

For any ***tautua*** to be effective and genuine, this attribute of ***fa'aaloalo*** is necessary. It is when a person possesses a profound sense of genuine respect that they would effectively **tautua** or serve another.

It is therefore accurate to propose that Jesus in his life and works indeed was sincerely carrying out the act of ***tautua*** with the nature of ***fa'aaloalo***. He never hesitated for a minute to carry out the instructions of his ***Matai*** (God) nor the requests from humanity. In his ***fa'aaloalo*** or deep respect, Jesus Christ illustrated the true sense of ***tautua***.

1.3 Jesus Who Gives

There is no question the in the acts and life of Jesus, where he vehemently displayed the attributes of a generous giver. Indeed Jesus spoke clearly of this when he said, "Ask and it will be given to you." (Mt 7:7) And indeed there are ample illustrations in the New Testament that testify to the generous giving of Jesus. For example, Jesus gives living water to the Samaritan woman (John 4:1-26); Jesus gives sight to the blind (Mt 9:27-31); gives health to the sick (Mk 1:29-34); gives food to the hungry (Lk 9:10-11) and gives life to the dead (Mk 5:21-43).

In all of these situations, there was never a moment that Jesus gave with conditions. He gave freely and wholeheartedly. Jesus knew that his calling was to give life those in need. This is evident in a response he made regarding his association with 'sinners', "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners" (Mk 2:17). Clearly, Jesus was indicating the fact that his ministry was for those who were in need. He came to give freely to those in want. And in this sense, there was a conscious awareness in Jesus that whatever he was to give could not be paid in return.

This runs congruent to the generous giving of the Samoan person with the quality of ***fa'aaloalo***. It is this respect that they give freely so that the other person will benefit. The motive of the giving is not selfish or ambitious, but rather it is truly a compassionate one. This is evident in their generous ***oso***, (gift to the traveller) ***fa'aoso*** (gift to the returning traveller) and ***taulaga*** (sacred donation).

It is the contention of the author that Jesus not only gave, but he himself was the ***oso***, ***fa'aoso*** and ***taulaga***.

1.3.1 Jesus is the Ultimate *Oso*

In every respect, Jesus Christ was the ***oso*** from God. He was himself the embodiment of the gift that God gave to the world. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son." It was in his incarnation that humanity received the greatest ***'oso'*** that could be received by a hosting person or community. That is, humanity was provided the ultimate ***'oso'*** in the form of Jesus Christ. This is the gift that Paul speaks of when he wrote to, in Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

A returning traveller will be given a gift to take back with them in their return known as the ***fa'aoso.*** The author contends that in the resurrection of Jesus and in his returning to be at the right hand side of his Father, the ***fa'aoso*** that humanity gave him was the sins of the world. In the letter to the Romans, Paul writes: "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8). It is this image of unconditional love that is heightened in the free gift in Jesus Christ. When generously giving the ***oso*** in His own form, Jesus Christ, there was not expectation of a similar gift as a ***fa'aoso***. Moreover, it was a very inequitable exchange that cannot be fathomed by any human reasoning.

1.3.2 Jesus Christ is the *Taulaga*

Taulaga refers to a sacred offering. The term ***taulaga ola*** or a living sacrifice is a term that is often given to Jesus Christ by the Samoan people. It is the recognition by the people that Jesus Christ in indeed the living sacrifice of God. It was in giving us His one and only Son that humanity received reconciliation with God. It was in this ***taulaga ola*** that humankind were blessed with eternal life. This was the living sacrifice that the writer of Hebrews refers to when he stated: "so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him."(Heb 9:28)

Therefore, it can rightfully be argued that Jesus Christ is the greatest ***taulaga***. It is a ***taulaga*** that was given for the sake of the world. It was a ***taulaga*** made so that the beneficiaries will be the recipients and not the donors. There was never a sense of self-glorification in this ***taulaga ola.*** There was no prestige that would have been gained by this ***taulaga*** by the

donor. Rather is the shame, humiliation and ridicule of the cross that was gained by the donor, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is then the greatest ***taulaga*** ever made in history.

1.4 Jesus Christ who does the *Fa'asoa*

Sharing was an essential element in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. As was outlined in Chapter Two, Jesus shared his time, resources and life.

The New Testament relates the story of Jesus who fed the multitude. This act of sharing or distributing to the community is not unlike the role of the ***Matai*** when distributing any goods for the ***aiga*** or family. In his love and compassion for the people, Jesus was adamant that the multitude will be fed by whatever amount food was available.

When Jesus had requested that the mass of people be fed, the disciples were doubtful that such a large number could be fed. However, Jesus was quietly confident that food will be provided for. He has taken that step of faith, knowing that there will be food supplied from God above. It is evident that the faith in the lives of other characters in the New Testament showed the blessings that they received. For example, the woman who suffered with the blood clot and Jairus, whose daughter that was brought back to life.

It is this attitude of faith and quiet confidence that would be valuable to any ***matai*** of an ***aiga***. In situations where it may appear that the resources are limited, the ***matai*** should remain steadfast in their faith that in the end God will provide.

In all the accounts of the Synoptic writers, it is made clear that 'he took the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them.' Clear in these accounts is the fact that Jesus had given the due thanks to the provider of the sustenance. It is suggestive of the fact that Jesus was giving due respect to the true giver of the food.

This quality of a thankful heart and giving due, thanks to where it is owed is another attribute that would be aptly applied to the lives of Samoan people in their act of ***fa'asoa***. It is the realisation that all blessings are from God. Thus, in the performance of a ***fa'asoa***, the decision maker and indeed the recipients of any blessings in the form money or food, should always appreciate the real source of their blessings. In so doing, they realise that resources when shared, become true blessings to a person. And indeed in this act of thanksgiving, they are being ***fa'aaloalo*** to the true source of all blessings.

The ultimate act of ***faasoa*** seen in the life of Jesus is the pivotal performance of ***faasoa***. It is this selfless act upon which any ***fa'asoa*** should be modelled upon. The authentic display of love and compassion, whereby he willingly shared his life to redeem humanity and so that humankind can be reconciled with God. In this act, Jesus displayed the essence of ***fa'aaloalo*** in the deep respect that he had for all humanity.

In effect, the above section related how Jesus Christ is the 'plumb-line' upon whom the Samoan concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** should be measured against. It is the acts and nature of Jesus which effectively can be used to identify the authenticity of this Samoan concept of ***faa'aloalo***. In so doing, it would prevent the misuse of this pertinent Samoan concept in the

lives of the people. It would allow the true and authentic sense of the ***fa'aaloalo*** concept to actively change the lives of the people.

2. *FA'AALOALO:* THE HOPE FOR THE SAMOAN PEOPLE

The appearance of a person or concept in a fresh new perspective would ultimately achieve a sense of the development of a new response and attitude. For a concept like ***fa'aaloalo*** and its close akin to the nature and acts of Jesus would bring about feelings of returning to grass roots level with regard to culture and traditions.

In the quest for a ***fa'aaloalo*** Christology, the realisation that the Samoan culture and Christianity through the nature and acts of Jesus, gives the Samoan people hope that their culture is another way of responding to God through the gospel.

It is my contention that the establishment of a ***'fa'aaloalo Christology'*** relays the obvious sense of belongingness to the Samoan person. It gives an obvious appreciation of the Samoan culture and how it serves the work of God. So in allowing our Samoan concepts to flourish within in own lives and in our homes, we feel a sense of oneness when being able to relate our cultural identity and that of our Christian identity.

This ***Fa'aaloalo Christology*** has introduced this Samoan concept to Jesus Christ in a new light. Jesus Christ is characterised by many designations, the one who honours the ***va tapuia***, the one who is the ***taulaga ola***, the one who performs the ***tautua***, and the one who does the ***fa'asoa***. That is, Jesus Christ's acts and nature are uniquely related to the Samoan concept of ***fa'aaloalo***.

This new insight will close the gap on the relationship of Jesus Christ and the people of Samoa through their Samoan culture. It brings hope to the Samoan people, that the foundation of their culture and tradition are manifested in the life and nature of Jesus. It is this manifestation of Jesus Christ in the Samoan culture; especially ***fa'aaloalo*** that gives the Samoan people the enthusiasm to understand the importance and to uphold one's cultural values.

The formulation of this ***Fa'aaloalo Christology*** will also bring a realistic perception with regards to one's culture. That is, the authenticity of this concept will only become into fruition when the life of Jesus becomes a plumb-line. It allows the Samoan person to once again, bring the concept closely to its real and genuine nature. And that is to honour that relationship between people by actively representing the new life in Christ. This would effectively mean the revival of ones uniqueness in their culture that is deeply entrenched in the persona of Jesus Christ.

There is a self-realisation that all aspects of ***fa'aaloalo*** are depictive of the life of Christ, and brings about a sense of worthiness and importance of the Samoan culture.

2.1 *Fa'aaloalo* paving the way forward for the C.C.C.S

In order for action of such recommendations of any findings is heavily reliant on the possibility of positive action. One's endeavour to approach the correct entry point for creative solutions is of great importance.

I have decided to make recommendations to the C.C.C.S concerning the decline of adherence, as well as the exodus of the Youth. It is my belief that the Christian Church in Samoa is the centre or focal point of communication, especially taking into account the nation's population is almost all of the Christian faith. Furthermore, if change needs to take place, the C.C.C.S is likely to be starting point of any sort of action.

With the foregoing in mind, it is my contention that this section explores the possible impact of ***fa'aaloalo*** with regard to C.C.C.S and its education policies on the Samoan culture.

The Samoan culture like all other cultures, have been a long time in history perceived as 'Unchristian' in a sense where culture is perceived as of a Semitic nature, not fulfilling the Christological qualities of the Gospel.[78]

The challenges faced by ***fa'aaloalo*** and other cultural aspects of the Samoan culture are not succumbed only to our situation here in Samoa. The concerns are also a cry from cultures around the world, in which cases some have become rootless because of the modern influences in today's changing world.

Changes and influences in today's society have instilled in the minds of people that one's culture and traditions are secondary to those of the modern world. This sentiment is shared by Kamu when he stated "culture is what holds a community together, and when one steers off the path of following their culture, it then paths the way for people being rootless in society."[79]

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[78] Rev. Derek Lindfield, *Personal Interview, Malua Theological College*, 27th July 2006.
[79] Kamu, 78.

The church must let the ***Fa'a-Samoa*** flourish in the hearts of the Samoan people, in order for sufficient spiritual feeding of not only the Word of God, but ***fa'aaloalo***, the foundation of our culture.

2.2 *Fa'aaloalo*: The cry for a future

The future of ***fa'aaloalo*** and the C.C.C.S is symbolic of a nation's acceptance of both its cultural heritage and the Christian gospel. We have shown that the Samoan concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** is significant in the lives of Samoan Christians in the C.C.C.S. But this theological process requires us to ask the question, where do we take it from here?

Unlike other overseas settings, New Zealand has begun by realising the number of Samoan people and their contributions to society, and therefore had installed in the New Zealand Education System namely at the Tertiary level, the inclusiveness of the Samoan language and culture.

The C.C.C.S needs to, therefore take the initiation of using their Samoan culture and traditions as part of their pastoral ministry. Yes, we would all like to learn English, but that does not necessarily mean we totally ignore who we are and where we come from.

The chiming of the Christian message and our Samoan culture must go hand in hand in order for Samoan people to feel a sense of belongingness. The pressures on 2nd and 3rd generation Samoans in overseas settings are overwhelming and the risk is that eventually if the understanding of ***fa'aaloalo*** in even the New Zealand context is not met, then there is great concern for the future of not only the C.C.C.S, but future of Samoa. A nation proud of

its culture and heritage, a culture that still to this day is strengthened by the ***Fa'a-Samoa***, and bounded by the rules of societal living.

The crying hope that the formulation of this ***Fa'aaloalo Christology*** will alleviate and annihilate the negativity that arises from a non understanding of ***fa'aaloalo*** in our society.

A critical area of the C.C.C.S in regard to ***fa'aaloalo*** is the exodus of the Church Youth. This can be seen because of the ignorance and neglect of understanding for change by the Church. The society which we live in is a changing one, where the mindset of culture and traditions must be instilled that they do change. The failure of the C.C.C.S to recognise the needs of the younger generations who will in fact be the future leaders of the Church. The C.C.C.S must realise that when a society changes and move forward, not to be caught up in the vicious cycle of being left behind.

CONCLUSION

This research was an attempt to form a ***Fa'aaloalo Christology.*** The importance of the Samoan culture played a prominent role in the understanding of ***fa'aaloalo*** in light of God's manifestation of the acts and nature of Jesus Christ.

The attempt at the Synthesis of symbols and concepts in the Samoan culture were studied according to these models to further enhance the religious and spiritual experience in the CCCS.

The process of assimilation and fusion of the Samoan concept of ***fa'aaloalo*** and the acts and nature of Jesus Christ has developed the notion of a ***'Fa'aaloalo Christology'.*** It has been evidently clear the existence of a ***'Fa'aaloalo Christology'*** to bring about a realisation of the identity of a Samoan person in the ***Fa'a-Samoa*** and the reality of person of Jesus Christ.

The inculturation of the gospel in the lives of the Samoan people gives hope for Christianity for the people of the CCCS, knowing that there is a sense of belongingness, and the hope to unify the Culture and the gospel of the Samoan people. There have been many studies in which case sees Culture as a threat to the gospel.

This research highlights the great role that the ***Fa'a-Samoa*** in particular ***fa'aaloalo*** plays in the growth and development of the CCCS. It also gives hope to the Samoan people to know that fa'aaloalo which is part of their own culture paves the way for the flourishing of the Gospel in the lives of the Samoan people through its culture.

Through the relationship we discussed of ***va tapuia*** between a brother and sister, and the intimate relationship that Jesus Christ had with God and humankind, illuminates the ***va tapuia*** and deems it as Christlike.

We also discussed Jesus Christ in light of the giver, the one who serves, and the one who shares, as parallel to the concepts of ***tautua, fa'asoa,*** and the ***taulaga.*** These three important aspects of the Samoan culture have truly given meaning to the ***Fa'a-Samoa.***

The fusion of this ***Fa'aaloalo Christology*** can be used as an understanding tool for the future of the Church here in Samoa, furthermore in the overseas context where ***fa'aaloalo*** and the ***Fa'a-Samoa*** can play the decisive role of emerging as the Saviour to the CCCS.

The cry from it's churches in the overseas context (New Zealand, Australia, U.S.A, Hawaii, Fiji, American Samoa) who see the exodus of the youth not only from the Church but also from its culture and traditions can now be developed and maintained. ***Fa'aaloalo*** and the ***Fa'a-Samoa*** can now give real meaning to Samoan Christianity today and in years to come. The reality of maintaining one's culture whilst adhering to the gospel can now be flourished in homes and the Samoan society.

GLOSSARY

ai savali	to eat whilst walking
aiga	family (nuclear)
aiga-potopoto	extended family
alagaupu	proverbial saying or expression in Samoa
ali'i	high chief
'alo	'face' in the respectful use of the word
alofa	love, care
ao fa'aalupega	literally meaning the Head of all Chiefly titles, referring to ministers of religion, given to them by Malietoa upon arrival of the Gospel to Samoa.
aoga faifeau	pastor's school
auli	household iron
fa'afeagaiga	Literally means one who makes the covenant, referring to ministers of the Word of God, and the covenant that they make between the Samoan people and God.
faifeau	'one who does the service' generally referred to Ministers of Religion of a denomination; pastor
fa'a	adverb which entails an action (to do) in the latter
fa'aaloalo	generalised translation of the term 'respect'
fa'alavelave	trouble; big events of a family, etc
fa'alupega	Every village in Samoa has this whereby the important titles of the village are spoken of anytime that particular village is spoken of.
fa'aoso	A gift given to a family or someone when visiting. It is seen as a token of friendship or fellowship, and an act of hospitality
Fa'a-Samoa	To do the Samoan way referring to the Samoan way of life
fa'asoa	Samoan concept of sharing
faletele	big house

feagaiga	covenant is the traditional translation, but is always referred to the
gagana	language
ifoga	Samoan concept of reconciliation
ioimata	person or a place which is held precious to one.
itumalo	Name closely associated with the term 'district' referring to an area and number of villages under jurisdiction of paramount chiefs
lagi	heaven
le a'oa'ia le amio	person whose "behaviour has not be taught well"
leai se mafaufau	no use of the mind, brain (inconsiderate)
malae	village green usually at the centre of the village where all village events take place. This is also the part of the village where all people in the village own; theoretically it is seen as a place of gathering
Malietoa	High Chief in Samoa
Matai System	Social and political structure of Samoa which is incorporated as the System which the country is governed
matai	A common chief
misi	white missionary
Nafanua	Legendary Samoan Goddess of War
nu'u	village/community
ofoina atu	offering, giving
oso	jump; exchange gifts for service and hospitality
pa	burst
pae	The act of smoothing out
paepae	pebbles
palagi	Name given to white missionaries, upon bringing the Gospel, ***pa*** meaning 'burst' and ***lagi*** meaning 'heaven', hence white missionaries burst from heaven; is now used to refer to people of white ancestry

tau	fight
taulaga	offering, sacrifice
taulaga ola	living sacrifice
tafa'ifa	The name given to the four important chiefly titles that constitute kingship in Samoa (Malietoa, Tamasese, Tuumaliliifano, Gatoloa'ivao)
talimalo	to be hospitable
tapu	sacred, taboo
teu le va	'keep the between in order', meaning one has to take good care of one's relationship with another
tua	back
tulou	'excuse me'. This term is used when passing in front or behind another
umu	underground oven
upu-fa'aaloalo	Could be seen as language of respect, whereby words of everyday use have a synonymous double that is used in a respectful way
va	space
va fealoaloa'i	relational protocols and etiquettes
va tapuia	sacred protocol; sacred relationship

TUUFATASIGA O FAIGA TAULAGA
EKALESIA FAAPOTOPOTOGA KERISIANO I SAMOA (CCCS) 2005

MATAGALUEGA	TAULAGA	SAMOA	TAULAGA	NUUESE	TAULAGA	A/T/MAFAI	TAULAGA	A/LEOLEO
	2,005.00	2,004.00	2,005.00	2,004.00	2,005.00	2,004.00	2,005.00	2,004.00
APIA SASAE	874,065.85	835,641.80	166,739.10	149,955.70	27,587.80	25,587.15	25,766.48	23,606.15
APIA SISIFO	817,619.65	749,278.38	241,884.75	207,499.20	43,200.90	37,339.75	43,175.50	37,403.01
MALUA	337,963.25	305,141.00	103,420.00	96,745.00	8,270.00	7,296.00	7,655.00	6,380.00
AANA	569,308.88	513,766.48	150,002.71	134,020.90	18,974.30	17,563.00	16,196.05	15,700.57
FALEALILI I SISIFO	423,376.50	364,670.04	112,168.80	100,107.25	15,598.30	13,815.80	15,828.20	13,854.95
FALEALILI I SASAE	231,452.60	214,046.65	32,264.00	33,609.00	8,144.20	8,156.60	9,508.60	9,606.35
FAASALALEAGA	886,448.52	870,972.94	132,317.60	128,032.30	16,778.00	16,210.00	16,284.00	14,908.00
ITU O TANE	393,806.96	373,085.80	115,531.00	112,839.60	15,505.00	12,460.30	14,739.00	12,375.70
NIU SILA I SAUTE	559,259.18	513,677.89	175,450.14	150,035.99	27,965.30	24,635.29	28,827.79	25,486.06
AUKILANI I MATU	397,940.71	379,646.50	151,687.96	139,382.75	18,598.50	17,529.82	19,636.17	17,791.60
AUKILANI I SAUTE	768,642.15	652,283.00	245,602.00	208,634.14	25,500.50	22,849.00	24,277.94	22,475.00
VITORIA	145,510.06	139,370.03	81,429.70	77,951.03	6,301.71	7,419.36	6,301.71	9,126.53
KUINISELANI	119,526.35	112,074.80	81,377.25	71,581.28	6,606.93	5,785.79	6,606.93	5,785.78
NIUSAUELESE	284,107.92	296,619.00	211,451.36	204,168.84	12,146.23	12,464.00	10,982.30	11,698.00
AMERIKA	169,981.43	142,234.40	18,961.83	19,175.37	11,110.33	10,531.08	10,211.83	9,615.33
HAWAII	99,931.15	80,387.20	24,602.78	23,381.25	3,350.10	3,349.00	3,350.10	3,349.00
IERUSALEMA FOU	10,094.08	4,055.48	4,005.00	1,463.00	904.50	654.10	904.50	654.10
PAPAUTA GIRLS COLLEGE	2,940.00	3,253.00	1,070.00	2,492.00	115.65	82.45		
AULOTU I SUVA, FITI		4,613.57						
AULOTU POROTESANO, APIA			5,000.00					
KOLISI MALUA	140,450.00	133,430.29	72,300.00	65,730.00	1,900.00	2,000.00	1,000.00	2,000.00
AOFAIGA FAIGA TAULAGA 2005	7,232,504.44	6,688,248.25	2,127,265.98	1,926,804.60	266,758.25	245,728.49	261,252.10	241,816.13

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