

CALLING OF AN A'OA'O MALUA: A PASTORAL THEOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

A Thesis Presented to the
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by

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ABSTRACT

A thesis presented on the impacts on an A'oa'o when he is called by God for Malua, leaving whatever life, surrounding and journey he had ever known. However, it is not only on him, his wife and children, but also on the families as the burden of support befalls on them that they take on willingly. From a pastoral and theological dimension of calling, this thesis helps to diminish the stereotypical misconception that coming to Malua to be a faifeau is to gain wealth and live well. These are irrational thoughts that very much overlook the many sacrifices of calling. This hopes to highlight the important roles of all involved, showing great commitment of faith to God.

DECLARATION

I declare that this work has not used without due acknowledgment
of any material that has been previously submitted for a degree or diploma
in another institution. I also declare that the work has not used any material,
heard or read, without proper acknowledgment of the source.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, Sisigafu 'a and Paratisa Bentley, my inspiration and motivation for this journey.

Also, my late grandfather Seufalevaai Lui Bentley, my late grandmother Puagau Bentley, and my only living grandparent, grandmother Toalima Laufili, I dedicate this work to your never-ending prayers

I dedicate this work also to my wife's parents, Sa'u Tafeaga Sau and Miriama

To all our families and friends, this is for you.

To my beautiful supportive wife, Emelia Joyce Bentley, and our blessings from God, Sisigafu 'a Shane-Junior, Sili Koveshua, Josif'a Tafa and Laumua Johannes, I am blessed and strengthened because I have you.

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May God bless you all abundantly and continue to bless our beloved Malua

Theological College.

List of Abbreviations

Rev.	-	Reverend.
LMS	-	London Mission Society
CCCS	-	Christian Congregational Church of Samoa
EFKS	-	Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa
MTC	-	Malua Theological College

Introduction

As Christians, we serve God in many ways. It is our calling and purpose in life, as Jesus commissioned His disciples. “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... I am with you always, to the end of the age”.¹ There is much work to be done, just as many workers are needed. Thus, this calling for workers is inspired by the Holy Spirit, providing gifts needed for ministry, extending Christ’s presence and power to each new generation of Christians. “This Spirit makes Christians one in Christ and empowers them for the church mission and for moral and ethical life”.² This is probably why many people try out for Malua, being called upon by the Spirit. Despite their works and contributions to their families; God sees great potential in them, and He plucks them out, to carry on Jesus’ commission. God’s calling utilizes people of all status and walks of life, given they accept the call for God’s work.

My calling to Malua Theological College

Growing up, I loved bible stories, Sunday school and bible studies on Sunday evenings. Still, I longed to learn more. For me, this was part of God’s Spirit inspiring me to take up the call. It turned out, that Malua Theological College (hereafter Malua), of all places, would fill this void, plus so much more. I was never talked into or forced to try out the Malua entrance exam. My parents didn’t even know I was going for it. There was a worry in me that no one would take after my father. He never spoke of his Malua days until now, and what fascinating stories he has.

¹ Burden of Anonymity; *The Holy Bible NRSV – Matthew 28:19-20*: Hendrickson; Massachusetts; 1989; 26.

² Achtemeier J Paul, Society of Biblical Literature; *Harper Collins Bible Dictionary – Revised Edition*; Harper Collins Publishers; New York; 1985; 433.

Attending Malua has its setbacks. The main impact of my coming to Malua is my church,³ as a pianist and as a Youth leader which I loved. Being independent, I worked and saved mainly for myself, sending money to my parents and family here in Samoa. All that energy was shifted to our kids, our priority. On the contrary, there are even more impacts for my wife being away from home. Being the eldest daughter, she was the main provider for her parents and siblings.

Our kids were also greatly affected with school and trying to get used to life in Samoa. I thought bringing them was best, to stay together. It turned out that being together was not the best option for them especially their medical status. So we sent them back to Australia where doctors and medicines are abundant and trusted. Their departure caused much emotional pain, and I started to wonder about the impacts on us as a family coming to Malua, whether it is all a necessary sacrifice.

Issue and Research Problem

When we prepared for Malua, I witnessed tremendous love and support from our families, church, our pastor and friends. They came and presented gifts and money, being very thankful for making it into Malua. I said to my wife that this was all too much. Yes, it's great news we made it, but not so great that they are now giving us so much knowing the cost of living is high. How can I ever repay this magnitude of kindness? Could I ever? Their words of encouragement, especially my pastor, Rev. Elder Ionatana Faaiuas, answered my own thoughts. "Go, knowing that all our hearts and prayers are with you. Trust and rely on God to strengthen you in order to complete your studies. Don't ever

³ Logan City EFKS in Brisbane Australia.

come back if you don't finish".⁴ For me then, coming to Malua is to offer one's self⁵ as *Taulaga soifua* to serve God. *Taulaga* is a sacred sacrifice, and *Soifua* is to live, thus making *Taulaga Soifua* the living sacrifice.⁶ It is someone who is consecrated for God's work, and through him his family is blessed.

However, there is a big misconception, and people are often heard saying that a person wants to be a *faiifeau* to be rich, own a big house and live a luxurious life, because the congregation pays for everything. Some people say it more mockingly, *o le fia ai tualā*,⁷(wanting to eat the best part of the pig). These are stereotypical beliefs and assumptions. Either they had a problem with a *faiifeau*, or only know churches that are stable. I have come across this quite a few times from people of all beliefs including ours (CCCS⁸).

These conventional beliefs fail to realize that becoming a *faiifeau* is a lot of work. It involves many sacrifices. The combined effort of all involved in the *A'oa'o's* calling is phenomenal. It is he who does the studying, whilst the families does everything else; bills, materials for projects⁹ as part of supporting their *taulaga soifua*. It's ironic in a way, that coming to Malua is a blessing, but the duty of support befalls on families and churches. Like myself and my wife, many *A'oa'os* and wives had good jobs with great money, being providers for families. All that money, opportunities, living freely is left behind for

⁴ Actual words of Rev. Elder Ionatana Faaiuas: "*Ia oulua o ma le mautinoa, o loo tapuai atu o oulua mātua, aiga, aulotu ma i matou uma. Faalagolago i le Atua ina ia tini le lua faamoemoe, ma ia aua ne'i alu alu lua toe o mai e le'i uma le lua a'oga.*"

⁵ Including wife and children. The *A'oa'o*, wife and children are living sacrifice of families, village and parishes offered for God's ministry.

⁶ Newell J E; *Pratt's Grammar and Dictionary of the Samoan Language*; Malua Printing Press; Apia, Samoa: Malua Printing Press; 1977; 121.

⁷ The *faiifeau* or high chief gets this most important portion (back) of the pig. It is not for anyone to eat. So saying that one wants to be a *faiifeau* just for this is farfetched, thus belittling the commitment, sacrifices and the hard work to be a *faiifeau*.

⁸ Congregational Christian Church Samoa

⁹ *Tā'aiga fala* to make baskets, trays, fine mats, materials for sewing, etc.

Malua. Some were also serving in a parish as *Tiakono*¹⁰ and even *A'oa'o Fesoasoani*.¹¹ Their absence from families and churches has impacts that are part of one's calling and sacrifice to serve God.

Research Questions and Chapters Outline

The main purpose of becoming an A'oa'o is to be a Pastor. To avoid the above misconception, this thesis will focus on: What is the calling of an A'oa'o Malua from the pastoral theology perspective? This paper will discuss, outline, and synthesize the calling, character, and competencies of an A'oa'o Malua; to serve God and carry out their responsibilities.

To answer the above Research Question, Chapter One opens with a brief history and background information of an A'oa'o Malua. The major part of Chapter One is how scholars define calling from a pastoral theology perspective. Chapter Two highlights the characteristics of an A'oa'o Malua from a pastoral theology perspective, with a closer look at each class and their duties in light of their calling. It will also include interviews of A'oa'os from First Year to Fourth Year.¹² Chapter Three is the theological reflection on Calling on selected passages from the Old and New Testament, followed by the conclusion and application in Chapter Four.

¹⁰ Deacons - assist minister in service; Tupolo Taeleasaasa; *Faavae o le EFKS 2006 – Faamatalaga o Teuteuga o le Faavae*; 11.

¹¹ Lay Preachers - members who have good reputations in the church with good knowledge of the Holy Bible. They have the gift of prophecy and also preach and assist with Youth Groups, Sunday Schools and church development; Ibid.

¹² Studying in Malua is for four years, hence the four classes. More will be discussed in Chapter One.

Methodology and Scope

This paper uses mostly Qualitative Approach¹³. Qualitative is a naturalistic approach to a subject matter. It researches things in their natural settings, collecting empirical materials from case studies, personal experience and interviews. Quality information used throughout this thesis are from scholarly literatures, articles, journals, thesis and dissertations as well as other relevant publications on pastoral theology and calling. Quantitative¹⁴ approach is used through questionnaires that were given to 50% of A'oa'o of each class, from First Year to Fourth Year in the academic year of 2020.

¹³ Dr. Dawson Catherine; *Introduction to Research Methods: A practical guide for anyone undertaking a research project*; simplifies qualitative research as focusing on an in-depth search for quality information using a small sample – 4th edition; How To Books Publisher; 2009; 14 -15.

¹⁴ Quantitative, referred to as hypothesis-testing, follows patterns of research operations in investigating something.

Chapter 1

Literature Review of Calling - Definitions

This chapter opens with a brief history and background information of an *A'oa'o* Malua. The major part of Chapter One is how scholars define calling from a pastoral theology perspective.

Brief History and Background Information of an *A'oa'o* Malua's Calling to Pastoral Ministry

An *A'oa'o* Malua is one who has passed the Malua entrance exam.¹ It was Rev. Dr. John Bradshaw² who introduced the entrance exams, in an effort to upgrade the academic standard of the College. That is how it is to this day. However, before the 1950s, there was no exam. The candidates were selected from Leulumoega Fou College.³ “This Malua-Leulumoega educational tradition provided many local villages, as well as church and government offices, with people whose English was adequate, but whose Samoan was impeccable”.⁴ While Malua was for male students (single or married), there was also a school for girls, in the case of women missionaries. This was “the Papauta School of

¹ Malua Theological College; *Malua Theological College 2020 Handbook*; 2020; 28. Held annually in August at District (Matagaluega) locations approved by the Board. Consists of three papers, Old and New Testament and English to the Year 13 level.

² Ibid; 8. He was the Principal of Malua from 1956-1963.

³ A secondary high school behind Malua.

⁴ Davidson J W; *Samoa mo Samoa: The Emergence of the Independent State of Western Samoa*; Oxford University Press; Melbourne; 1967; 180.

the LMS⁵ that ranked with Malua in educating an elite”.⁶ It was also important to educate women, as George Turner wrote in his book:

If we have the choice of two we reject the single man, and admit the married couple, for the simple reason that the wife needs education as well as her husband, and, when instructed, is a great blessing to her sex in the village where he may be called to labour.⁷

When a village applies for a pastor, they are often heard saying, “We want a young man who has a wife that can teach our wives and daughters something”.⁸

After passing the exam, there is an interview with the Board of Malua, a committee of the Elders. An exception to this is international students.⁹ The Malua Board gives the final approval to study in the College. Now he can finally move into the MTC compound. Illustratively, he was a part of a different boat crew or journey. Now, he has to captain his own. Like John Williams, who brought the Gospel to Samoa and the Pacific,¹⁰ he too, will be a *Vaa o le Tala Lelei*.¹¹ “Other experienced missionaries as William Clarke, John Marriott and James E Newell were respected by Samoans because they understood many aspects of Samoan culture and leadership”.¹² Such should be the *A’oa’o*, to be understanding of the context and culture wherever he serves.

⁵ Tupua Tamasese Tui Atua Taisi Efi, Suaalii-Sauni M Tamasailau, Martin Betsan; *Pacific Indigenous Dialogue on Faith, Peace, Reconciliation and Good Governance*; University of the South Pacific; Samoa; 2007; 231. London Mission Society, that brought the Gospel to the shores of Sapaalii Savaii in 1830, by its missionary John Williams.

⁶ Thorogood Bernard; *Gales of Change - Responding to a Shifting Missionary Context: The Story of the London Missionary Society 1945-1977*; WCC Publications; Geneva; 1994; 181.

⁷ Rev. Turner George, LLD of The London Missionary Society; *Nineteen Years in Polynesia: Missionary Life, Travels, and Researches in The Islands of The Pacific*; R McMillan; Papakura; 1984; 126.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Tokelau, Tuvalu and Kiribati students.

¹⁰ Williams, John; *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*; London; J Snow; 1837.

¹¹ Gospel Vessel taking the gospel to the world.

¹² Garrett John; *Footsteps in the Sea: Christianity in Oceania to World War II*; University of the South Pacific; Suva; 1992; 180.

Malua helps to mold people to be humble, yet tough to withstand any storm. This testing of character, patience and faith is not easy. Not everyone is the same in these aspects, but patience is truly a virtue in Malua to know and understand the importance of these characteristics an *A'oa'o* must have. After studies, he shall emerge anew, being tested and refined by fire through all he had faced while maintaining faith in God.

The *A'oa'o* must take his calling with a humble heart. The expectations are high due to the reality of the ministry awaiting them in the multi-faceted field. In the words of Richard S. Taylor, those trained to be pastors must be well equipped for modern challenges as,

...concept of success must be expanded to cover the whole gamut of the modern pastor's functions. He is not only a preacher and a teacher, not only a liturgist, but he is the legal head of a corporation. As such he is a planner, promoter, organizer, manager, advertiser, delegator, supervisor and diplomat. Success in the pastoral ministry requires some degree of skill in every function.¹³

Such a multitude of the ministry awaiting an *A'oa'o* is embraced in the College's aim and mission statement:

- a. Provide quality theological education for future ministers of the CCCA and other partner churches.
- b. Train and equip students and spouses for effective and relevant ministry of the church in Samoa and overseas.
- c. Train future CCCS leaders for Jesus and His church.
- d. Engage CCCS clergy and lay members in critical theological thinking and reflection.¹⁴

The above mission of Malua provides the platform for the expected performance of the *A'oa'o* in their holistic theological training. It provides academic standard of excellence with practical implications and uphold aspects that are most relevant to the ministry of the CCCS, carried out in the four-year journey of an *A'oa'o*. Students are

¹³ Taylor S Richard; *Principles of Pastoral Success*; Zondervan; Grand Rapids; 1989; 19.

¹⁴ Malua Theological College; *Malua Theological College 2020 Handbook*; 2020; 4-5.

equipped with the needed theological knowledge and skills, to serve the ministry within the boundaries of its political, economic and cultural constraints that is continually changing.¹⁵ The four years of studies is well structured in different years and it emphasizes the level appropriate for each *A'oa'o*'s theoretical and practical theological accomplishment.

Therefore, is a great privilege and a humble blessing to be in Malua. It is not a right, nor makes anyone feel smarter than anyone else, or see it better than any other job, as Professor Vogel sums it:

The fact that the vast majority of people simply cannot, as it were, afford to choose their life-work in terms of vocation, but rather are forced by all sorts of external and often most difficult circumstances into occupations which are in keeping neither with their inclination nor their abilities should in no way exalt the ministry above other professions.¹⁶

Calling in Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa

The calling, the ministry is God's gift for His Church through Christ, to better benefit the life and service of others, as in the Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa (hereafter EFKS) Tusi Faavae.¹⁷

There are two aspects of this important work of the Church in the world:

1. The Church represents God to men in its testimony and loving service to people, and may all its words and actions be a way to draw God's Holy Love to people.
2. The Church also represents the world before God through its prayers of confession, intercession and thanksgiving.¹⁸

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶ Prof. Vogel Heinrich; *Consider Your Calling – An Introduction to Theological Study in the Light of the Fundamental Questions it raises for Ministers and Divinity Students*; Oliver and Boyd Ltd, Edinburgh; 2017; 10.

¹⁷ Tupolo Taeleasaasa; *Faavae o le EFKS 2006 – Faamatalaga o Teuteuga o le Faavae*; Malua Printing Press; 2006; 9.

¹⁸ Ibid; 9-10

Therefore, ministry is not a profession, but a calling, and God is still calling men to lead His church. All actions are monitored and advice is given where needed to ensure the prosperity of the ministry.

What is ‘Calling’ in ‘Pastoral Theology’ perspective?

As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, being an *A’oa’o* is one’s calling to become a pastor¹⁹. Any discussion on calling to become a pastor or pastoral perspective must begin from defining pastoral theology. Pastoral theology according to Thomas Oden “is the discipline that deals with the office and functions of the Pastor.”²⁰ In simple terms, pastoral theology refers to all activities of the chosen servants of God. As the office and function of the pastor has a key role in this ministry as he proclaims the mystery of godliness. This is in line with the wider definition of Pastoral Theology given by James F. Stitzinger, that,

Pastoral theology is that branch of Christian theology that deals with the office, gifts, and functions of the pastor. As theology, pastoral theology seeks to reflect upon that self-disclosure of God witnessed to by Scripture, mediated through tradition, reflected upon by critical reasoning, and embodied in personal and social experience.²¹

Stitzinger’s definition outlines pastoral theology as the roles and responsibilities of the pastor according to God’s standards. It is a theological implication of the pastor’s calling, identity and service to not only God but also the church. It also points to God as the mandating authority of the call to serve God. Such a view is echoed by Wayne F

¹⁹ The word pastor is used to be consistent with reference to the Pastoral Theology perspective highlighted in this paper.

²⁰ Oden, O. Thomas, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*, San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, 1983. 2.

²¹ MacArthur F John; *Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry*: MacA. (Dallas: Word, 1995).

Steury that “pastoral theology must begin with God’s call,”²² and those called are vessels of God’s ministry. Later on, Seward Hiltner defines pastoral theology as the branch of field of theological knowledge and inquiry that brings the shepherding perspective to bear upon all operations and functions of the church and minister.²³

Calling as a Shepherd

“A pastor is a shepherd of souls: one who cares for a congregation”.²⁴ However, they are “God’s under-shepherds tending God’s flock, working not for money, but a calling from God”.²⁵ The word “pastor is the semantic equivalent of the biblical word for shepherd”.²⁶ They are to lead by example, be consistent in being role models to all because being a pastor does not mean one is perfect, but at least aspire to be a good leader. Their leadership with the flock should reflect the love of the chief Shepherd,²⁷ or Great Shepherd as in Hebrews 13:20, who is Jesus Himself, “the Head of the church”.²⁸

Tidball J Derek traced the history of pastoral ministry and calling to the theme, “The Lord is my shepherd” as in Psalm 23:1. It articulates the pastoral role of God with His people as the pinnacle model, illustrating His love and mercy for Israel, His people. Tidball describes this image as “the underlining paradigm of ministry, and stresses out what it comprehends, references to the authority, tender care, specific tasks, courage and

²² Steury F. Wayne. *Paul’s Teaching of Pastoral Theology in his First Letter to Timothy*, Published at: www.bernenazarene.org/1tim.pdf

²³ Oden, O. Thomas, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*; 1983; 49.

²⁴ Carr Wesley; *The New Dictionary of Pastoral Studies*; William B Eerdmans Publishing Company; Grand Rapids; 2002; 251.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Frye W John; *Jesus the Pastor: Leading Others in the Character & Power of Christ*; Zondervan; Grand Rapids; 2000; 18.

²⁷ Burden of Anonymity; *The Holy Bible NRSV – 1 Peter 5:4*; 1989; 184.

²⁸ Blue Letter Bible Ministry; *Blue Letter Bible*; available at www.blueletterbible.org; Internet, accessed June 1st 2020.

sacrifice required of the pastor”.²⁹ It signifies the identity and image of the calling as a Shepherd looking after the flock.

Similarly, Derek Prime and Alistair Begg view the shepherding model of leadership as “synonymous with pastoral care. It is the practical, individual, and spiritual care of Christ’s people as His lambs and sheep”.³⁰ Therefore, the call is for the shepherd to acquire skills to look after, nurture, and ensure the physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of the flock, like when Jesus calls Peter to feed his lambs.³¹ It is a calling which can only be completed with the sustaining love of God and commitment to his people. Jesus, in presenting this assignment to Peter, likens him to a shepherd who has to provide tender loving care to helpless sheep.

Characteristics and Roles of the Calling to Pastoral Ministry

As highlighted above, calling to ministry is a demanding and pressure job. It has unique requirements as its prerequisites. Not everybody can be a pastor. Only those who meet the biblical requirements and response wholeheartedly to the call of God on their lives, and have the appropriate gifts needed to make the office a success. As discussed above from the pastoral theology perspective, the office of the pastor stipulates the roles and needed characters that are biblically based for successful ministry.

Integrity and Humility

Personal integrity is very important, that it must be steadfast and firm in all areas of life. “Integrity comes from the Latin term *integritas*, meaning soundness . . . the quality or condition of being whole or undivided . . . embracing uncommon devotion to truth,

²⁹ Derek J. Tidball, *Skillful Shepherds: An Introduction to Pastoral Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986) 54

³⁰ Prime, Derek and Begg, Alistair. *On Being a Pastor: Understanding our Calling and Work*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2004.

³¹ Burden of Anonymity; *The Holy Bible NRSV – John 21:15*; 1989; 89.

unyielding opposition to falseness, and unwavering commitments to ethics, morality and virtue”.³² Humility is another characteristic. “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up”.³³ Humility keeps a person grounded, knowing one’s place in light of who God is. Good character must be consistent in order to “earn the people’s trust and respect,”³⁴ shown by actions. It’s all part of the practical side of the ministry. This practical theology is “the Christian life and practice within the Church and in relation to wider society”.³⁵ It is putting theory into action, as the saying goes, “actions speak louder than words”.³⁶ It is very important as “the practical theologian always has to face the demand of acting well in the light of the gospel”.³⁷

Visitation to those in difficult circumstances

The Lord Jesus promised special blessing for people who visit those in times of need.

I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me... Assuredly, I say to you, in as much as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.³⁸

Jesus highlights the importance of visiting and ministering in times of need. As mentioned above, pastoral care and counseling is part of the shepherd role; especially to those in need and facing difficult times.

³² Means E James; *Effective Pastors for a New Century*; Grand Rapids; Baker Books; 1993; 17.

³³ Burden of Anonymity; *The Holy Bible NRSV – James 4:10*; 1989; 180.

³⁴ Anderson Lynn; *They Smell Like Sheep: Spiritual Leadership for the 21st Century*; West Monroe; Howard Publishing Company; 1997; 159.

³⁵ Ballard Paul and Pritchard John; *Practical Theology in Action – Christian thinking in the service of Church and society, Second Edition*; SPCK; 2006; 1.

³⁶ The Idioms; *The Idioms – The Largest Idioms Dictionary*; An old proverb found in many languages. It was first recorded in English in this exact way in 1736, in a piece of writing with the title Melancholy State of Province the following is found: Actions speak louder than Words, and are more to be regarded; available at www.theidioms.com; Internet, accessed July 25th 2020.

³⁷ Ballard Paul and Pritchard John; *Practical Theology in Action – Christian thinking in the service of Church and society, Second Edition*; 2006; 45.

³⁸ Burden of Anonymity; *The Holy Bible NRSV – Matthew 25:36, 40*; 1989; 22.

Hospital visitation and family visits are important part of the pastor's ministry of care. Hospital visitation "is one of the most precious privileges of the pastor. During a time of illness, folks need sympathy and help in a very definite way".³⁹ As Christians, we ought to "live out the gift of faith, hope and charity shows our solidarity with the suffering, and afflicted".⁴⁰ As followers, we cannot fail to show our solidarity with the suffering, imprisoned or poor and all who are afflicted.

A man of Prayer

"What a man is on his knees before God, that he is and nothing more,"⁴¹ words of Robert Murray McCheyne (1813-1843), a great Scottish preacher. Such is the attitude of Christians, to be strong prayerful people, always seeking God's will. Being on the knees is an analogy of a humble person, always below and never above anyone else. Prayer is power, and there is power in prayer. One Presbyterian clergyman witnessed this firsthand and said, "We should remember that all these great revivals were bestowed in answer to prayer... the power of prayer..."⁴² Relying on God's help through prayer reveals our own helplessness, in need of His guidance, displaying our fear and reverence to Him. Prayer can do wonders, having the power to transform people. Such was the case with Dr. Silvosio, who witnessed 109 towns turn to God-fearing communities, believing that "prayer and evangelism are two sides of the same coin".⁴³

³⁹ Kent A Homer; *The Pastor and his Work*; Moody; 1979; 278.

⁴⁰ Gutierrez Gustavo; *We drink from our own Wells – The Spiritual Journey of a People*; SCM Press Ltd; London; 1983; 5.

⁴¹ Wirt Eliot Sherwood and Beckstrom Kersten; *Living Quotations for Christians*; Harper and Row; New York; 1974; 177.

⁴² Prime Samuel; *The Power of Prayer – Illustrated in the Wonderful Displays of Divine Grace at the Fulton Street and Other Meetings in New York and Elsewhere, in 1957 and 1858*; The Banner of Truth Trust; 1991; 69.

⁴³ Dr. Silvosio Ed; *Ekklesia – Rediscovering God's Instrument for Global Transformation*; Chosen Books; Minnesota; 2017; 30.

Preaching the Word of God

This is one of the core roles of those called to ministry. Warren Wiersbe defines preaching as “the communicating of God’s truth by God’s servant to meet the needs of people”.⁴⁴ It is a role that is not straight forward as it requires inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Austin Tucker stated: “Biblical preaching is not preaching about the Bible, nor is it merely preaching from the Bible. It is the faithful interpretation and effective application of scripture in proclamation”⁴⁵. The preacher must be well ready through meditation with the Holy Spirit to preach God’s Word so that the message can be received by its hearers. The preacher’s character is therefore very important. Such an emphasis is highlighted by Paul in his teachings to Timothy, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work”.⁴⁶

As argued, the listener and messenger are very important in preaching, but most important of them all is the Holy Spirit. As Jack Taylor sums it,

since the Word of God is alive by the same Holy Spirit who first breathed it, only a Holy Spirit anointed minister can retain its life. If the living Word is to be productive, the one who ministers it must be both illumined by and filled with spiritual life.⁴⁷

Preaching therefore is ministry.

Leadership

Leading God’s people is no simple task, needing good leadership skills. To lead is to serve and prepare the people to carry on this service to others. The best model of

⁴⁴ Wiersbe Warren and David; *The Elements of Preaching*; Tyndale House Publishers; 1986; 17.

⁴⁵ Tucker B Austin; *A Primer for Pastors*; Grand Rapids; Kregel; 2004; 53.

⁴⁶ Burden of Anonymity; *The Holy Bible NRSV – 2 Timothy 3:16-17*; 1989; 166.

⁴⁷ Taylor Jack; *The Word of God With Power*; Nashville; Broadman and Holman; 1993; 138.

leadership is Jesus. In the words of Zaragoza, “As servants, pastors are somehow to be like Jesus. Servant leadership is a very attractive image for ministry to other people because it appears to blend what most churches look for in a pastor: a caring person who can also run a church”.⁴⁸ A leader must not think that he’s always right, but lead with a spirit of humility. Such leadership will make people flock towards him, seeing that he puts himself leveled with everyone else. If he does not, then it becomes a fail on his part, the people and the church. “Leadership in religious organizations has fallen into greater distrust and skepticism”⁴⁹ because people have become disappointed by the ethical flaws of their leaders.

Summary

Calling has been adequately defined by some scholars as well as Malua and the EFKS. The Pastoral perspective is in place to analyze the Malua context. The methodology is also explained as a questionnaire was given to A’oa’o from T1⁵⁰ to Faaiuasoo to help with the thesis. The next chapter looks at each class and their emphasis as well as the questionnaire responses.

⁴⁸ Zaragoza C Edward; *No Longer Servants, But Friends: Theology of Ordained Ministry*; Abingdon Press; 1999; 10.

⁴⁹ Shawchuck Norman and Heuser Roger; *Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving the People*; Abingdon; Nashville; 1993; 18.

⁵⁰ A’oa’o of First Year.

Chapter 2

Malua Context

This chapter looks at what is emphasized in each class in light of their calling. The responses to the questionnaires given to A 'oa 'o from T1 to Faaiuasoo is also revealed.

First Year: *MAAVEAVELEFUA* (T1)

This is the foundation year, the toughest year, physically. Their journey has begun, accepting the Holy Spirit's inspiring call upon them. They have been plucked out of their usual environment to be trained for God's purpose, continuing the commission work Jesus commanded to His disciples. In this new surrounding of Malua, there are a lot of challenges. It all starts on the first day with Iron Week.¹ All the basis of life in Malua are learned and conform to. It is a lesson in humility and patience shown by their actions speaking louder than words, the practical side of showing their call to serve God. Thus, being humble in spirit, yet able to endure difficulties of the ministry.

The students are introduced to courses that build up their knowledge as they progress. Any prior beliefs from outside is corrected and maintained here. T1s are to be at any roll calls half an hour before the scheduled time. This is enforced as it teaches punctuality, a very important aspect of being a *fai'feau*. They are also introduced to *Au*

¹ Starting the day after the College has commenced every year, it's the physical test of endurance. It normally starts with clearing out the pa povi or bushland, plantations and mowing the whole campus. The toughness is in the form of delayed drinking break and the sudden stress put on the body that one may have never experienced before, accompanied by the Sun's heat, making it unbearable for some. However, it is a necessary step in finding out whether it's the right place to be to some. If one cannot handle the three-day labor of Iron Week, then surely Malua isn't for them.

Aiga.² Their main duty as T1 is *Kuka Tumau*,³ a duty performed daily for a whole year. In Malua, the T1 *A'oa'o* is the *Kuka Tumau*, offering service⁴ to whatever the Lecturer needs, from cleaning the yard to feeding the pigs. This builds good character, and time management to ensure all duties are performed according to the expectation of the Lecturer. The important thing is to observe, follow instructions and do as told and shown. It is a humbling lesson so they can learn things faster. What they learn here are carried on to make the next one easier, and to understand why things are the way they are.

Interview: Life before Malua; Why come to Malua? Is Malua for everyone?⁵

Regarding the questionnaire, every *A'oa'o*, single and married, was working⁶ to provide for their families. One worked three jobs, another worked for the government, another for the Church, and quite a few were teachers. Some were studying to get better jobs. They all had commitments to their families and jobs, an attribute of serving.

The questionnaire showed that 40% came because of their parents and grandparents' dream to fulfill. Another 40% came on their own, to offer their life to serve God. 10% responded that a change was needed in their lives, as they have been in trouble with the law. So they turned their life around and now they're in Malua. The other 10% explicitly mentions that they were inspired by the Holy Spirit. The importance of this is that they are able to fulfill a request and keeping a promise.

² Each Lecturer is allocated at least an *A'oa'o* (single or married) from each class. The Lecturer and his wife are their spiritual parents, so there's a sense of family. This is their inner circle where one looks out for one another, different from the class circle.

³ They are assigned to help staff with anything; Doing all these work builds character on timeliness and working unsupervised.

⁴ Pfeiffer F Charles, Vos F Howard and Rea John; *Wycliffe Bible Dictionary*; Hendrickson Publishers Inc; Peabody; 2001; 1554. Service and servant are used in the sense of both servitude and ministry in the Bible. However, it is service that is important here, ensure everything is done according to the Lecture, thus showing good character and commitment.

⁵ Questionnaire questions given to *A'oa'os*, representing half of First Year to Faaiuas.

⁶ The responses are anonymous as the *A'oa'os* wished, only using the information to show percentage.

Surprisingly, they were equally divided whether Malua is for anyone. That God's calling is not limited to the strong and young, but anyone who feels and accepts the call. Their humbling answers show that their hearts are in the right place. With time and patience, they will be strengthened mentally, physically and spiritually.

Second Year: *MAAVEAVE-MATUA* (T2)

With the first year over, the T2s can have a little breather, as another class now does the T1 duties. They have some understanding of how things are, realizing more the sacredness of their journey. They can now review their own journeys as first year students and see that God has been with them all along through their experiences. The challenges of the previous year, the new scenery, the sound of the machete clearing out the pa povi, the mowing of the lawn and marking of the fields were all God's incarnate words fleshed out in these experiences. They can now help show the T1s their duties.

In this Second Year, they are introduced to leading a Samoan worship, their main focus in T2, with Sermon Class.⁷ Only with their reliance on God can they succeed in this process, anointed with the Holy Spirit and filled with spiritual life as Jack Taylor says. Preaching in the context of training includes conducting the worship and providing a sermon that is inclusive to teach and encourage the flock, utilizing all the exegetical skills learned thus far. C Summer Wemp states that "preaching and teaching the Word of God is a vital part of the ministry. To stand in the pulpit and preach in the power of the Holy Spirit and see God transform lives is just short of tasting heaven itself".⁸ This pulpit humbles even the most confident of preachers, and have seen many a A'oa'o feel nervous whilst conducting worship. However, it is a good sign that they are in awe of God's glory

⁷ Conducting a service as leader, a most important step in T2.

⁸ Wemp C Sumner; *The Guide to Practical Pastoring*; Nashville; Thomas Nelson; 1982; 207.

that they feel unworthy before Him. Our principal and staff call this *fefe pa 'ia*,⁹ a holy fear of God's holiness. Their bible reading, praying, preaching and the conducting of the whole service is observed by the Principal and staff who then advise on any areas needing improvement.

Upon success, he is then allowed to preach at any Congregation. No pass, no preaching. Most people say that Sermon Class is the hardest thing in T2. Indeed, it's no small preparation. An adequate preaching ministry is essential to the health and growth of Church and Christian life. This is in line with the above mission of Malua, which is to equip students to become effective ministers of the church. This year helps them prepare for another challenging year ahead.

Interview: Life before Malua; Why come to Malua? Is Malua for everyone?

Like the T1s, all worked to provide for families with a couple studying for better jobs. Nevertheless, they were living comfortably.

Exactly half of them came to fulfill their parents/grandparents' dream, and the other on their own. A couple admitted that it was the Holy Spirit urging them to come.

Again, half recommended Malua for anyone and the other saying no. Clearly, no matter the different classes, similar thoughts are seen. They are very humble to be in Malua, appreciating their families' support.

⁹ A good fear to have, only shown when nearing the pulpit, standing in front of the congregation and preach, being very aware and careful not to make a mistake. A fear of reverence for God.

Third Year: *LAGOLAGO* (T3)

This is the hardest year, financially, as every College event and function is funded by the T3s. They do all the cooking preparations, especially the cultural side of things. If there is a wedding or a funeral, the T3s deal with the transportation of everything back to the College. Our Principal justifiably explained why this class is called Lagolago. He refers to the pillars of an *umu*,¹⁰ closest to the fire, their duties in preparing and catering for all Malua occasions.

An important program is the *Faamasani*,¹¹ because pastoral visitation is another duty of the pastor. Jesus highlights the importance of Christians visiting and ministering in times of need, as in Matthew 25:35, 40 mentioned in the previous chapter. Thomas C Oden highlights the importance of visitation as “ministry has a special representative role in visiting the sick, which involves not just conversation, but teaching, praying, healing, and consoling in Christ’s name on behalf of the whole community”.¹²

The other important aspect of the *Faamasani* Attachment is being assigned to congregations in either Upolu or Savaii. This is a very important opportunity for the *A’oa’o* and wife to observe and participate in the life of the ministry in the real congregation. It is where they talk to the pastor and wife about life in the ministry, participating and experiencing the ministry. Their experiences from the *Faamasani* program helps them live out the gift of faith and hope, showing harmony and unity with

¹⁰ Samoa’s traditional way of cooking, with four pillars that forms a square filled with stones that become hot with fire to which taro, banana, pig and other foods can be cooked upon. Then the top is layered with banana leaves and/or newspapers to trap the heat in, cooking the contents until the time it is ready.

¹¹ T3 Field Work Program going outside MTC to see the ministry firsthand, visiting pastors, hospitals and the Aged Care home at Mapuifagalele, Samoa Victim Support Group, and prison.

¹² Oden C Thomas; *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*; Harper One Publishers; San Francisco; 1983; 249.

those who are afflicted. After this year, the *A'oa'o* and wife are well equipped to move to the last year of their journey as leaders of the student body in the College.

Interview: Life before Malua; Why come to Malua? Is Malua for everyone?

Again, everyone worked like the T1s and T2s. They all left willingly to come to Malua. Some were chiefs, one was a lawyer, all given up for Malua.

In contrast to the previous classes, 70% came on their own accord. Two from it relied on the Holy Spirit. The other 30% came for their parents/grandparents. The spirit of coming to Malua is high, whether on their own or not.

Results show that 70% agree that Malua is for everyone, while 30% says it isn't. With three years in Malua, they've endured quite a lot, and therefore know more duties to make this decision based on their own experiences.

Fourth Year: *FAAIUASO*

This is the final year of study. In my experience, some people look forward to this year. Being leaders, they instruct, direct and advise the lower classes. When someone steps out of line, they rebuke accordingly. Like Shawchuck says, a leader can cause greater distrust. This is a great responsibility as the Lecturers and Principal entrusts them to lead everyone in the ways of Malua.

Although it is the final year, it is also the hardest. If one is not careful and starts doing things he's not supposed to, he will surely be in trouble with the principal and staff which can lead to termination. This has happened many times before, even on the day of Graduation. Having learned everything, the *Faaiuasos* are ready to serve God at a congregation once they graduate. There's a big influence on their leadership. If there are things that need to change, it is the *Faaiuasos* that would implement it, given it's for the

betterment of everyone especially the College. Like Dr. Silvosio said, it is a call to transform. Not only from an old tradition that is no longer applicable in the current context,¹³ but it's the reality after Malua, to help transform people's lives. They will become role models for everyone else, and people will most certainly want to see a good change from them. Our Principal once said after one of the Sermon Classes, that as leaders, we should lead with love, not with knowledge or wisdom we may have. This is precisely what we're currently doing as *Faaiuasio* and enforced on everyone, to build and maintain good relationships with love and respect. Keeping a good bond promotes unity, just as "Augustine regards the Spirit as the bond of unity between Father and Son... and God and believers... which unites believers both to God and to other believers".¹⁴ The unity of the church depends ultimately on the unity of believers. Therefore, if there's friendship in Malua, then that will carry into the ministry well after Malua.

Interview: Life before Malua; Why come to Malua? Is Malua for everyone?

Like the other classes, most were working good jobs, and a few were teachers at secondary schools and some were chiefs.

Coming to Malua was both for them as well as parents/grandparents' wishes. Being here for four years now, the hope of completing the studies is high as we draw nearer the end of the year. This is important as it shows that, despite being *Faaiuasio*, there's that element of fear of not seeing the dream fulfilled. I would say that Malua is for anyone who wants to serve God through the church, wanting to learn more about God. Our class

¹³ For example, on Saturdays after the morning session of work, everyone gathers at 12pm to clean up the compound ready for Sunday. In previous years, the first session of work finishes around 11am-12pm, then rest until second session at around 3pm. Doing it this new way not only helps to get it out of the way faster, but also gives the A'oa'os time to catch up on studies, prepare for au aiga umu, clean their yards or get a good rest before pese at 6pm.

¹⁴ McGrath E Alister; *Christian Theology – An Introduction*; John Wiley and Sons Ltd; West Sussex; 2017; 285.

also agrees with the others, that it's for anyone. The common responses indicate a uniqueness in thinking across the different classes, all thinking inclusively.

Summary

The emphasis on each class has been made clear. Their response to the questionnaire has also been shown, and no surprising that there were similar answers right across every class. The next chapter looks at the theological reflection.

Chapter 3

Theological Reflection

This chapter looks at the biblical side, with the calling of Amos and the disciples. Although they're events from different eras, both were called upon for a greater purpose.

Old Testament: Amos 7:14-15

¹⁴Then Amos answered Amaziah, I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son;
but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore tree.

My Hebrew translation is, And Amos answered and said to Amaziah, I am not a prophet and not a son of a prophet for I am a herdsman and a gather of figs and sycamore trees. This was Amos' answer when Amaziah the priest said to Amos; "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah... and prophesy there".¹ Amos wasn't a prophet, nor known to be related to one. The Hebrew words **אֲנִי-נָזִיר** - particle negative meaning no or not, and *naviy* – a masculine singular noun meaning spokesman, speaker or prophet. He is contradicting Amaziah's assumption that he is a professional prophet.² He had no established credentials of being a prophet. Rather, "he reasserts the position that prophets are free agents working directly for Yahweh and not requiring any certification other than the truth of their message".³ He cared not of his own status, only the message he was delivering. He was simply a herdsman who gathered figs and dressed sycamore trees when he was suddenly overwhelmed by God and called to be a prophet.⁴ Amos is probably the owner of a substantial flock and not just the simple shepherd who watches

¹ Burden of Anonymity; *The Holy Bible NRSV – Amos 7:12*; 1989; 663.

² Auld, A G; *Amos*; Sheffield Academic Press; Sheffield; 1995; 26.

³ Matthews, Victor H; *Social World of the Hebrew Prophets*; Hendrickson; Massachusetts; 2001; 73.

⁴ Heschel, Abraham J; *The Prophets*; Harper and Row Publishers; New York, 1969; 28.

over them.⁵ So he lived his own life comfortably not knowing God was going to call upon him.

Also, herdsman here can also be understood as a sheep breeder. Therefore means he has a lot of sheep with a great flock or many flocks, meaning he would have owned great lands. Aside from that, gathering figs and dressing sycamore trees would be a side job, earning him more money. This makes Amos a wealthy, respected man. “Sheepbreeder probably means an owner in charge of other shepherds, a substantial and respected man of his community”.⁶ A man this stable is favorable in his community as he is able to help people in need.

In the introduction of Amos in chapter 1:1, it uses the word *נֹקֵד* - *noqed* meaning sheep-raiser. This word is also used in 2 Kings 3:4, king Mesha of Moab being a sheepbreeder, delivering a hundred thousand lambs, and the wool of a hundred thousand rams to the king of Israel annually. So the use of this term, *noqed* denotes someone wealthy. In Arab, it’s a shepherd of a kind of sheep which have excellent wool,⁸ a cattle-owner or owner of flocks. This indicates that Amos was in charge of many flocks, as well as one with expensive wool, therefore very wealthy. He answered God’s call to be His messenger. He trusted God’s lead and became a very bold-preaching who prophesied God’s judgment to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. The series of oracles Amos spoke of is foreshadowed in chapter 1:2, “best understood as the book’s motto”.⁹ Amos, meaning

⁵ Hays, J Daniel; *The Message of the Prophets: A Survey of the Prophetic and Apocalyptic Books of the Old Testament*; Zondervan; Grand Rapids; 2010; 287.

⁶ Mays, James Luther; *Amos – A Commentary*; SCM Press; Bloomsbury Street; 1969; 3.

⁷ Bibleworx.

⁸ Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon; n.d.

⁹ Boda J Mark and McConville J Gordon; *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets*; Intervarsity Press; Downers Grove; 2012; 6.

“burden-bearer,”¹⁰ carried the burden of delivering bravely God’s message of His inevitable judgment upon Israel because of their social injustice. He did it so well and so boldly.

¹⁵And the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, Go, prophesy to my people Israel.

My translation; “and the Lord took me from behind the flock and He said to me to go and prophesy to the people of Israel.” While Amos attended his flock, the Lord took him so he can be His messenger to Israel. Thus, Amos dropped everything in order to serve God. He lived his own private life in his village of Tekoa, southeast of Bethlehem in Judah, before God called him. The word behind, **אַחַר** - *achar* shows that Amos was no longer a follower, being behind sheep, but called by God to be a leader. God plucked him out of his comfort zone and took him to a place where he was not welcomed. His message was bold, and Amos had the heart to deliver it in front of a crowd with no fear. His job as a shepherd may have faced more dangers than merely delivering a message. Therefore, he was comfortable in any situation others may find uncomfortable.

This paints a picture of an *A’oa’o* who left all the life and money to be had behind, to pursue God’s calling. Although it is a big step, the blessings of offering one’s life to God are immeasurable. He could well be the fountain in which God pours out His blessings upon him and his family. Therefore, it’s very important to know and act upon our calling. Our lives are only meaningful when there is a purpose, and what greater purpose to offer ourselves than doing the will of God? An *A’oa’o* Malua is just like Amos, that God called him out of his comfortable lifestyle to deliver His message to the people. He must also be bold so as not to preach only what people want to hear through sugar-coated words, but preach truthfully God’s Word.

¹⁰ Ibid.

New Testament - Matthew 4:18-22.

¹⁸As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea – for they were fishermen. ¹⁹And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.” ²⁰Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. ²²Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

It is clear from the passage, that Jesus’ call made these men leave what they were doing and followed Him. Being fishermen means they provided for their families. They were most likely very good at it, so they would have made much money from their catch. However, to leave what they loved doing; even their family was a great risk, as they did not know who Jesus was at this time. They even left their father to follow Jesus.

Jesus did not just say “Follow me.” He commanded them. *δεῦτε* – an adverb, meaning come (a command/exhortation).¹¹ Followed by *ὀπίσω* – a preposition genitive meaning behind or after, relating to follow and being a disciple. *μου* – a genitive singular pronoun, meaning I or me. Jesus initiated their calling. Their acceptance made them His disciples, and they followed after Him,

These men didn’t hesitate, but acted upon their calling immediately, shown by the Greek word *εὐθέως* – an adverb meaning at once, immediately. Interestingly is the word *ἀφίημι* – a verb, participle aorist active nominative masculine plural, meaning they let go, permitted and forgave.¹² Three meanings can be found:

1. All four men let go of their nets, let go of their status in their society and family (being providers), “renouncing their old life, not even taking time to

¹¹ Bibleworx.

¹² Blue Letter Bible Ministry; *Blue Letter Bible*; 2020.

bring in nets (and boat?), they leave all and follow Jesus”.¹³ They were given a new role, being disciples of Jesus.

2. The men permitted, without hinder, giving up a thing to a person. This could be their nets and their catch, given away because they were leaving straight away with Jesus.
3. The men forgave any debts that anyone owed them. A sign of a good heart, ready to go on a mission with Jesus.

These fishermen-turned-disciples “will be as effective in seeking men as they have been in catching fish”.¹⁴ Brothers James and John even left their own father to finish mending the nets. This mending of the nets can be seen as “an allusion to the pastoral ministry, perfecting the Church”.¹⁵ Such action is very disrespectful, but only in this context that it’s appropriate because it was Jesus. He saw the men and called them. He chose them, harmonizing with John 15:16, “You did not choose me, but I chose you...” The Holy Spirit hasn’t come yet, but it is Jesus Who initiated their calling and empowered them for the mission. “When the authoritative call of Jesus comes, there is not even time to say farewell to one’s father”.¹⁶

The calling of an *A’oa’o* is seen in both Amos and the disciples’ calling. Having lived comfortably before Malua, but God plucked him for His purpose. All the *A’oa’o* worked, and the ones who were at school was for a better job to support families. Thus making them well-off like Amos, who owned a great flock or many flocks, yet left when

¹³ Davies W D and Allison C Dale; *The International Critical Commentary – A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Gospel According to Saint Matthew Volume 1*; T & T Clark Limited; Edinburgh; 1988; 399.

¹⁴ Hill David; *New Century Bible Commentary – The Gospel of Matthew*; Marshall, Morgan and Scott Publications; London; 106.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Davies W D and Allison C Dale; *The International Critical Commentary – A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Gospel According to Saint Matthew Volume 1*; 1988; 399.

God called him. God initiated this calling through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. God Himself called Amos. The disciples on the other hand, were called by Jesus, as the Holy Spirit hadn't come yet until in Acts 2:2-3, a time after Jesus had ascended to heaven.

In our Samoan context, no one would leave their parent in the middle of doing something. It would anger any parent, and may end up cursing him, thus making his journey useless. It is unacceptable for any child to desert their parent, but that is exactly what these men did as soon as Jesus called them. Just this one time, I say it was the only right choice to make. But there is now an impact on their families. Their father is now left to their mother, or other family members. If there are siblings, the role of fishermen now falls on them, giving them more responsibilities.

This is like the *A'oa'o*'s calling, leaving everything for God's ministry. A great leap of faith indeed, because success is not guaranteed, and the road is not easy. Four years is a short time to the outside world, but in Malua, it is long. The fishermen seemed to have no idea of what they were getting into. Luckily, it was the best choice for them, to be more useful than just being mere fishermen. *A'oa'o* on the other hand, may seem to want to get into Malua because it's nice and respected. But seeing it as anything but to be of service to God through others may be a downfall to some. An *A'oa'o* Malua can be said to have listened to their hearts and followed God's calling, led by His Spirit. Abandoning everything is the catch that they are willing to sacrifice. Therefore, the fishermen and *A'oa'o* have the same calling, just different atmosphere of where they learn and work. Whereas the disciples were called by Jesus personally, it takes more faith to realize that one's calling is by Jesus.

Knowing these great sacrifices makes one more appreciative of their families. There is only but one way to repay their efforts and support, and that is to complete the studies. There should not be anything less than that because their prayers would be in vain

otherwise. It is, therefore, very important to keep this in mind as motivation, not to let anyone down. Even more so, it should be more than enough to steer out of anything troubling that could jeopardize this great opportunity. A grateful heart with determination would serve an *A'oa'o* just fine during his studies. That would ensure that all the work gets done, and never giving up so easily. The family does their part of supporting, and the *A'oa'o* to successfully complete his studies, therefore, complimenting both sides. A greater awareness of these would make more people want to come to Malua for the right reasons. Also, it would also weave out the ones who may only be in it for status and money.

Summary

The calling of Amos and the disciples clearly shows a life devoted to God's will. Both scenarios reveal the impacts of their calling, both on them and the lifestyle they left behind. This supports the notion of the *A'oa'o* leaving a well-off life to come and study in Malua, called by God for His purpose.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

It is clear from this research paper, that the calling of an *A'oa'o* Malua is inspired by the Holy Spirit, who empowers and provides gifts for ministry. This calling is God's way of plucking them out of their ordinary lives, away from families, friends, and jobs for a greater purpose, to be a Pastor, Shepherd, and Preacher of His Word.

The misconception of becoming a pastor to be rich has been proven wrong. This mindset ridicules the efforts and sacrifices that it takes to become a *faifeau*. An *A'oa'o* is a *Taulaga Ola*, Living Sacrifice of families offered to God for His will. Wanting to be a *faifeau* is offering wholeheartedly oneself to the ministry. The many sacrifices and impacts are not only on him, but his wife, children, and their families also.

From a pastoral theology perspective, it gets more complicated. An *A'oa'o* Malua's journey as an *A'oa'o* ends when he becomes an ordained minister after the four years in Malua. But the end of that journey is the beginning of another, becoming a Pastor. It is not just preaching, but involves a broader responsibility to the people, the flock. He is to be like Jesus the Chief Shepherd, taking care of the people. It takes great commitment, but that's also part of the many sacrifices of the calling. It is not easy to take God's calling, but relying on God Who called us into action in the first place is the only thing a faithful believer can do.

The biblical texts have proved that God initiated the calling on Amos, and Jesus to the disciples. It is in contrast to the introduction, only because the Holy Spirit hadn't come yet as Jesus was still on earth. Nevertheless, both scenarios show great commitment. Amos left his great flock and wealth, and the disciples let go of their status in society, as

well as leaving their father without a goodbye. There is a sense of urgency to act upon the calling, not to wait, not to keep God waiting.

The different classes have shown through their responses that they are serious about their calling. A good aspect of their commitment is fulfilling someone else's dream. Also, their own hearts wanting to come to Malua is surely an inspired call from the Holy Spirit that they acted upon, and it has led them here. Each class has a different goal at the end of their respective year, but in the end it's the same, to finish the four year study. Despite the different viewpoints, experiences and knowledge of how things are in Malua, the main key is to work together, staying united, just as the Spirit unites all believers.

As mentioned in the introduction, the Spirit's inspiring and endowing power is the key component, the very crux and principle why successful people leave their lives for Malua. This is the only reasonable explanation to the mystery of the people flocking to Malua. An *A'oa'o* Malua is put on a pedestal by families, no matter how young he is. That is how important God is to Samoans. They do not do it because of any good of the *A'oa'o*, but for their reverence to God Whom his life is offered as service to. This fear, this great faith of families in God, is why *A'oa'o* are greatly respected.

It is clear that although God's calling to us is a blessing, it also comes with many sacrifices. These sacrifices are but a test of character, patience and faith to redefine ourselves in our calling. They mold us to be the best we can be to serve Him.

APPLICATION

As *A'oa'o*, we ought to be good role models for the younger generation. Let the being away from families be the only burden, and therefore not add any more stress on anyone else, especially in the lower classes. We can also help those who have lost their way. Malua may be hard to get into as well as out of, but it can certainly help someone

who's in need of transformation. Our task is never done in leading the way for all the youth to take part in church activities to build their faith. Doing so with one can encourage another in the same situation, and so hopefully a little ripple can turn into a wave of transforming lives. That is our calling after Malua.

Appendix

Appendix 1-

Questionnaire for Research on an A'oa'o's calling to Malua: Calling or Obligation

Year: _____

Birth Year: _____

1. What were you doing before Malua? Fulltime/ Casual work, Study, well-off?

O a au mean a fai? Faigaluega, a'oga, olaga mautū, tausi aiga, tafao?

2. Why did you come to Malua? Your dream or someone else's? (reasons)

Aisea na e sau ai i Malua? O oe poo se isi? (mafuaaga)

3. Do you think Malua is for everyone? If not, why? And for who then?

O Malua e mo soo se isi? Afai e leai, aisea? E mo ai la?

Glossary

<i>Fia'ai</i>	hungry/ want to eat
<i>Tualā</i>	back section of a cooked/ pig
<i>Faamasani</i>	field work
<i>Maaveavelēfua</i>	breadfruit (fruit) that is not quite ripe; title given to first year Malua students
<i>Maaveave matua</i>	breadfruit (fruit) that is ripe and ready to cook; title given to second year Malua students
<i>Lagolago</i>	assistant; title given to third year Malua students
<i>Faaiuasō</i>	drawing to the end; title given to the fourth year Malua students
<i>Fefe pa'ia</i>	respectful, fearing

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