

**TOWARD A SAMOAN-CHRISTIAN
IDENTITY OF DECISION MAKING IN A
LIFE-THREATENING SITUATION IN AN
*AIGA SAMOA***

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by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis attempts to use a life situation about my son's sickness that affects my family to hopefully start a discussion about these issues from a cultural, biblical, theological, scientific, and pastoral point of view in our families and in our churches – such as in our Church Christian Education programmes. Awareness of these issues concerning the church's healing ministry and the available help and support according to today's world scientific research is essential. Therefore, this paper aims to share my experience of liver transplant and its implications from a Samoan-Christian understanding in hybridity of what it means to give your life as a parent and a *faiifeau* (ordained minister) for your children in the *aiga* (family) and its significance to our healing ministry for our families. Transplantation, in general, is a big issue, and I do wish to delve into what stance the Congregational Christian Church Samoa (CCCS) may have on it. This is in light of a personal experience. I believe this life-saving operation is culturally, biblically, scientifically, and theologically appropriate within the realm of culture, religion, and theology within our Samoan families, villages, and churches. This study, therefore, aims to describe and discuss the ambiguity of liver transplant as an experience of a parent and a *faiifeau* in dealing with a life-threatening sickness of his children in our Samoan-Christian world and how it could provide life lessons for parents and their children in the *aiga* (family) context in our contemporary Samoan world. It will reveal the importance of our Samoan and Christian understanding of becoming and being a parent and a *faiifeau* as shown in our *faaSamoa* (Samoan social and cultural ways) of *tautua* (serve/servant/service) as servant and carer and in Jesus' ministry as a follower or a disciple of Christ. Thus, my Samoan-Christian parenthood perspective as *tautua* and *faiifeau* is vital for this paper, which I will explain later. Hence, this thesis looks at how the issue of liver transplantation that affects a family's and community's livelihood can bring hope to people who experience a similar situation. It seeks in the Bible a pastoral way of dealing with situations that could help ameliorate our pastoral ministry in our families, churches, and villages.

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 thesis is a heartfelt dedication to the cherished memory of four extraordinary individuals who played vital roles in shaping my academic journey, a journey that has led to the completion of this thesis. Their unwavering support, love, and inspiration have been the bedrock upon which this endeavour stands.

Reverend Anoa'i Faletutulu, my late beloved spiritual father, occupies a central place in this dedication. It was his guidance, faith, and unwavering support that became the driving force behind the genesis of this thesis. Reverend Anoa'i stood by me during the most challenging and critical moments, particularly as we embarked on a life-changing liver transplant operation, both for myself and my son, Azariah Malala. His enduring belief in the power of faith and resilience remains an indelible influence on my academic pursuits. This thesis is my tribute to him, recognizing the profound impact he had on my life and the inspiration he instilled in me to seek knowledge and overcome adversity.

Lemalie Nuutolola, my late grandmother, holds a special place in this dedication. Her words of encouragement and the last conversation we shared before our liver transplant operation with my son still echo in my heart. Her presence in my life was a source of warmth and love, and the memory of her unwavering support continues to guide me. She served as a beacon of strength and a reminder of the importance of family bonds. This thesis is dedicated to her memory, carrying forward her legacy of love and encouragement.

Tamamasui Malala Su'a, my late father, was a source of wisdom and love throughout my life. His guidance continues to resonate with me, reminding me of the importance of dedication and perseverance. His memory is a constant source of motivation, pushing me to excel in my academic pursuits.

Rev Falefa Matatia, my late father-in-law, played a significant role in supporting and encouraging my academic endeavours. His presence served as a reminder of the strength that stems from familial bonds and faith. This thesis is dedicated to his memory, recognizing the importance of his support.

Though these beloved individuals have transitioned to the realms beyond, their spirits are deeply woven into the fabric of this thesis. It serves as a testament to their enduring love and support, the very reasons that ignited my academic journey. Their memories will forever inspire me to seek knowledge, to confront challenges with unwavering faith, and to cherish the bonds of family and spirituality.

May their souls find eternal peace, knowing that their legacies live on in the lives they touched and the achievements that bear their influence.

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At the very core of this thesis stands the figure of Rev Dr Vaitusi Nofoaiga, not only as my esteemed supervisor but also as the Principal of Malua Theological College. His guidance, mentorship, and unwavering belief in my potential have been instrumental in shaping not only this research but my entire educational journey. Together with his wife, Mile Nofoaiga, their wisdom and support have illuminated my path.

My family has been a constant source of love and encouragement. My dear mother, Pakisa Malala Su'a, and my cherished mother-in-law, Faamita Falefa Matatia, have provided unwavering support and have been my pillars of strength. My siblings, brothers, and sisters, have shared in my triumphs and trials, creating a sense of unity and purpose that fueled my determination.

I must also express my heartfelt gratitude to my extended family, in-laws, aunties, and uncles, whose collective support and encouragement have strengthened my resolve. The guidance and unwavering support of my uncle, Rev Uamuli Su'a, and his wife, Senara Su'a, have been invaluable.

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To all our Pulega and Aulotu; Pulega Falealili, Pulega Itu o Tane; to our Aulotu at Vaovai Falealili and Faletagaloa Safune. Faafetai le tatalo, faafetai mo le tapua'iga.

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And last but certainly not least, my children, Matthias Sataoa Semikueva Jr., my transplant son Azariah Malala, my beautiful daughters Karishma Florence, Faamita Zorin Jaylyn, and my son Angel Maluafou, have been the driving force behind my academic pursuits. Even though Angel Maluafou resides in heaven, his spirit remains an integral part of our family. Your presence in my life, Angel, is an eternal source of inspiration, and I am grateful for your everlasting place in our hearts.

In conclusion, the completion of this thesis is a testament to the collective support, encouragement, and sacrifices made by these individuals and institutions. Their contributions have not only enriched this work but have also shaped my academic and personal journey in profound and enduring ways. With the deepest gratitude, I acknowledge their role in my accomplishments. God bless you all....

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1: Alofā Framework as the Hybrid construction of my Samoan-Christian Identity

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | | |
|---------|---|---|
| CBQ | - | Catholic Biblical Quarterly |
| CCCS | - | Congregational Christian Church Samoa |
| JSOTSup | - | Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplementary |
| MTh | - | Master of Theology |
| NICNT | - | New International Commentary of the New Testament |
| NRSV | - | New Revised Standard Version |
| PhD | - | Doctor of Philosophy |
| SBL | - | Society of Biblical Literature |
| SNTSMS | - | Society for New Testament Studies Monograph |
| SRI | - | Sociorhetorical Interpretation |
| WBC | - | World Biblical Commentary |

INTRODUCTION

0.1. What is the Study

In the story of God's creation of the world, as shown in the Book of Genesis, God creates human being in God's image. Another meaning of the word image used in the creation story is character. Thus, God created humankind to live ethically according to God's ways. An essential part of the creation of humankind is God's creation of man and woman to live in partnership, and one of their roles is to produce children – to multiply. In other words, God created, in the beginning, a family or *aiga* where its members have roles and responsibilities – roles and responsibilities to fulfill God's will and purposes in God's created world.

In Jesus' teachings, as revealed in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus said to let children come to him, for they are the image of those accepted in the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 19:14). The Bible emphasizes the importance of producing children and caring for them for God's purposes. So, not looking after the children as God's given gifts is not doing God's will. This thought came to mind as I tried with my wife to decide whether to donate my liver to help my son. Moreover, my thinking as a parent to help my son evoked a sense of doing it for God's creation of humankind to consider the organ transplantation operation as a natural way of helping those in need of such help.

This study aims to discuss the issue of organ transplantation as an option to consider in our Samoan Christian world to help anyone in need, for it has cultural and biblical acceptance. The consideration of organ transplantation needs to be looked at properly from a Samoan social and cultural understanding and the church-related biblical and theological understanding. Thus, one of the aims of the study is to be used

as a resource in a discussion of this issue in the Christian Education programmes of our Congregational Christian Church Samoa, especially in the area of the church's healing ministry. It is also a helpful study to look at the critical use of all various understanding, cultures, values, and technologies now available to find a solution to a problem, such as helping a sick person in need of a donated organ.

The consideration of organ transplantation in helping our children need organs is a driving reason behind this study. This study is regarded as a cross-cultural study of the integration of the Samoan social and cultural understanding of *aiga* and the Christian understanding of family concerning the parent-children relationship in conjunction with the healing of children. I will engage in a discussion of the Samoan and Christian understanding of the parent-children relationship relative to the *tautua* or becoming and being a servant as a *faasinomaga* or an identity of any family member in the family and community contexts that are socially, culturally, and religiously based. The importance of undertaking the role of becoming and being a parent and a *tautua* sometimes is in conflict when different priorities are to be carried out at the same time. So, I will approach the issue of organ transplantation from a dialogical approach where a dialogue between the Samoan and Christian understanding is made. It discusses organ transplantation using the understanding and experience of encountering the need for such an operation and the issues around it. It is dealing consciously with the situation with an experience and understanding of who I am as a Samoan and a Christian – an understanding and experience of my *faasinomaga* or my identity as a Samoan and Christian in my family, village, and church.

The engagement between self and the topic discussed evokes an understanding that will shape and form a way to help someone who will experience that life situation in the future make the right decision. The study depends on the plurality of cultures and

understanding. This dialogue will consider important those in need – those marginalized and oppressed by sickness and stigmatization for trying to help people in need. Thus, the influences of the social, cultural, and economic systems on the life situation of those involved are considered in the discussion.

My life experience described in this study is part of the larger narratives of my life as a follower of Jesus. Thus, I must tell this brief story of my life as it reflects why I desire to revisit the subject of organ transplantation in relation to the church's healing ministry. Melanie Anae, in her attempt to identify who she is as an Aotearoa/New Zealand-born Samoan, says that “the problem of identifying is the problem of arriving at a life story that makes sense....”¹ Anae’s point of view reminds me of why it is important to define who I am as a Samoan in terms of my experience of life in Samoa as a parent or a member of my family and as a *faiifeau*. It will provide a sense of identity concerning my *aiga* that will inform and shape how I see the importance of this study in the future.

I strongly support Samoa as a nation founded on God.² It is where I belong. My understanding of Samoa as a nation founded on God is fundamental to my experience as a Samoan and a Christian. I regard myself as a member of a Samoan *aiga*³ (family) who

¹ Melanie S. Anae, “Fofaivaese: Identity Journeys of NZ-born Samoans” (PhD Dissertation, University of Auckland, 1998), 136.

² The cooperation of *fa'aSamoa* and Christianity is officially declared in this statement in the Samoan constitution: “The leaders of Western Samoa have declared that Western Samoa should be an Independent State based on Christian principles and Samoan custom and traditions.” See Government of Samoa, *The Constitution of the Independent State of Western Samoa* (Apia: Samoa Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd., 1960).

³ The term *aiga* expresses depicts an extended family unit whose membership either comes from a common ancestor or where the member was adopted into the family (see Lalomilo Kamu, *The Samoan Culture and The Christian Gospel* (Suva: Methodist Printing Press, 1996), 38-44; Feleti E. Ngan-Woo, *FaaSamoa: The World of Samoans* (Auckland: Office of Race Relations Conciliator, 1985), 35-40; Amaamalele Tofaeono, “Eco-Theology: *Aiga* – The Household of Life. A Perspective

has grown up in different places and diverse cultures, such as in a traditional Samoan village⁴ as a young boy and teenager and in a place near the town area of Apia as a teenager, and as a married adult with children.

Growing up in a Samoan family in a traditional Samoan village, I learned how to be the son of a *matai* (chief), how to be a brother to my sisters, how to be a son to my parents, and how to be a servant to my family and the church. As the son of a *matai*, I learned the hierarchical structure of the *matai* system. My role was, and is, to be a good *tautua* (servant) to my family and village regarding providing food and security. That service role is part of the *matai-tautua* (chief-servant) relationship. Part of learning the *matai* system (chiefly system) is how it is implemented at the village and church levels. I have experienced then that despite the church having its structure, the *matai* hierarchical structure plays a significant and influential part in the church system. Part of that experience includes learning to value the church and the family's needs.

As a child to my parents, I was taught to care for my parents by obeying them and serving their needs. I also witnessed at the same time my parents' undertaking of their roles as parents. They worked hard on the family plantation to ensure we had abundant food. In that family context, I also learned to be a brother to my sisters. As a brother to my sisters, I was taught to undertake the sister-brother relationship in *fa'aSamoa* (the Samoan way) to respect my sisters by considering their needs and

from *Living Myths and Traditions of Samoa*" (PhD Thesis, Erlangen: Erlanger Verl Mission Und Okumene, 2000).

⁴Two legal systems run Samoan society. One is the constitutional law implemented by the Samoan national government and the other is the customary law put into action by the village council. Implementing the two systems often creates conflicts at all levels; family, village, districts and nation. A *matai* in a recognized rank in the village is a dominant chief in the implementation of the customary legal system.

rights more important than mine. I have witnessed men of all ages in our family in the traditional village valuing the importance and significance of the *matai-tautua* (chief-untitled man), parent-children, and sister-brother relationships. These values of being a male as a son, brother, and father, which I learned in the village about my *aiga*, village, and church, were carried with me when I left the village and shifted to live near Apia.

As a member of a family growing up as an adult, married, and having children near the town, I found life difficult, especially when my family tried to fulfill our family's needs, the extended family's, and the church's needs. There was no land to grow food on, and it was overcrowded. Nine people had to live in a small open Samoan house. However, learning through faith in God in our *aiga* and church and living in such a way was all part of the necessary sacrifice to our *aiga* and church. We had to endure this way of life in Apia to get access to better jobs, education, and other life opportunities.

I overcame some of our family's hardships when I graduated from Malua Theological College and worked in our Church youth development programmes sector. I was pleased initially, for I believed I could manage financially to look after my wife and children. Unfortunately, despite how hard I tried as a father and a *faifeau* working in our church youth development to serve my family and church, I could not earn enough money to help cater to my wife's and kids' needs. I had no choice but to continue living life doing my responsibilities as a member of my Samoan family—as a father, a *faifeau*, a Samoan, and a Christian. Being in this situation gave me another look at life in terms of thinking about other ways to take care of my family. It was simply vying for survival despite not having many resources to care for my family. This experience gave me reasons to become a better father in my family and a better *faifeau* in my church. One of these was to keep hope and faith that God would

give me opportunities to find ways to deal with problems that would happen to me and my family. It was just a matter of living life with what was available. In other words, it was all about surviving each day

0.2. Purpose of this Study

One of the important parts of our ministry as church ministers with our wives in our families, churches, villages, and nations is the ministry of healing. Theologically, when we talk about healing, we discuss the healing of the body, mind, soul, and spirit. It is healing the whole person in flesh and spirit. The different circumstances and situations now occurred in our lifetime due to population growth, such as the emergence of the ongoing existence of pandemics, the fast development of new technology, and the normal occurrence of natural disasters as consequences of climate change, come together with new technological and scientific thinking and expectations of how to deal with problems caused by those undeniable new situations and changes. For example, is making use of the new available technology to help treat an illness in a desperate situation such as a member of an *aiga* (Samoan family) in desperate need of an organ transplantation. Organ transplantation as an option to treat a family member in an *aiga Samoa* was not heard of or an expected considered treatment for our children or a family member in our Samoan context.

However, from my point of view as a parent in my *aiga* who experienced being in such a situation and as a youth worker working in the Christian education part of our CCCS church, it is now important to talk about these situations in light of our church healing ministry. As Christians we believe that we find answers to those questions in the Bible. Thus, it is essential to consider a biblical and theological explanation in the discussion of such treatment and operation that affect God's creation such as donating

another person's organ to help another person that needs it. From the Church viewpoint in relation to its theological doctrines, it is important to seek a theological and biblical understanding about those issues in order to bring awareness to our people and our church members who needed some explanations.

In the pastoral ministry of the CCCS church in the Samoa contemporary society, this is one of the challenges it now faces whether to take advantage of the opportunities available – the opportunities that seem to contradict the theological and biblical beliefs of the church – to deal with the needs of the people who are in desperate situations of life saving. Opportunities that even though were heard of before but were not available. In other words as mentioned, the so-called life risk opportunities such as donating our organs to help our children and family members who need them.

This was not a normal practice in the life of the Samoan people as in the worlds of the people in other parts of the world such as in Pakistan and India. Despite the life risk and danger of these operations, our people now in Samoa and abroad are using these opportunities with their prayers that these are some of the ways God provides to help those who need them. It is therefore important to look at these life situations and start a conversation from the pastoral ministry point of view for our people. It is looking at the issue from the perspectives of becoming and being a member of our families in our Samoan social and cultural world, and becoming and being a member of our Congregational Christian Church.

The effort of our church (CCCS) to put into action the undertaking of discipleship as Jesus commanded his disciples to do in Jesus' commissioning of his disciples in Matthew 28 continues with challenges such as dealing with issues involving the influences of the Christian tradition, teaching, understanding and the Samoan culture in the contemporary Samoan society. At times, there are tensions between these two

horizons, Christianity and Samoan Culture, when a resolution to an issue or problem is discussed. We often hear words in those situations such as: “It is not the way according to our Culture or according to our Christian tradition.”

It was also the type of thinking and understanding heard when I tried to deal with the problem of the life-threatening situation our family faced which was my son’s liver abnormality. When we were told about what would happen if we do not find help for him, the feeling of hopelessness and not wanting to live any more came to mind. However, being able to think properly and to use all ways possible at the time to find help brought me and my wife to a realization of the importance of taking advantage of both our Christian understanding and our Samoan cultural values of having faith and believing in going forth with whatever opportunity available with utter faith and trust in God. It is this realization that I will share in this paper, hopefully that it will bring some awareness about the importance of the use of both our Christian and Samoan cultural values and understanding in our dealing with issues and problems in our contemporary Samoan Christian world. It is where I will put together what I have learned from Malua about discipleship and my experience of becoming and being a parent to my children in the context of *Aiga Samoa* and with my experience of working in the Youth Section of our CCCS Church, to bring forth some suggestions of an approach that could be discussed or used in the planning of our Sunday Schools and Youth Programmes.

As mentioned, part of my work as our district (*Matagaluega*) representative to our EFKS Church Christian Youth Education Programmes when we deliver these programmes is to discuss life issues with youths in our different churches and how these issues relate to our Samoan Christian worlds and understanding. I have heard in this sharing with the youth the struggle for understanding for some of the young parents in dealing with family problems caused by their children’s sickness. I believe it is also the

case for parents of other ages who have come across the similar experience. The problem of confusion and uncertainty in these types of situations lead to more problems in these young couples' families. For some young parents, the pressure of such types of life situations ends their marriages in separation and divorce. I can understand their struggle for I experienced it myself when my son was diagnosed with a life-threatening problem to his liver. It is the purpose of this paper to share and discuss my experience when I was a young parent of dealing with our children's sickness, especially the type of sickness that is life-threatening. The discussion will be carried out from my perspective of the integration of my Samoan and Christian understanding of caring and serving our families in our Samoan Christian worlds. I have called myself a Samoan-Christian parent because how I see life as a parent and deal with life problems as a parent are always influenced by the Samoan and Christian values and understanding I was taught with by my parents, family, and Samoan churches and village communities. Hence part of this paper will explain this Samoan-Christian identity which I consider as a hybrid identity. I call it a hybrid identity for I took advantage of fluctuating in-between my Samoan and Christian understanding of dealing with life situations taking advantage of what I thought was appropriate to help my family.

0.3. Congregational Christian Church Samoa Christian Education

It is important to show in this part of the thesis an overview of our church, the Congregational Christian Church Samoa's Christian Education programmes, especially its programmes for the Sunday Schools and Youth Groups. The overview would help provide for this study a way that could bring into those programmes an inclusion of a discussion of healing from the '*Aiga Samoa*' approach as the Samoan Christian perspective used in this thesis to discuss the importance of organ transplantation from the wholistic and holistic view of healing.

The office of the CCCS Christian Education is based and located at Mulinuu Apia. The workers in this office are graduates of Malua Theological College representing each district (*Matagaluega*) and work under an annual salary paid scale provided by the CCCS. This group is looked after by a Director appointed by the Church Christian Education Committee in every three years. Their tasks are to prepare programmes for the Church Sunday Schools and Youth Groups in booklets to be distributed to all churches and come up with ways to put those programmes into actions. Actions such as different activities that bring together district youth groups to share their biblical, theological, and cultural understanding of certain issues – activities like debates, choir shows, and inter-district cultural activities.

All the churches' Sunday Schools and Youth Groups are using those prepared programmes by the CCCS Christian Education Office to guide their biblical and theological teachings for the church children and youth. Lately, a youth debate competition, one of the youth programmes broadcasted on our CCCS TV uses some of the topics from those youth programme books. The application of the biblical and theological teachings described in those provided programmes is based on the contemporary issues.

This is good from my point of view but we need to add more issues and topics that were not discussed before in our families and churches such as the topics and issues of organ transplantations, gay marriage, and pandemics. What needs to bring into the discussion of these topics and issues are not only the theological and biblical meanings of those issues but also their impact on our cultural values and understanding, and our church doctrines. All this understanding will help our people who would experience such situations make decisions of what to do. At the end of this study, an understanding

and experience of the issue discussed hopefully would bring some help to those who would come across the similar situations as explained in this thesis.

0.4. Motivation of the Study

There is a Samoan saying, “*O au o matua ia fanau i aiga*”⁵ (dear to parents in their families are their children). This saying derives from the relationship between parents and their children in the *aiga* in the Samoan social and cultural context. The relationship between the parents and their children is considered sacred where the children must love and respect their parents while their parents discipline, nurture, and take care of them. Keeping this relationship will bring blessings to the children and joy to the parents.

O au o matua o fanau, can be literally translated “the joy and the accomplishment of the parents are their children.” In other words, they are their parents’ greatest accomplishment and represent that success for generations to come well after they are gone. Rev. Nove Vailaau roughly translates the proverb which “likens children to an internal organ, the liver, a vital part of a human being’s system.”⁶ The analogy through such a claim suggests that “just as a person needs to protect and care for his/her liver, so the parents are to care for and protect their children.” As a father of five children, I find the proverbial expression to be an accurate representation of my own feelings of parenthood. It is interesting to note that the metaphoric proverb chooses the liver as the

⁵ *Muagagana* in Samoan refers to the sayings that were constructed by our ancestors from within our culture and tradition including our surrounding and our everyday experiences. A Samoan saying or *muagagana* represents an important tradition of the Samoan culture wherein the language art forms communicate the inter-connectedness of the Samoan people with the land, sea, and the sky. These sayings highlight the relational nature of the Samoan culture. Levesi Laumau Afutiti defines *muāgagana* as Samoan wisdom sayings. See Levesi Laumau Afutiti, “Native Texts: Samoan Proverbial and Wisdom Sayings,” in *Sea of Readings: The Bible in the South Pacific*, ed. Jione Havea, (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2018), 53-68.

⁶ [Strong families | Pasefika Proud](#) accessed 7 March 2023.

source of comparison for children. With an average weight of three pounds, the cone shaped organ is responsible for regulating ‘chemical levels in the blood.’⁷ Some of its main functions are the removal of toxins, poisonous substances, waste, and bacteria from the blood stream. And on the other hand, this same organ is tasked with balancing and making glucose as needed and storing the body’s iron.⁸ Without a liver, humans face certain death. Not only is the liver a storage for vitamins and minerals, the body depends on the liver to activate its immune response against infections and diseases.⁹ In other words, toxins that inevitably attack the human system will invade and successfully destroy the human body.

Thinking back to the aforementioned proverbial expression, the likening of children to the parent’s liver is justifiable in my view. Just as the liver removes the toxins from the bloodstreams, my children have in many ways removed the stresses of my day to bring joy in my life. Just as the liver activates the immune system to fight against the threat of infections, my children have been my motivation, activating me to strive in all of my endeavours. And in a metaphoric sense, without my children, I would perhaps feel lifeless and without a purpose. *O au o matua fanau* encapsulates my strong feelings about my children.

Ironically in 2016, my metaphoric *au* (liver) would face an imminent threat. At birth, my second child, Azariah Malala, was diagnosed at the Moto’otua Hospital in Samoa as having jaundice. As a result, our family travelled to New Zealand to seek medical treatment. After several scans and tests, my wife and I were informed by the New Zealand medical experts that jaundice was now the least of our concerns. A

⁷ Liver: Anatomy and Functions | Johns Hopkins Medicine accessed 5 July 2023.

⁸ Liver: Anatomy and Functions | Johns Hopkins Medicine accessed 5 July 2023.

⁹ Can You Live Without a Liver? Half a Liver, Liver Failure, and More (healthline.com) accessed 5 July 2023.

shocking discovery was made upon their investigation of our Azariah's jaundice. The experts had unveiled that Azariah was born with a condition known as *biliary atresia*. In simpler terms, my *au* was born with liver failure in 2016.

To make matters worse, the New Zealand doctors and hospitals were unable to operate due to my family's citizenship status. Methods of operation were available, but it would be illegal for the doctors to operate or even recommend an operation in New Zealand considering our immigration status. We were informed that our time in New Zealand was up and that we had to return with Azariah to Samoa. However, several experts had given us details about the necessary operation for Azariah's case.

We were informed by medical experts that the life expectancy for Azariah was only eight months. Now assuming we were able to handle our citizenship issues and receive some formal support for the Samoan government, several other medical factors were to be taken into consideration. Firstly, Azariah was in need of a liver donor. Secondly, the liver donor had to have the same blood type as the recipient. And then the last pieces of information are what seemingly added to the hopelessness my wife and I experienced in the situation. The donor not only had to have the same blood type, but the donor also had to be the same age. At the time of these discussions, Azariah was only four months. Furthermore, the New Zealand medical experts noted that there was only a 50% chance that the operation would be successful. And lastly, this mere attempt at a 50/50 life-saving operation would cost a whopping \$600,000 in New Zealand dollars.

We arrived in Samoa with very little hope. Yet my wife and I agreed that a 50% chance was better than no-chance at all. We began our fundraising efforts upon arrival, praying to reach the \$600,000 NZD mark before Azariah's seventh month. During this

period, we sought the help of traditional healers, the Samoan *taulasea*, with hopes that they could provide some sort of help for our son.

We were recommended a *taulasea* (Samoa traditional healer) from the village of Magiagi that specialized in liver related issues. However, we did not find the solution and the healing that we had hoped for from this healer. The *taulasea* diagnosed Azariah's ailment as a case of what she called *ate fefete* (hepatitis). And the only information we were given about the ailment is that if this illness is found within a person, odds are that they are the one person from each generation within a family that will be the carrier of the illness. Disappointed in what we had just been informed of by the healer, we continued our efforts to raise the necessary funds for New Zealand.

We sought financial assistance from the Samoan government, much to no avail. Although our government provided assistance for medical treatment for Samoan citizens seeking treatment exclusively found in other countries, the \$600,000 NZD price tag proved to be too expensive for the government's budget for one individual.

During this period, our families who genuinely supported our financial efforts to raise funding for our son, began to speak to us about alternative decisions for our dilemma. Both my wife's parents and my mother, in their genuine concern over our fatigue and the toll that our efforts took on us, suggested that we pray and come to accept the reality of our situation. Their advice was made out of love. They were worried that the situation was affecting our health negatively.

Furthermore, the *taulasea* that we sought, although unable to perform a viable solution, presented us with what they perceived as hopeful news. Although it appeared that the liver transplant was distant from our desire, we at least knew that our son as the bearer of *ate fefete*, ended any concern of anyone from his generation being bearers of the illness.

It was during this period of contemplation that my wife and I were contacted with news that would forever change our lives, especially the life of our Azariah. Dr. Tuitama Leao Talalelei Tuitama was the Minister of Health for the Samoan government in 2017 when he had contacted my family to inform us that a collective of doctors from India had arrived in Samoa. The doctors, visiting Samoa from Fortis Hospital in India, specialized in various organ transplants. Dr. Tuitama notified us that the doctors had been informed of Azariah's situation. About two months away from the expected Azariah's eighth month, the doctors had told Minister Tuitama that the liver transplant at Fortis Memorial Hospital in New Delhi, India guaranteed a 95% success rate. Furthermore, they would operate for much less than \$600,000 NZD. The price tag for the operation at Fortis Hospital was only \$70,000 Samoan Tala.

My wife and I met with the doctors to discuss the operation, and were afforded the opportunity to make any inquiry that we had about the process. Our main concern at this point was the identifying of a donor. But we were comforted when the doctor expressed that the main qualification for a donor was having the same blood type. Furthermore, given that I shared the same blood type as my son, we were further happy when the doctors shared with us that the operation is likely to succeed if Azariah received his biological father's liver. This calmed any worry that I had, as the doctor recommended the donation of about 40% of my own liver.

We shared the news with our families as we began preparation for the operation in India. However, my in-laws, my mother, and many of our own families tried to talk us out of our decision. There was distrust amongst our families with the statistics given to us by the Indian medical experts. Considering the 50% chance of success provided by the New Zealand experts, the Indian doctors' claims seemed impossible to our families. Our families were also concerned with me being the donor. They feared that in a

situation where the operation was unsuccessful, they would not only lose Azariah, but they would also lose me in the process. Our parents suggested that my wife and I made peace with the situation, meaning we would stay in Samoa to soak in as much time as we had with Azariah.

However, in the spirit of “*O au o matua fanau,*” my wife and I could not afford to sit around and do nothing for our Azariah. Our minds were made up. As parents to our children in our *aiga*, nothing could deter us from seeing the operation through, not even the concerns of our own parents.

The operation in India was a success. Forty percent (40%) of my liver was transplanted into Azariah. We journeyed back to Samoa after some recovery time. And upon the one year mark of the operation, we returned with Azariah for a follow-up. There the doctors found that Azariah’s body was adjusting to its new liver, and that the operation was looking very successful. This year, 2023, marks the six year anniversary since Azariah’s transplant – a long way from the eight month life expectancy that he was given upon diagnosis. Azariah is a very healthy and active little boy and he indeed brings joy to our *aiga*, as do my other four children as well.

However, within this journey with Azariah’s condition, attitudes about liver transplant came to the forefront of my attention. Had my wife and I conceded to the advice of our extended families, especially their scepticism towards the operation, we would not have our Azariah today. But I believe that their advice against the operation is indicative of their attitudes and beliefs towards liver transplant. I believe their attitude against the operation is a consequence of who we are as young parents. We consider ourselves as Samoan-Christians. We believe that it was the combination of our becoming and being Samoans and Christians that planted the seed of faith within us to go ahead with our decision to do the operation for our child. In other words, the

decision made by my wife and I was a reflection of the fluctuation of our beliefs in hope and miracles in life in-between our Samoan and Christian understanding of becoming and being parents to our children in our *aiga*. It was in that swaying in-between the Samoan and Christian beliefs about the spiritual realm of where God exists made us took advantage of the available help to deal with the life-threatening situation for our child. Hence, it is important to look at this hybrid Samoan-Christian identity that influenced our decision making to bring forth some thoughts and awareness of both sides – the positive and negative impacts of the situation.

This paper intends to explore the different contexts in which we entered in our seeking help, and the different attitudes of that we have experienced from those contexts towards liver transplant. These factors played a major role in the discouragement for liver transplant we received from our beloved ones, but also played the critical role in our decision to go against our parents and do for our Azariah.

Consequently, this study aims to explore and to ascertain multiple views on the issue of transplanting, from the perspective of a successful liver transplant donor through the lenses of a *fai'feau* and a parent in the *aiga*. The study will also explore the biblical views on the importance of parents to their *aiga* or parenthood's life-saving approach and results as portrayed in Jesus' ministry, and Jesus' choosing of disciples to take the ministry first to their families that shows another important role of discipleship. Findings from this work may motivate and inform church ministers how to provide effective spiritual support and pastoral care support to parents and their families or people who would have encountered this experience, as an opportunity to manifest God's unfailing love for the terminally ill, the dying and their parents and family.

0.5. Focus

In this paper, we will explore how an *aiga* considered as a Samoan Christian *aiga* dealt with the idea and practice of liver transplant, and the process and reasoning for such practice. We will also explore both theological and social attitudes towards the idea of liver transplant, paying some attention to how the Samoan culture perceives the practice.

The theological exploration and biblical interpretations that linked to liver transplant or organ transplantation will be sought to both support and discredit the practice of liver transplant, and further investigation will be afforded to seek how these interpretations could influence the opinion of our Samoan people as Christian in our Samoan world and context. The ultimate question is whether this life-saving operation can provide any meaningful insight on how the Christian faith is to be practiced, and how the Christian faith shapes the decision of donating and receiving organ transplants.

As mentioned, we (me and my wife) were not able to come to the realization of knowing the importance of our decision to continue on with the operation, if it was not for our knowledge and understanding of who we are as Samoan and Christian in our Samoan world. Thus, it is important to explain our young parent identity of becoming and being a Samoan-Christian as it is the basis of our understanding life which influenced how we approach life when facing life-threatening experience.

More importantly, this paper will present a biblical exploration as mentioned of whether there are biblical references and understanding that are theologically based that could bring theological and pastoral thoughts into the consideration of transplantation in our ministry in our church. It is an exploration that could be shared in our Youth's Christian education programmes and other ways – all for the purpose of offering and

suggesting other ways and opportunities that could help those who may come across the similar situations.

0.6. Chapters Outline

The thesis will be divided into eight chapters. Chapter One describes our decision to go ahead with the operation of giving a part of my liver to help my son. It begins with a description of what a liver transplant is. The chapter ends with a testimony or a personal experience that guides my explanation of my bringing together of the Samoan and Christian understanding about becoming and being a *tautua* or servant and hope that influenced my decision to donate my liver for my son. Chapter Two deals with the methodology and approach used in this study which is an integration of cultures and values approach where the Samoan and Christian understanding about valuing life are fused together to form a Samoan Christian identity in hybridity – an identity that depicts the taking advantage of the relevant values and understanding to provide a healing option for the sick son. The integrating approach is shaped by my adaptation of the ‘Critical Spatiality Theory’ described by Vernon K. Robbins. That theory emphasizes three spaces considered as the firstspace, secondspace, and thirdspace. I regard the firstspace as my Samoan understanding and experience space of *aiga Samoa*; the secondspace as the Christian understanding of family; and the thirdspace as my Samoan Christian identity in hybridity of *aiga* and family. The Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity in the third space is where I integrate the Samoan understanding in the firstspace and the Christian understanding in the secondspace. Chapter Three is part one of the firstspace of the Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity that talks about the *aiga Samoa* space. Chapter Four is part two of the firstspace of the Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity that speaks of the cultural perspective on the attitude towards organ

transplantation. It begins with the cultural perspective of a *taulasea* (Samoan traditional healer) on liver transplant and finishes with the cultural perspective of donor and recipient in the Samoan context. Chapter Five is part one of the secondspace of the Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity which is about the arrival of Christianity and its impact on the Samoan society. Chapter Six is part two of the Christian understanding of the Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity that explains family in God's creation and in Jesus' ministry. Chapter Seven is the thirdspace which talks about the hybrid construction or the integration of the firstspace and secondspace into the thirdspace – the thirdspace of my Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity which I call home or *aiga fiafia* (happy home or happy family). It is where the “*alofa*” framework is shown to help guide our attempts in making decisions in life threatening situations. In other words, after all according to our Samoan and Christian understanding of who we are in our *aiga*, there is always hope when we continue to believe in the power of faith and love. The study ends with a Conclusion in Chapter Eight. Developing of Christian education programmes in our church can use this model as a guide to youth and Sunday school activities, debates and discussion about issues that affect the health and the well-being of our people in our church and society.

0.7. Conclusion

Liver transplant is now a generally understood operation in advanced Western countries. For both medical experts and the general population of Western countries, life-saving operations are generally recommended and accepted when situations of life and death arise within the medical world. Doctors are also generally required by law to ensure that they do all that is within their knowledge and power to save lives.

However, from my experience, it is clear that sometimes, life-saving efforts are subject to debate. There is much to be considered before making the decision to proceed with a liver transplant, both for the recipient and the donor. By using the “alofā” framework and integrating self, cultural, theological, and scientific perspectives, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the attitudes and beliefs surrounding liver transplants within a Samoan context. The research methodology outlined in this study allows for a holistic exploration of liver transplantation, considering the wider cultural, religious, scientific, and personal dimensions that influence decision-making processes. The findings of this study will contribute to the body of knowledge on organ transplantation, inform culturally sensitive healthcare practices, and foster a more inclusive and informed dialogue within the Samoan community.

CHAPTER 1:

THE DECISION TO DO THE LIVER TRANSPLANT FOR MY SICK SON

This Chapter is mainly focused on describing my decision of going ahead with liver transplantation for my son. It provides a detailed medical background and various aspects of such operation. The Chapter will also explore the issues of distress, emotions, and anxiety experienced by both the patient, the donor, and everyone involved. In addition, a detailed testimony of the author is given with regards to the issue of liver transplant. This is important to this study which led to my explanation and discussion of the various thoughts – all the thinking and understanding – that influenced how I came to the realization of making that decision which I am thankful now that I did.

1.1 Transplantation

Transplantation is removing an organ from one person (the donor) and surgically placing it into another (the recipient) whose organ has failed its body. It is the process of surgically removing of an organ or tissue and placing it in another person as a necessary procedure for the recipient. Historically and in the modern world, it is one of the greatest advances in medicine. However, the downside is that unfortunately, the need for organ donors is much greater than the number of people who need organs to be donated.

Over the past 50 years, transplantation has become established worldwide with ever-improving results. The process is only recommended when the only option to save lives in patients is available. In the last two decades, organ transplantation has gradually increased and has provided excellent results in children and young adults. This is indeed challenging by the growing proportion of elderly transplant patients. As mentioned,

transplantation depends on the availability of human organs and their scarcity means that there is a waiting list. This process of obtaining organs for donation and transplantation depends on the resources of health facilities in their own specific context.

The donor may come from any deceased body as well as living humans. Furthermore, there is an assessment of the patient in their psychological and behavioural aspect before and after organ transplantation. Vice versa must also be done to the donor and must be considered as it is a process that involves an outcome of either life or death. This process is a sustainability of life, but the disparity that exists between supply and demand leads to a loss of many lives. In a psychological analysis of the process, the most important in organ donation is to maximise the well-being of the donors before and after transplantation. This psychological issue with the living organ donation includes prevention of psychological harm, trying to ensure that the donors are fully informed and decide to donate with coercion. It is important to monitor psychological outcomes. They are intimately linked to the factors that historically served as barriers to the use of organs from living donors.

Therefore, it is clear that the process of transplantation of organs is difficult. It is a process that requires mental, psychological, and physical monitoring before and after the procedure. In light of this paper, the fact that patients in need of organs are much greater than donors is an issue that interests this paper. This resulted in recipients localising their search to a more particular audience, most notable their family members. This is one of the most touching forms of human compassion, especially when transplantation is from a mother to a son, from a father to a daughter, from a brother to a sister, from a friend to a friend. From a religious perspective, it is an expression of the believer's generosity, duty, charity, and cooperation.

1.2 What is Liver Transplant?

A liver transplant is an operation to remove a diseased or damaged liver. It is the advocacy to replace the old and damaged kidney with a new and healthy one. Usually, it is recommended when the liver has been damaged to the point where it cannot perform the functions it usually performs. This is known as liver failure or the final stages of liver disease. There are many causes of liver damage. It is now an established treatment modality for management of children with end-stage liver disease. It is a medical procedure, and the process of transferring or transplanting the liver is normally carried out in three stages.

First is the donor surgery to obtain a healthy liver where the donors can come from two sources, namely donors from people who have recently died or donors from those who are still alive. If it comes from a person who has died, the process must obtain approval from the family to give or donate organs that are still healthy. Not only is the liver in this process, but it also usually involves removing the cornea of the eye, heart, kidneys, lungs, even skin or bones. Until after the appointment, the donor still has to be assisted with a breathing machine even though they have died. This is done so that the donated organs still get a supply of oxygen. This process of liver transplanting from living and healthy people can be carried out immediately after the donor undergoes a series of tests. These tests are required to prove that the condition of the body and heart is healthy and right for the recipient. The regenerating nature of the liver allows liver organs left from the donor to grow back into new, healthy organs.

In the second stage of the process, the stage is undergone in the surgery back table, which is performed at the receiving hospital to make changes. These changes include the size of the liver and are carried out just before the liver transplant or process is carried out.

Finally is the liver transplant surgery on the recipient. This final stage is the process of transplantation. It is the implantation of healthy liver tissue from the donor to the recipient, while also replacing liver tissue that has been damaged and is no longer functioning properly. The recipient is given an anesthetic that causes the donor to fall asleep. This is to ensure that the recipient does not feel any pain. The surgeon gives medication and intravenous blood transfusions to prevent the recipient from losing an excess amount of blood during the process.

The surgeon makes incisions in the abdomen to remove the damaged liver, and then reattaches the new and healthy one. In some cases, surgeons insert several medical tubes to help the body carry out its functions properly after the operation. However in many issues, the body sometimes attacks the new liver tissue because it perceives it as foreign. This is made aware to the recipient and donor prior to the process of the transplantation.

1.2.1. Requirements for Organ Donation

The new liver organ to be used for this liver transplant stems from two options, namely liver from a living donor or a deceased donor. What is the major difference in this? Living donors may come from siblings, friends or family members. Prospective donors must go through a medical screening and evaluation process first to ensure their liver is healthy and in optimal condition before being transplanted. If the liver is from a deceased donor, the selected donor is usually the one with brain function death with the heart still beating. Moreover, there are several requirements that must be met by potential organ donors including; intention to become a donor without coercion, having a good health condition, an age between 18-60 years, and the blood type and body posture are the same as the patient.

1.2.2. Possible Risks Involved

When one is aware of this procedure, it helps prepare for surgery if one is a donor or vice versa. To minimise the risk of complications it is crucial that one prepares for all scenarios. The most common and severe types of complications may include breathing problems which may arise as a result of the anesthesia. Furthermore, problems can also occur with the bile duct which is the long tube-like structure that carries bile. Common ones may include shrinkage or leakage of the bile ducts. There is also the complication of bleeding, as well as infection. All these factors make the process difficult, and to suppress the immune system for the rest of their life, so as not to reject the new liver that has been transplanted into the body.

1.2.3. The Recovery Process

For me, one of the crucial elements of this process is the recover process. It was a process where one questions their reality as to whether they will heal completely or not, especially with the length of recovery. The length of one's recovery process is how severe the patient's condition was before surgery. On the general basis, for the receiver, it takes about 6-12 months to completely heal.

There is a general consensus on the element of life expectancy after liver transplantation because it varies greatly. This depends on individual conditions. In general, seventy percent (70%) or more of patients who undergo liver transplantation survive for at least five years after surgery.

The reason as to why it is important for me to elaborate on this procedure is to emphasise the abstract reality of my feelings in light of the situation that I had undergone. As seen, one of the most crucial factors in recovery for recipients of the surgery, only about 30% of them go on to live more than five years. For me, this is a

terrifying fact from the eyes of a parent, and it reveals my parenthood perspective that although I was noted of this prior to the operation of my son, I took the chance in order to continue my relationship with him. It is a procedure that is not easy to sit through, even from the donor side of the operation. In the following Chapters, I will address the perspective of why my parenthood is crucial, especially from my background as a Samoan-Christian.

1.3. Addressing the Issue

The Preamble of the EFKS Constitution is as detailed:

This Constitution has been prepared in the hope that it will guide the whole Church in villages, Sub-Districts, and Districts. There is belief and faith in the truth and integrity of offering for the work of God as led by Jesus Christ the Head of the Church.

An assessment of the EFKS Constitution has led to the understanding that the Church does not hold a stance for anything involving transplantation or any sort of life-offering medical procedures. This thesis aims to suggest or create a conversation on the topic including all perspectives mentioned. The Constitution in light of all other subject matters takes into consideration the cultural and theological aspects of the situation and context. For example, in Section 9, “The Church and Culture,” all new ways of thinking and all new ideas which are received and adopted by a large group of people may be described as their way of life and culture. It states that it is right that there should be such a basis for their lives so that they may meet the needs that each day brings. This study suggests a consideration of adding other aspects of life into the “Church and Culture” such as other life situations encountered by people in need. In other words, it is important to add to the fusion of Church and Culture the life situations that affect lives of the people in the church such as natural disasters, diseases, and sicknesses. Thus, it is

important to look at bringing real life issues that could influence the Church and Culture in which the church members live.

One important example as raised is dealing with a life risk situation of a church member and its impact on the lives of other people involved. In other words, it is important to add examples of real life issues and situations encountered by church members with a theological understanding that is biblically-based connected to the church theological stance.

We cannot just put in a stance that is particular to transplantation but maybe indicate it as an example in a footnote considering it as part of the fusion of Church and Culture in dealing with life issues church members encountered in today's world. This paper suggests that the final sentence of the Preamble lays a foundation for my argument. "There is belief and faith in the truth and integrity of offering for the work of God as lead by Jesus Christ the Head of the Church."

The Preamble begins the constitution of the EFKS, therefore, everything following, and its concepts must have been founded and derived from it. I wish to enter the ambiguity of this issue through the lens of what it means in the EFKS to 'offer'. Offering for the "work of God as lead by Jesus Christ" is an implication that the prime blueprint of 'offering' is Jesus Christ. Perhaps this very 'offering' is the avenue that transplantation may take into the conversation of EFKS. Thus, there is a need of a mention somewhere in the constitution of an indication of real life issues affecting our people in the church where help is needed.

1.4. 'Transplanting' from a Medical Point of View

David Weill in 25 years as a transplant doctor has cared for hundreds of patients who received lung transplants. Overall, he is now worried about the growing number of

people who will need lifesaving procedures in the future but will encounter a diminished number of transplant physicians to do it. Interestingly from his medical profession story, in the U.S, about 120,000 people are waiting for the call from doctors that they have been matched with a donor for a new organ. Unfortunately, the number of doctors who answer the call at 2 am that a donor has been found for their patient is gradually getting smaller. Weill while directing a lung transplant program at Stanford University began noticing a sharp decrease in the number of applicants for the transplant fellowship program which is a requirement to become a transplant physician. He normally saw five to six applicants a year, but in recent years has seen no one. This issue was not specific to Stanford, as he notices it was a decline in the number of physicians committing to the transplant field, regardless of what organ type was being transplanted.¹⁰

From the medical profession view, physician wellness is therefore also affected in the transplantation process. Up to half of physician's experience anxiety, depression, insomnia, and poor interpersonal relationships. For the future, things may get from bad to worse. Weill believes it is because many view this profession unstructured with few boundaries to the physical work as well a huge emotional commitment. It almost seems like transplantation for the physician is a sure path to physician un-wellness. Furthermore, many of the experience doctors at some of the best programs in the U.S are retiring a lot earlier than the traditional age of 65 because of physician burnout. This does not sound good for the field or patients. From this view, transplantation is getting harder, not easier.

¹⁰ David Weill, "As the need for organ transplants grows, the number of transplant physicians dwindles," <https://www.statnews.com/2019/10/17/transplant-physicians-number-dwindling/>.

Transplantation may also be a victim of its own success. Don Colburn considers an issue in where two patients have irreversible liver disease with their only hope being a liver transplant. One will die within days, while the other is sitting at home watching television but will die within a year. Given the first patient, the most sick of the two with a 30 percent chance of talking out of the hospital, while the second has an 80 percent chance, who then gets the liver transplant? This question was asked by Colburn to many medical professions as nobody wants to touch that question. This requires decision making and rational staging. One doctor claimed that “in transplants, we are in the lifeboat.” On any given day, more than 10,000 Americans are on waiting lists and many will die before a suitable donor is found. Furthermore, doctors are also left with the task of determining ‘prices’. How does one ration an expensive medical technology and its ethical challenge?

Another aspect of transplantation is rejection, when the body’s immune system to fight off viruses and infections as well as other foreign organisms does not recognise it as its own. In addition, the procedure also requires doctors to be mentally fit in light of situations where a failure of the procedure may be a result of their lack of the profession. If this is the case, the fact that the life of donor and recipient is held by the doctor or physician throughout this ordeal requires a lot of will power. To see this from the perspective of a medical profession allows us to see that it is also not easy for doctors. The procedures of transplantation require skill and mental fortitude. To see this point of view from a medical profession opens up to the conversation of the anonymous ethical tensions within. Therefore, it is important to see their point of view also.

1.5. The Testimony – Personal Experience

My personal experience of the whole situation is an unforgettable experience of my life. As mentioned I do not blame our families for their decisions in their encouraging us not to go ahead with our decision to donate part of my liver to help my son. It was a life risk decision. However, I was not able to see and witness the suffering and the pain my son had to endure. I rather died with him than being alive and not being able to help him with the chance of donating my liver for him.

There were many things to consider in that experience. Despite the life risk that was obvious in the whole process, there was always a feeling of hope that evoked from my belief and utter faith in God that came together with my being a Samoan parent's courage that it was my responsibility to help my son. The feeling of hope with faith in God that was planted in me by becoming and being a church member right from when I was a child to entering Malua to be trained to be a church minister. I felt that the decision to help my son was a culmination of all that learning of who I am as a member of my family and church. I am not Jesus, but if Jesus gave his own life to help the world, then why not me to give my life for my child. If I was the one who held the opportunity to help my son then it was my duty as a father to do so. So the decision was easy to make from those points of views.

1.6. Conclusion

This Chapter was mainly focused on the issue of Liver Transplanting with detailed medical background and various aspects of such operation. The Chapter also explored the issues of distress, emotions, and anxiety experienced by both the patient, the donor, and everyone involved. In addition, a detailed testimony of the author is given with regards to the issue of liver transplant. Hence, the chapter laid out the true

experience of being in that situation not only from the point of view of a parent but also as a church minister. This experience is important to the purpose of this study for it reveals the reality of such life threatening experience in our Samoan world. Donating an organ to another person is rare in our Samoan world. However, what had happened as explained brings awareness that such situation does happen in Samoa and we can also deal with it if we have the strong belief with faith in our Samoan and Christian values and understanding of becoming and being a member of a Samoan and Christian *aiga* or family.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

This Chapter deals with the methodology and approach used in this paper to explain and discuss my experience of parenthood in dealing with the life-threatening situation of my son's sickness in our *aiga*. I was able to reflect on what happened which gave me a realization of how fortunate I was at the time to be able to have an understanding of the significance of the different and various values that depicted who I was as a father and a *fai'feau* at the time of seeking a decision to make – a decision to save my son. Looking back at what happened, I was able to integrate my Samoan understanding of the social and cultural values of who I am as a member of my *aiga* with my understanding of the Bible learned from my parents, *aiga*, church, village, and Malua. I decided after all to donate my liver organ to help save my son's life.

2.1. The Methodology

The methodology that will be used in this study to guide my explanation of that experience is about how to bring various and different understanding, social, cultural, and religious values together to form and shape a way to resolve issues and problems encountered by members of *Aiga* in the contemporary world. It is making use of the available resources from all walks of life to help us in times of need in our vying for survival in today's world. It is revisiting how we look at ourselves as who we are in terms of our identities as members of our families, villages, and churches in this dynamic world.

This chapter will lay out the methodology as a dialoguing approach which integrate life experiences of things happened in our *aiga* and various beliefs of how we live in this world as taught and practiced in our Samoan and Christian cultures, values, and understanding. The chapter begins with a philosophical understanding of integration

of cultures and understanding in terms of their weaknesses and strengths leading to the philosophical view that will guide how we work towards an intercultural and integrated understanding. This view would help us in our dealing with problems that might happen to us in our families such as a life situation of a child sickness that the only hope to provide healing is organ donation by a family member. It is followed by the consideration of the different values and understanding in light of different life spaces regarded in this thesis as the firstspace, secondspace, and thirdspace. The chapter will end with the elements of the methodological approach used in this study that will direct the discussion of the issue from a father and a *faiifeau* perspective in an *Aiga Samoa* context leading towards an intercultural understanding of the importance of the taking advantage of the different values, cultures, and understanding we have in our world and time.

2.1.1. Philosophical view of Integration of values and understanding

One of the questions that we ask in our world today is; ‘How can we integrate or make use of all these different and various available resources in our days in a way or ways that would help us deal with difficult life situation we encounter in our families, villages, and churches? For this study, we consider important the philosophical way of looking at life that is full of all these different and various things and take advantage of them.

An example of a philosophical point of view of bringing various and different horizons together is Hans Georg Gadamer’s view. Gadamer looked at that integration as the fusion of two horizons.¹¹ For Gadamer, the bringing of two or more cultures, different and various values and understanding together is the fusion of those horizons

¹¹ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Barrett Barden (John Cumming. New York: Deabury, 1975), 356-357.

and the dialogue between the fusing of those horizons is ‘play’. Dialogue forms the understanding of the issue discussed and that understanding is the converging of the two or more horizons at play.¹² In other words, Gadamer suggests that at a point, understanding brings about fusion between the horizon of the interpreter or the person seeking an understanding of an issue and the horizons of contexts or persons affected by the issued discussed or research. Relating that theory to the purpose of this study, there will be a dialogue or ‘play’ between the Samoan traditional understanding of *aiga* and the Christian understanding of *aiga* in relation to the family of God in God’s creation of the world and Jesus’ ministry.

However, there were scholars that argued against Gadamer’s idea of the fusion of horizons. E. D. Hirsch argues that Gadamer's discussion of horizons conceals the fusion of horizons.¹³ For Hirsch, obtaining an understanding can only be done either within our horizon or beyond our horizon. If we choose the latter we will not be able to get an understanding, for it is beyond our horizon. If we choose to be within our horizon, then there is only one horizon. So, the ‘fusion of two horizons’ is impossible. Jürgen Habermas argues against Gadamer's idea by considering the fusing of two horizons nicely as impossible.¹⁴ According to Habermas, the use of two horizons in the new meaning, will ignore other important claims. As such, there will be a position where communication does not happen. Paul Ricouer says that you need to have a critical element; you cannot just fuse horizons neatly.¹⁵ Paul Ricouer adds to Gadamer’s theory the importance of having a critical element in the integration and the discussion

¹² Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 273.

¹³ Richard E. Palmer John Wild et al., eds., *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer* (Evanston: Northwestern University, 1969), 60-68.

¹⁴ Jürgen Habermas, “Hermeneutics and the Social Sciences,” in *The Hermeneutics Reader*, edited by Kurt Mueller-Vollmer (New York: Continuum, 1985), 293-19. See also, Georgia Warnke, *Gadamer: Hermeneutics, Tradition and Reason*, 129f.

¹⁵ Roger Lundin et al., *The Responsibility of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 26-27.

of making the fusion of two horizons which should make that connection more interesting.¹⁶

Martin Heidegger added to this human approach of exploring and interpreting of an integration or interaction of two or more horizons the significance of “Being and Time”. Heidegger used the German word *Dasein* which means being there and considered the significance of language as indication of ‘being.’¹⁷ In other words, the blending of two or more horizons such as cultures and values evokes a new existence or a new being that takes advantage of being able to blend those cultures and values in ways that benefit him or her. And one of the very good examples of the existence of that new being will be made known by the emergence of new language and understanding. For example, the Samoan Christian understanding of the *aiga* that will be elaborated upon later will benefit our new generation. They will take advantage of the understanding of courage in the *faaSamoa* where any member of an *aiga* is expected to give all that he or she could do – all to help anyone in need in the *aiga* with the Christian understanding of *faith*. In other words, beyond any hardships and sufferings there is always hope.

Again, the philosophical views as mentioned consider the significance of the integration of cultures as a way of finding beneficial ways appropriate to resolve issues and problems in society. It is an integration done not with smooth undertaking but with challenges. Thus, the Samoan Christian identity that will be described here as realized in my experience of dealing with my son’s sickness is an identity that I take advantage using both my understanding of the role of a *faiifeau* (ordained minister) and parent as

¹⁶ Roger Lundin et al., *The Responsibility of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 26-27.

¹⁷ David Jasper, *A Short Introduction to Hermeneutics* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004), 104-106. See also, Anthony C Thiselton, *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutical Philosophical Description with special reference to Heidegger, Bultmann, Gadamer and Wittgenstein* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1980), 24-47.

tautua (servant and carer) in my Samoan world; and my understanding of parenthood and discipleship in the Christian world as portrayed in Jesus' ministry. As such, I can call this Samoan-Christian identity as hybrid identity.

Hybridity as a concept is described by Homi Bhaba as a space in which colonised people respond to colonial rule.¹⁸ It is a concept used in Postcolonial studies to describe a response of the disadvantage or the marginalized in a society to a colonized or oppressive situation by taking advantage of what is available from the centre of society for him or her as he or she works his or her way towards the centre from the margin.

'Hybridity' is an 'in-between space' where the colonised person interprets ways imposed by the colonisers.¹⁹ 'In-between space' is a postcolonial perspective that regards 'supremacy', 'autonomy' and 'hierarchy' as less significant values and emphasises an awareness of the hybrid moment of reciprocity between the cultures of the colonised person and the coloniser.²⁰ 'Hybridity' as a postcolonial perspective looks at non-Western regions where the traditional and modern ways and ideas are juxtaposed creating a space for exploration.²¹

For the purpose of my study, 'hybridity' is a relevant perspective to expose the difference between the person in need of help (a parent and a *faifeau*) and the life-threatening situation that he or she is facing in my Samoan world. The perspective aims to raise awareness of how to create inter-cultural, inter-social, and inter-religious

¹⁸ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 2.

¹⁹ Homi K. Bhabha, "The Vernacular Cosmopolitan", in F. Dennis and N. Khan eds. *Voices of the Crossing: The Impact of Britain on Writers from Asia, the Caribbean and Africa* (London: Serpent's Tail, 1995), 139.

²⁰ Bhabha, "The Vernacular Cosmopolitan," 139.

²¹ Prem Poddar, "Homi Bhabha", in *Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies*, edited by John C. Hawley (London: Greenwood, 2001), 62.

exchanges between the traditional Samoan culture and the scriptures' teachings in parenthood and discipleship or serving God bringing forth some healing or help to reduce pain and discomfort of a situation.

Hence, this study uses Bhabha's concept of 'hybridity' not from the point of view of the relationship between a colonizer and a colonized but the point of view of vying for survival in a life-threatening situation. It is where a person in need looks and uses any opportunity arises in a society that would help solve a life situation. For example is the Nofoaiga's use of hybridity from the perspective of *fiaola* (an opportunity seeker or someone vying for survival) in his reading of Judas' betrayal of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew. Nofoaiga in this reading considers the reader location of a *fiaola* as someone who is when in a desperate situation of vying for survival will take up and use any opportunity available to him/her (either good or bad), as long as he or she survives. Similarly, my Samoan-Christian identity as a life experience from the hybridity space is considering my becoming and being a parent and *faiifeau* as someone who can fluctuate in-between the Samoan and Christian understanding of parenthood and discipleship taking advantage of what solution is available and relevant that would resolve a family problem. This fluidity movement in-between the Samoan and Christian horizons deals with both good and bad of the integration of two horizons which a necessary resolution evoked to help with the discussed or dealt with situation.

Whatever solution this intercultural identity might offer to help identify and bring forth resolutions to family crisis caused by life threatening sickness in young couples' families in the Samoan society, it will in a way express fluidity of who we are as Samoan parents and *faiifeau*, in the present Samoan society. What this suggests is that there is not one solution. However, this study argues that what might work for the father and his *aiga* mentioned in this study and *faiifeau* struggling to deal with life problems at

the young age in the Samoan society needs to be in accordance with the reality of the world they have now encountered. Any proposed and attempted solution is about vying for survival in the contemporary world. This is the agenda of the proposed Methodology developed in this part of the thesis. To make clear the integration of the cultures, values, and life experience emphasized in this study as portrayed by the concept of hybridity, the study will elaborate on that integration from the point of view of ‘critical spatiality theory of the three spaces – first, second, and third.

2.1.2. Integration in Hybridity from the ‘Critical Spatiality Theory’

The Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity explained here is guided by the ‘critical spatiality theory’ of the three spaces’ (firstspace²², secondspace²³, thirdspace²⁴) as adapted by Vernon K. Robbins. Their use here is to express and picture the spaces which I experienced in my becoming and being a Samoan and Christian parent and *faiifeau*. It shows how my Samoan-Christian identity as a Samoan parent and *faiifeau* takes advantages of both the Samoan and the Christian understanding of parenthood in the *Aiga Samoa* and discipleship dealing with the reality of caring children in today’s world in the contemporary Samoan society. The emphases of the three spaces accentuated in this study are: First is the firstspace regarded as the Samoan understanding of becoming and being a member of an *Aiga Samoa* and all the

²² Robbins defines ‘firstspace’: “A concept within critical spatiality theory (CST) in which experienced spaces, locations, and situations are primary spaces in which people develop and perpetuate special pictures and memories in their minds. Vernon K. Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, Vol. 1. (Blandform Forum: Deo, 2009), xxii.

²³ According to Robbins, ‘secondspace’ is “People’s cognitive and conceptual interpretation of geophysical spaces as social, cultural, religious, and ideological places. In SRI (Socio Rhetorical Interpretation), people’s blending of geophysical spaces with God’s cosmos is a special aspect of secondspace.” Robbins, *The Invention of Discourse*, xxviii.

²⁴ Robbins explains ‘thirdspace’ as the “Spaces, places, and situations in which people negotiate their daily lives in ongoing contexts of sensory-aesthetic experiences that are “spaces of blending.” In SRI, (Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation) thirdspace is a dynamic space in which readers, interpreters, and writers negotiate possible alternative identities on a daily basis in relation to firstspaces and secondspaces. Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, xxix.

experiences, understanding and values that help instil in a Samoan parent's mind the importance of being a parent that is expressed and fulfilled in carrying out the *fatuaiga tausi a le matua* (parent's role) as a sacrifice to ensure the survival of the family.

The secondspace in this study is considered the Christian understanding of family as revealed in God's creation of the world, and in Jesus' ministry. Secondspace not as second in importance to the Samoan understanding in the firstspace but second as the other important horizon similar to the firstspace that guided my decision to do the operation to help my sick child. Chapter four will deal with this understanding which will begin with an interpretation of family in God's creation which offers another interpretation of God's creation of Eve from Adam's rib as an example of the use of another human's organ to help another person that needs it. The interpretation continues to the Jesus' teaching about family in his ministry as revealed in the Gospel of Matthew.

The thirdspace identifies the hybrid construction of the firstspace and secondspace as a cultural translation of different cultures that made up the Samoan society. In this section, my *matua* situation and *faiifeau* as a product of those influences is identified. Here, I depart from my original identity to enter into a third space through the processes of dialogue and negotiation. Thus a new identity emerges that makes sense of how the serving role of a parent and *faiifeau* to his family and as a follower of Jesus is to be understood in contemporary Samoan society. It is an imaginative space I call home or *aiga*. It will form and frame how 'I' as a parent and *faiifeau* is a *tautua* (servant and carer) to my wife and children, considered to be marginalized by a life problem such as a life-threatening sickness in our Samoan society, can move away from the margin of that sickness in our Samoan society to the centre and beyond. It is a space of transformation where different values and understanding will be brought in and be taken advantaged of in a way that would help resolve the occurred problem. It is making

use of all avenues or things available to help resolve a life situation. This perspective will be used to inform what could be or should be the parenthood role of mothers and fathers as family members and as followers of Jesus portrayed both in our becoming and being members of our *aiga* in our Samoan social and cultural context and in Jesus' ministry as will be explored the biblical interpretations revealed below. It is about taking advantage of options and opportunities available to find help in such situations.

2.2. Conclusion

This Chapter describes the methodology and approach utilised in this study that will explain and discuss my experience of being *matua* or parent in dealing with the life-threatening situation of my son's sickness in our *aiga*. It was an unforgettable experience and it has great impact on how I looked at doing my role as a parent in my *aiga* and a *fai'feau* in the church in the role of putting together Christian education programmes for the church focusing on the youth of the church. The life experience I encountered gave me realization of the importance of all the different values and understanding of how to live life that are considered significant in our Samoan Christian world such as the Samoan values of being a member of the *aiga*, and the Christian values of being a member of God's family. The methodology and approach emphasized in this study as shown above is about taking advantage of anything available at the time of finding a solution to a problem. It is about survival.

CHAPTER 3: FIRSTSPACE PART ONE OF THE SAMOAN-CHRISTIAN IDENTITY IN HYBRIDITY

This Chapter will deal with the firstspace of the Samoan-Christian identity in Hybridity as described in Chapter One. In the ‘critical spatial theory’ (CST), the firstspace is the primary space in which the author or reader firstly experienced who he/she was/is as a person not only in knowing his roles but also the problems he encountered in that primary space. This chapter describes the first part of the firstspaces which is identifying myself as a *matua* and *faiifeau* in the *aiga* and the *faaSamoa* (Samoan culture) and in the Christian world as portrayed in God’s creation of the world and in Jesus’ ministry.

It is the Samoan social and cultural understanding of its social and cultural world that is centred on the *aiga*. It is where the identity of being a Samoan or the *faasinomaga* is considered significant in defining a person’s sense of belonging to a particular space or place where the *aiga* is resided or dwelt in. Chapter Two gives an explanation of identity or *faasinomaga* in Samoa by discussing *faasinomaga* as a sense of belonging to a place or space such as the place and space of *Aiga Samoa*. This is important because it shows that sense of belonging as a sense of carrying out one’s duties, roles, and responsibilities for his or her family. It is called in Samoa the *fatuaiga tautua* – one’s undertaking of his or her roles and responsibilities for the family that must be carried out. From the *Aiga Samoa* perspective this is the family member *aia tatau* or human right.

Because I consider myself a parent and *faiifeau* who is a family member serving his *aiga* and church, the first part of the firstspaces describes the serving role of a *matua* (parent) and *faiifeau* as a *tautua* (servant) in a Samoan family. The second part

considers parenthood and discipleship in relation to the *Aiga o le Atua* or God's family as revealed in Jesus' ministry. It investigates how a *matua* and *faifeau* as a *tautua* make that role extend beyond its *faaSamoa* boundaries. The study will elaborate on this part in My Samoan Identity or *faasinomaga* in the *Aiga* space

3.1. The concept *aiga*

Ama'amalele Tofaeono wrote that *aiga* can be looked at as a symbolic expression of the beginning and continuation of any Samoan identity or *faasinomaga*.²⁵ What this means is that there is no identity without a family or an identity only exists when there is *aiga*. It simply means the wholeness of a Samoan being is embraced in the term "*aiga*".²⁶ It speaks of the Samoan family or a household community-related in blood either close or distant.²⁷ As a Samoan, the *aiga* represents a significant part of my life and existence in this world.²⁸ My *aiga* helped shape my life and made me to who I am today. The sound characteristics of being a human, the knowledge and understanding of being a good person, and the respectful way of dealing with relationships and responsibilities to others within my *aiga* are deeply dear to my soul. They are the fundamental values that are very important to my existence today. I live and sacrifice my life for my *aiga*; likewise my *aiga* does for me. Thus, the study at this stage needs to define the term *aiga*.

²⁵ Tofaeono, "Eco-Theology: *Aiga* – The Household of Life. A Perspective from Living Myths and Traditions of Samoa" (PhD Thesis, Erlangen: Erlanger Verl Mission Und Okumene, 2000), 187.

²⁶ The Samoan term *aiga* will be used interchangeably with the term family.

²⁷ Ama'amalele Tofaeono, *Worship Mission Scripts Eco-Theology Aiga the Household of Life*. (Neuendteilsau Germany Freimund-Druckerei, 2000).

²⁸ Faala Sam Amosa raised a very important point in defining *aiga*. There are definitions made by those who do not belong by birth or descent to Samoan culture such as defining *aiga* as a group of people made up of parents (father and mother and children). This is not the only definition for there is *aiga* as in the extended famil context. In other words, when we talk about *aiga*, we mean everyone including our grandparents, aunties, uncles, and cousins. Amosa added: "They (those who do not belong by descent to Samoan culture) should not crowd out and replace the work done by those who live the cultural system." See Faala Sam Amosa, "Courting a Public Theology of *Fa'a-vae* for the Church and Contemporary Samoa" (PhD Thesis, Charles Sturt University, 2020), 126-132.

The word *aiga* is defined with the following meanings. One meaning of *aiga* is a family feast. The word *aiga* is made of two words, *ai* and *ga*. Therefore, the word *aiga* derives from the verb *ai* which means eat. The word *ga* is a suffix that adds to the verb *ai*, making the word *aiga* a noun. Another meaning of *aiga* is inhabiting a space or place, as depicted in this Samoan sentence: *Ua aigā le nuu* (The village is inhabited). Both meanings reflect the social and cultural values of *aiga* as a family in the Samoan social and cultural world. Firstly it is a group of people made up of parents and children sharing a life of living together in a space called home.²⁹ Secondly, it is a group of people that considers a particular space a place of living or belonging. Thus, the *aiga* is a group of people who relate to each other living together in a space they consider home and relating those significant meanings of the word *aiga* to this study, for me, as someone who have lived and experienced that life of being a member of that *aiga*, I strongly relate to the significances of fulfilling the roles of being a member of the *aiga*. Hence, I have a sense of belonging to my *aiga* as a member who not only has a role to play for my *aiga* but also has a sense of belonging to the space and place where my *aiga* lives and calls home – the local space or place. Thus, in this study, I will consider my social and cultural identity as Samoan in the *aiga* in relation to my experience and understanding of the place I live with my family. It is the local place that has its own culture, values, spaces, and people.

There is a saying in Samoan, ‘*o le tagata ma lona faasinomaga*’ (The person and his/her identity). It expresses the connection of a person to a particular *aiga* (family) or who the person is in terms of the *aiga* he/she comes from. The concept *aiga* also

²⁹ Fatilua Fatilua writes about another important meaning of *aiga* in our Samoan world: “*Aiga* can comprise of not just kinship relations (extended family) but also non-relatives.” I have experienced what Fatilua is talking about. Some of the people who helped us are not my kinship relations but became part of our family because of their willingness to help us such as doctors and nurses. Fatilua Fatilua, “*Seu le manu ae tagai le galu: A Sociorhetorical Inquiry of the Political Economic Context – Steering a Pacific Island Reading of Luke 18:18-30*” (PhD Thesis, Pacific Theological College, Suva), 153.

expresses and pictures an extended family unit where its membership either came from a common ancestor or was adopted into the family.³⁰ The *aiga* as extended family is the basic social and cultural unit in the Samoan society. Keesing spoke of this unit as, “the unit of life rather than the individual.”³¹ *Aiga* is the main domain of the *tautua* role and status. It is operated under the Samoan *matai* system. Any undertaking to remove the *matai* system is regarded as an attempt to destroy the *aiga* Samoa and its important functions.

3.2. The role of *tautua* in the *Aiga* space

One of the significant thoughts or personal feelings that influenced my decision to donate part of my lung to help my son was looking at myself as a *tautua* (servant) to my wife and family – *tautua* in the sense of being a carer. Everyone in the *aiga* is a *tautua* beginning from the parents to their children. A *tautua* has a special social and cultural role and responsibility to his or her family.³¹ *Tautua* is a vital and very important role and responsibility to play in the welfare and well-being of the *aiga*. The stability of a Samoan family relies on how every *tautua* carries out his or her *tautua* role. This role is carried out within social and cultural boundaries that define important different and various social and cultural relationships within the Samoan family system. These relationships as examples are: *matua* (parents) and *fanau* (children), *tautua* and *matai*, *tautua* and *tuafafine* (sisters), *tautua* and *matua* (parents), *tautua* and *taugane*, *tautua* as a husband and a father, *tautua* as a wife and a mother. The *tautua*’s undertaking of obligations that fulfill the conditions of these relationships in his or her *aiga*, is performed within the social and cultural space of the *tautua*. That space is

³⁰ Lalomilo Kamu, *The Samoan Culture and The Christian Gospel*, 38-44; Feleti E. Ngan-Woo, *FaaSamoa: The World of Samoans*, 35-40.

³¹ See Vaitusi Nofoaiga, *A Samoan Reading of Discipleship in Matthew* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), 33-39. Nofoaiga in this book writes about *tautua* in *aiga* in relation to the discipleship work of the *fafeau*.

metaphorically considered the space of doing what needs to be done to help meet any need of the family at any situation at any time.

The parents as good *tautua* look after and take care of their children. The son or the daughter as good *tautua* looks after his or her parents, and young siblings. The wife as good *tautua* looks after her husband and children. The husband as good husband takes good care of his wife and children. There is a belief in the *faaSamoa* ‘the children who are good *tautua* will be given all blessings by his parents’ and the parents who are good *tautua* are reflected in the blessed lives of their children. The *tautua* provides for each other in the family such as food for the parents, young siblings, wife, husband, and children. As a good *tautua*, he or she will not worry about his or her stomach as long as other members of his or her family have something to eat and are satisfied. It is all about sharing and living together in peace and harmony. Thus, a good *tautua* makes a family good and happy.

Undoubtedly, what is needed and expected of the *tautua*’s response is ‘actions speak louder than words.’ It is a type of service depicted and explained in the words that define the *tautua* role such as *tautua-le-pao* or *tautua-le-pisa*. It is simply mean doing the role of serving each other with silence. It is a service carried out not asking for a reward but giving all as a sacrifice to ensure the good wellbeing of every member of the family. To serve with silence is a *tautua* behaviour which is not in the sense of submission to oppression or colonization but in the sense of respect with commitment to carry out his or service role to the best of his or her ability ensuring survival of his or her family. *Tautua* as a role and status in the *faaSamoa* is not an easy task for any family member in an *aiga* Samoa. I am speaking from the sense of *tautua* that influenced my decision making to help my son. Sometimes, we forget about these values but they are actually part of us, and are inside us that cannot be denied and

ignored. It is important to recognize them and remember them in times of decision making for they remind us of who we really are in term of people who are given God-given gifts of knowing how to survive. Knowing who we are in our Samoan social and cultural worlds is *faasinomaga* (our identity as our sense of belonging to a place or space). Therefore, it is important to look into what *faasinomaga* is in relation to our being members of our *aiga*.

3.3. *Tautua as Faasinomaga in the Aiga space*

My identity as *tautua* in terms of belonging to a family, village, and church, including title names, is described in Samoan as *fa'asinomaga*.³² *Faasinomaga* is made up of two words, *fa'asino* and *maga*. *Fa'asino*, is a verb meaning 'point,' or 'direct'. The verb *faasino* as an action word points a Samoan to a particular family and village that he or she belongs to.³³ The certain families and villages that a *tautua* belongs to, have their particular title names, customary lands, and residential places. The second word, *maga*, is a suffix³⁴ making *fa'asino* a noun, *fa'asinomaga*. Thus, *fa'asinomaga* is a way of identifying who is a *tautua* in and through his or her social and cultural connections to a Samoan family and village in Samoan society. Part of *tautua's* *fa'asinomaga* is that it points a *tautua* to his or her social and cultural status and role such as his or her role as a parent, son, daughter, sister, brother, wife, and husband in the *aiga*. In the village context, a *tautua* belongs to the village social and cultural structure of the Samoan *matai* system (chiefly system) that is also exercised with in the

³² There is a saying in Samoan, '*O le tagata ma lona fa'asinomaga*' (The person and his or her sense of identity). It expresses the connection a person has to a particular family or who the person is in terms of the family he/she comes from.

³³ G. B. Milner, *Samoan Dictionary: Samoan-English, English-Samoan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 50.

³⁴ Milner, *Samoan Dictionary*, 120.

aiga space. The hierarchical structuring of *matai* titles is made in accordance with the recognition of a *matai* title in the honorific address of each family, village, church, district, and in Samoa as a nation. The *matai* system is accepted by Samoan people as the central part of their social and cultural traditions. The *tautua* is positioned at the lowest part of the *matai* system. This does not show that the *tautua* is not important but it is to show the difficulty of the task he or she will face as a *tautua* in providing food and security for the family. It is why *tautua* is called *malosi o le aiga ma le nuu* (the strength of the family and village).

As mentioned *fa'asinomaga* (sense of belonging to a place) of a *tautua* also points *tautua* to particular relationships he or she belongs within his or her family and certain roles he or she is to carry out to fulfill being part of those relationships. Examples of those relationships are the brothers in the *aiga* as *tautua* in their relationship to their *matai* and to their sisters.³⁵ Undertaking their roles in those relationships are expressed by the Samoan words *va fealoa'i* and *va-tapuia*. *Va* as a noun means space. It is any space; not just spaces between people but metaphorical spaces between people and social, cultural, and religious systems. Thus, that space is relational space. The word *fealoa'i* means to interact respectfully according to the recognized role or status of each other in the family, village, church, and community. For example, the children must interact respectfully with their parents because they are their parents. The words *tapuia* in *Va-tapuia* derives from the word *tapu* meaning sacred. So the space that links one person to another in the *aiga* is sacred and as such it

³⁵ Sharing the *tautua* role between the brothers and sisters is the central undertaking of the sister-brother relationship in *fa'aSamoa*. It is a relational carrying out of the sisters' and brothers' roles and is learned within the *aiga* context. Hence, the sister-brother relationship is a very important part of *fa'aSamoa*. See Aiono F. Le Tagaloa, *O le Faasinomaga: Le Tagata ma lona Faasinomaga* (Alafua: Lamepa, 1997), 16-20; Penelope Schoeffel, "The Samoan Concept of *Feagaiga* and its Transformation," in *Tonga and Samoa: Images of Gender and Polity*, ed. Judith Huntsman (Christchurch: University of Canterbury, 1995), 85-105.

must be entered with respect and care. So *va fealoa'i* and *va tapuia* designate any type of relationship such as relationships among people, and between people and the social and cultural systems recognized in the *aiga*, village, and family that function in that society. Manifestly, *tautua* is expected to carry out his or her serving others in the family, village, and church, within the social, cultural, and religious recognized significant spaces with care and respect.

Obviously, those spaces as relational spaces have boundaries that need to be recognized and respected. Those spaces are described in Samoan as *tuaoi*. *Tuaoi* comes from the Samoan phrase of '*tua atu o i*'. This phrase means 'beyond this point.'³⁶ It describes the expectation that we as members of our families must respect other families. Each *aiga* has customary lands and chief titles people. It is very important for members of a family to respect the properties and belonging of other families. The word *tuaoi* is also used in any context of any relationships in terms of respecting boundaries that recognizes the different statuses and roles such as the boundaries between the sisters and her brothers in the *aiga* context – as expressed in the sister-brother relationship. Another example is the *matai-tautua* relationship where the *tautua* must know how to carry out his roles as a *tautua*, an untitled man, according to the boundaries of that relationship. The important function of these *tuaoi* is not to mark a difference between the person in high status as the colonizer and the person in the low status as the colonized. Instead, the boundaries show the importance of the social and cultural order in the *aiga*, village, and church where the young people for example shall

³⁶See TuiAtua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Efi's "Keynote Address for Pacific Futures Law and Religion Symposium" (National University of Samoa, Lepapaigalagala, Samoa 3 December 2008), accessed at <http://www.head-of-state-samoa.ws/pages/welcome.html> on 14th July 2013.

respect the elders, or the untitled men and women shall respect any person chosen by the *aiga* as the *aiga* leader.³⁷

The *tautua*'s sense of place as *faasinomaga* is essential in the *tautua*'s effort and attempt to fulfill his or her *tautua* role. A *tautua*'s sense of place as *fa'asinomaga* considers how he or she is connected to his or her family and the space which his or her *aiga* inhabits within a village. Part of that *fa'asinomaga* is to know and understand the relationships to which he belongs and his role in taking care of those relationships. And that role is expressed in the Samoan phrase *loto fuatiaifo*. *Loto fuatiaifo* is about the personal giving or offering of one's heart to do something good to help someone who is in need of help. It is connoting the subjectivity required to initiate good relations and respect with regard to each other's needs and rights regardless of situation, status, gender, race, and colour.³⁸

Loto fuatiaifo is made up of three words. The word *Loto* means the person's will. The word *fuatia* means hit or touch and the word means *ifo* to bow. Putting the meanings of those words together reveals subjectivity in the Samoan world. It is a feeling or emotion in which a person's heart is touched by a moment outside of his or her self. From that emotion produces an attraction which will make him or her deny his or her own self-needs in pursuit of doing what is needed to do. It exhibits the emotional element that is very important in defining the subjectivity necessary when undertaking

³⁷What this means is that sometimes families select to be a leader someone young whom they see to have the wisdom or has already proven in and through his serving the family that he or she is the good person to lead the family. It is not that other people who are older than him are not good enough but it is a decision everyone in the family agrees is good for the family.

³⁸ Jeannette M. Mageo in her work on theorizing self in Samoa describes subjectivity in the Samoan world in the following way: "[I]n Samoa *loto* (will), 'subjectivity,' is the marginalized element of the self." Mageo does not mention the Samoan word that could have helped elaborate her definition of subjectivity. That word is *loto fuatiaifo*. See Jeannette Marie Mageo, *Theorizing Self In Samoa: Emotions, Genders, and Sexualities* (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1998), 11.

tautua in the interests of others as shown in the sister-brother relationship in *fa'aSamoa* (Samoan way). It is where a person of high status undertakes the responsibility of that status as servant to help the needs of others. Thus, the approach of a *tautua*, as explained, is to have courage to face challenges for the sake of the *tautua's aiga*. It is an approach to life in the *aiga*, village, and church that is to be carried out with humility and respect. It is not making the *tautua* to be silent but showing that the *tautua* has an opportunity in the *faaSamoa* to make his voice heard but in a respectful way.

3.4. Conclusion

This Chapter is part one of the firstspace of the Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity. The firstspace of the Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity is the Samoan understanding and experience of the author that influenced his decision to go ahead with the liver transplantation. According to the 'critical spatial theory' (CST) that guides the construction of the hybridity identity, the firstspace is the space where the author first experiences who he/she was/is as a person not only in knowing his or her roles but also the problems he or she encountered in dealing with the issue raised – in this study is liver transplantation where a father donates part of his lung to help his son who was diagnosed with hepatitis. So it was the task of this chapter to describe the first part of the firstspace of the author's Samoan understanding and experience, which is identifying himself as a *matua* and *faiifeau* in the *aiga* and the *faaSamoa* (Samoan culture).

This chapter explains the Samoan social and cultural understanding of its social and cultural world centred on the *aiga*. It is the space in which the *faasinomaga* of any Samoan is regarded as significant in defining a person's sense of belonging to a family, village, and church. The explanation of the author's understanding of the *aiga* speaks of the *faasinomaga* as having a sense of carrying out one's duties, roles, and

responsibilities for his or her family is called the *fatuaiga tausi* – one’s undertaking of his or her roles and responsibilities for the family that must be carried out. Furthermore, *fatuaiga tausi* is undertaken as a *tautua* (service), a role and responsibility carried out within boundaries or *tuaoi*. Thus, being and becoming a member of an *aiga* is undertaken within sacred relational spaces, and in recognition of the awe and the significance of those boundaries and relational spaces emerged the feeling and the willingness of *loto fuatiatifo*, which is the subjectivity within the self of a person to initiate doing something good to help anyone in desperate need of help, regardless of any consequences afterward. This is one of the Samoan understanding and feelings that influenced the mind and the heart to help my son and my *aiga*.

CHAPTER 4: FIRSTSPACE PART II: CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS ORGAN TRANSPLANTATION

This Chapter will address the social and cultural perspectives on the attitudes toward transplantation. The function of this explanation of the cultural perspective of the attitude toward organ transplantation is essential to this study. It shows other thoughts and understanding about the issues, which were all helpful in the decision-making. As usual in our Samoan world, we always seek the help and advice of *taulasea* (Samoan traditional healers) for another opinion about some of the sicknesses in our world. As a Samoan, the many stories and historicity of healing concepts in Samoa also gave life to others in the forms of *taulasea* and other spiritual healings. Although the concepts were spiritual ‘giving’ or ‘offering’ life to another person, will be dwelt on in this section. This information about *taulasea* and my experience of seeking their opinion and help is crucial because we cannot deny that our people continue to consider the part *taulasea* plays in the healing of our people. This Chapter also gives an explanation of other views from within the social and cultural contexts of our Samoan world which all helped in the decision making to donate part of my liver to help my son. All these various and different views are important for they help us in our thinking for they are part of the reality of the world we live in.

4.1. *Taulasea* in Samoa

The *Taulasea* is a term deeply rooted in Samoan culture, carrying significant historical and cultural significance.³⁹ I will explore the etymology and cultural significance of the word "*Taulasea*" in Samoa, shedding light on its rich meanings and

³⁹ See Arthur Wulf, "Diagnosing Jeremiah's Incurable Diseases from a Samoan *Taulasea* Perspective," *Samoa Journal of Theology*, vol. 2. no. 1 (2023): 27-34; and Samasoni Moleli, "Understanding healing in Exodus 15:22-27 through the arts of Samoan *fofō* and *fōfō*," *Samoa Journal of Theology*, vol. 2. no. 1 (2023): 35-45.

the role it plays within Samoan society. By examining the historical context and cultural practices associated with the *Taulasea*, we can gain a deeper understanding of its importance in Samoan culture.

The word "*Taulasea*" in Samoan is a compound term consisting of "*taula*" and "*sea*." "*Taula*" refers to the process of stretching or spreading out, while "*sea*" translates to sacred or consecrated. Combining these words, the term "*Taulasea*" embodies the notion of something being stretched out or spread out in a sacred or consecrated manner. This concept is deeply ingrained in Samoan culture, encompassing both physical and metaphorical dimensions.

4.1.1. Historical and Cultural Context of *Taulasea*:

Taulasea in the Samoan context refers to the notion of respect, honor, and reverence for individuals who possess knowledge, skills, and wisdom. It encompasses the recognition and appreciation of expertise, experience, and leadership within the community. The concept of *Taulasea* finds its roots in the traditional Samoan hierarchical structure, where *matai* (chiefs) hold positions of authority and are considered *Taulasea* figures.

4.1.2. Roles and Responsibilities of *Taulasea*:

Taulasea figures play essential roles in Samoan society. They serve as custodians of cultural traditions, guardians of ancestral knowledge, and mentors for younger generations. *Taulasea* individuals are expected to demonstrate wisdom, integrity, and exemplary behaviour, serving as role models for others. They provide guidance, settle disputes, and contribute to the overall harmony and cohesion of the community.

4.1.3. *Taulasea* in Various Sectors of Samoan Society:

Taulasea extends beyond traditional leadership roles and influences various sectors of Samoan society. In the realm of arts and crafts, skilled artisans are recognized as *Taulasea* for their expertise in traditional craftsmanship. In sports, accomplished athletes who bring honor to Samoa are revered as *Taulasea* figures. Similarly, in academia, educators and scholars who contribute to knowledge and education are held in high esteem as *Taulasea*.

4.1.4. *Taulasea* and Cultural Preservation:

Taulasea plays a vital role in the preservation and promotion of Samoan culture. *Taulasea* figures are responsible for passing down cultural practices, oral traditions, and customary rituals to future generations. Through their leadership and guidance, *Taulasea* individuals ensure the continuity of Samoan customs, language, and values, fostering a strong sense of cultural identity.

4.1.5. *Taulasea* in Contemporary Samoa

In modern Samoa, the concept of *Taulasea* continues to hold significance, although its manifestations may have evolved. *Taulasea* figures are recognized and respected in various domains, including politics, business, and community development. Their influence extends beyond traditional structures, and their wisdom and expertise contribute to decision-making processes and the overall development of the nation.

4.2. Donor and Recipient in Samoan Context

The act of organ donation and transplantation holds significant cultural and social implications within the Samoan context. In Samoan culture, the notions of giving, receiving, and reciprocity are deeply ingrained, shaping the perspectives and practices surrounding organ donation. This essay explores the dynamics of the donor and

recipient relationship in the Samoan context, examining cultural beliefs, values, and practices that influence attitudes towards organ transplantation.

4.2.1. *Fa'a-Samoa*: Cultural Values and Practices.

The traditional Samoan concept of *Fa'a-Samoa*, which encompasses the cultural values and practices of the Samoan people, plays a crucial role in understanding the dynamics between the donor and recipient. *Fa'aSamoa* emphasizes communal living, collective responsibility, and reciprocity. These values are reflected in the context of organ transplantation, where the act of giving an organ is seen as an extension of communal solidarity and fulfilling one's duty to support the well-being of others.⁴⁰

4.2.2. Family and Kinship Bonds:

In the Samoan context, family and kinship bonds hold immense significance. The decision to become an organ donor or recipient involves not just the individual but also their immediate and extended family members. Samoan families are tightly knit, and decisions regarding organ donation are often made collectively, taking into account the views, concerns, and well-being of the family as a whole.⁴¹

4.2.3. Spirituality and Belief Systems:

Samoan culture is deeply rooted in spirituality and religious beliefs. The influence of Christianity, particularly the dominant presence of the Christian Congregational Church of Samoa (CCCS), shapes attitudes towards organ transplantation. While organ donation is generally accepted within the Samoan Christian community, discussions

⁴⁰ Suaalii-Sauni, T., & Hay, K., "Fa'asamoa and the social and cultural contexts of child maltreatment in Samoa," *Social Sciences*, 3(1) (2014): 1-18.

⁴¹ Salote, L., & Suaalii-Sauni, T., "Perspectives of Samoan organ transplant recipients and their families," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Pacific Arts and Culture*, edited by S. P. McGrath, 153-169 (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017)

around transplantation often incorporate spiritual aspects and seek guidance from religious leaders to ensure alignment with religious teachings and moral values.⁴²

4.2.4. Stigma, Taboos, and Cultural Perceptions

Despite the cultural value placed on giving and supporting others, there may exist certain stigmas, taboos, or cultural perceptions associated with organ donation and transplantation in the Samoan context. These perceptions may stem from fears, misconceptions, or limited understanding of the medical procedures and long-term implications. Addressing these concerns through education, community engagement, and culturally sensitive communication is crucial to dispel myths and foster acceptance.⁴³

4.2.5. Culturally Responsive Healthcare Delivery

Providing culturally responsive healthcare services is essential when working with donors and recipients in the Samoan context. Healthcare providers must understand and respect cultural norms, values, and practices related to organ transplantation. Collaborating with cultural advisors, community leaders, and religious authorities can help develop strategies to ensure effective communication, informed decision-making, and optimal care for both donors and recipients.⁴⁴

Within the Samoan context, the dynamics between donors and recipients in organ transplantation are deeply influenced by cultural values, family ties, spirituality, and

⁴² Lepou, L. T., "Culture, spirituality, and health in the Samoan context," in *Spirituality and Cultural Expression in Nursing*, edited by K. Wittkowski, D. L. Hodge, & D. G. Fowler, 295-311 (New York: Springer Publishing, 2007).

⁴³ Taitano, E. J., Moyer, E., & Underwood, M. K., "Samoa culture and mental health," in *Encyclopedia of Child and Adolescent Development*, edited by Deborah Steward, 1-6 (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2020).

⁴⁴ Marsh, J., & Wright, M. (2016). "Caring in Samoa: Insights into nursing practice in a new cultural environment." *Nursing Praxis in New Zealand*, 32(2) (2016): 14-23.

community support. Understanding the Fa'a-Samoa cultural framework, the significance of family and kinship bonds, and the role of spirituality can help healthcare professionals navigate the complexities associated with organ donation and transplantation in a culturally sensitive manner. By fostering cultural awareness, engaging with the community, and providing education, Samoan society can embrace the potential of organ transplantation while preserving and respecting their unique cultural heritage.

4.3. Modern Cultural view on Transplantation

Transplantation is a medical procedure that involves the transfer of organs, tissues, or cells from one person (the donor) to another person (the recipient) in order to restore or improve their health. While the medical advancements in transplantation have saved countless lives, it is essential to consider the cultural perspectives surrounding this procedure. This essay explores the modern cultural view on transplantation, examining how diverse cultural beliefs, values, and practices shape attitudes towards transplantation in contemporary society.

4.3.1. Cultural Diversity and Transplantation

In today's globalized world, cultural diversity is a prominent aspect of society. Different cultures hold unique beliefs, customs, and values, which influence their views on transplantation. Cultural factors such as religious beliefs, traditional practices, and societal norms play a significant role in shaping attitudes towards organ donation and transplantation.

4.3.2. Religious and Spiritual Perspectives

Religious beliefs and spiritual values often inform individuals' perspectives on transplantation. Some religious traditions support and encourage organ donation as an

act of compassion and saving lives, considering it a selfless gift. Conversely, other religious beliefs may raise ethical concerns or present cultural taboos regarding the alteration or removal of organs from the deceased.

4.3.3. Traditional and Indigenous Cultural Views

Indigenous cultures have distinct perspectives on transplantation, which may be rooted in their ancestral traditions and beliefs. For example, some indigenous communities emphasize the interconnectedness of all living beings and perceive organ donation as a way to continue the cycle of life and reciprocity. Understanding and respecting these cultural perspectives are crucial in promoting inclusive and culturally sensitive approaches to transplantation.

4.3.4. Socioeconomic and Ethical Considerations

Cultural views on transplantation can also be influenced by socioeconomic factors and ethical considerations. Access to healthcare, economic disparities, and social inequalities can impact the perception and acceptance of transplantation within different cultural communities. Ethical debates may arise regarding organ allocation, fairness, and the ethical implications of transplantation, shaping cultural attitudes towards the procedure.

4.3.5. Promoting Cultural Awareness and Education

In order to address cultural barriers and foster understanding, it is essential to promote cultural awareness and education regarding transplantation. Healthcare professionals should be equipped with the knowledge and skills to engage sensitively with patients from diverse cultural backgrounds. Cultural awareness programs, community outreach initiatives, and collaborations between medical professionals and cultural leaders can help bridge the gaps and facilitate informed decision-making.

The modern cultural view on transplantation is multifaceted, shaped by diverse beliefs, values, and practices. Understanding and respecting cultural perspectives surrounding transplantation are essential for promoting inclusivity, fostering trust, and ensuring equitable access to transplantation services. By recognizing the role of culture in shaping attitudes towards transplantation, healthcare providers, policymakers, and society as a whole can work together to navigate the complex ethical, religious, and societal considerations associated with this life-saving medical procedure.

4.4. Conclusion

This Chapter which is part two of the firstspace of the Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity gives some explanation of the social and cultural perspectives on the attitudes toward organ or liver transplantation. The Chapter reveals other views which are very important in the fluctuation of our thoughts in-between various and different horizons of understanding toward making the most appropriate decision. First, it describes what is *taulasea* and the important function of their roles as traditional healers in our Samoan world. Obviously, their role is important. The *Taulasea* serves as a reminder of the interconnectedness between past, present, and future generations, maintaining cultural identity and fostering a sense of belonging. Understanding the *Taulasea* enriches our appreciation for the intricate nuances of Samoan culture and the values it upholds.

It is followed by an explanation of other social and cultural views which all influenced the decision making. It is important to make a balance of all these views in the sense of making sure that we consider and recognize all of them. These are very important views that need to be considered when the issue of liver transplantation is discussed in youth programmes. This Chapter also gives an explanation of other views from with the social and cultural contexts of our Samoan world which all helped in the

decision making to donate part of my liver to help my son. All these various and different views are important for they help us in our thinking for they are part of the reality of the world we live in.

CHAPTER 5:

SECONDSPACE PART ONE OF THE SAMOAN-CHRISTIAN IDENTITY IN HYBRIDITY IS CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING

The space I see as the secondspace is the Christian understanding of family revealed in God's world creation and Jesus' ministry. Part one of that secondspace, which is the emphasis of this Chapter, is the arrival of Christianity into Samoa and some examples of its influence on our Samoan society. The arrival of Christianity in the 1830s significantly impacted the Samoan society.⁴⁵ The people of Samoa received the missionaries' teachings and values. The Samoans saw in the missionaries' new ways that a change would benefit and improve their way of living, such as more beneficial ways of fulfilling the serving role of a parent to their family. The church and its teachings changed how that role in a Samoan family was undertaken. In this section, I will explain 'that role' as the responsibility of *tautua* (servant) in the Samoan culture (*faaSamoa*) and Christianity.

5.1. Arrival of Christianity and its impact

As mentioned above, Christianity has played, and continues to play a significant role in changing the attitude of a family member's undertaking of the *tautua* role in his family. Christianity, as brought in and proclaimed by the missionaries in Samoa, was a global view, and the Samoans saw in that view a change that would benefit and improve their lifestyles. One example is the teaching of Jesus about the importance of family, where different relationships, such as the parents-children relationship, are essential and have significant effects on the everyday life and future aspirations of the Samoan

⁴⁵See, Malama Meleisea, *Lagaga: A Short History of Western Samoa* (Suva: University of the South Pacific, 1987), 52-59; 67. Meleisea is a well recognised Samoan historian. He wrote the history of Samoa from a Samoan perspective. See also, R. P. Gilson, *Samoa 1830-1900 The Politics of a Multi-Cultural Community* (Melbourne: Oxford University, 1970), 65-137.

people.⁴⁶ Another example is the meaning and putting into actions of becoming and being a follower of Christ considered a disciple as reflected in the meaning of the word *taulaga soifua* – another title given to the *faifeau* or church ministers graduated from Malua. These titles are significant not only in the Christian sense but also in the sense of being a *tautua* in one's family. It is why it is essential to define what is *taulaga soifua*. I remember these words of my father when I was thinking about a decision to help my son.

“Aua nei galo, o oe o le taulaga soifua ua ofoina e lenei aig, nuu, ma le ekalesia mo le Atua. O le taulaga e te tautua ai i lou aiga, nuu, ma le ekalesia”

(Do not forget that you are the living sacrifice offered by this family, village, and church for God – the sacrifice to be a servant to God through your family, village, and church)

Taulaga means sacred sacrifice, and *Soifua* means to live, make *Taulaga Soifua* the living sacrifice.⁴⁷ I remember what my father said on my last day with my family before I departed for Malua. He said: *“Atalii aua nei galo, o oe o le taulaga soifua a ou aiga, aemasie ma'ua o ou matua.”* (Son, do not forget. You are the living sacrifice offered by your family and us your parents for God). I never forget those words. I always remember them, especially in times when I am in a moment of making decisions for my family or my work.

Being the first in my *aiga* called into the ministry has been a great privilege and honor for myself and my *aiga*. They have been very supportive financially and socially, as demonstrated in the last three years I have spent here in Malua. My *aiga* has upheld their commitment and support to love, nurture, assist, protect, safeguard, and ensure my success as the *Taulaga Soifua o le aiga*. In response, I have to do my best to become a

⁴⁶ For example is Jesus' teaching on allowing children to come to him and his conversation with the Canaanite woman who came to him for help for her sick daughter

⁴⁷ George Pratt, *Pratt's Grammar and Dictionary of the Samoan Language* (Apia, Samoa: Malua Printing Press, 1960-1970).

good representation of the *aiga* by being obedient, responsible, diligent, and hard-working. I have to stay out of trouble and use my time wisely within Malua to prepare for the future ministry. From that experience and understanding of *Taulaga Soifua*, I have come up with the following questions that will guide my exploration of the text: What does a *Taulaga Soifua* as a living sacrifice do? What are his/her roles and responsibilities in his/her family? What are his/her roles and responsibilities in his/her church? What are the social, cultural, political, and religious systems that run the communities and society in which the *Taulaga Soifua* carries out his duties? Does a *Taulaga Soifua* have the authority to choose a true family? Would a *Taulaga Soifua* publicly ignore his/her mother, brothers, and sisters? What spaces should the *Taulaga Soifua* stand in to fulfill his duties as *Taulaga Soifua*?

This realization of the importance of knowing the significant contribution of our Christian understanding in dealing with any problem in life came from what I have learned in my training to be a church minister at Malua Theological College. We learned in Malua the essence of becoming and being a true disciple of Jesus as told and shown in the Gospels' presentations of Jesus' ministry. It is a ministry that needs to begin from within – in the family and village. This teaching is reflected in Nofoaiga's Coconut Discipleship interpretation of Matthew 12:46-50 and 28:16-20. Nofoaiga writes:

The Samoan Bible⁴⁸ reflects this mindset of emphasizing localization of the Gospel in relation to discipleship. As an example, I refer to the translation of “Go and make disciples of all nations” (Matt 28:19) – *O e fai nuu uma lava ma soo*. In this translation, the word “nation” is translated as *nuu* (village) instead of *atunuu* (nation). A back-translation of the Samoan rendering reads as “Go and make disciples of all villages.” This reflects the CCCS church elders' sense of the

⁴⁸ *O le Tusi Paia* is the first Samoan translation of the Bible made by the church elders of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa at Avao Savaii. This Samoan Bible is used by other denominations in Samoa.

importance of the consideration of local families and villages in the work of discipleship. The Samoan Bible is unique this way, and I use this locally emphasized thinking as a perspective to look back at Jesus' ministry in Matthew's Gospel.

Parenthood as a role is one essential characteristic of becoming a follower or a disciple of Jesus. Becoming a parent is a recognized way of fulfilling that commitment. As a moral value, parenthood is a self-understanding of a Christian believer relative to his/her own experience of that understanding. This self-understanding is a Christian believer's interpretation of the call to become a parent in a moral sense. This commitment must be fulfilled in every aspect of a Samoan life. A follower attempts to match the love revealed in Christ by modeling the sacrificial suffering of Christ in his parenthood role.

5.1.1. Religious attitude toward organ transplantation

Religious concepts in transplantation procedures should be discussed more. Besides cultural, scientific, and self-perspective, theological beliefs play a significant role in the attitude towards organ transplantation much more than clinicians believe. Furthermore, at the same time, healthcare providers may lack sufficient knowledge on religious issues about transplantation. Hesham Abdeldayem provides an overview of the different religious concepts of organ transplantation. Knowledge of this is essential in the medical profession as it may provide a background to deal with religious concerns towards organ donation professionally and appropriately as a way to increase transplant numbers.⁴⁹

Organ transplantation is a multifaceted medical procedure that carries significant scientific and cultural implications and holds profound theological significance. While

⁴⁹ Hesham Abdeldayem, et. al., "Religious Concepts in Organ Transplantation," in *Frontiers in Transplantology*, eds. Hesham Abdeldayem, Ahmed El-Kased, Ehab El-Saarway, 3-22 (Croatia: Intech, 2016).

the cultural, scientific, and self-perspectives on organ transplantation are often explored, clinicians and health-care providers often overlook theological beliefs and considerations. This oversight can result in a lack of understanding and knowledge regarding religious issues about transplantation within the medical profession. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize the role of theological beliefs in shaping attitudes towards organ transplantation, as it can enhance the professionalism and appropriateness of dealing with religious concerns in the medical field. By gaining insight into the various religious concepts surrounding organ transplantation, healthcare providers can approach organ donation professionally and ethically, ultimately increasing the number of transplant procedures.⁵⁰

5.1.2. Biblical Understanding

The theological perspective of organ transplantation finds biblical support in various passages that address the value of compassion, healing, and preserving life. In the following chapters, I will elaborate on the biblical understanding of organ transplantation concerning family, discipleship, and healing. It emphasizes the significance of selfless love and care for others, which aligns with the ethical dimension. It is essential to mention that biblical interpretations and understanding significantly influence my decision-making in dealing with my son's need for a liver transplant. Furthermore, biblical teachings on the sanctity of life, such as the healing ministry in discipleship, reinforce the theological basis for valuing and preserving life in and through organ transplantation.

⁵⁰ Abdeldayem, et. al., "Religious Concepts in Organ Transplantation," 3-22.

5.1.3. Ethical Considerations

From a theological perspective, organ transplantation can be seen as an embodiment of selfless love and sacrifice. It could be considered as an act of love of an individual or a community that comes together to support the available help, as in a medical operation to help a child in desperate need of help.⁵¹ It reflects the Christian understanding of giving one's life for others, mirroring the sacrificial love of Christ. This concept aligns with the biblical principle of loving one's neighbor as oneself (Mark 12:31). The decision to donate organs can be viewed as an act of compassion and service to others, where individuals selflessly offer a part of themselves to extend and enhance the lives of those in need. The ethical considerations surrounding organ transplantation encompass issues such as informed consent, fair allocation of organs, and the dignified treatment of donors and recipients. Taking a theological perspective into account provides a foundation for approaching these ethical complexities and making decisions that uphold the sanctity of life while promoting the well-being of individuals and communities.

5.1.4. Pacific Perspectives

In the Pacific context, the theological perspective of organ transplantation intersects with unique cultural considerations and indigenous beliefs. Pacific communities have rich cultural traditions and spiritual practices that shape their attitudes towards organ transplantation. It is essential to acknowledge and respect these cultural beliefs, as they contribute to a holistic understanding of health and well-being.⁵² In Pacific cultures, the concept of communal identity and interconnectedness plays a significant role. Nofoaiga called this interconnectedness as “*alofa faa-le-aiga ma le*

⁵¹ Stanley Hauerwas, *God, Medicine, and Suffering* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994). In this book, Hauerwas speaks of God, who, through his believing community, can give a voice of healing to our children in the pain and suffering of sicknesses.

⁵² Interview with Vaitusi Nofoaiga (Principal of Malua Theological College) on 12 July 2023.

alofa-faa-le-nuu e iloa ai le lotoaiga ma le lotonuu” (It is family love and village love which expresses one’s sacrificial heart for one’s family or one’s village). The decision to donate organs can be viewed through the lens of reciprocity and collective responsibility, where the well-being of the community is prioritized. Pacific perspectives emphasize the importance of engaging in dialogue and consultation with community leaders, cultural elders, and religious figures to address any concerns or reservations regarding transplantation. By incorporating Pacific values and perspectives into the theological understanding of transplanting, health-care providers can develop culturally sensitive approaches that foster trust and promote better health outcomes. This is encouraged in the Samoa health system. The cultural perspectives of the *taulasea* or anyone with traditional healing knowledge and skills are allowed to be used if the health workers such as doctors and nurses consider them appropriate.

5.2. Conclusion

This Chapter, as part one of the secondspace of the Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity, explains the Christian understanding horizon emphasizing the arrival of Christianity in Samoa and some of its influence on the people of Samoa. As mentioned, the Samoans considered the missionaries' new ways they brought with their missions as a change that would benefit and improve their way of living. One of the ways is believing in the spiritual influence of faith in God as a hope to heal and overcome any difficult life situation. Part of that belief is believing in another life beyond death for those who cannot survive the circumstances of this world. That belief is readily accepted by those who consider themselves *tautua* (servant) or *taulaga soifua* (living sacrifice) in the context of discipleship work.

Part of this Chapter briefly mentions the theological perspective of organ transplantation that holds great significance in shaping attitudes and approaches toward

this medical procedure. Recognizing the theological beliefs and considerations surrounding organ transplantation allows healthcare providers to address religious concerns professionally and ethically. In other words, from our Samoan context, Christian understanding and experience bring another dimension into decision-making about organ transplantation as another option to be considered in saving lives. It explains that biblical understanding can provide a framework that values compassion, healing, and preserving of life and ethical consideration to bring forth the selfless love and sacrifice inherent in organ donation. The Chapter also considers essential the Pacific context influenced by that Christian understanding and, in our case, is the Samoan context where the cultural thinking of love is blended with the theological understanding of love that should enrich the positive reason for doing organ transplantation. Thus, embracing a comprehensive theological perspective that incorporates biblical, ethical, and cultural dimensions would make health-care providers navigate the complexities of organ transplantation with sensitivity, respect, and a commitment to the well-being of individuals and communities. The following Chapter will elaborate on the biblical understanding of the importance of family concerning discipleship, where healing is significant. It will lay out the biblical foundations of the Christian understanding of my Samoan-Christian hybrid identity in dealing with organ transplantation.

CHAPTER 6:

SECONDSPACE PART TWO OF THE SAMOAN-CHRISTIAN IDENTITY IN HYBRIDITY IS CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING

This Chapter explains what family is in God's creation and Jesus' ministry. It shows the Christian understanding of family which was one of the influential understandings in the decision I made to help my son. I will begin with an interpretation of family in God's creation of humankind. It is followed by an interpretation of family in Jesus' ministry. In this part, it will start with an explanation of the three historical views of Jesus' family leading towards the interpretations of Jesus' family in Matthew 12:46-50 and the interaction between Jesus and the Canaanite woman in Matthew 15:21-28.

6.1. Family in God's creation of the world in Genesis 2:20-23

The use of another human's organ to help bring life to another human is not a new practice. It actually started in God's creation of the world and humankind. In other words, God himself has shown that there is life in using someone else's organ to help another person. It is all to ensure that people are multiplied to live in the beautiful creation that God made. This is revealed in the following verses (Genesis 2:20-23)

²⁰The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. ²¹So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²²And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken.'

6.2. Family in Jesus' ministry

6.2.1. Three Historical views of Jesus' family

It is important to first talk about the three historical views of Jesus' family because one of the debatable questions in Jesus' ministry is whether Jesus considers important his earthly family. Jesus' attitude towards the family, such as his earthly family, concerning discipleship is still debatable in biblical studies. According to some New Testament scholars, this happens because studies of Jesus' ministry seem to focus on the global function of Jesus' ministry.⁵³ Hence, less focus is on Jesus' link to family and household at the local level. One of those scholars, Halvor Moxnes, writes:

The question of his (Jesus) family is mostly relegated to a less important biographical interest. In a similar manner his critical elements about family and household, and about leaving family, become just a topic, and not a very important one, in the overall picture of Jesus' message. This seems to be typical of recent Christian scholarship on Jesus.⁵⁴

The three main historical views of Jesus' family are Helvidius, Epiphanian, and Hieronymian (Jerome).⁵⁵ The Helvidius view says that the brothers of Jesus namely James, Joses (Joseph), Judas, and Simon are sons of Joseph and Mary. These brothers were born after Jesus, meaning Jesus is the eldest child of Joseph's and Mary's children. The Epiphanian view, the predominant view in the Eastern Orthodox churches, considers the brothers of Jesus as the sons of Joseph from Joseph's first marriage before he married Mary. Significant in this view is the considering of Mary's status in the church as a very important mother whose only child is Jesus. The Hieronymian view also regarded as Jerome's view became the traditional Catholic view. This view speaks

⁵³ Examples are: Stephen C. Barton, *Discipleship and Family Ties in Mark and Matthew*, SNTSMS 80 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, trans. James E. Crouch (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 200-201.

⁵⁴ Halvor Moxnes, *Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom* (Louisville: WJK, 2003), 23.

⁵⁵ Richard Bauckham, "The Relatives of Jesus," *CBQ* 54 (1992), 1-28.

of the brothers of Jesus as the first cousins of Jesus.⁵⁶ They are children of Clopas, a brother of Joseph, who married a lady named Mary. There is a woman named Mary, wife of Clopas, mentioned in John 19:25.

Both the Epiphanian and Hieronymian views suggest the significant consideration of the virginal conception of Jesus. These three views continue to be the major views in the continuing debate of the historical earthly family of Jesus. It is not the aim of this study to partake in that debate. Instead, this study will explore what Jesus' true family is as Matthew tells and shows in 12:46-50. The exploration will begin with a literature review of Matthew 12:46-50.

6.2.2. Jesus' family according to Matthew 12:46-50

Various interpretations of this text are made from different emphases and views of scholars. The most popular interpretation of this text is that Jesus' true family is his disciples – those who do the will of his Father. This interpretation emphasizes the point mentioned in the text that Jesus' earthly family, which includes Jesus' mother, brothers, and sisters, are no longer important to Jesus when he is doing his ministry. John Nolland sees Matt 12:46-50 as part of Matthew's portrayal of the theme of discipleship where the difference between the crowds and disciples is shown.⁵⁷ For Nolland, the disciples are those who do the will of God and the crowds as an ambiguous and ambivalent group are made up of people who have not yet decided to follow Jesus.⁵⁸ Nolland in his interpretation considers important the placement of 12:46-50 with 13:54-58 as a frame

⁵⁶ Bauckham, "The Relatives of Jesus," 1-28.

⁵⁷ Vaitusi Nofoaiga in his Master Thesis speaks of the significance of the crowds in Matthew's presentation of Jesus' ministry such as the involvement of the crowd in Matt 12:46-50. Vaitusi Nofoaiga, "Crowds as Jesus' Disciples in the Matthean Gospel," (MTh Thesis, University of Auckland, 2006).

⁵⁸ John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 516-518.

around the parables of the kingdom in 13:1-53. It is to assert the significance of God's kingdom or the Family of God in this part of Matthew's Gospel. Craig A. Evans likewise interprets Jesus' words and actions in this passage (12:46-50) as the revelation of Jesus' true family. It is the family of those who do the will of God, suggesting the blood relatives of Jesus as not the priority of Jesus at this time.⁵⁹

In his reading of the Gospel of Matthew from the perspective of the homeless Jesus, Robert Myles also interprets Jesus' true family in relation to discipleship, emphasizing the cost of discipleship. According to Myles, Jesus' description of his true family is to show that doing the will of God is not an easy task. Thus, following Jesus redefines Jesus' true family as reflected in the contrast between Jesus' "mother and brothers on the outside [and] Jesus and those who do the will of God on the inside." Myles' interpretation that emphasizes the cost of discipleship relates to his interpretation of Jesus' not allowing one of his disciples to bury his father in 8:21-22. Myles' interpretation is different from the above scholars' interpretation. Myles adds hardship and suffering in the carrying out of doing the will of God.⁶⁰

Stanley Hauerwas also speaks of Jesus' true family concerning the calling of disciples, but he added a biological dimension to the interpretation. According to Hauerwas, Jesus' loyalty to his true family is radical, as evident in and through the calling of the disciples (4:18-22), his not letting one of his disciples bury his father (8:18-22), and his words on what will happen in the time of the church persecution which is family members going against family members such as children putting their

⁵⁹ Evans, *Matthew*, 265. See also Walvoord, *Matthew Thy Kingdom Come*, 91; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 494; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13 World Biblical Commentary*, 122.

⁶⁰ Robert J. Myles, *The Homeless Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2014), 131.

parents to death (10:16-23, 34-39).⁶¹ For Hauerwas, what Jesus said about his actual family contradicts the Jewish's attitude towards family. Jesus, as a Jew, was supposed to get married and have children. Hauerwas observed that Jesus chose to stay single. It was Jesus' practice of his understanding of true family described in 12:46-50.⁶² It is Jesus' considering God's kingdom built not by "biological ascription" but by "witness and conversion."⁶³ This is an exciting interpretation especially the biological attribution as not part of Jesus' claim of what his true family is. I see this interpretation as not what the text says and means. Jesus is not talking about family planning but how to run and manage the household centered on doing God's will, which should begin from the inside. I will elaborate on this point later in my interpretation of the text. Anthony Saldarini also interprets 12:46-50 as a text that shows how to follow Jesus, where one should leave his/her father, mother, brothers, sisters, and children. From the historical point of view of the significance of family in the Jewish community, Saldarini wrote that this understanding of Jesus of what the true family is was one of the reasons behind divisions in families and the Jewish community in the late first century.⁶⁴ Hauerwas also mentioned these divisions in the Jewish community.

Ulrich Luz's interpretation of Jesus' words on what true family is is made from Luz's ecclesiological view. For Luz, because the Gospel of Matthew emphasizes the church, the true family Jesus talks about is the church. Luz observed that what Jesus said in 12:46-50 is Jesus' response to Israel's rejection of his proclamation of God's

⁶¹ Stanley Hauerwas, *Brazos The Theological Commentary of the Bible: Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006), 125.

⁶² Hauerwas, *Matthew*, 125.

⁶³ Hauerwas, *Matthew*, 125.

⁶⁴ Anthony J. Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 90-91. See also Hauerwas, *Matthew*, 125.

kingdom mentioned in chapters 11 and 12.⁶⁵ Thus, Jesus' true family as the church is Jesus' defining of how his disciples should do the will of God. Luz speaks from the ecclesiological level, which targets the one-directional purpose of spreading the word of God globally. The church's goal for the Gospel is to reach the four corners of the world. However, as a consequence, this one-directional purpose of spreading the Gospel overlooks the people in need in the local contexts. Revisiting Jesus' words on his true family, presented in this thesis, will consider the needs of people at the local level.

Daniel Patte interprets Jesus' words about his true family as showing the change in authority in the family.⁶⁶ For Patte, Jesus' family choice shows the change of authority that runs the usual earthly family to the household of God, where God is the sole authority. Patte's interpretation raises the important point of authority in Jesus' ministry.

The brief literature review reveals Jesus' claim of true families to do with discipleship, and this is manifestly shown and told in the text. What is predominantly reflected in the interpretations reviewed here is that the discipleship they described is discipleship that gives priority to the church, which makes family at the local level the second priority. For example is Luz's interpretation of Jesus' true family as church. However, interpretations such as Saldarini and Patte show that Jesus' revelation of his true family relates to life in the local context. For example, Saldarini mentioned that what Jesus said about his actual family caused divisions in the Jewish community. What Saldarini said gives a reason why it is important to revisit this text (Matt 12:46- 50). If

⁶⁵ Ulrich Luz, *Studies in Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 63, 141. See also; Ulrich Luz, *New Testament Theology: The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew* (Cambridge: University Press, 1995), 96.

⁶⁶ Daniel Patte, *The Gospel According to Matthew: A Structural Commentary on Matthew's Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 182-183.

Jesus came to fulfill the law but not to abolish it, did he want to abandon his mother, brothers, and sisters? Patte mentions an interesting point about authority. Patte's point could be made stronger if he considered other local authorities that Jesus challenged in his ministry, such as the Imperial Power of Rome, mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew.

Matt 12:46-50 shows the emphasis of Jesus' message in regards to being a faithful member of the family of God. The author paints a picture of the current situation of where the passage is taking place and how the rhetorical language within the text brings out the meaning embedded within the text, allowing the reader to observe and communicate with the passage and make interpretations. According to Crosby,⁶⁷ the passage is simply a way of the Matthean Jesus' attempt to change the mindset of people in order to help people experiencing poverty. That by doing God's will. One is entitled to his family, and being part of this family, one should be able to serve or accommodate people experiencing poverty. And how the kingdom of God is for those who act out his will are considered his family.⁶⁸

The subheading of the passage is "The true Kindred of Jesus." According to Margret Y. MacDonald,⁶⁹ the word Kindred is not the same as a family, even though they are very similar concerning the New Testament because Kindred more falls to the impositions of Cultures than that of Biological and sexual relations. So, the term "Kindred" is very fitting for the passage because Jesus' message was inclusive, meaning everyone who does the will of God is his family. Not a family through blood but through a more inclusive system.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Michael H. Crosby, *House of Disciples: Church, Economics, and Justice in Matthew* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 145.

⁶⁸ Crosby, *House of Disciples*, 145.

⁶⁹ Margaret Y. MacDonald, *The Pauline Churches: A Socio-Historical Study of Institutionalization in the Pauline and Deutero-Pauline Writings*, vol. 60 (Cambridge: University Press, 2004), 46.

⁷⁰ Dietmar Neufeld and Richard E. DeMaris, *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament* (London: Routledge, 2009), 29.

The following interpretation of this passage Matthew 12:46-50 reveals that Jesus considers his earthly family important. The initial word in verse 46 that begins the passage is “*while*” translated in Greek as ‘*Heti*’. This word is an adverb, allowing the reader to know and understand that, Jesus is currently at work. The type of work Jesus is doing is described in verse 46 by the use of the word, “speaking” translated in Greek as “*Laleo*”. This verb as a participle shows that Jesus’ action is a continuous action carried forward to this very moment, letting us know that Jesus was at work for quite some time and is still working. I see this continuing undertaking of Jesus’ ministry as a very important undertaking because it shows that Jesus is carrying on his work as a member of God’s family, the work of the proclamation of the message of salvation for all. It is not time for his earthly family. He is at work for everyone else and his earthly family is part of this ministry as well.

Jesus is preaching that message, speaking with much intensity, speaking with authority, and power. The author tells these actions of Jesus with an introduction of more characters into this event – the characters of Jesus’ mother and brothers. In other words, this is the time Jesus’ family is being introduced into the purpose of Jesus’ ministry. Their current location within the story is being realised by the word outside, translated in Greek “*Efo*” which is an adverb. This adverb indicates the position of belonging for Jesus’ mother and brothers. The adverb suggests Jesus’ absence in the presence of his family, for they are outside implying that Jesus is somewhere else or inside. In relation to the location of the disciples in that event, it is not mentioned whether they were inside or outside. Jesus’ pointing to the disciples to contrast his family outside of the crowds’ location indicates that the disciples are in the same circle as the crowds. Thus, the crowds and the disciples are in one group. The narrative flow of Jesus’ proclamation shows the disciples and crowds depicted in the same contents. So 12:46-50 as the last event of chapters 11 and 12 before Jesus speaks the parables in chapter 13 can be looked at as the conclusion of the narrative of the varying responses to

Jesus in chapters 11 and 12. And as a conclusion it indicates clearly who is the true learner among members of the crowds. The true learner or disciple is the person who does the will of God. Despite the crowds' ambivalent nature as portrayed by reference to many members, some members emerged to have faith and understanding and Jesus considered them as people given the knowledge of the secrets of God's kingdom in the parable of the sower (13:1-23). Thus, disciples are being characterized by those qualities that they portray in response to Jesus' preaching, teaching and healing, even though they are not explicitly named individuals. In other words, the twelve are not the only disciples but anyone who listens and obeys Jesus' teachings – including Jesus' earthly family.

Another important word is the word “*Speak*” translated in the Greek as “*Zeteo*” which is a verb participle. This verb expresses Jesus' family's objective to find and speak to Jesus is not just to have a small talk or a group chat, but they are really in need, with much urgency to speak with Jesus emphasising the vitality and necessity to talk to him regarding something important. But in comparison to the Greek translation, the translation in the NRSV has the author using the word “wanting” but there is nothing in the literal translation to suggest that the word exists. The occurrence of this may be a result of the author's agenda towards what he wants for the readers to take out from the passage.

The author in verse 47 introduces a new character who is someone from the crowd. This character plays a vital part in this passage and his/her actions define Jesus' message that Jesus has been preaching. This new character's interference with Jesus' preaching is turned by Jesus into Jesus' favour to elaborate the message of salvation he is proclaiming to the crowd. The word “*look*” translated in Greek “*Idou*” as an imperative suggests that this person in the crowd not only interrupts Jesus but also

commands and tells Jesus what to do while speaking to the crowd. This person's words show that he/she knows the importance of any family member's role and he could be reminding Jesus his role as a member of his earthly family.

In the Greek translation, the action of the family of Jesus is shown by the use of the verb "seek" translated "**Zeteo**". It is a participle verb plural suggesting that Jesus' mother and brothers were not just looking for Jesus. They were looking for him with much intensity so they could speak to him. The word "speak" translated in Greek "**Laleo**" is a verb infinitive aorist. This means that what the family of Jesus are in need of talking to Jesus about something already talked about in the past. It is why they continue to follow Jesus. What they want to talk to Jesus about is not mentioned. However, Jesus' family actions of waiting outside without going inside where Jesus is shows that the family knows the importance of Jesus' role as their living sacrifice. The family is doing the role of praying and waiting in silence while Jesus is doing his work. The family knows that they should not interrupt Jesus' work and it could be the reason why they stay outside. In this way, what Jesus says to this person from the crowd, could be looked as an implication of Jesus' saying that his family knows that he is doing his ministry and they are there to watch out for him.

Verse 48 begins with the conjunction "**But**" translated in Greek "**Kai**" shows the link of what Jesus is saying to what the person from the crowd says. **Kai** as a conjunction has multiple functions in a sentence such as transition, continuity, and contrast.⁷¹ As a marker of transition, the story is now in the light of Jesus and not the person from the audience, as a marker of continuity, the space between the person from

⁷¹ See Stephanie Black, *Sentence Conjunctions in the Gospel of Matthew: καὶ, δὲ, τότε, γάρ, οὖν, and Asyndeton in Narrative Discourse* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 142-78.

the audience and Jesus is still carried forward and continues and awaits Jesus response, and a mark of contrast, Matthew wants to show the difference in command, difference in authority. And the way Jesus answered the person from the crowd, is realised in the word “**Replied**” translated in Greek “**Apokrinomai**” which is a verb participle aorist. Meaning Jesus responded passionately. Jesus’ tone is in a much more serious manner making his demand known. Jesus in responding to this person was in a form of a Question. “Who” is my mother, and who are my brothers.

Verse 49 is an answer to Jesus’ question stated in verse 48. It starts with the conjunction “**and**” as translated in the Greek Text, “**Kai**”, meaning a continuation being carried forward and being elaborated more. Here Jesus is “**pointing**”. Pointing is translated in Greek as “**Ektelno**” which is a verb participle aorist meaning Jesus stretching out his hand and not just point out but pointing zealously, to the disciples and not to the crowd.⁷² The word disciple used in this verse has an alternative meaning in the Greek Translation which is “follower”, where we can interpret this as follower of Christ, who does the will of God, and are considered to be families of Christ. The word, “**Idou**” in this verse is a verb imperative aorist active translated, Behold! It means that becoming a member of Jesus’ true family is, is someone who not only knows and understands God but also acts and does God’s will.

In this last verse (v.50) the author explains the result, the outcome of being a disciple. They will become true members of Jesus’ family and the ones that do the will of His Father in Heaven, they are his mother, and they are his brothers and sisters. We see this idea being carried forward from the last verse but is made much more clearer and easier to understand. Interestingly, the word sister was never mentioned throughout this unit until the final verse. So this goes to show that acting out the will of

⁷² See Black, *Sentence Conjunctions in the Gospel of Matthew*, 142-78.

God, entitles everyone to be a member of his family, regardless of gender, race, and ethnicity. Everyone is rewarded in to the promise of his family.

6.2.3. Jesus' family according to Matthew 12:46-50

The interpretation shown above reveals the significant difference in knowing boundaries in a community – the boundaries of those inside and those outside concerning specific roles carried out by different people in a community. I could say this happens at 12:46-50. A family member's awareness of one's role in relation to other family members and members of a community is very important. This is reflected in the interpretation shown above. Jesus' earthly family is willing to speak to Jesus, but they wait because they know the importance of what Jesus is doing. What they want to talk to Jesus about is not mentioned because that is not important at this stage of Jesus' ministry. As depicted in their movements, what is essential is their approaching of Jesus as the one who is proclaiming God's kingdom. The family does not voice why they are there. It is the person from the crowd. The story ends without any voice from Jesus' family. It is Jesus who voices what he thinks of the situation. According to the interpretation, Jesus is not talking to his family but to the person from the crowd pointing to the disciples. The disciple is the one who is listening. Therefore, Jesus is speaking to everyone, either inside or outside, as a disciple of Jesus if he or she listens and does the will of God. It does not mean that Jesus is abandoning his family. It shows that when Jesus is doing his role in the community for everyone, that is his priority at the time, and his earthly family could wait. Moreover, his family does that; they wait outside until Jesus finishes his work inside. This is how we, as *faiifeau*, should carry out the roles of being disciples in our families, villages, and churches, offering our lives for God

6.3. Parenthood in Jesus' ministry in Matthew 15:21-28

This section focuses on the exegesis of Matthew 15:21-28, looking at exploring the parenthood role of the Canaanite woman in seeking help for her sick daughter. I will begin by looking at the characters, the setting, the plot and the worlds within the text. I will examine the text with the use of some rhetoric devices to further the exegesis of the text. The chapter will end with the analysis and the placement of the text.

6.3.1. Characters of Matthew 15:21-28

A. Woman (Un-named/Un-known):

The motif of the unnamed or unknown woman in the Gospel of Matthew is not new. The author first employed this tactic four times before the narrative of the Canaanite woman. Firstly, in Matthew 8:14-17, regarding the mother-in-law of Peter, a disciple of Jesus; secondly, in Matthew 9:18 – 19:23-26 with the rulers' daughter; thirdly, in the story of the woman who was suffering from hemorrhages in Matthew 9:20-22, inserted into the middle of the account of the rulers' daughter; and lastly in the story of Herodias and the unnamed daughter in Matthew 14:1-12. Every time the unnamed or unknown woman character appears in the narrative, she highlights the differences in the understanding of the role of women within Jewish society and how her aggressiveness challenges the societal norms of the period. Alex Woloch, in his book 'The One vs. the Many' highlights the importance of a minor character's role within the narrative she appears in. Woloch's understanding of characterisation posits those minor characters are indispensable to the broader narrative; together with other characters within the text, they create a single narrative totality essential to the holistic unity of the narrative's themes.⁷³ Melanie S. Baffes, in her article 'Jesus and the

⁷³ Alex Woloch, *The One Vs. the Many: Minor Characters and the Space of the Protagonist in the Novel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 13-14.

Canaanite Woman: A Story of Reversal' proposes the representation of women by the author in the Gospel of Matthew sends a solid message to encourage women as a whole (Jewish and Gentile) who were often marginalised within society, to challenge the popular conceptions of women of this period. It is interesting to note that despite the popular perceptions of women in Jewish society, they played an essential part in the spreading of the gospel in the first century.⁷⁴ More importantly, their spreading of the gospel is carried out through their role as mothers to their children or parents to their sick children.

According to the text, the Canaanite woman's movements and motives not only shadow Jesus' movements but overtake Jesus's narrative by the end. Instead of being a narrative of Jesus' miraculous healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter, it becomes a narrative of the Canaanite woman's faith and belief as a mother or parent – her mother's or parent's love for her child, which controls the narrative.

The text starts with Jesus landing in the foreign land of Tyre and Sidon (v 21); the narrative's focus sharply shifts to the Canaanite woman and how she came out of Tyre and Sidon and shouted to Jesus (v22). The meeting between the two occurs in a foreign land, in a land not clearly described: Jesus has landed in a foreign land on his way to Tyre and Sidon; the Canaanite woman has come from Tyre and Sidon. Thus, Jesus and the Canaanite woman meet in a land foreign to both, in a liminal space, "in-between." The introduction of the Canaanite woman is fascinating in that she is described as "coming out/coming from" the region of Tyre and Sidon when they initially meet: *"Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting..."*⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Melanie S. Baffes, "Jesus and the Canaanite Woman: A Story of Reversal," *Journal of Theta Alpha Kappa* 35, no. 2 (2011): 14.

⁷⁵ NRSV Bible is used for all biblical quotations in this thesis.

This term *evxe,rcomai* is translated as “come out of/come from” with the implication of leaving behind or departing – in this text, the Canaanite woman has left Tyre and Sidon behind. This connotation of “leaving behind” regarding the word *evxe,rcomai* can also be seen to mean “leaving the past behind.” The broader connotation is not only the physical leaving behind but also the cutting of ties, as in a change of religion and context. Some scholars have stated that the word and its synonyms within the Bible reflect a person who has left his past behind, not just in one aspect but a total change from the past – in other words, a change of religion as well as physical landscape and distance.⁷⁶

Upon arriving in the “district of Tyre and Sidon,” Jesus is faced with the voice and will of a strong Canaanite woman or a willing parent seeking help for her child. By labeling her a “Canaanite,” the woman is immediately identified as not only an outsider but the most extreme of the outsiders who were often in conflict with the people of Israel. The term “Canaanite” has led to much scholarly debate. Firstly, “Canaanite” was commonly used to refer to the oldest of Israel’s enemies, which reflected a deeply embedded enmity towards the people known as the “Canaanites.”⁷⁷ This enmity can be seen in that “...*Canaanites were allowed no entry to the Jewish community nor permitted to intermarry with them.*”⁷⁸

In recent years, scholarly debate has seen a shift from “Canaanite” to refer to a defined group of people to now being generally used to refer to anyone seen as an opponent of Israel. It has also become seen as an all-inclusive term of reference for any

⁷⁶ Glenna S. Jackson, *Have Mercy on Me* (Sheffield Academic Press, New York, 2002), 105.

⁷⁷ Jackson, *Have Mercy on Me*, 71.

⁷⁸ Niels Peter Lemche, “*The Canaanites and Their Land*,” (JSOTSup Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 160.

foreigner to Judaism or outsider.⁷⁹ The fact that this Canaanite woman challenges Jesus and begs for his healing hands on her daughter hints that this woman is not a simple outsider or enemy of Israel – she is a vehicle for his healing power to manifest itself. Her status as an outsider is to be used to highlight the miraculous power of Jesus further in that it is an outsider that Jesus listens to, answers, and, despite his language – miraculously heals her loved one, illustrating the power of Jesus is not specific but universal.

The demeanor of the Canaanite woman sets her apart from the other women in the Gospel of Matthew. According to Keener, the Canaanite woman is described as one who would not take no for an answer. She is often portrayed as a powerless woman who is determined and persistent in her dogged attempts to beg Jesus to heal her daughter.⁸⁰ Although Jackson recommends her action as a standard formula by Matthew adopting the Old Testament idea as it is in the book of Ruth that one must go through a four-time request before acceptance.⁸¹ It is apparent she was more than that – she was a woman who was willing to play her role as a single parent, but also as a strong woman in a context which not only fulfilled the cultural norms but also allowed her to challenge the same norms when it came to the love of her daughter. Thus, this woman could be looked at as a great example of a parent willing to give all to take hold of an available opportunity to heal her child, even if it's an opportunity that she will end up eating dirt. She will take no for an answer.

⁷⁹ David Novak. *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism: An Historical and Constructive Study of the Noahide Laws* (Toronto Studies in Theology, 14; New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1983), 60.

⁸⁰ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2009), 415.

⁸¹ Jackson, *Have Mercy on Me*, 126-137.

6.4. Conclusion

This Chapter is part two of Christian understanding, the secondspace of the Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity – the identity that expresses the third space I entered in making the final decision as a parent to donate part of my liver to help my son. This Chapter begins with an interpretation of God’s creation of the first family of Adam and Eve as showing an example of God’s use of another human’s organ to help bring life to another human. This is shown in God’s use of Adam’s rib to create Eve. It is followed by an interpretation of Jesus’ consideration of his earthly family in Matthew 12:46-50. According to the interpretation shown above, Jesus’ response to the member of the crowd who told Jesus about his earthly family waiting outside, reveals that Jesus is bringing other people to become part of his earthly family which is also the family of God. On the other hand, Jesus’ mother’s and brothers’ and sisters’ waiting outside shows their respect for Jesus’ work meaning they are there to watch out for Jesus while attending his duties. Thus, it suggests that one of the important approaches as family members in such situations is to know what to do to help take care of a family member while doing his or her duties. Hence, everyone in Jesus’ family including Jesus respects each other’s roles not only for their immediate family but for other people outside of their families. As the interpretation reveals, more importantly, despite Jesus’ attending to his duties at the wider community he still has time to take care the needs of his earthly family. The interpretation of the Canaanite woman’s approaching of Jesus as a parent seeking help for her daughter shows that Jesus regards important parenthood. It is the life experience of being a parent that disciples were not aware of at the time. Jesus’ way of challenging the woman was not only to test the woman’s parenthood but also his disciples’ way of dealing with the spreading of the Gospel at the time. At the end of the story, the woman’s willingness to take whatever opportunity available to her

despite its consequences was an eye-opening message. It reveals the importance of accepting and making use of any available chance in a desperate life threatening situation for a family with hope and faith that God will take care of everything. It stresses the significances of always having hope that there is a way prepared by God to help his faithful followers in their times of need.

CHAPTER 7: THIRDSPEACE: HYBRID CONSTRUCTION OR THE INTEGRATION OF THE FIRSTSPACE AND SECONDSPEACE

The thirdspace identifies the hybrid construction of the firstspace and secondspace as a cultural translation of different cultures that made up the Samoan society. In this section, my *matua* situation and *faiifeau* as a product of those influences is identified. Here, I depart from my original identity to enter into a third space through a process of negotiation. Thus a new identity emerges that makes sense of how the serving role of a parent and *faiifeau* to his family and as a follower of Jesus is to be understood in contemporary Samoan society. It is an imaginative space I call home or *aiga*. It will form and frame how ‘I’ as a parent and *faiifeau* is a *tautua* (servant and carer) to my wife and children, considered to be marginalized by a life problem such as a life-threatening sickness in our Samoan society, can move away from the margin of that sickness in our Samoan society to the centre and beyond. It is a space of transformation where different values and understanding will be brought in and be taken advantaged of in a way that would help resolve the occurred problem. It is making use of all avenues or things available to help resolve a life situation. This perspective will be used to inform what could be or should be the parenthood role of mothers and fathers as family members and as followers of Jesus portrayed both in our becoming and being members of our *aiga* in our Samoan social and cultural context and in Jesus’ ministry as will be explored the biblical interpretations revealed below. It is about taking advantage of options and opportunities available to find help in such situations. It is important to begin this chapter with identifying the negative influences of trying to deal with the situation.

7.1. Survival underlying my parenthood or *matua* perspective

From all the experiences as explained then we come to a point of realization of what to do in order to make things work better for my son and most importantly for God's will in our belief and faith in God. Being in my current situation, I can reflect on my experience and understanding of being Samoan and a Christian and the influences of what happened to my family. A hybrid construction of an identity in thirdspace provides an opportunity for the parent such as a young parent as a follower of Christ to respond to life threatening situations encountered by his family in society. Considering myself as a parent encountering problems in my young family, enables my situation as a Samoan Christian to be defined and analysed within the overall importance and significance of parenthood as God's undertaking of his message of salvation. Being in the thirdspace as explained appropriates the ideology of survival underlying my parenthood perspective. In other words, hybridity as the approach to identify my Samoan Christian location expresses and pictures negotiated interdependent relationships between my being a parent and the way of life and standard of living in Samoa showing how my son should survive in Samoa.

Because hybridity as described explains my reception of the gospel with the *faasamoa* in the present world, defining that reception does not start in a vacuum. It actually starts from my consciousness of the parenthood teaching as revealed in Jesus' ministry, and the importance of undertaking the family role of serving the family in the *faaSamoa*. The experiencing of parenthood and the role of serving the family in the *faaSamoa* will be looked upon as life journeys. The common space in which these journeys are undertaken is the Samoan society. In this process, the traveller experiences life threatening situations in the Samoan society as social, cultural, political, economic and religious influences of *faaSamoa*, Christianity, standard of living.

No culture is innocent, even the *faaSamoa* has aspects that hinder the undertaking of serving and taking care of one's family. In these types of situations, we have no other choice, but to vie for an imaginative world. It is a world in the third space where I can make sense of how the role of serving the family is to be carried out in the present Samoan society. In other words, I have lived in a space of uncertainty when dealing with the situation of my son and then went on to explore what it meant to leave that confined space and enter into a thirdspace that is controlled by uncertainty and fear. In doing so, I will refer to an understanding of what is 'home' as the basis of entering this thirdspace.

Home as a concept is redefined by a feminist writer, Bell Hooks (Gloria Hawkins) and is well worded by Christopher Baker in his work, *The Hybrid Church in the City*. Baker wrote:

Home for her [Hooks] is no longer a precise geographical location, but a non-physical space, liberated from constraints of spatiality or culture. It is the space of emotional and intellectual freedom in which she can feel empowered to be what she feels called to be; a new identity forged from various different aspects of her personal past....⁸²

Hooks' definition of home reflects the situation I faced as explained: a parent who was living in the space of fear of what might happen to his child but had some hope influenced by the *tautua* mindset and Christian faith led to entering the thirdspace of going ahead with the operation. The space of sacrifice where I have to do it myself by offering my liver for my child. It became a space of emotional and intellectual freedom to seek for more ways to help ameliorate my serving role to my family. It was forming a hybrid way of taking advantage my Samoan and Christian feel and understanding of how my parent role could be carried out in today's world.

⁸² Christopher Baker, *The Hybrid Church in the City* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 19.

One of the activities of hybridity that forms a hybrid identity according to Bhabha is ‘negotiation.’ To Bhabha, negotiation is where contradictory elements are brought together, not to deny the existence of one another but to be negotiated through agonistic and also pragmatic discourse that will lead to new hybrid discourses and identities.⁸³ Thus, the hybrid construction of the serving role of a family member in Samoan society is a negotiation of *tautua* in the *faaSamoa* and being a follower of Christ in the Christian tradition.

This space is where resolution is to be found. And the resolution in what I call home. Home.

Home for her [Hooks] is no longer a precise geographical location, but a non-physical space, liberated from constraints of spatiality or culture. It is the space of emotional and intellectual freedom in which she can feel empowered to be what she feels called to be; a new identity forged from various different aspects of her personal past....⁸⁴

As mentioned, home in this sense is not just a physical space but a spiritual and mental space where a feeling of certainty emerges with faith that God’s grace and love to help our situation will prevail to help. It is where a sense of healing will exist to help deal with the situation of my son’s sickness regardless of its outcome. What this means is that we rather go ahead with what opportunity is available than just hoping without actions. It not only helps us but hopefully could provide a suggestion or a thought to help a decision making to parents who will come across the similar situation.

Looking at home in the thirdspace from a Samoan perspective, I consider it to be expressed, identified and defined in the Samoan word for family that I mentioned above which is ‘AIGA.’ Aiga is home to us, Samoans. Aiga is the physical, mental, and spiritual space for all the Samoans where they are brought up in the midst of different

⁸³ Bhabha, 1994, 25.

⁸⁴ Baker, *The Hybrid Church in the City*, 19.

life situations, good or bad, such as life-risk situations faced by family members for the sake of survival in this world. Thus, the Samoan perspective of 'Aiga' will be used as the methodological approach and my Samoan Christian identity to deal with the family situation explained in this thesis hoping to bring some understanding and thinking from the Christian Education point of view that would help start a discussion of these situations and thoughts about healing in these situations.

7.2. Who am I after all: a Samoan-Christian Parent and *faifeau*

As mentioned, the arrival of the London Missionary Society (LMS) in Samoa in the 1830s had a huge impact on the Samoan society.⁸⁵ The missionaries' teachings and values were well received by the people of Samoa. The Samoans saw in the new foreign ways a change that would benefit and improve their lifestyle. The Samoans merged or blended the Christian understanding and values with the Samoan culture and values in ways that would make sense the meaning of life according to two cultures – Christian and Samoan. Thus, the Samoan-Christian self of a Samoan being in the Samoan world existed. This is what this study had tried to do. It was to show the different spaces of life in which we enter as Samoans and Christians where we took advantages of the knowledge and understanding about life we found in those spaces. In the case of this study, those spaces were the firstspace considered as the Samoan understanding of life concerning *aiga* and the secondspace is the Christian understanding of God's creation and Jesus' ministry concerning family. Hence, the integration of those spaces into the thirdspace regarded as a hybrid construction of my Samoan-Christian identity referred to as an identity in hybridity. It is my Samoan-Christian identity or an intercultural

⁸⁵See, Malama Meleisea, *Lagaga: A Short History of Western Samoa* (Suva: University of the South Pacific, 1987), 52-59; 67. Meleisea is a well recognised Samoan historian. He wrote the history of Samoa from a Samoan perspective. See also, R. P. Gilson, *Samoa 1830-1900 The Politics of a Multi-Cultural Community* (Melbourne: Oxford University, 1970), 65-137.

identity of my serving role as a parent or father to my wife and children in *aiga* or young family in Samoan society. In other words, it is a combination of my living life as a Samoan based on our *faaSamoa* and as a Christian based on the teachings of the Bible such as Jesus' teaching shown in Jesus' ministry. This identity reflects an intercultural understanding that is popular in our Samoa Christian world as expressed in this Samoan saying:⁸⁶

*E mamalu le Talalelei ona o le Aganuu,
e mamalu foi le Aganuu ona o le Talalelei.*
The Gospel is respected because of the support of Culture,
so is Culture respected because of the support of the Gospel.

Nofoaiga in his use of this Samoan saying in his Samoan Reading of the Earth helping a woman in Revelation 12 says that this saying expresses the symbiotic relationship between the church and Samoan culture. For this study as shown in the work above, I interpret Nofoaiga's explanation of this Samoan saying as showing the integration of the Christian understanding and Samoan understanding of the world in partnership to make sense of the reality of a world or space a Samoan inhabits. It is an experience of the integration of cultures. And this integration of cultures is not a phenomenon that just happens in one's life such as my life as a parent and a *faiifeau* (church minister). It happens because of faith and hope – faith and hope in believing that God is God of love who will always be here for us in time of need. It is faith as learned in our Christian teaching and living taught to us by our families, parents, churches, church ministers, and everyone else in our worlds.

Richard Niebuhr one of the world known theologians and ethicists contends that any human being cannot act responsibly and be a moral human being without faith. It is

⁸⁶ Vaitusi Nofoaiga uses this saying in his interpretation of the woman in pain in Revelation 12. Vaitusi Nofoaiga, "Earth Came to Help a Woman in Revelation 12," in *Bible Blindspots: Dispersion and Othering*, ed. Jione Havea and Monica Melanchthon, 45-56 (Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2021).

Niebuhr's moral phenomenological approach to what an ethical responsibility is. For Niebuhr, that approach considers important knowing oneself and knowing that one-self is truly known by a self-knowledge obtained from a dialectical relationship or a relationship and interaction with other selves or with other people.

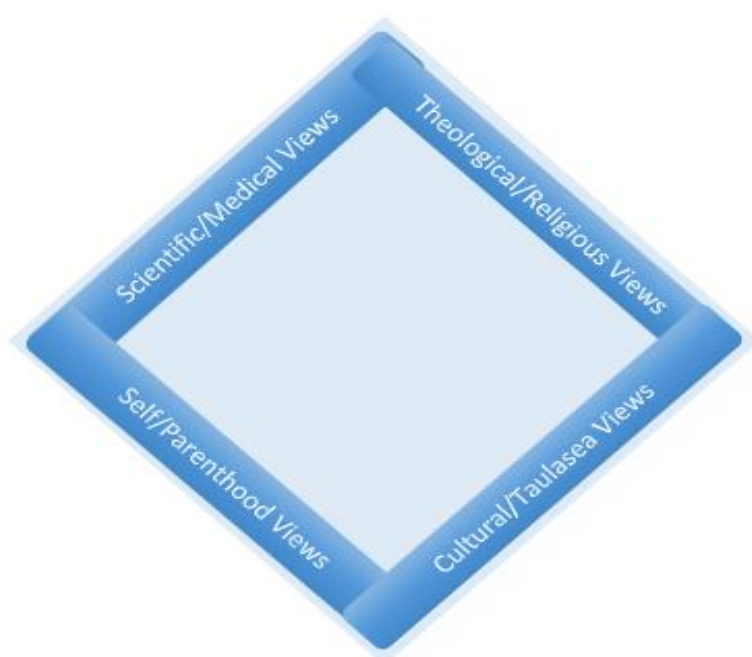
Thus, Niebuhr's approach is an integration approach that considers important other selves such as other cultures in order to make more sense the reality of how to react and to deal with a life situation in today's world. Hence, the integration of cultures approach emphasised in this study is not just to bring cultures together but to find how the integration brings benefits or resolutions that would help resolve a situation or issues.

Bill Ashcroft called that significance of the integration of cultures as "cultural transformation." It is bringing together of cultures making use of elements from both cultures that are relevant to help resolve a situation.⁸⁷ And these cultures as emphasized in this study are the Christian understanding or belief of God's existence in our lives and the Samoan culture of caring for each other as in the practice of "alofa" which has no boundaries.

Me and my wife's response versus our family's response towards liver transplants are similar in the sense that they are decisions that came about after the dialoguing of namely four perspectives in the Samoan and Christian understandings of a being and becoming a member of *aiga*: the cultural perspective, the theological perspective, the scientific perspective, and my parenthood perspective.

⁸⁷ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2000), 14-17.

This study explained the Samoan, Christian, Scientific, and parenthood perspectives respectively, toward liver transplant. As a result, it came up with an alofā approach shown below, that shows a blending of the perspectives of cultural, religion (theological/biblical), scientific (medical) and the sphere of parenthood within the *aiga* as HOME. My place as a Samoan-Christian who grew up in the Samoan culture and experienced the core values of the Samoan traditions and Christian values, is important



in this hybrid space I called HOME.

Figure 1: Alofā Framework as the Hybrid construction of my Samoan-Christian Identity

As mentioned, this study wishes to use an alofā framework to merge all the perspectives mentioned in this study – the perspectives influenced by the Samoan and Christian understandings and experiences of life concerning the life situation raised in this study. The alofa framework is considered the hybrid construction of my Samoan-

Christian Identity. It represents hope in dealing with a life threatening situation of a family member as in my case it was my son.

It takes the form of the shape of a square. In geometry, it is a regular quadrilateral shape with four equal sides. The purpose of its name as *alofā* is a direct reference to the action of love (*alofa*), which is central to all four sides of the square. This method is a derivation of the *Tafatolu* (three sides) methodological framework used by Alesana Palaamo who used the *Tafatolu* approach in his research.⁸⁸ He uses three sides of the research methodology as a synthesis of three key parts that are considered to be valuable in any research. In his research, he uses the three approaches of cultural, self, and contemporary academic approaches. The most important one in light of this paper is self. It represents the researcher's perspectives while also positioning themselves within their selected project.

Evident in the diagram above, this paper as reflected in and through the discussion of the issue raised in this study those four sides that are representative of the different research perspectives this paper had explained: cultural, scientific, theological, and parenthood. The compilation of this information resulted in an attempt by this thesis to come up with a hybrid perspective that embraced the decision to go ahead with the liver transplant operation. .

So the “*alofā*” model as shown depicts a culmination of how I responded as a *matua* and a *faiifeau* in my *aiga* to the social, cultural, and economic pressures of doing a liver transplant operation. However, being able to hold on to our certain beliefs, understanding with hope in faith from our Samoan and Christian worlds social, cultural, and religious beliefs namely from the *self* (*Parenthood*), *theological* (*Religious*),

⁸⁸ Alesana Palaamo, “Tafatolu (three-sides): A Samoan Methodological Framework,” *Aotearoa New Zealand Social Work* 30/4 (2018): 19-27.

cultural (Taulasea) and the *scientific (Medical)* perspectives, evoked the decision that we made and it was the right thing to do. I will briefly mention those perspectives again.

7.2.1. Self (Parenthood)

The self-perspective, a significant aspect of the “alofā framework, acknowledges the role of the researcher's personal experiences, perspectives, and positioning within the research project. Researchers are aware that their background, beliefs, and values can influence the research process and findings. The self-perspective encourages reflexivity, transparency, and critical self-reflection throughout the research journey.

As shown in this study, the self-perspective requires researchers to be aware of their own biases, assumptions, and potential impacts on data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Engaging in reflexive practices such as journaling, critical self-reflection, and seeking input from peers and colleagues can enhance this awareness. By embracing the self-perspective, researchers can navigate their subjectivity, acknowledge potential limitations, and present a more nuanced and balanced understanding of the research findings.

7.2.2. Cultural (*Taulasea* Views)

The cultural views on liver transplant differ among individuals and communities within the Samoan culture. This section will have engaged in conversations within Samoan community leaders, cultural experts and fellow community members to provide further insight into specific cultural perspectives, values and beliefs regarding liver transplantation in Samoan context.

In the Samoan cultural context, *taulasea* as described above are respected elders and cultural leaders who hold valuable knowledge and wisdom. Their perspectives on health, well-being, and medical interventions are deeply rooted in Samoan cultural values and traditions. The study has shown the importance of engaging with *taulasea* to

explore their views on liver transplants. Their insights provide cultural lens through which to examine the acceptability, perceptions, and potential challenges associated with liver transplants within the Samoan community. *Taulasea* perspectives can shed light on the role of traditional beliefs, rituals, and community dynamics in shaping attitudes toward organ transplantation

7.2.3. Biblical and Theological Views

The biblical and theological views as shown seek to explore how the Christian beliefs and teachings, particularly within our Samoan Christian context, shape attitudes towards liver transplants. This aspect of the study has shown that it is important to learn biblical and theological knowledge and understanding by engaging with *faiifeau*, church youth workers, biblical scholars and theologians who hold strong Christian beliefs.

By delving into theological perspectives, we have uncovered how concepts such as the sanctity of life, stewardship of the body, and the role of faith in healing, influence perceptions of liver transplants. Theological insights were analysed in light of biblical teachings and interpretations. Thus, the analysis of those biblical and theological reflections and interpretations provides a nuanced understanding of the theological considerations surrounding organ transplantation and their impact on decision-making processes.

7.2.4. Scientific (Medical Views)

The Scientific approach as discussed linked to some medical experts, including doctors and scientists, also play a crucial role in shaping the discourse on liver transplants. Their knowledge and experience contribute to the scientific advancements and ethical considerations within the medical field. This study as revealed has shown the significance of engaging with medical professionals to gain insights into the medical procedures, advancements, and ethical dilemmas associated with liver transplants.

Interviews with doctors and scientists shed light on the technical aspects of liver transplantation, success rates, risks, and potential complications. Understanding the medical experts' perspectives helped contextualize the cultural and theological responses to liver transplants.

Above all, it is important to have hope. In circumstances where there is no solution, this study suggests out of the integration of the firstspace and secondspace as explained and discussed in this study, it is important to have some hope. It is one important element of the Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity developed in this study. On that point, I would like to look at hope.

7.3. Hope, its meaning and significances

7.3.1. Definition of hope

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines hope in two ways. As a noun, it is a desire accompanied by the expectation of or belief of fulfillment. As a verb, it is defined as cherishing a desire with a certain level of anticipation.⁸⁹ Whether hope is defined as a noun or a verb, it describes “a feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen.”⁹⁰ From this definition, I say that what will happen depends on the person’s desire. It can be either good or bad. In other words, a person’s desire determines what is expected to happen. Thus, hope can be either true hope or false hope. True hope is hope that expects good results, whereas false hope does not bring good results. It is essential to realize that sometimes, a person’s desire to expect good results may result in bad results. Therefore, hope in reality has obstacles. These obstacles exist because seeking hope is not an undertaking in a vacuum. It is a way of life lived by whoever is hoping for whatever he/she wants to happen for him or her in a specific context, in a particular

⁸⁹ R. E. Allen, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, ed. H. W. Fowler and F. G. Fowler, 8th ed. (Oxford University Press, 1964), 568.

⁹⁰ Allen, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 568-570.

place, in a particular group of people – people with culture, values, and rules. This study, therefore, seeks to understand what hope is concerning certain people who have their own culture and values of living life in their world – people who belong to a particular place. The type of people whose hope is emphasized in this study are the oppressed, colonized, marginalized, unrecognized, lonely, and disadvantaged to survive in a world. It is the hope that desires blessings. This understanding will guide the discussion of what hope is from theological perspectives and my Samoan social and cultural experiences and understanding. In other words, what hope is and how it is understood in this world is to be done concerning certain people in their worlds. The theological meaning of hope discussed below is people-centered relative to their relationship to God.

7.3.2. Theological meaning and significances of hope

The general understanding of what hope is in Christianity is relative to eschatology. This understanding is twofold; one is called ‘consistent eschatology,’⁹¹ where we hope that at the end of this world, we become the ones chosen to live in paradise. In other words, we find this expectation only at the end of time. However, the other understanding is that faith and living by God’s will make us realize now that we will be in that paradise. This is called realized eschatology.⁹² It is living life with the confidence that we will end up in paradise. In their discussion of hope in Christian belief, theologians fall in either the first or the second, sometimes both. I will mention some of them below as examples.

⁹¹ See *A New Dictionary of Christian Theology*, edited by Alan Richardson & John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1983), 184. The phrase ‘consistent eschatology’ was coined by Albert Schweitzer.

⁹² See Richardson & Bowden, *Dictionary of Christian Theology*, 185.

A well-known theologian, Jurgen Moltmann, describes hope in the Christian context as Christian hope that can be enacted by the person who hopes, either for himself or for another; through that enactment, change can happen.⁹³ With the publication of his book, *Theology of Hope*, Jürgen Moltmann has emphasized that Christian hope is firmly grounded on the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.⁹⁴ It is claiming Jesus' death and resurrection as death and resurrection of us all. Its significance is a reassurance of life for the dead – the sinners. It is giving the fallen humankind hope of life. Furthermore, according to Moltmann, what is already known of Christ – the cross and the resurrection, assures us of the wealth of that which is yet to be known and draws us onward in a confident search and in active mission to bring the world within the same divine promise – the kingdom of God.⁹⁵ This unique event in the history of the world, demonstrates God's faithfulness to his promise, by directing men's minds forward in active expectation of something beyond all past and present experience.⁹⁶ Therefore in looking to Christ, the life of men is motivated by hope, a desire to obtain God's promise. Moltmann's understanding of Christian hope is also seen in John Macquarrie's discussion of Christian hope, which he calls the "Full Christian Hope." According to Macquarrie, Christian hope "is more solid than just the emotional side, more tangible in the belief side. It is concrete, as it is solidified in God through Christ Jesus."⁹⁷ This is our genuine hope; through Christ, all things are possible. It touches on all the facets of human existence, individual and social. It is not

⁹³ Jurgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope* (London: SCM Press LTD, 1967), 92. Various labels have been attached to his theology by those who are familiar with Moltmann's writings: theology of hope, theology of eschatology, dialectic theology, theology of the cross, political theology, liberation theology, the theology of Trinity, and so forth.

⁹⁴ Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 221-23.

⁹⁵ Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 221.

⁹⁶ Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 221.

⁹⁷ John Macquarrie, *Christian Hope*, (Oxford: A.R. Mowbray and Co Ltd, 1978), 2.

limited or canceled out by death but overcomes all obstacles.⁹⁸ Macquarrie, therefore, sums up his explanation of Christian hope as hope that is realized in this world through faith in the historical event of the cross, which presupposes dutiful obedience to the claims of Christ. This bears a positive outlook towards God and God's promise, particularly in times of trials. This dynamic Christian hope produces its effects, which in turn produces a greater openness to the working of God in the personal life and the community of faith. Such hope is also described by the apostle Paul himself. In his letter to the Romans, he declares that "hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us" (Romans 5:5). This is Christian hope.

7.3.3. My understanding and experiences of hope in the Samoan social and cultural world.

The Samoan social and cultural world I refer to here is the world that is run by Samoan cultures, values, beliefs, and practices. For example, I live in a Samoan family and village. My understanding of hope in the Samoan world begins with the Samoan word for hope, its meaning, and undertaking.

The Samoan word for hope as a noun is *faamoemoega*, something you wish to happen. This definition has a future sense. It has another meaning in Samoan, which is *faatutuaga*, translated into English as reliable and trustworthy. The first meaning expresses self-hoping, whereas the latter meaning speaks of one relying on another person to help him/her achieve his/her hope. Hope as verb in Samoan is *faatali iai ma momoo* meaning wait and wish. This definition shows that seeking hope is a task that needs patience and continuous hoping. The above definitions of hope in the Samoan

⁹⁸ Macquarrie, *Christian Hope*, 58.

world have deeper meanings; waiting, wishing, and relying are just the beginning of hope. What is expected to happen or achieved is more important in this hope process.

From my experience of my Samoan world, what one expects with hope is that it happens following the accepted way of life in a family and village. In other words, what is to happen will bring benefits to the person hoping and the people he belongs to. This expectation is called in Samoan *manuia*, translated in English as blessings. Thus, the hope for any Samoan as a member of a Samoan family and village is to seek blessings such as having more than enough resources for the family and village to survive. Another example is for members of a family and village to be able to help their people who are in need or those who are hoping or vying for survival. This shows hope in the Samoan world as a relational phenomenon.

In brief, as defined above from the Oxford Dictionary, hope is also reflected in my Samoan social and cultural world context. That is, it is a desire to achieve a goal. This is expressed in the Samoan translation of hope, which is *faamoemoe*, which has a more profound social, cultural, and religious meaning. It is about seeking and receiving blessings in the world we live in – blessing as *manuia* in Samoan. Thus, hope is not just a dream that can be easily fulfilled. Finding it has obstacles and obligations that are people-related and community-related. In this way, hope is not something that will just be achieved at the end of the world. It is realized and is achievable in life. Therefore, hope has characteristics and elements that need identifying concerning people seeking hope, places where hope is sought, and those who help the hope. The above discussion on the definition of hope provides key aspects highlighted below. Hope is a desire to find something. Hope is both realized and consistent – How is hope as ‘realized’ or ‘consistent’ is told and shown in our lives? Hope is social, cultural, and religion-related – How is hope as social, cultural, and religion-related revealed in our lives?

7.4. Conclusion

The thirdspace identifies the hybrid construction of the firstspace and secondspace as a cultural translation of different cultures that made up the Samoan society. In this section, my *matua* situation and *faiifeau* as a product of those influences is identified. Here, I depart from my original identity to enter into a third space through a process of negotiation. Thus a new identity emerges that makes sense of how the serving role of a parent and *faiifeau* to his family and as a follower of Jesus is to be understood in contemporary Samoan society. It is an imaginative space I call home or *aiga*. It will form and frame how ‘I’ as a parent and *faiifeau* is a *tautua* (servant and carer) to my wife and children, considered to be marginalized by a life problem such as a life-threatening sickness in our Samoan society, can move away from the margin of that sickness in our Samoan society to the centre and beyond. It is a space of transformation where different values and understanding will be brought in and be taken advantaged of in a way that would help resolve the occurred problem. It is making use of all avenues or things available to help resolve a life situation. This perspective will be used to inform what could be or should be the parenthood role of mothers and fathers as family members and as followers of Jesus portrayed both in our becoming and being members of our *aiga* in our Samoan social and cultural context and in Jesus’ ministry as will be explored the biblical interpretations revealed below. It is about taking advantage of options and opportunities available to find help in such situations. It is important to begin this chapter with identifying the negative influences of trying to deal with the situation.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

This study's purpose was to look into the liver transplant life-saving operation in light of all options and circumstances that we have experienced in the context of our *aiga* to bring awareness, understanding, and opportunities to anyone who may experience such life threatening situation. Liver transplant as explained is another option to be considered for those who need it. It is important to look at all aspects of its undertaking especially in the context of the *aiga*, before coming to a decision of what to do. Liver transplant is not a life-saving operation but also a life-risk operation within the medical world. It is important to know that the doctors are required by law to ensure that they do all that is within their knowledge and power to save lives.

As shown in this study, sometimes, life-saving efforts are subject to debate. Therefore, much must be considered by the recipient and the donor before deciding to proceed with a liver transplant. This thesis shows some of the issues regarding liver transplants we have to consider, which is why, as suggested in this study, we look at all sides of its processes and consequences in relation to all the people involved – such as the donor, the recipient, the doctors, the families, the churches, and the villages. Hence, as emphasized in this study, it is essential to learn and understand how to integrate all the perspectives and issues that influence decision-making, such as the self, cultural, theological, and scientific perspectives. All these perspectives with certain beliefs surround liver transplants in the Samoan Christian context. This was the aim of this thesis: to make this study a helpful task to be used not only by anyone who will experience the situation we have been through with my family and our youth in our Church Education programmes.

The methodology used in this study to show all sides of the experience we have encountered with my family to deal with finding help for my sick son is called '*Toward a Samoan-Christian Identity of Decision Making in a Life-Threatening Situation in an Aiga Samoa*.' It is guided by the critical spatiality theory proposed by Vernon K. Robbins. The methodology signified the significance of different spaces – the firstspace, secondspace, and thirdspace. The thesis shows that the understanding and experiences of the firstspace and the secondspace are integrated into the thirdspace, where the hybrid construction of a Samoan-Christian identity in the context of *Aiga Samoa* is formed to show how the decision to do the operation was made.

The study discusses the issue of Liver Transplanting with a detailed medical background and various aspects of such operation. It also explores the distress, emotions, and anxiety experienced by the patient, the donor, and everyone involved. In addition, I gave an account of what happened concerning the issue of liver transplants. I shared that experience from the point of view of a parent and a church minister. This experience is vital to the purpose of this study. Donating an organ to another person is rare in our Samoan world. However, what had happened, as explained, brings awareness that such a situation does happen in Samoa, and we can also deal with it if we have a strong belief with faith in our Samoan and Christian values and understanding of becoming and being a member of a Samoan and Christian *aiga* or family. The methodology and approach emphasized in this study as shown above is about taking advantage of anything available at the time of finding a solution to a problem. It is about survival.

The firstspace of the Samoan-Christian identity in hybridity is the Samoan understanding and experience of the author that influenced his decision to go ahead with the liver transplantation. According to the 'critical spatial theory' (CST) that guides the

construction of the hybridity identity, the firstspace is the space where the author first experiences who he/she was/is as a person not only in knowing his or her roles but also the problems he encountered in dealing with the issue raised in this study. The explanation of the firstspace was divided into two parts. Part one was the author's understanding of who he is as a Samoan in relation to his role as a *matua* (parent) and *faifeau* (ordained minister) in the *aiga* and the *faaSamoa* (Samoan culture). It explained the Samoan social and cultural understanding of its social and cultural world centred on the *aiga*. The space described what the *faasinomaga* of a Samoan is relative to his or her sense of belonging to a family, village, and church. The explanation of the understanding of the *aiga* in this part of the thesis spoke of the *faasinomaga* as having a sense of carrying out a family member's duties, roles, and responsibilities for his or her family as a *fatuaiga tausi* – a family member's undertaking of his or her roles and responsibilities for the family. A family member must carry it out as *tautua* (service) – the serving role and responsibility carried out within boundaries or *tuaoi*. As such, the *fatuaiga tausi* of a family member as *tautua* is undertaken within sacred relational spaces of *va fealoa'i* and *va tapuia*. Thus, one of the reasons that influenced the decision to proceed with the liver transplant was to fulfil my *fatuaiga tausi* of *tautua* as a husband to my wife and a father to my children. In other words, it was a service carried out from my heart or my *loto fuatiatifo* – one's self-subjectivity from the heart to initiate offering help for someone in desperate need of help.

It is followed by part two of the firstspace of the Samoan understanding horizon, which explains the social and cultural perspectives on the attitudes toward organ or liver transplantation. In this part of the study, I discussed other influential views in decision-making. One was the view of the *taulasea* (Traditional Samoan healer). The view of the *Taulasea* revealed the interconnectedness between past, present, and future

generations in maintaining the significance of fostering his sense of belonging to our local traditional places and spaces. Understanding the *Taulasea* enriches our appreciation for the intricate nuances of Samoan culture and the values it upholds.

The next part of the study dealt with the secondspace of the development of the Samoan-Christian hybrid identity portrayed in this thesis. The secondspace was the Christian understanding of family. The first part of the secondspace, as shown above, was the arrival of Christianity in Samoa and its impact on the Samoan society. As mentioned in this part, the Samoans regarded the missionaries' new teachings and ways as ways that would benefit and improve their way of living. One of the teachings was believing in faith and hope to heal and overcome any difficult life situation. This part also explained the theological perspective of organ transplantation that holds great significance in shaping attitudes and approaches toward the medical procedure of liver transplant. Hence, it is important to recognize the theological beliefs and considerations surrounding organ transplantation. They help healthcare providers address religious concerns professionally and ethically. Thus, in our Samoan Christian world, Christian understanding and experience bring another dimension into decision-making about organ transplantation as an option for saving lives. It expresses the significant Christian values of compassion, love, and sacrifice as inherent in organ donation in saving lives. This part of the study recognized the importance of the interaction between the Pacific understanding of helping one another influenced by the Christian teaching of helping those in need, enriching positivity in doing organ transplantation. Thus, embracing a comprehensive theological perspective that incorporates biblical, ethical, and cultural dimensions would make health-care providers navigate the complexities of organ transplantation with sensitivity, respect, and a commitment to the well-being of individuals and communities.

It was followed by part two of the secondspace of the Christian understanding, which was the biblical foundations or interpretations of particular texts that stress the significance of helping each other in the family context. This part of the study considered God's creation of the first family of Adam and Eve as an example of God's use of another human's organ to help bring life to another human. This is shown in God's use of Adam's rib to create Eve. It was followed by an interpretation of Jesus' consideration of his earthly family in Matthew 12:46-50. According to the interpretation shown above, Jesus' response to the member of the crowd who told Jesus about his earthly family waiting outside reveals that Jesus is bringing other people to become part of his earthly family, which is also the family of God.

On the other hand, Jesus' mother's and brothers' and sisters' waiting outside shows their respect for Jesus' work, meaning they are there to watch out for Jesus while attending his duties. Thus, it suggests that one of the important approaches for family members in such situations is knowing how to help take care of a family member while doing his or her duties. Hence, everyone in Jesus' family, including Jesus, respects each other's roles for their immediate family and others outside their families. As the interpretation reveals, more importantly, despite Jesus' attending to his duties to the broader community, he still has time to take care of the needs of his earthly family. The interpretation of the Canaanite woman approaching Jesus as a parent seeking help for her daughter shows that Jesus regards important parenthood. It is the life experience of being a parent that disciples were unaware of at the time. Jesus' way of challenging the woman was to test the woman's parenthood and his disciples' way of dealing with the spreading of the Gospel at the time. At the end of the story, the woman's willingness to take whatever opportunity available to her despite its consequences is an eye-opening message. It reveals the importance of accepting and using any available chance in a

desperate life-threatening situation for a family with hope and faith that God will take care of everything. It stresses the significance of always having hope that God prepares a way to help his faithful followers in their times of need.

The discussion ended with the thirdspace, which was bringing together or integrating the firstspace and secondspace. In this section, a new identity emerged that made sense how the serving role of a parent and *faiifeau* to his family and as a follower of Jesus was to be understood in contemporary Samoan society. It was an imaginative space called home or *aiga*. It formed how a Samoan parent and a *faiifeau* as a *tautua* (servant and carer) encountering a life-threatening situation could deal with it by taking advantage of all those understanding – the Samoan and Christian understandings. Thus, the thirdspace, as shown, is a Samoan-Christian identity in the hybridity of a Samoan parent and *faiifeau* who used all the influential views and experiences of the Samoan and Christian worlds to make the final decision. It was a space of transformation where different values and understanding were brought in and taken advantage of in a way that would help resolve the family's situation. It used all available resources to help resolve a life situation.

The result of this study could inform the development of some youth programmes in dealing with the issue mentioned in this study and other issues with similar needs. It is about taking advantage of options and opportunities available in our contemporary world to find help in such situations.

GLOSSARY

aia tatau – human right
Aiga – family
aiga fiafia – happy family
Aiga o le Atua – God’s family
Aiga Samoa – Samoan family
alofa – love
ate fefete – hepatitis
faamoemoe/faamoemoega – hope
FaaSamoa – the Samoan way
Faasino – direct
Faasinomaga – identity
faatuuatua – reliable and trustworthy
Faifeau – ordained or church minister
fatuaiga tautua – family member’s role and responsibility
fatuaiga tautua a le matua – parent’s role
feagaiga – bond, covenant
fiaola – opportunity seeker or vying for survival
fuatia – touch
ifo – bow
loto – will
loto fuatiaifo – giving with one’s heart
malosi o le aiga ma le nuu – the strength of the family and village
manuia – blessings
Matagaluega – CCCS church district
matai – chief
matai-tautua – chief-untitled man
matua – parent
Muagagana – Samoan wisdom sayings
O au o matua ia fanau i aiga – dear to parents in their families are their children
O le tagata ma lona faasinomaga – The person and his/her identity
soifua – live
tafatolu – three sides
taulaga – sacrifice
taulaga soifua – the living sacrifice
Taulasea – traditional Samoan healer
tapu – sacred
Tautua – serve/servant/service
Tautua-le-pao and tautua-le-pisa – serving each other with silence
Tuafafine – brother’s sister
Tuagane – sister’s brother
tuaoi – boundaries
Ua aigā le nuu – the village is inhabited
va fealoa’i – relational space
va-tapuia - sacred space

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