


# Selective reading of 1 Corinthians 14:26–40 resulting in the marginalisation of women

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The aim of this paper is to point out a hermeneutic gap in Assemblies of God – Back to God's order of service where 1 Corinthians 14:26–32 is read, eschewing verses 33–38. It points out the Assemblies of God's perception of women's ordination into the ministry, where women are allowed to participate in public worship but are not allowed to take up the pastoral leadership of the local assembly. The research problem is the hermeneutic gap behind refusal to ordain women into the ministry. The selective reading of the Scriptures poses a problem for hermeneutical inclusiveness that embraces social exegesis to arrive at the conclusion that it is not unscriptural to ordain women into pastoral leadership. The conclusion gives the remedial actions of the scenario, to suggest breaking out of a shell, agency and resilience, engaging social exegesis and hermeneutics, and engaging the community through dialogue to justify the rationale for ordaining women into the pastoral ministry in the same par with men.

**Contribution:** Situated within feminist theology, the study on women pastoral leadership is a burning issue for both classical Pentecostals and some of their evangelical counterparts. Pentecostal and charismatic studies should expand their understanding of Pauline theology regarding women's leadership to arrive at inclusiveness and non-sexism.

**Keywords:** women; Assemblies of God; Pentecostal; leadership; patriarchal; hermeneutics; Pauline.

## Introduction

The Assemblies of God in Southern Africa (AOGSA), especially the Back to God section, started to attract attention of the academics in the past three decades. Although the church makes it challenging to give researchers access to their documents for unbiased reflections and recordings, much has been unearthed to unmask the façade behind the church's culture, modus operandi, and polity. Three Masters' dissertations are worthy of applaud here:

- Critical Analysis of the Use of Scripture in the Assemblies of God Movement: A Hermeneutical Perspective (2010) by Motuku (University of Pretoria).
- The role and impact of women in worship, in the Pentecostal churches of the Germiston District of Gauteng: A ritual-liturgical exploration (2019) by Mogoane (University of Pretoria).
- Addressing Christian and Xhosa Cultural Obstructions Towards Women Ministerial and Christian Leadership Development in the O.R. Tambo District, Eastern Cape, South Africa (2020) by Jali (University of South Africa).

There are many dissertations and theses on AOGSA focusing on different aspects, but these three are of great interest to this article, as they address the place and the role of women in this church. The issue at stake in Assemblies of God – Back to God (AOG-BTG) is the hermeneutical gap of the weekly reading of 1 Corinthians 14:26–33; 39–40, deliberately bypassing verses 34–38 which seems to be contrary to the invitation for all to participate in public and open order of worship in Assemblies of God – Back to God. Deliberate circuitous route of verses 34–38 supposedly prevents women from participating in public worship. The social exegesis and hermeneutical exposition conclude that this text (1 Cor 14:34–38) is regarded as cultural and not normative.

## Assemblies of God – Back to God

The AOG-BTG is the section of AOGSA, historically and predominantly a black component of the denomination. This section is the largest and comprises over 2000 plus churches nationally and sub-continentially (Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Lesotho, Namibia and Botswana). In South Africa, AOG-BTG is known for sectarianism, limiting participation of members and leaders in any ecumenical

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initiatives or interdenominational ministers fraternals. A good example is to see many AOG-BTG students in university campuses opting to go to the townships to attend the church rather than joining AOG Students Fellowships or any ecumenical body (such as Student Christian Organisation, The Navigators, Campus Crusade for Christ, etc.) operating in campuses. Assemblies of God – Back to God is rigidly structured and this cascades from the top leadership structure. For instance, churches are expected to follow some rigid programmes such as time for worship, days for youth (Fridays), girls (Wednesdays) and mothers (Thursdays though at different times), fathers or men (Saturdays), and prayer meetings (Mondays). The church departments are organised on weekly, monthly, and quarterly regimentation. This is a centralist polity dictated from above, and it is expected from every local assembly. In some places, there are some variations regarding days and times, but the monthly and quarterly reports should reflect that regimentation is followed.

Church choirs sing choral music based on tonic solfa and are strictly identified by black and white attire. Church music is a mixture of contemporary African gospel music and traditional hymns, using various traditional hymn books such as *Icilingo leVangeli* (isiZulu), *Lifela tsa Sione* (in Southern Sesotho used by both Setswana and Sepedi speakers), Methodist Hymnbook (isiXhosa and Setswana), *Mhahamhala Ya Evangelii* (isiTsonga), and *Phalaphala Ya Mafhungo-Madhifa* (TshiVenda).

Unlike any typical Pentecostal church, AOG-BTG is very liturgical, though with some charismatic manifestations and spontaneity during the worship. The Methodist influence dominates AOG-BTG churches' order of worship characterised by musical renditions of the Lord's prayer as part of the opening prayer. Introduction to a call for orderly worship – what is known as *ditumiso/dikgalaletso*, after public reading of 1 Corinthians 14:26–33; 39–40 is followed by singing Psalm 100 in isiXhosa or Setswana just as the Methodists sing it. The preacher is ushered to the pulpit by the singing of the famous *umbedesho* called *Siya kudumisa Thixo*. Sometimes this is alternated with the singing of the Apostles Creed [*Ndi yakholwa, or Ke a dumela*]. Although this liturgy is common in AOG-BTG, some provinces where isiXhosa is unfathomable, the liturgy or these renditions are bypassed. But deep in the hearts of conservative AOG-BTG leaders an exemplary AOG-BTG assembly is the one that follows this pattern. However, it is acceptable that the churches bypass this liturgical pattern, but they are encouraged to sing that in their lingua franca, or ignore it. The dynamic demographics of many Assemblies bypass or ignore this because of the inevitable cultural mix in the congregation.

## Assemblies of God and women ministry

From the time of its inception at the beginning of the 20th century, the Pentecostal movement was an experience of men

and women indiscriminately. Assemblies of God historian, Edith Blumhofer (1989) reinforces by saying that:

In the early Pentecostal movement, having the 'anointing' was far more important than one's sex. As evangelistic hands carried the full gospel across the country, women who were recognised as having the anointing of the Holy Spirit shared with men in the preaching ministry. (p. 137)

The charismatic manifestations of the Holy Spirit played a distinctive role in the origin, development, and growth of the Assemblies of God. Charismata has been evident in the ministries of many outstanding women who pioneered and directed a broad spectrum of ministries. Courageous women served on mission frontiers at home and abroad as missionaries, evangelists, church planters, pastors, educators, and so forth. A good example here is Miss Susan Easton who after joining Assemblies of God became a prominent church planter in India (McGee in McClung 1986:35). Seven of the twelve members of the Azusa Street Credential Committee were women who credentialed and licensed many women into the ministry (Corum 1982:6). These women were and continue to be part of the revivals in the new frontiers. They play some critical roles in planting new churches. As the new churches grow and move towards a more organised ministry, the church polity concerns emerge to direct new churches towards male leadership, sidelining the female pioneers and cocooning them either to some form of hermitage or sent to the new turfs. As this evolved, 'women were relegated to being pastors' wives and performing tasks associated with ministry to women and children' (Poloma & Green 2010:161). This is also confirmed by Jali (2020:1) that in AOG-BTG, 'Women are confined to teaching each other and children as well as supporting men in primary and secondary church activities'. Resane (2018:9) also laments the fact that previously in the South African AOG Bible Colleges female students were mostly pastors' wives and only pursued a 1-year certificate course. The curriculum was mostly Sunday school teaching or working with other women ... and crafts courses were designed for this purpose.

This approach or perception regarding the role of women in AOG, especially here in Southern Africa, is subliminally patriarchal. Resane (2018) captures it correctly that:

There is a predominately masculine culture within the AOG. This culture finds its way into the nature of movement events and public communications and, even more insidiously, into the very structures of church and pastoral leadership.

Patriarchalism, male chauvinism, and paternalism characterise AOG perception on pastoral leadership. The hermeneutical gap and exegetical poverty leads to unwarranted conclusions of the Pauline theology regarding feminine leadership role. (p. 9)

## Women in Assemblies of God – Back to God

In the AOG-BTG women are credentialed but not ordained as pastors or even elders. However, in recent developments, women are ordained as deaconesses in their local Assemblies.

Even though women are not ordained, there are women who pastor churches and exercise authority of men as well in those churches. Two such women come to mind: Grace Maseko in the Eastern Reef region who pastored Devon and Eersterus Assemblies and is currently pastoring another assembly. She attends all pastors fellowship meetings and participates fully in the deliberations. There is also Ms Moremi in the Northwest who demonstrates the capacity to plant new churches and revive those that were on the verge of collapse. There is a reputable evangelist Tiny Banda with extraordinary evangelistic capabilities. These women are 'reservedly respected' by male traditionalists counterparts but wield a respectable authority in their respective Assemblies.

Assemblies of God – Back to God stands on the strength of women in ministry other than pastoral leadership. The history of the movement bears witness that women had always played some pivotal roles in raising and shaping this ministry towards its current viability. The year was 1960, when the pioneer of AOG-BTG, Nicholas Bhengu conducting fundraising in Brooklyn, New York in the United States (US) received a vision from God. The American Assemblies of God closed their churches for him to complete the fundraising. This was because of the church squabbles that were brewing in South African Assemblies of God between the Americans and the other missionaries' agencies implementing evangelistic campaigns among the African populations. Mochechane (n.d:156) elaborates on this tension that began as early as 1946, and Assemblies of God in South Africa (AGSA) was targeted for isolation because of its support of Nicholas Bhengu's national operations. The American missionaries preferred the Assemblies of God United States of America (AGUSA) structure of autonomous districts under the superintendent, who would assumedly be an American missionary. Lephoko (2018:140–142) belabours the vision that Bhengu received: In a vision, God showed Bhengu an African woman wearing a doek (African head – gear). It is from such women that he would raise funds for his Back to God Crusade evangelistic campaigns.

The goal of women's ministry was to empower women with skills to build self-confidence and self-reliance in a patriarchal environment of the culture, church and society at large. After intense prayer, Bhengu appointed his first wife, Mylet to lead the team made up of Mrs Doreen Sikiti, Mrs Virginia Buthelezi, Mrs Emily Mngoma. In 1970, he added 11 other women, including, Mrs Monica Tembe, Mrs Dinah Mofokeng, Mrs Beatrice Qina. After the death of Mylet, the team was led by his second wife, Nokwethemba.

To achieve his goal of empowering women to fundraise for the Back to God Crusade and socio-economic development, Bhengu mobilised women, trained them, and developed strategies to equip them for the task of raising funds for Back to God Crusade and self-development.

## Patriarchal Reading of 1 Corinthians 14 text in Assemblies of God – Back to God

Hermeneutics, which is the art of how texts are interpreted, can be wrongly used to marginalise women in AOG worldwide. The normally accepted hermeneutics is defined by Thiselton (2009:1) as an exploration of how we read, understand and handle texts, especially those written in another time or in a context of life different from our own. Biblical hermeneutics investigates more specifically how we read, understand, apply and respond to biblical texts.

This citation points to the fundamental components of encountering the text: reading, understanding, handling which might be interpreted according to the context in which the text was produced. Generally, AOG hermeneutics is defined as an interpretation of Scripture that is common with evangelical hermeneutics, with special emphasis on some unique constituent elements. In reality, Pentecostal hermeneutics 'combine biblical historical narratives with their personal experience, theological biases, church history and other fundamentals in their hermeneutic' (Togarasei 2016:3). Pentecostals are:

[T]he literalists who are emphatic on the authority, infallibility, inerrancy, and inspiration of the Bible. For them, the Bible is the complete truth and must be accepted as it is. To reject its completion is to reject God himself. They are well-versed in the biblicist-literalist method of Bible interpretation. (Resane 2020:18)

Therefore, their preaching revolves around 'the narratives of faith, love for one another and guidance from the Holy Spirit who shows no partiality' (Sande 2017:58), yet never on structured exegetical exercises. It is believed that the Holy Spirit liberally disburses charismata to men and women and that during the church service all people, including women can minister, prophesy, pray, and lay hands on the sick, and can be church planters just as men can do. Although they enjoy some of these freedoms, Gabaitse (2015:1) rightly says 'they are marginalised because they must still submit to the authority of men both at home and in church'.

Part of the liturgy in AOG-BTG is the reading of 1 Corinthians 14 passage, which is unfortunately read dichotomously. When this passage is read, there is some deliberate eschewal of verses 34–38 where the apostolic command is that women should keep quiet in the church. This causes a crisis of conscience for AOG-BTG Order of Worship as during the public ministry [*ditumisiso*], all saints, regardless of gender participate. One sees the hermeneutical injustice applied here. The rationale behind eschewing verses 34–38 is exactly what Gabaitse (2015:4) alludes to that 'the two essential aspects of Pentecostal hermeneutics that have bearing on the marginalisation of women are literal interpretations of the Bible and proof texting of the Bible'. The literal interpretation of the text and the disregard for the socio-historical context of the text lead to the conclusion that women cannot lead the church.

The hermeneutical omission of 1 Corinthians 14:34–38 by AOG-BTG churches is because of patriarchalism and male chauvinism that still reign supreme in AOGSA, especially within the BTG churches. ‘Male chauvinism, both in the West and Africa, gained climax by appealing to the Pauline texts on women, particularly 1 Corinthians 14:34–36 and 1 Timothy 2:9–15’. Interestingly, these passages are read every Sunday in AOG-BTG churches. The first one (1 Tim 2:1–8) is usually read to intercede for leadership while verses 9–14 are eschewed. The second one is 1 Corinthians 14:26–33; 39–40, eschewing verses 34–38, which is the focus of this article. The rationale behind these omissions is assumedly to protect women. According to Thomas (1994):

Both texts have proven to be notoriously difficult to interpret, in part because they seem to be contradicted or at the least modified by other passages in the same epistle (1 Cor. 11.5) or group of epistles (Tit. 2.4). (p. 53)

In AOG-BTG, the texts are accepted literally, without any endeavour of interrogating the contexts in which they emerged, or socio-cultural background in which they evolved. Inevitably, these texts become meaningless to address the modern era of inclusivity within cultural diversities. The major hermeneutical detriment committed and perpetuated by AOG-BTG’s disregard of women is proof texting:

Proof texting refers to the art of using and harmonising a few biblical texts to support any one argument narrowly without considering how those texts relate to the Bible as a whole. (Gabaitse 2015:6)

This practice encourages doctrinal conclusions based on stand-alone biblical verses and Bible stories taken at face value or stand-alone pieces. Inevitably, the contexts will be ignored, leading to the text becoming irrelevant or antonymous to the contemporary era. This hermeneutical strategy justifies and supports dogmatic conclusion of women marginalisation within Pentecostal spaces such as in AOG.

To do justice to the Pauline texts is to place these passages alongside his other statements and practices, as there is textual evidence that the New Testament, including Paul, supported and encouraged women ministry. Undoubtedly, women fulfilled important ministry roles in the Early Church. For instance, Tabitha (Dorcas) the seamstress served the poor and the needy (Ac 9:36). Philip’s four unmarried daughters had the ministry of prophecy, therefore were prophets (Ac 21:8, 9). Paul’s two co-labourers were women called Euodia and Syntyche, and he referred to them as women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers (Phlp 4:2, 3). Priscilla was another of Paul’s female exemplary fellow workers in Christ Jesus (Rm 16:3, 4). Romans 16 contains Paul’s greetings to a large number of ministry colleagues whom some were women, including the work [*kopiaō*], of Mary, Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Persis (Rm 16:6,12). There is a reference to Phoebe, a leader in the church at Cenchrea (Rm 16:1,2). Phoebe was a recognised *diakonos* of the church at Cenchrea. Depending on the context, *diakonos* is usually translated ‘deacon’ or ‘minister’. In the case of Phoebe, she

qualified as both a deacon and a minister as she served in the leadership role and position of the church.

In addressing Paul’s theology of women, Resane (2020:19) asserts that ‘To interpret Paul’s theology of women correctly, one must examine this command in light of the culture and situation of the ecclesial community that these epistles were addressing’. The Pauline texts (1 Tim 2 and 1 Cor 14) deal with specific, local problems that needed correction.

The epistles were written in the face of specific issues that have come to the attention of the apostle. A proper interpretation requires that this problem be identified to the best extent possible. The concern of the epistles is *diestrammena* [distorted teaching] and *heterodidaskalein, muthois, genealogiais* [false doctrines, myths] and some elements of Judaism as found in Acts 20:30 and 1 Timothy 1:4 (Resane 2020:21).

Paul’s consistent affirmations of ministering women among his churches are his true perspective, rather than the apparent prohibitions of these two passages, themselves subject to conflicting interpretation.

## African male chauvinism and culture: Reason for selective reading of 1 Corinthians 14 in AOG-BTG

African culture dominating AOG-BTG is, to a certain extent still not yet ready to articulate women into pastoral leadership. Four decades after Bhengu’s passing, AOG-BTG is still trapped in a cultural cocoon of selective reading of the texts that literarily muzzle and marginalise women. They still continue, as Motuku (2010:11) avers: ‘The historical context of the Bible is less important, it is only important in as far as it helps to address the current situation’. The Bible (literarily interpreted) and culture continue to play a critical role in shaping AOG-BTG ministerial deliberations. Stereotypes such as choir uniforms, traditional hymnal singing, descriptive clothes for men and women, and so forth all bear witness that progressiveness in AOG-BTG is far-fetched. There are always some hermeneutical and exegetical injustices pronounced to try to justify these sectarian practices. Unfortunately, tradition and culture continue to emerge as a plumb line. This is perpetrated by the illiteracy of the clergy. At the time of his research earlier than 2010, Motuku could still capture the fact that:

To date the Assemblies of God Movement (AOGM) releases people into full-time ministry offices as pastors without any theological training or background whatsoever. Unofficial literacy statistics suggest that the average preacher in the AOGM has got a standard four and no theological background whatsoever (2010:25).

This is demonstrated by the poverty of enquiry from many, especially women, to critically interrogate the rationale behind eschewing 1 Corinthians 14:32–38 every Sunday. The culture of subduing women has taken roots in AOG-

BTG that if someone can read the whole passage on Sunday, disciplinary hearing can be instituted. There is a prevalent assumption that AOG-BTG is dominated by a Xhosa culture, I think because of the prevalence of Xhosa Methodist liturgy in AOG-BTG Sunday services. Jali (2020) points out that:

Xhosa cultural practices view women as perpetual minors and inferior to men in all respects. These attitudes and beliefs translate into the church where women are consequently perceived as not cognitively competent enough to lead and dependent on men in all leadership matters. (p. 2)

Culture reigns supreme, side-by-side with the Bible and their juxtaposition in AOG-BTG reinforces marginalisation of women whenever 1 Corinthians 14 passage is read weekly.

## Conclusion

Assemblies of God internationally still struggles with women ordination, despite the fact that women are an integral part of the local assemblies. One observes that women in AOG-BTG contribute the largest portion of millions of rands in bank accounts. Mogoane's (2019) empirical research confirms that AOG-BTG women 'recognise themselves as the backbone of the church's fundraising strategy, and they are proud of it' (p. 131). Regardless of their phenomenal contribution, they do not comprise local assembly's pastoral leadership. Jali (2020:102) enlightens us that 'Leadership is vested upon the elders and deacons with the pastor being the chief elder. Women are not eligible and there is no official position in this regard'. The solution to this anomaly is for AOG-BTG women to opt for what Ramantswana (2024:8) calls 'epistemic delinking through disobedience. Epistemic disobedience is the deliberate refusal to perpetuate the distortions'. The Pauline theology of women is aggressively distorted to elevate male chauvinism and patriarchalism. Patriarchy robs women in AOG-BTG of their potential to excel in practising their Spirit-given abilities of pastoral leadership. The cry remains that 'even though there are now many women who have filled important positions in the church, it is still felt that their role in ecclesiastical ministry is still under-emphasized' (Santoso, Sindoro & Putrawan 2022:9). The following initiatives are recommended for emancipation of women in AOG-BTG:

- Breaking out of a shell: The Bible writers emerged from patriarchal cultures, occasionally discrediting women in their recordings. Through the ages, the Bible has been interpreted through patriarchal lenses, making its interpretations culturally biased. Many women suffer immensely under theologised religious experiences. As they are not allowed to talk, they suffer in silence. Resane and Mudimeli (2023:6–7) lament the current scenario:
  - One anathema in the theological discourse is the hermeneutical tendencies towards patriarchalism. These tendencies are audible in pulpit statements such as 'Women are created by God as inferior beings, designed to serve their husbands', 'Women are not

supposed to preach to men in a church setting, and she needs to be covered by men all the time when they minister', 'Women are the weaker vessels therefore pose dangers to menfolk etc'.

Marginalisation and restriction of women within religious circles have become a social norm. For progressive theology, it is a misnomer to be addressed by women themselves through their regular monthly and quarterly initiatives. The Setswana proverb, *ngwana o sa leleleng o swela tharing* [a child who does not cry may die on the back of the one who carries him]. It basically means if you don't make others aware of the problems or challenges you are facing, or of what you want, you will not get the help you require. Through and by women, silence must be broken, and the shell should be broken to emancipate AOG-BTG women from hermeneutical restrictions. Mogoane (2019:30) is correct in saying that 'women have the capacity to reason the same way as men, and to also become responsible citizens as men'. They should be included and recognised as persons with the same freedom and dignity as men:

- Agency and Resilience: The common understanding of agency is the capacity to make decisions about one's life and to act on those decisions towards the desired outcomes (Andrew 2023:8). Agency empowers people to take responsibility for their own lives. It involves full participation both physically and verbally to announce one's feelings prevailing in the status quo. Agency enables resilience, which basically means bouncing back. Women must reject male chauvinism to press them down by allowing the status quo to go unchallenged and remaining in the mode of emotional and mental immobility. Assemblies of God – Back to God women are exhorted to bounce back and find a conducive space to lead the church under the unction of the Holy Spirit. Anything that disturbs their success and flourishing should be broken to articulate them towards recovery and thriving. They should shift 'from breakdown and disorder to recovery, adaptation or system-wide transformation before, during and after adversity' Ungar (2021:6). This is the 21st century when 'Pentecostal congregations can start creating space for complexity and ambiguity, resisting any stereotypes and norms that undermine women's agency and suppress their resilience' (Anderson 2023:16). Assemblies of God women should through all denominational channels, as Resane (2021) alludes, welcome and embrace the spirit of the daughters of Zelophehad by embracing justice education that promotes equality and social justice. The patriarchs make a loud noise and act with authority, claiming 1 Corinthians 14:32–38 as their hermeneutical *isikhonkwane* [plumb line or landmark] – which is one of the common echoes in AOG-BTG kerygmatic activities.
- Engaging social exegesis and hermeneutics: For AOG-BTG women to break the shell and become resilient in the face of marginalisation, they should enter the theological education arena by considering theological academy as a career. This is where they will be enlightened

on the correct understanding of Pauline theology regarding women, especially the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2 passages. 'An understanding of the Pauline teachings by preachers guided by the Holy Spirit requires further interrogation for contextual comprehension' (Jali 2020:108). The inclusion of women in ministry must be biblically based and directly connected to correctly interpreted Scripture (Mbayo & Nyakora 2018). Women are to engage in scientific interpretation of the Bible to discover that they also possess the capacity and ability to occupy pastoral offices, to such an extent of even doing better than some of their male counterparts. It is true that 'Often, when people oppose the ordination of women as ministers and their inclusion in leadership, this is not biblically based but based many times on the authority itself' (Dweba, Mbali & Rashe 2021:3). Reference to authority here implies culture. The bottom line is 'pastors within the AOG (BTG) be trained in gender and religion, and how women have had influence in the establishment and development of Pentecostal churches in various parts of the world' (Mogoane 2019:134).

- Continuous community engagement. Although AOG-BTG tries to explain itself to the modern inclusive culture, the fact remains that their structures and polity are perceived to be maintaining and reinforcing 'patriarchal cultures, perpetuating gender stereotypes that keep women in the position of the subjugated other and negate any and all gender and sexual manifestations that do not correspond with the heteronormative ideal' (Coral Gómez 2020:81). To redress this public perception, AOGSA should be bold enough to dialogue with the broader community in order to capture women's feelings and understanding of their pastoral leadership. Thomas (1994:55) captures the reality that 'The community can offer balance, accountability and support. It can guard against rampant individualism and uncontrolled subjectivism'. Theology of dialogue is central to understanding the community's heartbeat. Active listening is crucial to gaining insight and wisdom echoed from the other side of the dividing line (gender bias division).

Assemblies of God – Back to God is therefore encouraged to re-look at the issue of ordaining women into pastoral leadership if they really want to actualise the missional goal of From Cape to Cairo. Indeed, Mogoane's (2019:133) finding is correct that 'if the AOG (BTG) is to benefit maximally from women's spiritual gifts, one of the pragmatic options is to appoint women in leadership and pastoral positions'.

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