The effect of the religious environment on the vocational motivation of protestant students of theology in Transylvania

The current thesis is based on earlier research conducted with regard to the development of pastoral identity within the ranks of protestant students of theology. We have concluded, that the social and cultural setting of a churchgoer might have a measurable impact on the call to a ministerial vocation experienced by individuals. The current thesis sets out to verify this hypothesis. We have established this course, because we consider that analysing narratives is the most authentic means to uncover the relationship that exists between aspects of religion and those of psychology with regard to the vocation of students of theology. We have also considered the fact that international research conducted in this field identifies the culture of the congregation, and implicitly the religious milieu of the congregants as the element, which has the most important influence on the decision of following a calling to churchly duty. The Roman-Catholic Church has already recognized this consideration, and included it into its catechism half a century ago thusly: "Upon observing the source of vocation, in the background we always feel the community, family, congregation, and school, or with other words, the entire milieu of the candidate's education, followed by all the people he has met on this path. These elements opened up new horizons for his life, and prepared him entirely for a service in the use of humanity in the spirit of the friendship of Jesus Christ." Our research sets out to uncover the context of the origin of the vocation of the students of protestant theology in Transylvania.

In order to carry out this academic endeavour we have designed a two-step research sequence. In the first block of the thesis we verify the first basic hypothesis according to which biblical motifs of calling appear in a complementary fashion with factors of motivation formulated by cognitive psychology. This in turn provides a factual basis for the scholarly soundness of the second block, in which we conduct a deeper study on the relationships that exist between aspects of a congregation's being and personal call narratives of the students.

We build up the blocks of the research project based on a proprietary methodology, which we detail at every relevant chapter in part. We provide a firm theoretical footing for every methodological decision taken within the elaboration process of the thesis.

The study starts with a clarification on the elementary notions employed within the thesis, such as call, calling, vocation, motivation. The Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament provides four meanings for the verb καλεῖν (under the heading for καλέω), thus we follow this structure in our presentation. First calling means to identify by name or attribute. Calling to someone implies naming as well, but this naming or designating as someone or something is not used with regard to vocation in the NT, rather as setting aside. Naming someone implies very often that the emphasis is to be placed less on the fact that names are such and such, than on the fact that the bearers of the name actually are what the name says about them. Second,

the meaning of call is to request the presence of someone, or as a synonym to invite. Several invitations can be found in the NT, and their meaning is often to be understood as an invitation to a specific location, yet in the case of Mk 2,17 we find that a further sense is evidenced, namely that Jesus' invitation does not merely refer to a physical location, but rather to the condition of repentance. The encyclopaedia of theology and religion adds a broader description of this condition by stating that the one called is to become a disciple of Jesus, or, after the resurrection, to be called into the Christian community, "but then also into particular responsibilities (proclamation, blessing), attitudes (freedom, sanctification, suffering, peace), and into eschatological salvation (inheritance, glory, kingdom of God, eternal life, table fellowship)." Third, the meaning of call is to summon a person or a group through the use of authority. This third meaning also bears the connotation of summoning slaves to give them orders. Fourth, we find the development of an extended sense derived from the meaning of invitation. More exactly this extension refers to choosing someone for receiving a special benefit or experience.

After having presented the notion of calling from the point of view of religious studies and the Testaments, we shall conclude the row of definitions with theoretical supplements provided by the field of practical theology. This in term distinguishes between general calling to Christian life and specific calling to ministry. The specific calling to ministry "is to be understood theologically as a *vocatio externa,* as the Holy Spirit laying claim *ad personam* (blessing and sending), and in terms of church law as a commissioning by the Christian community in the name of God. It is not linked to a *vocatio interna* as an internal, psychic call experience." According to this assertion, one cannot claim a call to ministry based on a psychic call experience, or in other words as being based in a conscious process of self-understanding.

The thesis continues with the presentation of prevalent examples of call narratives found in the Old and the New Testament. We conduct an exegetical process of analysis with the purpose of finding the most common motifs of the call narratives. Every chapter is followed by a summary, which gathers the identified motifs.

Within the heading on defining the concept of calling, among several aspects we identified that Reformed practical theological scholarship distinguishes between general calling to Christian life and specific calling to ministry. The later one is to be understood as God's sovereign act, which is not influenced in any way by the responses of the individuals give to it. The OT narratives, which we have analyzed, provide support for this claim, and thus supply an adequate complement to the postulates of psychology that advocate for the supremacy of conscious choice with regard to vocation.

We have found that the distinctive Hebrew line of reasoning - according to which naming someone is a means of providing the possibility for bringing to completion the intention of the one making the call - is evident in the call narratives of Moses, Samuel, Isaiah and also in the case of Israel as well. Israel, for example, receives a call to praise the Lord, to continue the worship in the temple of Jerusalem, and to become an instrument in carrying out God's will.

In the call narrative of Moses, we found how the fact so vividly living in the Hebrew consciousness, namely that God is omnipresent, and the possibility of meeting him is a real and probable one, eluded the conscious attention of the protagonist. The fact that Moses did not plan on meeting the Lord, provides us with an example of a well-known life situation, in which we are not the ones making the first step toward God, but rather he is the one, who chooses to commission us for a specific role. We have found this specific aspect also occurring in other OT call narratives.

Within the context of the OT's symbolism, call narratives can also be interpreted as the act of God aimed against forces of evil, or in other words as the fulfilment of God's will through blessing and commissioning of those elected. In this context setting someone into service means using them as instruments against the forces of evil in the process of establishing God's rule on Earth. The stories analysed exemplify how call narratives are provided with a surplus of meaning in an eschatological prospect.

A further finding of our analysis is that it is an indispensable process to undergo an adequate preparation before meeting the Lord. Furthermore, it is important to perceive and understand the holy nature of the event of being faced with God and receiving a commission. When being cleansed in preparation for receiving the calling, the servants undergo a radical change in their personality and perspectives. Self-images of the servants are changed by being faced with the glory of God. We have found instances of this in all the stories we have considered. Isaiah, for example, gains a new type of freedom, and an encompassing knowledge, which make him into an instrument appropriate for the service of the Lord. The account of his vision is one of the most representative examples of OT call narratives.

Hearing and conveying the word of the Lord was a privilege of the prophets. Yet we found that the Lord may choose any time and any place to commission someone for a specific task. All OT call narratives happen in the spirit of personal encounter, thus we may establish that the experiencing of even a minute part of God's infinite glory, is a reality that has to be considered with all seriousness.

Those who receive a call, are never left on their own, because during the presenting of their commission, the Lords unveils his own identity, thus provides justification for the call,

and then assures the servants of his proximity and promises support in all their endeavours. This promise is applicable in the narrative of Moses, Samuel, Isaiah, as well as the call of Israel. By commissioning someone for a service, the Lord assumes a relationship with that individual or group, in which being a servant is not a despicable predicament, but rather a positive life situation of belonging to a caring God, who fulfils his promises and does not turn his back.

Pertaining to the relationship that exists between servants and the Lord, further on we found that God himself deems his servants as his friends. We also established that meaning of being a friend of the Lord is not exhausted in knowing him superficially, rather it is necessarily supplemented by the meaning of having an intimate relationship with God.

The Lord does not only call individuals to his service, but also far larger groups of people, whole nations in fact. The fulfilment of his intentions are not limited by physical or geographical boundaries. Receiving a call from God to fulfil a specific duty provides both rights to the commissioned individual, but also the responsibility of having to be firm in one's vocation.

The most general observation derived in our understanding from these OT instances of calling is that they are narratives of commissioning for a specific role and purpose.

By means of exegetical analysis we have noted several defining motifs within the NT call narratives, which we list under this present heading. Based on the call narratives of the Twelve and of Paul we managed to synthesize two dozen summating findings.

Within the call narratives we find that the Lord Jesus does a symbolic act here through calling those who are not distinguished within the ranks of society, but are rather held in contempt. The echoes of this gesture are spun into the fabric of the gospels, where Jesus himself emphasizes the fact that the amount of worldly wealth can in no way contribute to obtaining access to the possibility of redemption. Thus social status is not an exclusive factor in the context of analyzing discipleship.

Another important difference between Jesus and the rabbis is the fact that he was not chosen by his disciples as it was customary in the case of rabbinical schools in which students would join the entourage of a rabbi they desired to follow. Jesus called the disciples in an authoritarian fashion to share with them his life and service.

Commissioning does not presuppose having a prior factual, living relationship with the Lord. Practically vocation can be established in the case of individuals who have already had contact with Jesus and his teachings, in the case of those who have witnessed his miracles, or it can be established in the case of people in the lives of whom commissioning and coming into contact for the first time with the Lord happen simultaneously.

In the call narrative of James and John, we find that they left behind not only their livelihood, but also their father and the hired men, in other words they broke away from their habitual lifestyle. By following Jesus, they accepted the status of discipleship with all its appurtenant aspects.

In the call narrative of the Twelve by analysing the symbolism of the geographical elements we concluded that the event of the call is not a location-specific action. This opens up the possibility of a wider way of theological interpretation in which meeting Christ and being commissioned by him is not limited by any geographical constraints, or other boundaries set by specific life-situations.

Jesus spent the night before the election of the disciples in prayer, and when he called the twelve he had three main goals: teaching and training the disciples through example, sending them to preach the gospel, and giving them the power to cast out demons. We may thus conclude that commissioning is targeted and purposeful, just as we have seen in the case of OT examples.

The commission of Jesus is simultaneously a task and a process of preparation because Jesus provides the disciples with the basis of their mission, and at the same time he makes them strong enough to fulfil this service of bearing witness before others of the experiences they gathered beside him. They are granted power and authority to continue this mission through preaching the gospel, healing the sick, and casting out demons. The disciples' mission was similar to that of the Master, yet secondary in comparison, because it is entirely dependent on receiving and engaging His gifts. The act of giving a name is a symbolic form of election and of receiving the mentioned gifts. We have expanded on this within Peter's call narrative. Presenting the Johannine narrative tradition's typical theological surplus is a turning point for our analysis because we seem to have found the possibility for compatibility between the postulates of opposing theoretical frameworks. Through the chosen pericope out of the Gospel according to John the call narratives of the Bible provide us with motifs which can be openly appropriated to the principles set forth by the schools of thought of cognitive psychology. This in turn produces a magnificent borderline territory, which is able to accommodate elements from contrasting theoretical realms. This acknowledgement is a useful accession of our comparative study.

An important attribute of this specific Johannine narrative is the fact that it presents how John the Baptist is able to lead others to faith through his own testimony. This force of example will sweep through the ranks of future disciples spreading from one individual to the other, creating a recognizable pattern in which coming to faith is a result of personal

ascertainment and experiencing testimony. We have thus recognized that commissioning can be established both directly and indirectly.

One form of indirect commissioning can be the experiencing of others' testimonies within friendly gatherings. Such a testimony is a factual result of love, and the example we find for this within the mentioned call narratives could serve as a model for the way in which we should behave toward our brethren.

By examining the Gospel according to John we found Jesus' peculiar question: "what do you want?" With regard to this question Bultmann states as a side note, that this should be the first question which should be raised by those who approach Jesus, because one should be able to respond to this question without hesitation. When someone offers to serve the Lord willingly, he/she has to consciously comprehend what it is, that he/she is looking for.

In Peter's call narrative we have found that this is enriched by a very special gesture, that of giving a name to the disciple. This may be important for our research with respect to God's wonderful power of creation expressed through this symbolism of giving a name to someone, and in this act also creating everything within him/her, which is necessary to complete his/her commission. It is my duty to follow him according to my name, that is to follow adequately to my personality the one who called me by my name. Faith gains importance only within personal spheres, that is only there, where no one else can provide solace, in other words, within the realm between the name of the true God and my own name. Commissioning is accompanied by a qualification in faith.

Within our exposition on the call narratives of the Gospel according to Mark we managed to bring to the fore the fact that Jesus chose individuals from the lower levels of society to be his disciples. In the Gospel according to John on the other hand we find an educated Jew, who offers a testimony about Jesus, and joins the ranks of his followers. This example is a salient one demonstrating that the call issued by Jesus cannot be confined by social standards. No human system of categories can restrict the Lord's sovereign choice of election, because as we have demonstrated earlier, one of the primary attributes of naming someone is the subsequent fact of making that particular person ready and able to fulfil his commission.

Different cultural and environmental effects that influence personal development may seem from a human point of view as being negative, or as making the individual unfit for a certain duty, yet the Lord's unfathomable plans for one's discipleship and commission for service make these effect serve a purpose unknown to man. Thus what we may see as disruptive or hindering circumstantial effects, might well be expertly useable in a context in which God commissions someone for a particular service. We find an example of this in Saul's conversion,

in which it is truly wonderful how the entire life story and his mixed heritage prepared him to do the service he was commissioned for. All influences that shaped him during his life, be they Greek, Jewish or Roman, played an important role in preparing him for service. We concluded that Paul's Greek heritage taught him to think critically and clearly, his Jewish heritage shaped his moral standing, and the Roman influence made it possible for him to understand and perceive the relations that govern the world on a large scale. All these cultural and moral impacts aided the establishment of the gospel's worldwide spreading.

We find the example of fatherly soothing reassurance in the knowledge of the fact that the Lord is able to commission for service people from all walks of life from any and all imaginable situations. Based on the elements of Paul's call narrative we might find that personal spiritual distress, despair, the recognition of one's own pettiness, the recognition of one's sinful past, or the experience of the pure joy provided by the palpable contact with salvation could well be a real point of origin for the establishment of the students' vocation.

In the process of calling the identity of the calling entity has always been of special importance. This is due to the fact that the commissioned individual needs a sort of stalwart certainty which is above any doubt and scrutiny. Experiencing this sort of certainty creates a necessary prerequisite for the service that is to be fulfilled. By revealing his identity in the call narrative of Paul, Jesus disperses any doubt in the consciousness of Saul, which leads him to the recognition that results in a vast missionary activity. The OT call narratives provide us with several examples in which such a revelation of the Lord's identity is evident. Through this confirmation the followers are reassured of the promise that they will be kept safe on their journey to which they were sent by the Almighty.

Those who give themselves entirely to serving the Lord's will, are able to complete their commission with far greater ease, because their lives are in line with God's sovereign resolution, and they have received their commission through the Lord's endless sanctity and grace. In the narrative of Paul's conversion, we see how a person fighting against the Christian way, hating the Lord Jesus Christ, is transformed into a servant who is to become one of the most outstanding servants of Christianity. Regarding the objection and opposition pertaining to one's instinct, inclination and impulse, John Calvin states that this makes the work we have to do several times more difficult to bring to completion.

In the NT call narratives we have found a type of commissioning that is similar to those we analyzed in the OT, namely in which God uses the servant as an instrument to fulfil His will. We come to know of Paul that he is the Lord's chosen instrument, who shall carry the Lord's name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel.

The newly converted members should not be left alone in their service, so the example of Ananias teaches us about the correct attitude of the church, which has to fulfil a role of support and edification in the lives of its serving congregants.

Due to formal constraints we were not able to present in detail Paul's own reflections on his calling having to concentrate exclusively on the call narratives in fact, but we will use these summating notes to mention an important idea of Romans 1,1, which highlights the fact, that there is no set chronological or logical order among the actions of election, calling through grace and commissioning in deed. Considering Paul's testimony, we may renounce the necessity of organizing call narratives according to a set chronological pattern, and rather concentrate on the factual existence of the calling or commissioning.

Additionally, we may conclude based on this supplementary passage that it is not absolutely necessary to know in advance the transcendent elements of our call, because the knowledge of the prompting experience's veracity should be sufficient for the commencement of our service. We cannot presume that Paul had an encompassing knowledge bestowed upon him about Christ at the time of his conversion. Moreover, he himself writes in his letters that his knowledge about Christ developed with the passing of time and with the evolution of his Christian being.

In many instances we cannot draw a clear delimitation with regard to what the servant of the Lord may feel the most intense desire toward to preach about, because creating a hierarchy between the different contents of the gospel is nearly impossible. In Paul's wording the Word, Jesus Christ, and preaching about the notion of faith are intertwined. We may use our findings to focus on how current students of theology think about themselves. Do they consider themselves primarily as preachers of the gospel, or prophets of the faith, or promoters of a specific dogma, or perhaps they do not have such a self-definition.

1Peter 2 talks about specific and general calling, the latter being obtainable by everyone through the preaching of the gospel. We shall not present this in detail because the features of the 1Peter epistle emulate the elements of the call narratives in which personal commissioning is presented. This part of the epistle reinterprets from the point of view of the resurrection what we have already recognized in the call narratives of the OT, more specifically the commissioning of the people of Israel.

 Accepting our commission and assuming our calling supposes that we understand our role and contribute with the entirety of our competences and with the best of our knowledge to fulfilling the tasks that have been set out for us.

The third chapter provides an overview of the motivation theories that have been formulated within the schools of cognitive psychology. This is followed by the marking of the specific factors, that are paralleled by biblical motifs. We use these pairs of motifs to establish a useable survey for our research.

In the endeavour to accurately define and measure vocational motivation several theories have been developed within different schools of psychology, which have tried with varying results to figure out what drives humans to take a specific course of action. The road leading from the questionable practices of the psychoanalysts to the modern theories of motivation formulated by cognitive psychology was a long one. In this heading of our research we are searching for the means in which cognitive psychology's methods can be used to measure vocational motivation in the case of protestant students of theology in Transylvania.

In the present case our research method for uncovering the set of tools provided by cognitive psychology is document analysis. In this chapter we highlight the fact that we are able to control emotions through cognitive processes only in a limited fashion. We are able to aid the processing of emotions, we can ease difficult transitions, but we are not able to exclude any of them entirely. We analyse the effects emotions have on cognitive data processing, furthermore we present the framing effect, the sunk cost effect, and the effect of social context on simple decision-making. In presenting theories of motivation, we focus on the theory of cognitive dissonance, the theory of bounded rationality, the elimination-by-aspects theory, and the theory of unconscious thought. This chapter provides a theoretical framework in which cognitive theories of motivation become applicable in a protestant religious context.

Based on the works of Bernard Weiner, the two most common metaphors for understanding human existence are: humans as machines, and humans as God's image. These metaphors can help us create a system in which we are able to categorize our theories of motivation. The mechanic approach of the machine-man metaphor gave rise to the psychoanalytic and socio-biological theories. This was followed by the drive theory, and Gestalt-theory's several derivatives. Within the second metaphor, in which man's godlike resemblance comes to the fore, we may align the expectancy-value theory, and attribution theories of motivation.

This metaphor is to be dealt with due theological consideration as not to imply even accidentally that humans possess godlike powers, rather that they are created in the image of God, and are infinitely inferior to His being. Within this category of metaphors, we have to separate one specific sub-metaphor in which we consider humans as judges, as entities capable

of making their own grounded decisions. Cognitive theories can be categorized within this sub-metaphor.

The fourth chapter presents the data gathering process with its subsequent analysis. We have gathered a set of parallel motifs, and formulated statements that reflect the substance of the motifs. We have then set up a proximity scale on which respondents were able to mark their preference for a specific statement, having biblical motifs coded on one side, and cognitive factors on the opposing side. Once the respondents completed the questionnaire, we were able to obtain quantifiable data, and through the use of the SPSS statistical analysis tool we managed to assess the correlations that exist between the elements of our survey. Thus we were able to prove that our first hypothesis was correct. According to our data, biblical motifs of calling appear in a complementary fashion with factors of motivation formulated by cognitive psychology, and there is no significant difference between the data sets provided by Reformed respondents and Unitarian students. Through this verification process we have proven that there is indeed a solid scholarly basis for conducting the second block of the study.

Below we present the most important steps taken in this process. Based on the motifs identified in the biblical context and that of cognitive psychology, we compiled them in the following table.

MOTIFS IDENTIFIED IN THE BIBLICAL CONTEXT	MOTIFS IDENTIFIED BY COGNITIE PSYCHOLOGY
• The priest is an instrument of God	• Theological studies are an instrument of fulfilling personal goals
• God is the one, who calls	• Vocation is the result of a personal decision
• Theological studies are considered as a means for healing others	• Students choose theological studies as a means for their own healing
• An outside influence on vocation can be identified	• Vocation is the result of an internal conscience
• Theological studies provide access to instruments necessary for serving the Lord, and this leads to the	• Theological studies provide access to instruments, that aid the development of personal

- development of personal competences

- Vocation is the result of submission to external factors

- By accepting the calling, one also accepts the possibility of experiencing vicissitude

- Calling has the prerequisite of accepting to make sacrifices, such as giving up family, a former profession, etc.

- Vocation is influenced by friends or other external factors, and the candidate surrenders to a higher power

- Past experiences of the candidate contribute to becoming a worthy servant of the Lord, but the entourage does not deem these experiences useful

- One may oppose accepting the calling, but it manifests itself and comes to completion despite the opposition of the future disciple

- A clear image of the elements of the service is outlined only during the fulfilment of the duties of the vocation. (On the other hand, God

- competences, which are later applied for serving the Lord

- Vocation is the result of perceiving the effects of internal factors

- Vocation is chosen to avoid negative experiences

- Accepting the calling, supposes the possibility of developing personal competences and resources

- Vocation is influenced by friends or other external factors, but the candidate analyses in a conscious manner the experience of others and considers his/her own decision based on that analysis.

- Past experiences of the candidate contribute to becoming a worthy servant of the Lord, and the entourage deems these experiences useful

- If the experience of the calling is present, opposition does not manifest itself, because accepting vocation has always been a conscious choice

- A clear image of the elements of the service may serve as an impediment in the way of accepting vocation.

may offer clear indications as to the nature of the service beforehand.)	(On the other hand the disciple may use the "satisficing" heuristic.)
• The disciple is ready to endure suffering for the fulfilment of his/her duty established by God	• The disciple is ready to endure suffering for the fulfilment of his/her duty only if the goal is set by him-/herself
• Priestly vocation is an instrument of the attainment of a larger goal	• Priestly vocation is a valuable goal in itself
• Accepting the vocation does not consider responsibilities of adaptation to external factors, due to the fact that it only considers obedience to God as being above all others	• Accepting vocation in a conscious manner considers one's personal responsibility toward the social context with regard to decisions and the effects thereof. This conscious appraisal acts as an impediment in the way of the complete unfolding of one's free will
• Knowing all stages of the completion of one's vocation has not been a condition of the calling	• Knowing all stages of the completion of one's vocation is a prior condition of the calling

After having compiled the motifs presented above, we have completed a survey with 62 students of theology, out of which 57 belong the Reformed Church, and 5 to the Unitarian Church.

		Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7	Question 8
		The priest is an instrument of God	God is the one, who calls	Theological studies are considered as a means for healing others	An outside influence on vocation can be identified	Theological studies provide access to instruments necessary for serving the Lord, and this leads to the development of personal competences	Vocation is the result of submission to external factors	By accepting the calling, one also accepts the possibility of experiencing vicissitude	Calling has the prerequisite of accepting to make sacrifices, such as giving up family, a former profession, etc.
N	Valid	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mode	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3a

		Question 9	Question 10	Question 11	Question 12	Question 13	Question 14	Question 15	Question 16
		Vocation is influenced by friends or other external factors, and the candidate surrenders to a higher power	Past experiences of the candidate contribute to becoming a worthy servant of the Lord, but the entourage does not deem these experiences useful	One may oppose accepting the calling, but it manifests itself and comes to completion despite the opposition of the future disciple	A clear image of the elements of the service is outlined only during the fulfilment of the duties of the vocation.	The disciple is ready to endure suffering for the fulfilment of his/her duty established by God	Priestly vocation is an instrument of the attainment of a larger goal	Accepting the vocation does not consider responsibilities of adaptation to external factors, due to the fact that it only considers obedience to God as being above all others	Knowing all stages of the completion of one's vocation has not been a condition of the calling
N	Valid	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mode	3	4	5	1	1	1	3	2

The response options are set on a value scale from 1 through 5, where 1 is "highly applicable" and 5 is "does not apply". In the tables above we find that the identified motifs in the biblical context are prevalent in the majority of cases. We have marked these responses in the relevant cells with diagonal lines. The cells formatted with a black background and white letters show responses in which the identified motifs belong predominantly to the cognitive field. The analysis of the data shows that in the majority of the cases, the vocation of students is influenced by exterior factors, such as the influence of the entourage or a confirmation coming from the community. Students are consciously aware of the contribution of past experiences to the fulfilment of their own vocation. The responses also highlight that one may oppose accepting the calling, but it manifests itself and comes to completion despite the opposition of the future disciple.

Identifying the modes of the answers provides us with a few conclusions that are upheld by the analysis of the frequency of individual response possibilities.

In the tables below we observe that in the case of the students, who participated in the survey, the biblical motifs appear each time in a complementary fashion to the factors of motivation identified by schools of cognitive psychology. If we consider the analysis of the dimensions of motivation, we observe, that in the cases in which biblical motifs are prevalent, outside influences, such as friends, family, or the congregational context are also present.
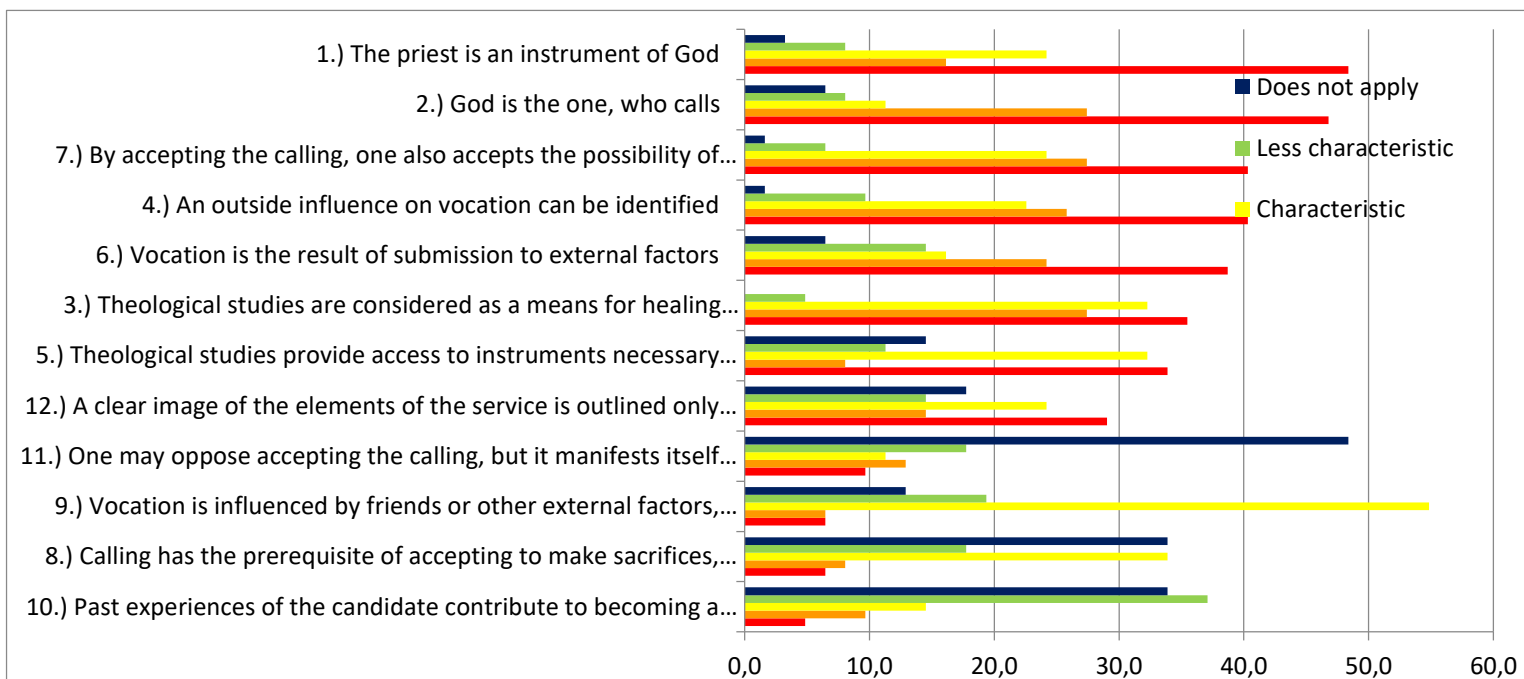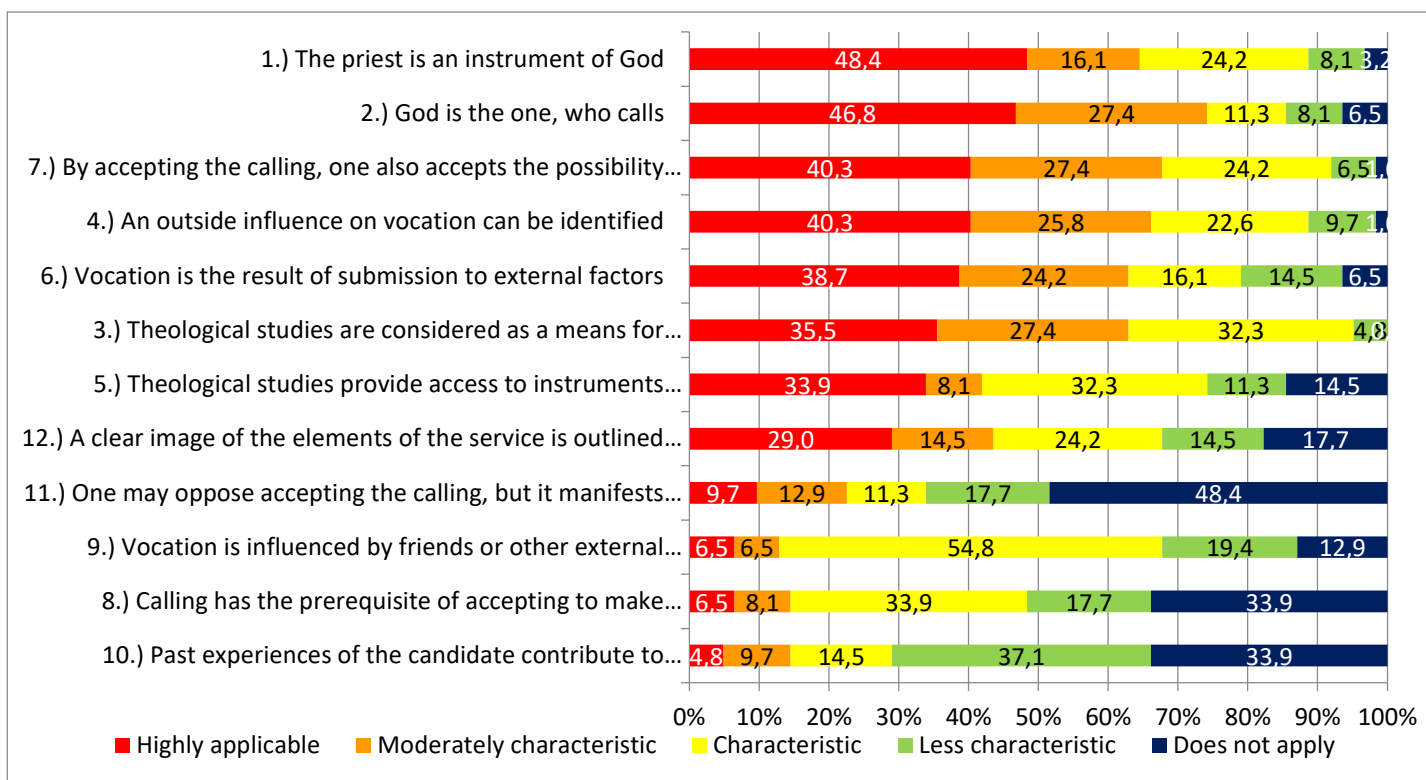
In the analysis of the data we found that Unitarians show a slight inclination toward the prevalence of psychological motivational factors. In order to verify the veridicity of this observation, we established a comparative statistical analysis of the answers given by Reformed and Unitarian students.

In order to definitively answer this question, we created a new variable called SumTeo, in which summated all biblical motifs. The value of the variable is provided by the sum of all possible values of the responses. Thus in the case of 16 questions with possibilities of responses ranging from 1 to 5, the minimum value of the variable is 16, and the maximum is 80. A 16 point value shows the absolute prevalence of biblical motifs, whereas an 80 point value denotes the absolute prevalence of motivational factors identified by cognitive psychology. The median value of the variable is 48, thus all lower values show the prevalence of biblical motifs, and higher values than the median show the contrary.

	Church membership	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SumTeo	Unitarian	5	51,20	9,418	4,212
	Reformed	57	41,88	7,015	,929

The data presented in the table above shows that the mean in the case of Unitarian students is 51,20, so a value which is higher than the variable's median value of 48, which denotes an inclination toward motivational factors identified by cognitive psychology. The mean value in the case of Reformed students is 41.48, which is lower than the variable's median value of 48, which denotes an inclination toward biblical motivational factors. The difference between the two groups is emphasised by a t-test. With the aid of this test we may establish with certainty whether or not there is any significant difference between the two separate groups set aside by their church membership.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
SumTeo	Equal variances assumed	0.156	0.695	2.776	60	0.007	9.323	3.358	2.605	16.041
	Equal variances not assumed			2.161	4.398	0.091	9.323	4.313	-2.237	20.882

The independent sample test presented above confirm the fact that there is no significant difference between the answers offered by students of theology belonging to the Reformed or Unitarian Churches.

The fifth chapter summarises the first block of the thesis, giving a short recapitulation on the main line of reasoning presented in the thesis. We have concluded that 47% of the students who participated in the survey, namely two thirds of the entire populace of the Protestant Theological Institute of Cluj-Napoca, display a propensity toward the biblical features of their own vocation. 28% of the respondents lean toward a vocation that is rather set in a frame which shows motivational factors predominantly from the field of cognitive psychology. Mixed elements of motivation were evident in a quarter of the samples. By analysing the data with the aid of the SPSS statistics processing interface we managed to uncover new dimensions of the relations that prompted the current study. The first benefit of applying social research methods to a topic predominantly pertaining to the field of theology, is that we were able to prove our hypothesis with the aid of hard data. The second gain lies in the fact that we identified the community context as possible influencing factor in the frame of vocational motivation. This in turn provided us with a firm footing for the continuation of the research sequence designed at the onset of our scholarly endeavour.

The sixth chapter presents the methodological considerations that guide the second block of the study. This includes a research design with a clearly marked objective, as well as additions to the key concepts employed in the process. It also answers the question of how practical theology and the methodology of qualitative research can be put to use in our research.

According to Mowatt and Swinton one of the most prominent models for doing practical theology and integrating the social sciences is the *mutual critical correlation* model. The authors try to answer the question: how can practical theology and qualitative research be brought together in a way that is both mutually enhancing and faithful? Mutual critical correlation sees the practical-theological task as bringing situations into dialectical conversation with insights from the Christian tradition and perspectives drawn from other sources of knowledge, primarily the social sciences. It is a model of integration which seeks to bring these dimensions together in a way which respects and gives an equal voice to each dialogue partner.

The way in which equal voice can be given to both partners of the dialogue is critical to be understood and applied consciously. This means that in our description of the methodological choices we made, we have to account for them through showing how primacy is established between the two conversation partners, and how the dialectics between them is to be dealt with.

The quoted authors present Tillich's method of correlation, who drew from human experience with theological answers offered by the Christian tradition. The problem with this model was that the theological answers given by this Christian truth could not be questioned. This meant that the model was unilateral, and it had to be adapted somehow to provide a dialogue. This step was made by Seward Hiltner and David Tracy, later developed by Stephen Pattison. So how does this process work? A situation is identified within the contemporary practice of the Church or the world which the practical theologian decides is worthy of reflection and exploration. The practical theologian then begins to explore the situation using other sources of knowledge. It is here that qualitative methods can effectively be utilized in uncovering the hidden meanings within the situation and the practices that participants embark upon in response to their particular understandings of the world. This data is then taken into constructive dialogue with scripture and tradition with a view to developing revised forms of practice that will impact upon and transform the original situation. Here we are faced with a difficulty. If social sciences can question truths made evident by God through revelation in history, then theologically we are at an impasse, and we cannot accept the use of such tools. So how can these tensions be put to rest? Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger suggests that the relationships between the two disciplines/sources of knowledge should be viewed as similar to the relationship between the divine and human natures of Christ, in that there should be: indissoluble differentiation; inseparable unity; indestructible order; logical priority of theology. The authors reach the conclusion that a revised model of mutual critical correlation can be developed and applied. We will use the findings of this chapter to produce our research.

The above authors suggest that Practical Theology can utilize qualitative research methods to aid in this process of ensuring that Christian practice is in correspondence to the event of God's self-communication. In order to do this correctly we need the following: hospitality, conversion, critical faithfulness. We have applied these findings for our own research in identifying a current praxis, understanding the context of that praxis as clearly as possible, reflecting on the praxis from a theological point of view, and very briefly formulating useful remarks which hopefully will be able to have a beneficial effect on the praxis with regard to the matter of motivation in the context of vocation.

The seventh chapter presents the biblical guidelines in the teachings of the New Testament pertaining to the life of the congregations. We have confined our research to the New Testament based on the assertions of Gerhard von Rad and Rudolf Bultmann, according to which the Hebrew קָהָל, which is the equivalent term of ἐκκλησία, defining a community, a Church, a or a congregation, is a spatially and temporally delimited term. In this sense, presenting Jewish

communities with all the rules and commandments that govern their existence, would be of no tangible use in finding reference points for the analysis of contemporary Christian communities. The tenets formulated in the New Testament provide a standard for interactions between members of a community, as well as for the congregation as a whole. If all communities of worship were to abide by these protocols, the working process of practical theology would find itself devoid of its focal points, namely of problems in the conduct of members and life of the community that need to be identified and scrutinized in the light of biblical teaching with the goal of reaching a state of congruence between their intended purpose and factual state.

The eighth chapter is the last theoretic part of the thesis' second block, which provides a context for the ecclesiastical analysis focusing on resources, structures of authority and the congregation's culture, that is made up of its activities, the artefacts, and the shared language and stories.

The second hypothesis of the study states that elements of an individual's religious environment have a significant effect on the vocational motivation of current students of protestant theology in Transylvania, and that these influences intertwine their personal narratives. We have uncovered these elements with the aid of empirical qualitative research, and present the methods thereof in the ninth chapter.

In the ninth chapter we elaborate on the method through which we carried out the empirical research. In the timespan between 2007-2016 a total number of 280 students gained admission to the courses of the Protestant Theological Institute of Cluj-Napoca, out of which 216 Reformed, 50 Unitarian, and 14 belonging to the Evangelical-Lutheran Church. In order to calculate the relative number of students to the size of the congregation of origin and the population of the administrative unit of their provenance, we used the data of the National Institute of Statistics. We correlated this to the data found in the pastors' yearly reports kept at the archive of the dean's office under the jurisdiction of whom the congregations in question belong. After selecting a number of congregations with the use of a randomizing generator, we obtained their consent of participating in this research project.

The ecclesiastic analysis has two important sources of information. The first source is made up of the data found in the yearly reports of the pastors. These sets of data have been verified by the general assembly of the congregation and the deanery. The second source consists of the interviews with the ministers and the laypersons in charge of leading the congregations. Thus we managed to provide a double verification to the data serving as grounds for the survey of the congregations. This was followed by the interviews with the students belonging to the

selected congregations. Within the interview process we offered the students the possibility of exposing their call narratives, then we used the means of the semi-structured interview to identify the deeper connections that exist in the background of elements that are evidenced at a first encounter with the portrayals of the interviewees. After conducting the interviews, we carried out a coding procedure, and classified all elements around the topics used in the ecclesiastical analysis of the congregations.

Based in the methodology applied in the elaboration of the thesis as well as considering nomothetic and idiographic knowledge equally valuable, we argued that generalising the conclusions in the case of the results obtained in this process, is not possible. The table presented below does not serve the purpose of generalising our findings, rather it is a summation of what we have ascertained through the analysis of the call narratives. We include this totalisation solely to provide an overview of the state of facts at the moment of conducting the research.

Topic	Congregation	Student	Ascertainment
Resources	A	A1	0 (correlation is not evident)
	B	B1	1 (effect is evident)
	C	C1	1
		C2	1
	D	D1	1
		D2	1
		D3	1
	E	E1	1/0 (does not present full evidence)
		E2	0
		E3	0
Structures of authority	A	A1	0
	B	B1	1
	C	C1	1
		C2	1
	D	D1	1
		D2	1
		D3	1
	E	E1	1
		E2	0
		E3	1
The congregation's culture	A	A1	0
	B	B1	1
	C	C1	1/0
		C2	1
	D	D1	1
		D2	1
		D3	1
	E	E1	1
		E2	0
		E3	0

The final chapter summarizes the second block of the thesis and concludes the findings according to which our second hypothesis may be deemed valid and verified.

Let us conclude our study with the words of the psalmist from Psalm 127: "Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain." It is our belief that the work undertaken in this thesis is able to contribute to our understanding of our role and responsibility within the Church of God. May this work aid all, who read it, to come one step closer to recognizing and fulfilling their unique purpose, finding congruence in the entirety of their heart, soul, and mind. We pray that God in His unending love and wisdom grace those who labour for His glory, with His support and edifying presence. Soli Deo Gloria!