

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS, DATA ANALYSIS, HERMENEUTICAL INTERPRETATION AND COMPARISON OF CHURCHES AND THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE PHENOMENON IN VENDA: CASE STUDIES.**

#### **5.1. Introduction.**

Based on the prologue of the work done above, the researcher will now share and present the empirical data collected through the interviews from the respondents of the three churches. The researcher will also, later, do analysis of the data collected from the above mentioned Churches based on the questionnaires as shown on appendix page. The original intention was to interview ten (10) people from each church. The Churches gave their letters of consent and they all have allowed their data/information to be used for educational purposes. They also have no problem in allowing their actual names and names of their Churches to be mentioned and be published in this dissertation. Therefore the researcher undertakes to use their responses for academic purposes in analyzing and creating the insights that will bring the whole perspective of engaging in a homiletical way on the phenomenon under study. The actual data collected is based on (10) ten interviewees from Tshigubu Church in Vhufuli, (11) eleven interviewees from the Lutheran Church at Georgenholtz at Ha- Luvhimbi and only (6) six interviewees from the Charismatic Calvary Christian Church at Lwomondo. The total interviews that have been conducted and chronicled are 27 instead of 30 interviews as previously proposed. It is not the intention of the researcher to repeat the responses, but to give verbatim the responses as the researcher had received them.

#### **5.2. African Independent Church (Tshigubu church), Lutheran Church and Calvary Christian Church in Venda, Case Studies:**

In this particular space we will look at the researched data from the Tshigubu Church which is quoted verbatim and chronicled. The information is laid as captured, is to be later engaged and analyzed to be hermeneutically relevant to the phenomenon under

study. These are recorded as the respondents/interviewees answered during the interviews that were taken in the Tshigubu Church case study with regard to concepts of transformation, development and therapeutic thrust.

### **5.2.1. Case Study 1: TshigubuChurch.**

#### **A brief background of the beginnings of African independent churches**

Ayeboyin and Ishola contend that, “the period from the nineteenth century to the present has been characterized by establishment and growth of the African strand of development of Christianity. This phenomenon has given birth to indigenous Churches and prayer groups in Africa. These groups have not only taken root but they have proliferated and shown phenomenal growth particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa” (Ayeboyin & Ishola 1997:11).

These scholars continue to narrate the bigger picture of African independent churches numerical growth. “The West, Central and the South Africa, as statics have shown, remain the most fertile for the growth of these indigenous Churches. The number of distinct denominations which registered with the government, according to David Barrett was over 760 in 1970 but the number increases with each succeeding years. Of course, the number of the unregistered bodies would be greater than the registered denominations. In South Africa alone, an estimated 5,000 Indegenous Churches represent between 30%-40% of the total black population.” (Ayeboyin & Ishola 1997:12 ). Ayeboyin and Ishola, further argues that, “African Independent Churches (AICs) denotes the churches which emerged from within the Mission Churches, beginning from the 1920s. They are also called: Indegenous Christian Movement, Aladura, and African instituted/ initiated Churches. These Churches are believed to be somewhat self-supporting, self-financing, and self- governing. They do not depend on any Missionary Board or individuals or groups abroad for financial and spiritual assistance (Ethiopian and Zionist by designation)” (Ayeboyin & Ishola 1997:19).

This brings us to Vhufuli in context were the research begins with the Vhufuli Tshigubu Church which is linked to the mother Church at Nzhelele, which started in South Africa in 1913. Like many African independent Churches, they started as a protest stance from mainline churches that could not be compatible with polygamous marriages. It is an afro-

centric Church that accommodated African traditional religion, including the drum beating. Many missionaries labeled these practices as heathen and that they invited cultural spirit influences. This church uses syncretism of a mixture of healing in a traditional way, with a lot of fortunetelling disguised as prophecy. Their use of the Bible in a mystic way and in a way being unaware, that they are violating the hermeneutical code of exegesis. These Churches of the African ethos offer an alternative to the Orthodoxy mainline churches. They attract many followers since their code, especially when it comes to marriage, allow men to have more than one wife and promises healing in its afro-centric approach. They seem to be answering personal core issues that appeal to the African way of life. Hence, one finds the majority of members having been sympathetic towards the uncritical approach to life thus, having to appeal more to people of the common ordinary life. They, however, raise sharp biblical theological debate to some passages of scripture should be interpreted; especially on polygamous marriages. It appears that if one fails to hold to the ideals of Orthodoxy mainline Christianity, he/she can worship God at the Tshigubu (Drum) Church to compensate for the strictness of mainline Churches with regard to biblical doctrinal standards/ criteria and the whole theological outlook.

#### **5.2.1.1. Pastor Mabusha, 70 years.**

The local head Mungameli/ Overseer had this to say:

The origins of our Church position can be better articulated by the secretary of our Church. He gave the following insight, “Our order of service, which is neither written down nor taught but, is intuitively lead, starts with a lot of singing and drum beating and dance. When the atmosphere is charged, some kind of confession personally is done. Prayer requests are made and an intercession in form or mass prayer which involves everybody follows. If someone is sick or has any trouble hindering his/her spirit it is shared in Church publicly. The singing continues and the tunes are typical Venda inclined lyrics that they appeal to an African person in a deeply spiritual way. The floor is open beginning with youth, men, women all share the word and if the Preacher feels his is covered by those who stood, he does not continue he just calls for the sick to be prayed

for and closes the service. The service begins at 12:30 noon to about 15:30 pm every Sunday.”

In your homilies does transformation feature prominently?

In a spiritual sense we try to preach, `but one can only say we have moved along way, we were not very good at preaching, especially on transformation. The Church has changed from the old ways and we do not have trained Preachers, we just chose each other. Sometimes the preaching is so off target and is used to personally attack opponents within, but I just ignore the offside shootings and concentrate on the positive.'

Do you consider training your Preachers'?

We believe that the spirit will teach us how to preach, so theological training is not there, neither is it encouraged. It is hard for the older generation, to critique one another , because they do not take kindly to criticism, whether it is well meaning, it is normally interpreted wrongly as a personal victimization and breeds animosity. Preachers are chosen if they show a strong voice when delivering a word, confidence also accounts.

Does your homily feature development?

This one is difficult. We just add a few social concerns; never really preach on development we are more spiritual inclined.

How about healing of society?

Every Sunday there is a healing service in our liturgy. Other than that, we cannot say we are involved in healing in the broader sense of community/ society.

#### **5.2.1.2. Maudu Olive, 45 years old.**

She has been a member for 10 years and holds positions as Mokokeli, chairperson, inspector of uniform and sitting arrangements, Preacher.

How often does the Preacher include the following themes: Transformation, Development, and healing in his/her homily?

Transformation: Is preached very often, but with the inclination to faith, to trust God and how to go to God. It also means repentance and repentance from drunkardness, robbery, theft and other bad ways.

Development: There is a church development card for R20 every month. This fund is ear-marked to build Churches. This also means to grow in faith – mature in faith.

Healing: physical healing is emphasized by praying for the sick every Sunday.

The Archbishop of our mother Church where ever he is invited and his feet steps there, he leaves behind, the area reduced in crime rate and become more peaceful.’

What have you experienced as the role of the homily in your church?

I have grown up in this church from Sunday school, youth, middle age, until now Mungameli. The protocol is as follows, deacon, evangelist, pastor, Mungameli, Superintendent, bishop, arch bishop.

In all this preaching/homily is important. I wouldn’t see the need of going to church if there is no homily being preached.

Would you say in your Church transformation and development is taking place or has been neglected?

There is transformation and development happening

Do you see/perceive your Church as a healing centre for empowering quality of life?

It is the centre for healing but does not improve quality of life for people.

The bible prophecy says that the world will be destroyed by fire, is it worthwhile to work for transformation and development?

Not working for transformation and development is to deny the faith, for God will judge us on what we have done while in the body.

### **5.2.1.3. David Ndou Magwaba**

The son of Bishop Magwaba has been in the Church for 60 years, since birth holding currently position of Mungameli- Mufunzi-Pastor.

Transformation is taught very often with the emphasis on belief in God with one’s whole heart and being obedient to God’s law. Also when receiving the little baby into the fellowship to make the child holy and accept God’s love, the parents are also included into prayer to strengthen them.

Development as a subject of preaching is not engaged in locally may be the national office of our Church, the issues of poverty alleviation are difficult, for as we are also poor people.

Healing is emphasized in our homilies, especially as for physical healing, the sick are called in front to be prayed for every Sunday, by laying of hands on the sick.

Preaching is guidance to be Godly, so the homily is important if it were to be absent in the Sunday service I would not be happy. The Preacher's homily has power of healing and guidance as it's based on God's law and word.

I say on the issue of transformation and development in our church is difficult one. We had a split. The other group was giving trouble, now they left and maybe we shall experience transformation and development without difficulty.

Our church is centre of healing as people believe in healing and they are healed.

The prophecy of the destruction of the world should inspire us more to work for good in the world so that when the lord comes we may receive him with faith. It is the time to convert others.

#### **5.2.1.4. Agness Singo 53 years.**

Agnes Singo has been a Church member for 5 years of those 3 years as Mukhokheli.

In our church transformation is taught as conversion and repentance although I do know the verses involved whether from the book of Genesis, but transformation is taught.

Development: we are taught to take care of our lives, as the days are evil and perilous, young lives are going through death of the pandemic of HIV/AIDS.

Healing is included every Sunday, the sick are made to seat on a mat and the hands are laid on each one of them.

If the homily is removed I cannot be happy, I would see no reason of going to Church that has no homily. The sermon is needed.

I have a personal experience since I went to Church I live a better life, I would have died but the Church prayed for me. I find it as the centre of healing. In relation to the broader forms of healing I do not know, but personally I can testify.

#### **5.2.1.5. Grace Kwando- Mufhe Nthatheni , 79 years old.**

Grace Kwindu-Muofhe Nthatheni has been a Church member for 50 years. Her main task is to intercede.

Transformation is taught as converting people, telling them that "the world is ending turn to the God."

Development is the missing component of our Church.

Healing is done in our church and homilies on such effect are done every Sunday. Some are healed others are not healed probably it is a case that is human thing--witchcraft related, zingavha zwithu zwavhathu.

Preaching of homilies must be done every Sunday. The Church is fountain of healing and transformation.

The prophecy of second coming and destruction of the earth should motivate people to work for the good of the world because Christ is coming again.

#### **5.2.1.6. Elisa Nthatheni Kwindu, 81 years Pastor for 50 years.**

He has taught transformation,

Development is taught because according to Jesus transformation is development.

Healing is taught some are healed and some are not, according to faith.

Preaching must be done even if it not by me but some one of the young preacher men we have trained will preach and I just summarize.

Our Church is a fountain transformation and of healing.

Because the world will end let believers continue to work for development and transformation.

#### **5.2.1.7. Elisa Mukwevho.**

Years not known, serving as Jefro- mme muingameli.

Transformation: She did not know the concept of transformation per say.

Development: development for us old people it is not a topic of a sermon, or sermon material, but the younger generation are teaching about it, perhaps it is the right thing to do, I do not know. We of the old folk have some hesitation on the subject of development being taught.

Transformation can be said to be there for things are no longer the same as before in the olden days.

In our Church healing is taught but development and transformation are neglected.

#### **5.2.1.8. Merriam Lidovho 49 years**

Merriam Lidovho has been a Church member for 25 years and holds no position of responsibility. Transformation- conversion is taught every Sunday, admonishing people to live good lives. When you are in the fold of believers you ought to adhere to what is godly, keep doing good.

Development is taught so that people can have a better life, not the life leading into a ditch. Healing is taught with emphasis on physical healing, prayer for the sick in hospital, journeys and any place that needs healing.

Our Church attracts many new baptisms and the exemplarily lives make people keep coming to improve their lives. One can categorically say it is a fountain of healing, and is magnetic.

When the end time fire comes it must find good people working for transformation and development. The bad ones will be left behind.

#### **5.2.1.9. Suzan Ratshikombo, 71 years old.**

Suzan Ratshikombo has been a Church member for 50 years.

Portfolio held is Jefro –mother of prayer.

Transformation is included very often in the Sunday homilies, the understanding

Is that it means repent and be baptized, believe in Jesus as your Lord and savior?

Development is lacking and conspicuously absent.

Healing, prayer is done for the sick every Sunday.

The fire will come at the end of time, but we are to continue doing well for the sake of the one who died for us on the cross.

#### **5.2.1.10. Mudau Mashudu, 25 years old**

Mudau Mashudu has been a Church member since birth, no portfolio held. An ordinary member in the church had this to say:

Transformation, oftentimes the subject is taught in homilies, and it means receiving God into your life. The godly person's life must be different from the unconverted.

Development has to do with progress in life, today and tomorrow must be different.



Healing, the sick are prayed for; healing takes place according to the faith in somebody's heart in order to receive healing. I can describe our Church as fountain of healing because the things I need I find them by faith.

The end time of destruction may come but people should continue to work for good and transformation and development –progress in spite of being afraid of hell. But to avert going to hell by doing good work.

### **5.2.2. Case Study 2: Lutheran Church**

#### **The context and historical location of the Lutheran Church.**

During the Renaissance in the 1400's, the art of printing was discovered. "As more people started reading the knowledge of what was happening spread. People started objecting to the dictates of the Church. As dissatisfaction spread, the Church tried to suppress it....They excommunicated people. When this did not stop the accusations, they burnt people at the stake. One of the early people, who publicly objected to the corruption in the Church, was Jan Hus. When he refused to withdraw his statements, he was excommunicated and burnt at the stake in 1415. His death caused a civil war between the pro- and anti-Hus followers in Bohemia.

After repeated attempts to reform the Church from within, it came to a confrontation. On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther started the reformation, when he nailed his 95 theses (statements) on the Wittenberg church door. He was saved from the same fate as Hus, by the ruler of Prussia who hid him in the Wartburg castle. During this time, Martin Luther translated the bible into German. When Rome refused to consider Luther's suggestions, Luther's followers broke away from the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran Church was born in Wittenberg in 1524. From there the new reformed religion spread throughout Germany" (Giesekke 2004:1). In mentioning this background it makes sense to bring the Lutheran church closer to South Africa. Giesekke continues to narrate the story of this incredible Church in readiness to bring it to the Vhembe region.

#### **5.2.2.1. The Berlin Mission in South Africa**

The first mission station of the Berlin Mission Society in South Africa was started among the Korannas at Bethanien, on the Reit River south-west of Bloemfontein, in the Free

State (near Redderburg). In 1837, the second Mission Station was started among the AmaXhosa, at Bethel, just north of Stutterheim in the eastern Cape. Life on the Border was not easy as there were constant wars between the AmaXhosa and the settlers. The missionaries then had to leave the mission Station and flee to Grahamstown or over the Drakensberg to Natal. Through these regular visits across the Drakensberg area of Natal. They soon realized that here was a vast new Mission-field desperately which needed their services. The first Mission Station in Natal was started in 1847, at Emmaus, west of Escourt. (Geisekke 2004:6).

### **5.2.2.2. The beginnings of the local Georgenholtz Lutheran church.**

#### **5.2.2.2.1. Georgenholtz Lutheran church, 1878**

A wealthy German land-owner Georgen Holtz had been a faithful Mission donor. When he died, his daughter donated a large sum of money to the Mission, in memory of her father. She asked that the new Mission Station be established and maintained with this money; and that it be named after her father. The station at Makwarela's place was officially called Georgen Holtz in 1878. At last, there was enough money to establish a permanent Station in Makwarela's area, and the station at Tshifudi was called Georgenholtz.

Because the ruler, Makwarela, liked God's Word and allowed Koen to preach to the people without any hinderances, Koen was welcomed where ever he went. He held daily morning and evening prayers at Makwarela's capital at Tshipwarapwara. Makwarela encouraged all his people to learn so that they could be baptized. He even told his father, king Mphapuli, that he intended to be baptized one day. The old ruler did not oppose his son in this, but insisted that Makwerela allow the circumcision rite to be practiced during winter months. Although he did this, he did not force any one to participate in such rites.

Makwarela allowed all the people who attended baptismal classes to live with Koen at the Mission Station, where the heathens could not torment them. They helped Koen develop the mission station. They also wore western clothes which Makwerela himself made for

them- he was the only tailor in the area. Koen was amazed to find such sewing skills in a heathen ruler (Giesekke, 2004:72).

### **5.2.2.3. Case studies.**

#### **5.2.2.3.1. Rev.Ramalida avhasei Joseph, 40 years**

The Reverend Ramalida was born a Lutheran, portfolio held pastor.

Transformation, the diocese took a resolution to follow through with the transformation as an issue of the whole Vhembe Lutheran project, but could not follow through as change brings along many insecurities so that project did not get the needed ratification and follow up. So no transformation can be reported, though at a small individual pastor scale you find the teaching and preaching which lean towards transformation. Transformation is preached in a holistic sense; body, soul, mind, and emotional sense. Change the whole person.

Development is taught in a holistic way, though the lay person does not perceive it as development, youth are encouraged to be educated and be focused.

Healing in our church takes this form, during funerals we console in order to heal, hospital visitation, home visits, counseling the hurting and those who are divorcing, suicide prone and other human problems.

Since healing is a process one needs to persist until healing takes place.

Homily is to build the Church of Christ, it empowers, comfort the broken hearted, up lifts the whole person to change, opens the eyes of a person to see life with the eyes of God, encourages people of faith to be the light of the world.

To preach, teach morality, Sunday school, class, youth and premarital marriage counseling. Teach people about the prevailing economic meltdown. How to have a budget, and encourage people to have vegetable gardens, which will help on food budgets. How the Christian should try to be debt free.

Our Church is involved in up lifting the down trodden, in our society, through the following programs: Encourage youth to focus on education in order to avert HIV, suicide and other vices. To be a mouth piece for community in the chief's council in order to bring roads water and electricity. The Christian like his master must be involved in the

community issues. Jesus was involved with community, he took two fish and five loaves and he feed the masses and taught them to care for leftovers.

Despite prophecy of destruction of the world by fire, the believer must work hard and not give up on caring and working the earth.

#### **5.2.2.3.2. Nthatheni Nelufure, 29 years old.**

Portfolio: Youth chairperson.

Transformation is the change from old ways in order to live in these contemporary times. In this context of liberal government laws that violate Christian ethics, abortion, same sex marriages, explain the context and let believers live in these times without compromising their position. Membership migration to other newer Churches, allow musical instruments and newer songs to be played in the Lutheran Church.

Development: should occur spiritually, socially, financially and other wise for it to be meaningful.

Healing is the missing component in our Church, but some Pastors here and there pray for the sick. It also happens when one member is in hospital or sick at home, prayer is done. Every person can pray according to the Lutheran doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Homily is a spiritual meal/bread. Troubled hearts are healed, obstacles removed and leveled and way forward is chattered in a homily. The homily has big role to play in the Church.

Transformation is not taking place. It was suggested but there is no implementation.

Development can and cannot be seen; apparently it is boarder line phenomenon.

The believers must continue working for transformation and development. Do like Jesus did, He worked and developed people.

#### **5.2.2.3.3.Masoliadza Ndamulelo.**

Masoliadza Ndamulelo has been a Church member for 4 years.

Portfolio held, ordinary member.

Transformation, it is an important thing for a person to convert, knowing God and being obedient to God's law.

Development is not taught from the pulpit. Healing is not taught.

Homily is an important part of the service as that the main reason for coming, it to hear what God has to say about my life. To learn instructions on how, to live a God fearing life.

Transformation in the sense of changing people lives is there but development is absent as concept. The Church is a centre of learning; we receive knowledge from the pulpit and better our lives.

We cannot neglect working and caring for our land for it will appear unkempt and development cannot take place.

#### **5.2.2.3.4. Nthabalala Maanda Gift**

An ordinary member, been a member for 1 year and 6 months.

Transformation to my understanding is to believe in the lord and repent of one's sins.

Development, through focusing on education youth should progress in life and avoid the negative behavior of liquor and dagga/marijuana and other vices that destroy teenagers.

Healing takes place some Sundays; the Preacher calls for the sick to come to front and prays for the sick by lying on of hands.

A homily is the tool by which people gain words that move them from sin into the light of God. In our Church the youth are transforming and developing as they are taught the ways of Christ. They leave their bad ways to follow and decide to live for God.

#### **5.2.2.3.5. Maphuta Balinane**

Maphuta Balinane has been a Church member for 3 years.

Portfolio held, assistant choir master.

Transformation is about being lost then found by God's mercy

Development is not emphasized in sermon.

Healing: the sick are asked to come forward and they are prayed for.

With or without a Homily I can come to Church, so long there is singing. I love singing personally, because it revives my soul.

There is no transformation and development in our Church and you cannot say that it is the centre of healing and empower and upliftment of people.

#### **5.2.2.3.6. Sibijo Mashudu**

Sibijo Mashudu is an ordinary member.

Transformation: I do not understand transformation as a concept.

Development is not there in our Church.

A homily has the role of making people hear the word of God and turn away from their evil ways.

#### **5.2.2.3.7. Aanda Muofhe**

Aanda Muofhe has been a church member for 16 years. Portfolio: ordinary member.

Transformation is taught in the Church that we must change from a bad life to a good life of God. Development is taught that from a bad situation we improve to a better situation.

Healing: The sick are prayed for and some receive their healing.

Homily

A homily is tool to build us up, it is a must be in the service.

Transformation and development are taking place in our Church.

Healing centre, our Church can be said to be a healing center as people who visit there end up coming to join us permanently.

Prophecy is there for the destruction of the world, despite life's challenges we must keep doing the right thing.

#### **5.2.2.3.8. Mudau Sharon**

Mudau Sharon is a choir leader.

Transformation is taught as changing from bad way of living to a good way of living. The youth are encouraged to focus on their education.

Healing: prayer for the sick is done some Sundays.

Homilies brings faith and repentance in the lives of the believers.

When one looks at our Church, can say transformation and development have not been neglected. There are very much part of our program, thus qualifying to be a centre of healing and affirming life.

#### **5.2.2.3.9. Ligonoba Anwani**

Ligonoba Anwani has been a church member for 16 years, and she is a Youth Secretary at the local Church.

Transformation from a conversion emphasis is taught very often.

Development is normally addressed at conference with an emphasis of Church development. The general development is not taught.

Healing- sometimes people are prayed for, not so often.

A homily is important in the Church and if there is no homily it appears there would be no use to go to church.

Transformation and development have not been neglected though one cannot easily evaluate their effectiveness of these trends. Our Church is a centre of empowerment.

We should continue to work for transformation and development so that the others can repent before the day of the lord come.

#### **5.2.2.3.10. Matamela Livhuwani, 25 years old.**

Matamela Livhuwani has been a church member for 10 years.

Portfolio: Youth Chairperson of the local parish.

Transformation has to do with leaving evil bad ways and doing right.

Development, in our homily does feature minimally; we are not very successful in this area. It appears we are more concerned with our own needs than other people's needs.

Healing is a neglected area; it is not very prominent as people do not confirm their healing whenever it does occur.

Homilies are there to show us the mind of God so that we can live better lives.

Transformation is there here and there but not satisfactory.

Healing center as a church it is questionable but a center for betterment of people's lives, yes. We should continue to work for improvement and transformation of society even if the end time may be eminent.

#### **5.2.2.3.11. Ndou Aluwani.**

Ndou Aluwani has been a Church member for 16 years,

Transformation is taking place as people hear the word.

Development we have it in the area of taking care of orphans.

Healing it is there but very slow.

A homily is there to transform people.

Our Church is the center of healing as people find encouragement there.

Jesus is our soon coming king, we should continue working.

### **The historical context of the Charismatic movement**

This is the brief background of the history of the current charismatic movement and its human traditions. “There have been resurgences of the practices characteristics of the Charismatics through history, particularly centering around a “second-grace” experience which follows conversion, identified by them as a “baptism of the Holy Spirit” and accompanied by “speaking in tongues” (Jennings 1996:125).

This new wave of the old practice of “ecstatic utterances is not confined to minority religious sects, but has spread from the early 1960’s throughout Protestantism and Catholicism. We could say that Pentecostalism spilled over denominational lines when Dennis Bennett, rector of St.Mark’s Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California, experienced what he called baptism of the Holy Spirit and gift of tongues. The movement has touched the lives of individuals from nearly every educational, economic and cultural background” Jennings (1996). In this study Calvary Christian Church is a case and point and represent the Charismatic.

### **5.2.3. Case Study 3: Calvary Christian Church**

This church was started by the Apostle M.A. Masakona, firstly as roving preacher from 1988-1993, conducting crusades in Churches, known as evangelism through the local church in almost all the villages of Venda, and beyond. The inviting Church organized people to come and hear the Preacher and any souls won would be nurtured by the Church. The local churches invited included the Lutheran, reformed Churches, assemblies of God in Venda, Tzaneen, Linyenye, Giyani and this resulted in him visiting many other far places, some of which included Phalaborwa (more than 15 times), Soweto (Mofolo, Sharpville), Swaziland (more than 15 times) , and Mozambique.



In 1993 on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February 1993 Calvary Christian Church was started by its head **Pastor M.A. Masakona**. The Church's strategy changed to revivals and tent meeting with the intention to win souls for the new Church. The grounds where the Church stands were bushy and un-developed but now the bush is turned into a city. Now that the Church is established, home cells, follow up visits and bereavement consolation and counseling are employed to advance the Church. The interviews were done to probe about the research topic.

#### **5.2.3.1. Apostle Masakona, Head Pastor Ministry, 27 years, serving Jesus.**

15 years Crusades as a roving Preacher and 16 years the local Church Pastor

Do you include transformation in your preaching?

We look at transformation from a physical side, social, psychological and spiritual, in other words we view it from a holistic approach. Our themes run along national and international Calendar on issue of youth, women, we mainly align messages to address the situation of our times, always with transformation as in conversion in mind. The pulpit to us is the spring board of transformation. People believe what comes from the pulpit so we take the pulpit seriously.

What approach of development do you preach about?

It is with emphasis on developing the person to realize his personal worthy, equipping, empowering, so that he/she can improve their life. The eradication of poverty. We, also emphasize social development, reconciling families, talent development, gardening and subsistence farming; a relational approach to development is our core emphasis.

Healing: There is physical healing and we lay hands on the sick, but as a Church we realize that inner healing is the core issue as many health problems ensue from the inner person. We preach with the emphasis of inner healing and counseling is the major issue in all our homilies. If a person came depressed or stressed should go home healed and motivated, full of hope.

Role of the homily in your Church; Homily is the central theme/reason of gathering, the homily is there to uplift/ equip/ training/ correction and produces commitment, it is so serious that even before offering a short homily is given –exaltation to give. They would rather miss the singing than miss the word-preaching.

Would you say your Church is centre of healing?

It is the centre of encouragement and relationship building. Problem solving-counseling, Personal problems are solved.

In the light of prophecy that the world will be destroyed by fire, is it worthwhile to work for development and healing of society?

We should still work for development, transformation and we can use the benefit of technology and development to spread the word. Media, flying machines, we as believers should work for development and transformation the aim is to reach people before Christ return. “You do not stop eating because you are going to die”

#### **5.2.3.2. Associate Pastor Mufumadi- Shavhani David 45 years**

Youth pastor 1988-1993 Para Church Interdenominational Christian Crusaders I.C.C.

1993-2009 -----Associate Pastor, secretary, worship team member, publicist/organizer, chief interpreter.

Transformation has to do with shift from Churches relying on missionary support to self-reliance and be self-supporting. It also has to do with conversion of the soul. Change in life style.

Development: to begin with our Church site was bushy now there is a beautiful modern church that is infrastructural development. The main way we develop people is encouraging people to be educated, we have motivational Sundays where we feature people who from selling vegetable and those who have succeeded in building houses and having university degrees. Celebrating success of ordinary people, in order to spur self development and uplift their lives.

Bible College: The bible school namely “Calvary Saints Equipping College” was started three years ago and it has produced 34 Bachelor of art degrees accreditation with faith Bible College.

Would you say your Church is as Healing centre? We have no clinic or hospital, but we have medical practitioner who are given opportunities in conference/ seminars to address health matters sometimes special services are organized to address the awareness of HIV and aids.

We pray for the sick by laying of hands and people come and testify that they have been healed. Our church is a centre of healing but we do not minister frequently healing services, like we do with Preaching. I think it would be right to say we emphasize healing through preaching with a counseling inclination. In other words, when people hear the word of God through effective preaching, they find their healing.

What role does the homily play in your Church?

However powerful the worship may be, the homily is the basic core of the service. We may forget about singing but we cannot forget the word/homily. In almost all our gatherings a homily must be there.

Community enrichment;

We invite eminent persons of the community, they may be believers or non believers but, we honor them for what contribution they have made to society. Example we honored **President Kgalema Montlante** when he visited our Church in 2009. It is our way of touching communities as Church.

The scripture teaches through prophecy that, the world will be destroyed by fire at the end of time. Is it worthy while to work for transformation, development, and healing of society in the light of that?

It is important that God himself believes in what we are doing, when He created man He said it was good. He created Adam to take care and work the earth. He was mandated to develop and transform the earth, the only caution is we must not just work but remember that when our work is over, we shall be transferred to another place. He himself is always working.

### **5.2.3.3. Lorraine Neluvhalani 45 years.**

Portfolio –bookstore for church/ tape ministry/recording DVDs, Tapes, CDs.

Lorraine Neluvhalani has been a Church member for the duration of 16 years.

Transformation: every Sunday's message has to touch the issues of salvation, one believes the Lord after the word, get converted turn away from sin leave all the bad ways.

Development, the emphasis is on individual self development. You see a person progresses and grow as a person.

Healing: before the prayer for healing the pastor explains the pre requisite for healing and then hands are laid on the sick.

Role of the homily: faith comes by hearing the word of God. Its main aim is to bring to repentance and make a true change and development to take place.

Is your church Center of healing? Our church is the center of healing the sick are prayed for and are healed. Preaching emphasizes all facets spiritual, psychological, physical, emotional wellbeing, to encourage the person to better their lives.

Is it worthy while to work for transformation and development even when prophecy says the world will be destroyed by fire? Believers must still work for transformation and development as long as we are alive. God gave us the world to have dominion over it, so we must work to develop and transform it for the better.

#### **5.2.3.4. Ramabulana S.M. 35 years old.**

Ramabulana S M has been a Church member for 15 years.

Portfolio: Sales person for tapes and cassettes.

Transformation is taught almost every Sunday and people are encouraged to change their lives and follow Jesus.

Development, here development is viewed more like encouragement for business entrepreneurship, self development and economic empowerment. The person must come out of poverty.

Healing Sundays are special services held on a monthly basis and that does not deter every Sunday prayer for the sick and praying for the nations and society at large.

Homilies shared are uplifting, faith building, preaching uplifting from poverty.

The homily is extended even to non believers so that they, also should come to faith.

There is transformation in every sphere of our Church and development is taking place. There is progress and those who came poor are now empowered. The emphasis is on spiritual and personal development leading to self improvement.

Despite the prophecy of the destruction of the world by fire, Christians should continue to work for transformation and development and healing of human society.

#### **5.2.3.5. Mulondo Flora 43 years,**

Mulondo Flora has been a Church member for 6 years.

Portfolio: Chairperson of thanksgiving, Advisory committee (liaison Person) youth, executive committee international, secretary-subcommittee of registration, secretary scheme for investment.

Transformation: is always emphasized in homilies. It means not being stagnant but always changing for the better. It also means doing things that benefit community projects and programs.

Development is addressed in homilies, but the inclination is more to empower people to develop as persons, encourage education, social programs, health calendar, outreach crusades, old age programs and Christmas.

Healing: there are healing services and special miracle services organized for healing sessions. The sick come forth to the front and are prayed for, some are healed instantly, and others later on and other never receive their healing.

Homily: Homily is there to service us, to empower and also to create fellowship.

Transformation and development are taking place as you see lives change for the better, those who were without business now they are successful entrepreneurs, and those who had no cars now they are driving. People are progressing as the homilies do the life change.

The church is the centre for empowering and healing people.

Despite what prophecy says about the destruction of the world by fire, believer must still work for transformation and development, since we are still living we have to enjoy the benefit of development. The scripture says we must be fruitful and be change agents now before the second coming.

#### **5.2.3.6. Grace Tshilizi Netshiomvani**

Portfolio: Personal secretary to Apostle Masakona

Transformation: according to Grace Tshilizi transformation has to do with being transformed from one level to the other. It entails making a paradigm shift. It is not easy to adjust to the other level.

Development: it is a process where one is helped to improve. When you develop something you are modifying it or improving it.

Centre of healing: In our Church people come, broken hearted and they go away healed because the Apostle, has messages of counseling and the Brand name of our church is;  
*“A Church you can call home”*

There is no special healing services which are held as such, but all homilies are healing in themselves. Homilies are motivating, spiritually uplifting, personal relationship with God is emphasized. The sick are prayed for by laying on of hands.

Prophecy foretells of the destruction of the earth, is it worthy while therefore to work for transformation, development and healing of the human society?

We live once, so we have to leave our best when we go home to the Lord. So we must work and develop the earth. When Israel was in exile God told them to cultivate, give their daughter into marriage and be happy. He told them to pray for the peace of the land, for in its peace shall be your peace. (Before we return to our homeland in heaven, we must work the earth and care for it also work for its peace and its healing). This is my own understanding.

### **5.3. Research analysis, hermeneutical interpretation and comparison**

In this analysis, an attempt is drawn from the data of interviewees comments on all the strata/levels of leadership and the laity have given as responses to the four critical questions, as pertaining to the research topic (from the three Churches; namely Tshigubu Church, Lutheran Church and Calvary Christian Church) . One needs to acknowledge the enthusiasm with which the respondents/ interviewees came with. Also, all the participants from the above mentioned Churches and the understanding of their perceptions with which they privileged the researcher to narrate and record with their full authorization. Here in is the analysis of the data collected:

From the Tshigubu Church, the head Pastor said their Pastors do not train theologically in an institution or Bible college but they learn by apprenticeship. There is also a strong belief that when one is Spirit taught he/she does not need human teachers. It is believed that the spirit will guide on what to teach as need and situations arise. While from the Lutheran Church, the Pastor/Minister in-charge of the Parish, is a trained theologian, who is still furthering his studies. The head Pastor of the Calvary is also a trained theologian

with Doctoral Degree from Newburg theological seminary in the USA. He has his own Bible College which is affiliated and accredited for academic purposes to Faith Bible College, which offers degrees, diplomas and certificates. The mindset of leaders whether trained or untrained has an influence on the understanding of the concepts of transformation, development and healing of society. A leader is a pace--setter, who should liberate the followers. The key issue is to engage the above data as it relates to the transformation of the mindset and psychological emancipation has bearing on the perspective on change, development and healing from a Preacher's point of view.

### **5.3.1. Tshigubu Church Understanding of the Phenomenon**

The head Pastor of Tshigubu responded that transformation in his understanding has to do with change in a spiritual sense. As a wider concept, he stated that it is hard because among the Church members, when it comes to trying to critique one another on homily, people do not generally take criticism rightly for good or for bad. He stated, however, that they are slowly changing as a Church, it is not like before.

Based on the majority of respondents, that they understood the word transformation, to mean a number of things, namely; repentance, conversion, connecting back to God and His laws, changing in behavior and life style. They articulated the concept with the spiritual inclination. However, 'transformation' from which ever perspective, political, social, spiritual, emotional, psychological, religious it all bears the undergirding emphasis of the word change. There a number of theological terminologies that agree with the metonia mean mindset change that produces a change of direction. Society can experience rebirth if the preacher champion the cause of transformation.

Development did not feature prominently in the homilies. One of their councilors (Church title) said in public that he was not into the business of bringing roads, houses, water, electricity but he was for spiritual kingdom issues only.

One 81 year old man from the Tshigubu Church, however, related the two concepts as interchangeable ideas, transformation and development as basically one and the same. In

other words, he was articulating that the Preacher cannot preach transformation and neglect development; these concepts are inter-locked, intertwined. It was fascinating that one could encounter such an understanding from a lay Tshigubu Church member, who has not been trained in any theological matters. There was also a feeling of inadequacy one Pastor of Tshigubu church, who said, 'how can we preach development when we are poor ourselves.' The issue of development must begin at the change of mind set, empowering people to release their hidden untapped potential here at the grass root level, where life is happening. The crux of the problem of development in rural areas and churches is that, there appears to be a self despising look that remove the will and resolve for a people to state unequivocally with tenacity, that despite our circumstances, we can overcome and make it for the better. The other apparent reason is that since the gospel was introduced in a dichotomy frame, it separated the spiritual and mundane things of life there by fragmenting the holistic approach of life. So the majority of rural people feel guilty to talk about the holistic gospel. They still believe that the earthly will not inherit the heavenly. So the earthly must be left to the politicians. Distancing of common believers from these critical concepts is not for the progress of simple communities, but to their disadvantage.

One old lady cautioned that our young people are living at a dangerous and challenging time when the pandemic of HIV/AIDS is affecting development and progressive transformation. The resilience and indomitable outlook of life fueled by good homilies can make the desired difference. There is an intrinsic attitude of the mind that give the developed countries and our own major cities , with their big business all the latitude, to continue growing at the expense of the rural and peripheral underlying areas. The type of education which was inculcated from inception was to subjugate the African mind and perpetuate dominance. Alas, even the theological training got caught up in separating the Preacher from radical transformational, developmental and healing issues.

“In almost all countries, developed or developing, the role of human resource is more important than anything that can be obtained from other sources. Venda is no exception. To enable the Vhavenda to utilize modern possibilities of production, the Venda labour force needs to master the required skills and knowledge. For this, education and training



are essential. Education has more advantages than merely the economic possibilities it creates...Education is a modernizing agent, for it opens up a whole new world to those who receive its benefits” (Benso 1979:85 ).

The need for education cannot be over emphasized, the problem, however, is the type of education offered which was known as Bantu education. This kind of education had an emphasis on the labour force other than liberating conceptual education that empowers instead of perpetuating dominance of one race by the other. The theological training was also infiltrated by fighting any liberating theology.

The theology of the time created heavenly minded believers, who were of no earthly use and irrelevant to their reality. There has been in the past, presently, bad policies, that still perpetuate poverty and aggravate it into abject poverty with chronic conditions that need a deliberate onslaught to challenge its dehumanizing and disempowering manifestation. The disfranchised majority are in rural South Africa. The Preacher, who is the agent of the creator who made them in his own image, has a divine mandate to bring back the dignity of the marginalized and those on the peripheral. Though Jesus says, “The poor you will always have with you...” (Mark 14:7). It does not warrant lack of transformation, under-development and lack of health in the rural areas that are perpetuated and used out of context by the strong and financially powerful.

The liberating Preacher will hit the target, in saying that, ‘even in rural areas the potential is there to be tapped and used for enhancement of simple societies.’ Homilies that overlook transformation, development and healing of society as being the competence of politician, must be revisited to invigorate the centrality of the holistic healing homilies of empowerment.

The Preacher should influence government and big business through his homilies to create an enabling environment; and to put the needed capital even within the peripheral rural areas. There are wealth creating programs that can be put in place than the wealth depleting programs that support common solidarity but at the waste, they are recipes of

abject poverty. Taylor (2000:95) writes that, “Amidst widespread skepticism within Christian Aid, there was one area of a Christian teaching which was generally regarded as useful when it came to development policy-making. It was even incorporated as the central motif of its ‘mission statement’ in the 1980s called *to strengthen the poor*.”

Reinhold Niebuhr is quoted by Taylor (2000), concerning his classic writings about moral man and immoral society, he says, “His clear-eyed Christian realism did not underestimate our human capacity for self transcending love and generosity. But that capacity could never be wholly relied upon, even less so when we act as social groups rather than individuals; and it was not the only factor to be reckoned with. A Christian analysis of human nature revealed a darker side to it which, out of a deep-seated insecurity far more than sheer perversity, leads us to protect ourselves and defend what we perceive to be our own self-interests against the interest of others. What power we have as nations or classes or organized capital or labor we shall use for these purposes and the weaker we are the more vulnerable we shall be to policies that benefit only someone else” ( Taylor, 2000:95).

Niebuhr, according to Taylor (2000), continues to argue that oppressive structures and bad policy making is the underlying cause of imbalance, underdevelopment and that poverty being a lack of transformation on the part of the strong and greedy. It is only a transformed leader that can break the cycle of poverty and oppression; otherwise the corruption is perpetuated even after changing leaders. The kind of strategy hinted at “in the magnificent scripture (Luke 1.46-55) informing many a revolution, is no solution. To remove the mighty from their thrones and exalt the humble, the meek and those of low degree, is only to offer another social group the opportunity to behave like the one before, once power is in their hands. One oppressor with his egocentric behavior is simply replaced by the next. History proves that their generosity is not to be relied upon. Given that an imbalance of power is the fundamental occasion of injustice and therefore of poverty, what is required is not a change of power but a better balance of power and more checks and balances within power structures so that the rulers of this world cannot lord it over others without let or hindrance” (Taylor 2000:96).

Christian teaching, therefore, together with other disciplines which help us to understand how human societies work, produces a useful rule of the thumb for policy-making: will it or will it promote balance of power?...And Taylor says that, “the same teaching led to Niebuhr’s support for democracy, believing that the creative and generous side to human nature makes democracy possible and the darker side make it necessary... “The root of economic injustice is an imbalance of economic power where capital, for example, can move freely across the world to speculate and make money, but labour cannot.” Multinationals can often overrule the state. The free market spells opportunity to the “powerful” but is a constant threat to smaller producers. Poor countries are “exploited”, whilst rich ones are “protected”. Arguments about fair trade policies, democratizing international financial institutions like the world trade organization, internalized economies, which are less dependent on the global market, alliances of nations in economic communities, global governance to control the global economy, are all to do with a better balance of power where the “mighty” and the “low degree” don’t change places but are more evenly matched” (Taylor, 2000:95-97).

**Centre of healing:** The majority of respondents agreed that healing services take place in their church, in form of laying on of hands, is practiced for physical healing. The Christian Church, from time immemorial, has practiced the laying on of hands as a healing mechanism through faith healing. Most of the Christian Churches, even the ones that are featured in the research, practice laying on of hands in public, in Churches, in private and at hospital bedside. There is a narrowing of the concept of healing. The Preacher when looking at healing holistically can engage transformation of the mindset and development as a way of releasing full potential, being tools of healing to society that has maladies that threaten to the point of being insurmountable. The healing of society also takes place when a community which was bedeviled by under-development through self destructive patterns of opposing good progressive thinking because of mere meanness and jealousy, are removed through the transforming gospel of Christ. The rural communities tend to have certain Ways of remaining in cyclic spiral that need to be broken if transformation, development and healing can be encouraged.

Healing can also take place when good infrastructure, is developed in the vicinity to promote clean environs that transform rural centers to peri-urban centers. Good infrastructure can improve the life style of people, although true transformation begins inside-out. When the environment is healed through transformation and development, the people are healed. The caring of our environs is one of the divine imperative injunctions. So when the community and its Preacher are involved in transformation and development, they are healing the land. The homilies that accommodate the confession of sin for the people and their children should engage in a spiritual matter that leads to the healing of the land. The nation that honors God heals the land. “Righteousness exalts the nation” (Proverbs 14:34) and “blessed is a nation who God is the Lord” (Psalm 33:12).

In Venda gospel preaching unto salvation, for eternal life has been done and is being done, but there is a lack of integration for a holistic message that embraces all three namely: change, development and healing. You find many African independent churches emphasizing healing, at the expense of desiring and knowing Jesus the healer. Healing is the ultimate result of the gospel but to do so without letting the transforming and developing in terms of releasing untapped potential, is detrimental to the very gospel that is being propelled.

- **The prophecies of destruction of the earth should they hinder us for working for transformation and development?**

The majority of participants answered that the prophecy of the destruction of the world should be the motivation of working the earth; for the Lord will come and ask for what we did with his earth. In the early Church, the problem of the Church was that they anticipated that the Lord will return in their time. So some ceased to work as they thought the Lord was soon coming. Paul came and corrected their misunderstanding and explained that though the believers should anticipate the Lord's coming in judgment, that does not in any way hinder the '*work it*' and '*take care of it*' as it is a divine imperative. The question arises as to why work for development since Prophecy has pointed out that everything apocalyptically will be destroyed.

When He made man, He made him to glorify God and honor him, but also to work the earth and care for it. In the caring for the earth, it implies transformation and development. The same scripture says, “If a man will not work, he shall not eat.” (2Thessolonias 3:10). For humans, as long the owner of life gives us time to be on earth, we are to work for change and progress. In the response, one said that development is the difficult component in their Church and another said it is completely absent. A homily that misses out on development has just either failed to recognize the pivotal point of the Church's existence in the world. “As fire exists by the flame the Church exists by Preaching.”

The mission of Jesus is to the release the captives, which is key to transformation, development and healing of society. The unfolding of the hidden potential and giving people a feeling and realization of change for the better life is the mission of the Preacher. Open the eyes of the blind, announce good news to the poor and, emulate his/her master. The believer has to work even on the last day on earth as he goes to meet his marker; for God is always working and always on duty. God works (Gen 2:1-2).

“God incarnate was a Carpenter and St Paul mended tents. Even before the fall, God summoned Adam to cultivate the earth and name the animals Gen 2:15-20). Work is not only the way we meet our basic needs. In addition, it is both the way we express our basic nature as co-workers with God and also a crucial avenue for loving our neighbours. Meaningful work, by which persons express their creative abilities, is essential for human dignity. Any able person, who fails to work, disgraces and corrodes his very being. Any system that could but does not offer every person the opportunity for meaningful work, violates and crushes human dignity” (Gushee 1999:21).

### **5.3.2. Georgenholz mission Lutheran Church Understanding of the Phenomenon**

The head Pastor had this to say on the question of the phenomenon under study.

The diocese had seen the need of having the transformation committee to try and manage the region and spearhead transformation in general. The key concept has to bring change. However change by nature brings insecurities and the project for change by the northern diocess of the Lutherans did not takeoff the ground. The council of Pastors and elders that

were supposed to vote for a well drafted, well written transformational documents, failed to ratify/pass the documents. There are now buried in the archives of the diocese.

Some Pastors are transforming at a small scale in their individual capacity. The researcher was excited to learn that at least one of the Churches under the research had even a project in place, but only to be disillusioned as it never took off the ground. The majority of the Lutheran members, apart from two who the concept of transformation could not be understood, conversion, repentance, coming closer to God, obeying God's ways, receiving Jesus as savior and Lord and being lost and being found by God's mercy was their conceptualization of transformation.

The development issues are taught in a holistic approach spiritually, physically, psychologically, and academically through encouraging education. This is also done through teaching young people how to address the challenges of modern life; including the HIV/AIDS. For, a diseased youth cannot bring development, transformation and healing in the society in their time. The motivation is to the growth of the whole person who can also develop his community by, in being the mouthpiece of others in local chief's council bringing water, electricity and roads to the rural villages. The majority of Lutheran members who were interviewed could not explain and understand the concept of development apart from church development programs of building churches. The Calvary advocates for a holistic approach to transformation, while the Lutheran advocates for holistic approach to development.

Healing is happening during funerals when the hurting and bereaved are consoled, when the sick are visited at home and in hospital; and during the counseling people who are burdened are able to unburden. Healing is a process. Therefore, it is important to persist until cure takes place. The transformational, developmental and healing homilies are preached in order to build the flock of God, empower, uplift, comfort the broken hearted, and to holistically, open the eyes for people to see life through the eyes of God. Some Pastors make altar calls and pray for the sick, though not every Sunday but once in a

while. The Lutherans believe in the priesthood of all believers, so any believer can pray for the sick.

Despite the belief in the prophecy that the King will come to judge the earth, believers like Jesus should work for transformation and development of people. In the Venda area, one of the large Churches of the reformation Churches is the Lutheran. They have been pioneers in the development of education and they penned down the written Tshivenda language in 1887, in the Ha-Tshivhase area. In a way, they set the written dictum of the language of a people. They believed, from on set, that education was their tool of evangelization. Like every missionary effort, they were children of their time in that they brought the discipline of war time. They were very strict. They scrutinized their converts with a high standard before they could baptize them. They also were carrying the influence of where they came from, to some extent of their influences being used by the expansionist in their dream of taking over from Cape to Cairo. To preach transformation and development in Venda, you will find that the Lutheran missionary preachers are pioneering the effort. The building of the four corner house was brought by them. King Ralutaga Madzivhandila was “a kind and considerate ruler, with a good head on his shoulders. He soon realized that what his Teacher was doing was good and made life easier. He wanted to know all about how and why things were done. While Schweltnus was building his rectangular... house, the ruler asked whether Schweltnus would also build him such a house” (Giesekke, 2004: 48).

It appears that the Preacher could not be excluded in centre of civilization. Even in rural Venda, the Preacher made inroads then and is still making the transforming, developing and healing influence now. The human resource component that has been a bedrock to the chief kraal tribal council, Bantustan governments, the liberation struggle, even the present government majority of leaders were taught in missionary schools or by missionaries preachers. The missionary effort could not be removed from the civilizing influence as many good western ways were inculcated, though with a lot more not revealed nor taught, the native began to receive literacy through the Churches.

The Goergeholtz mission was started in the 1897 with the desire to convert many indigenous people to the Christian faith. The beginning was a difficult and real testing time for the pioneer missionaries. The present day Goergonholtz congregation (2007-2010), in the research, has focused on developing the youth through the promotion of education and also promoting responsible behavior with regard to the HIV/AIDS pandemic (cf. A World Council of Churches Study Document 1997: *Facing Aids*). True education prepares the learner in a holistic way to meet the challenges of life with a God-fearing fortitude. The Preacher cannot be divorced from transformation, development and healing of the society.

It has been argued that Africa's health situation is exacerbated by the relative poverty and underdevelopment of its economics. Although we can attribute some of the responsibility to policy-makers, who allocate minimal resources to health expenditure in comparison with expenditure on education, industry or defense. “The emergence of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) on the continent has aggravated the health situation immeasurably. AIDS has so far claimed, and will continue to claim many lives in our continent. Millions of deaths are projected, and yet no effective medical cure or preventive is likely to be available in the near future. AIDS poses major dilemmas for health planners, politicians and indeed the entire population not only in Africa but world-wide. He was and remains and an integral part of the phenomenon under study. One of the major weapons for controlling the spread of AIDS globally is considered to be a change in behavior-personal relations, sexual matters and the social value systems and images that are associated with these aspects of life. These changes must take place at all social levels, from the individual to the national, but it is extraordinarily difficult to convey to an educated person, who may feel perfectly well and appear to be quite healthy, that they are infected with the HIV virus that is likely to kill them in a matter of few years, and that at the very least they can make choices about not infecting others, who may include their future children” (ACARTSOD, 1990:38-39). The Preacher is to champion the cause of homilies that promote fidelity and purity of life in a world where morality has become a casualty. The undergirding emphasis is the transformation of personal lives and to encourage that life be lived in honor of God.



The reformation Church seems to have a take on transformation from its inception since Luther penned and pinned the 95 thesis of the door of Saint Peters Cathedral. The message of transformation was spreading like a bush fire then. Today, the attempt on transformation was done by the Church and development, though not clearly articulated, it is believed that it must be done in a holistic way by being inclusive of all the facets that are a composite of life in totality. There was a committee put in place to handle transformation in the northern diocese of Vhembe of the Lutheran church of southern Africa and the letter is included, but one cannot find any evidence of the implementation of the program of transformation. There is a letter in Appendix C to show an attempt on transformation.

### **5.3.3. Calvary Christian Church Understanding of the Phenomenon**

The head Pastor explained that transformation is viewed as conversion in a holistic sense: physical, social, psychological and spiritual dimension. “Holism is an important word for Christian thinking about development. There are a variety of ways in which we must think holistically. First, we need to remember the whole story from the beginning to the end. Sometimes we are tempted to shorten the biblical story and limit it to the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. While this is the center of the story, it is not the whole story. To think properly about human transformation, we must see the world of the poor and the non-poor in the light of the whole story. We must be clear on what was intended, how things got as they are, what God is offering to do to change them, and what we can and cannot do as participants in the story. We must have a holistic view of time, of biblical time...we need a holistic view of persons. This brings us back to the earlier theme: God's redeeming work does not separate individuals from social systems of which they are part. People come first, of course. Changed people, transformed by the gospel and reconciled to God, are the beginning of any transformation” ( Myers 1999:51-52).

Transforming social systems cannot accomplish this: “no arrangement of social cooperation, in which power controls power and anarchy is tamed, will produce human beings free from the lust for power” (Wink 1992:77).

Myers argues that transformational development in Christianity “cannot avoid giving invitation to say Yes to the person of Jesus and the invitation to enter the kingdom. At the same time, however, this individual response does not fully express the scope of God's redemption work. Social systems are made up of persons, but they are also more than the sum of the persons involved in them. Corporations, government ministries, and even church structures have a character or ethos that is greater than the sum of the individuals who work in than” (Myers, 1999:52).

The Preacher and his/her holistic transforming gospel, has great impact on the phenomenon studied. Development, in the context, is viewed from the point of developing the person, to realize his/her personal worth, equipping, empowering, social development, reconciling families, talent development with the core emphasis, is relational development, individual development.

Healing: they pray for physical healing but the core of their ministry is inner healing as many health problems ensue from the inner person. Our church is the centre of encouragement, relationship building, problem solving and counseling.

Unlike the Tshigubu Church, the Calvary Church has a focused vision of purpose. They attract a large number of professional people. They have Pastors that are trained. Their understanding of the concept of transformation is informed with the personal encounter with the saving changing power of Jesus Christ. Almost all the interviewees profess the change. Their drive to transform people through the gospel of Christ, equip, and empower them to live meaningful better lives, is resounding promotion of the Preacher and his centrality in the phenomenon under study. There is no substitute. They are elaborate about their understanding rather than generalizing the phenomenon under investigation. The holistic approach of transforming, developing and healing power of the gospel, is a remarkable discovery for a church in a rural context. It is church that exudes affluence in the midst of a village set up. The Lutheran agree with Calvary that if any preaching is to be done on the key concepts in the research, a holistic approach is the appropriate one.

Calvary however, singles out transformation to be done in a holistic sense, while Lutheran approaches development in a holistic way. In fact, the two Churches are in agreement with the 81 year old man from the Tshigubu Church; who from the onset saw the concepts as being interchangeable, intertwined, interlocked and that change begins from the inner person and it unlocks the inner potential that leads to the healing of the society. The reformation, which is favoured by the Lutheran Church, has a strong theology that emphasizes on transformation; as Luther's conversion was an exegetical conversion. As he was climbing Saint Peter's squares stairs, it dawned on him that it is not the rosary prayers, but that the just shall live by faith'. He was busy saving himself, when he realized that salvation is by grace alone through faith.

The *metonia* happened to him, a total transformation took place. In his Churches, regeneration was taught, but as centuries passed, there has been a backsliding that took place and that's why the Venda Churches of Lutheran revisited the issue of transformation. Even when the issue of transformation is revisited, one, however, cannot stress that development is viewed in the same way as transformation in these Lutheran Churches of rural Venda. It should, however, be mentioned that the Lutheran World Federation has been on the forefront for the cause of rural development through bringing clean water, sanitation, and schools in the most remote parts of the world. The theological terminology would be *regeneration*-meaning the inner working of the Holy Spirit in bringing salvation to human soul, which is redemption, rebirth and the very soul of inner change.

When deliberating on development, the Calvary brings in many dimensions to development. They focus on development of the individual so that he/she gains back his /her worthy, self esteem, social development and relational development is the core business defining their reason of existence as Church. Apparently, they want to enhance the whole human-being in all spheres and facets of life. One can surmise that development, per say, was a phenomenon which was alien to Churches as it was deemed to be worldly, thus earthly with no heavenly soul saving emphasis. It can be argued that all the three churches find it difficult to link transformation to development and to

healing. The sole reason can be that the theology that was brought from the onset emphasized the spiritual salvation which showed no earthly usefulness for the believer. To preach development was viewed as being worldly, therefore, anti God and anti gospel. The gospel embraces the whole aspect of human beings for working the earth on behalf of God while being here and now and being with God hereafter when the earthly assignment is over. The accepting of poverty as a blessing is not a motivation for development. It only exacerbates that notion of avoiding God--given earthly assignments to *'work it'* and *'take care for it'* meaning the earth and allowing all under-development to take its toll using the name of faith. It is inevitable for human to die, but before death God has given us a divine assignment with a divine mandate that should be carried out. The Lord's Prayer says, 'your will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Mathew 6:10). The true gospel embraces the earthly and heavenly as the dominion of God and his Christ.

“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever” (Rev 11:15). They call him Lord of lords and King of kings. “All kings will bow down to him all nations will serve him” (Psalm 72:11). He rules all in all. He is the sovereign ruler, the entire underworld and all rulers of darkness are under his control and under his feet. He alone controls time, He gives us time to be around for assignments to be accomplished.

Healing in the Calvary does not deny the laying on of hands but they have a strong conviction that the inner person must be touched and he healed first. They believe that many physical maladies are a result of the inner distortion. Their healing mode is through effective preaching of the word and counseling. Two of the interviewees from Calvary said they had special healing services, the majority emphasized that almost every homily is a healing homily. It is apparent that the church practices healing by laying on of hands and they do so even through the preaching.

The other profound contribution of Calvary is the Bible College, affiliated to Newburg theological seminary, which offers diplomas and degrees. The liberation of a mind, with the saving gospel of Jesus Christ is a significant thing in the rural setup. They have kept their cause of transforming, developing, empowering and equipping in holistic manner.

Education that is being used without ulterior motives, can engage a rural context to bring the desired outcome that can validate the research that the preacher is key to unlocking the untapped potential.

The Churches studied in this research show a link to the grassroots; where many social ills are present. If transformation and development can be meaningful to rural communities, it must touch people, for ultimately it is for people. Many developmental programs fail lamentably when the people are excluded while plans are being done and implemented for them, without them being involved. The key element is change of mindset to have viable development and healing of the society. One needs to, argue that when transformation and development have taken place in an effective way, the society will experience a therapeutic ethos. It can be stated that the restoration of hope is healing in itself. Villages in rural areas are sometimes under chronic under development, when developmental undertaking happen, whether it be infrastructure additions or paradigm shift, the village communities experience wholeness and healing. The politicians call it betterment of the lives of the local people. In theological terminology it is being restored, healed, redeemed and made whole.

In one of the villages a proposition was made by big business to bring a shopping mall to the people, since it took 25-30 kms to go and buy grocery. The chief, civic authorities and all stakeholders agreed. The site which centrally is accessible was marked out. The problem came when a certain household was approached that it must relocate to give community development a chance. The household would be reimbursed three times over, with a new house to be built for the people who live in it. The man of the house denied the offer and made the community to lose a once in a-life time offer by big business to develop a modern mall in the vicinity. The man insisted that the house was on his ancestral land and could not betray his roots. In staying loyal to his roots, he and the rest of the community still ride a bus to go and get simple amenities for their homes.

The African man has to take some time and consider the ramification of being inflexible. Instead of a paradigm shift and a mindset change, community development could have

been given a chance. They are those who argue that the man was right in rejecting the offer for him to give transformation, development and healing of society a chance, while on the other hand there are those who argue that this idolatry denied the whole community an opportunity of a life time; which is, having their own facilities within their vicinity.

### 5.3.4. Tables

**Table 1**

**The comparison table: The three Churches with regard concepts of the phenomenon**

<b>CONCEPTS</b>	<b>Tshigubu(Drum) Church African Independent</b>	<b>Lutheran Church Reformation</b>	<b>Calvary Christian Church Charismatic</b>
<b>Transformation</b>	Conversion, salvation, leaving behind bad ways, connecting to God.	Conversion, repentance rebirth, regeneration	Conversion, born again, rebirth, regeneration
<b>Development</b>	None	None	Personal development, empowering, self worthy/ self esteem
<b>Homily</b>	Every Sunday, but not important.	Every Sunday, big role	Every Sunday, major role.
<b>Healing</b>	Emphasized every service	Missing component	Inner healing is emphasized.

Table 2

Comparison table of the three Preachers

PREACHER	Billy Graham	Martyn L. Jones	John Chrystostom
<b>Theological persuasion</b>	Calvinistic	Calvinistic	Nicene Christian church
<b>Influence/ impact</b>	On world leaders arbitrator	World leaders arbitrator	World leaders/ arbitrator
<b>Conversion</b>	Personal	Personal	Ascetic/ personal
<b>Oratory skills</b>	Great communicator	Great communicator	Golden communicator/ rhetorical champion
<b>Intellectual ability</b>	Anthropologist	Physician turned Preacher	Legal person turned Preacher
<b>Family life</b>	Committed loving family man	Loving husband and family man	Vowed to celibacy
<b>Development</b>	Great impact on society. 350 crusades, 210 million audience	Great impact on society of his day.	Built hospitals for the sick and hostels for visitors, poor, beggars.
<b>Similarities</b>	Passionate Preacher	Passionate Preacher	Passionate Preacher

Table 3

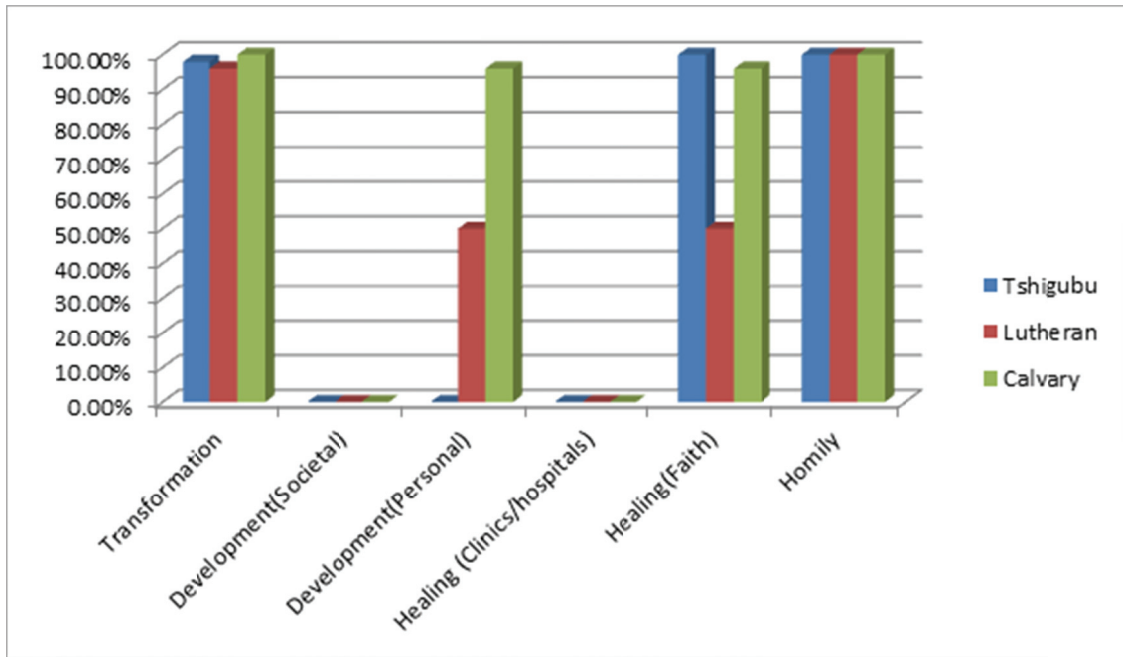
Reflection from the responses of data about the Phenomenon

CHURCHES	Tshigubu	Lutheran	Calvary
<b>Transformation</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Development ( Societal)</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Development (Personal)</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>96%</b>
<b>Healing ( Clinics/ hospitals)</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Healing ( Faith)</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>96%</b>
<b>Homily</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 5.3.5. Graph

**Graph 1**

**The graphic representation of Churches responses to the concepts of the interviews**



The Tshigubu Church's brief history and case study recorded ten respondent's responses to the questionnaire, the Lutheran church's brief history and case study of eleven respondents' response to the questionnaire and the Calvary Church's brief history and six respondents' responses the same questionnaire. The understanding of the three Churches of the concepts of transformation, development and healing of society.

Research findings and data analysis, the above data of the Tshigibu church, the Lutheran Church and the Calvary Church was analyzed and hermeneutically interpreted.



### 5.3.6. Lessons Drawn from the Study of Churches

- **Tshigubu Church of Vhufuli Lesson**

Transformation: Their understanding of transformation was spiritually inclined and had no societal bearing. The emphasis was only on conversion and nothing that can better the lives of its constituency in a holistic sense for here and now.

Development: This was another concept, which could neither be explained, nor featured in the homilies; as they were poor and not an area of their competence. Other than one oldman, who interlinked transformation and development as twin concepts. They could not show anything that spurs development for societal change and upliftment of the lives of people for the here and now. The other reason was poverty, and the question was: how can we preach development when we are poor ourselves?

The problem was further compounded by the denial of education for their Pastors by saying that the Spirit will teach them, they need no human teacher. Since education is key to development, transformation and healing, the denial thereof is a disadvantage in all cases.

Healing: The Tshigubu Church was found to be excelling in spiritual healing ministry and had no societal healing in place no clinic, and no hospitals to show. Their emphasis on spiritual healing does down play the healing of modern medicine.

- **Lutheran Church Lessons**

Transformation: The Lutherans were very articulate on the issue of transformation, their view was spiritual and emphasized on conversion. They also had formed a transformation desk which never took off the ground. Having a rich reformation history globally and in Venda, one could have expected more from these pioneers of spiritual and educational life of the whole Venda.

Development: The Lutherans looked at development holistically, but practically, they could not bring out any societal oriented development other than the building of good

church buildings. It, appears that the concept of development to churches is still a worldly phenomenon, that is taken as an unspiritual thing to engage in. Although in Venda the Lutherans are pioneers, they have not promoted any visible societal development other than being champions in education. However, globally the Lutheran World Federation, has been at the fore-front of making bore holes for clean water, building schools and clinics around the world in rural villages.

Healing: It is hard to pin point any clinic or hospital in Venda which was started by Lutherans. It can be accurate to say that healing has happened through preaching and teaching of the word of God, but no visible societal centre for healing ministry can be credited to have been pioneered by Lutherans.

- **Calvary lessons**

Transformation: Like their counterpart this has been emphasized and well articulated in their homilies which are conversion focused. A personal, changed life is attributed to being born from above; which is rebirth or regeneration.

Development: This has been addressed more in emplacing personal development as their homilies are geared to convert, develop the inner person and improve their lives. One can surmise that although they have touched the individual, there still is a need to focus on the societal development in order to bring a holistic approach for societal progress in this rural Venda.

Healing: Like in development they emphasize their call on inner healing through counseling although even on laying of hands.

They believe that through the preaching which is counseling oriented the inner personal is empowered to handle the challenges of life. It can be said that although they emphasized on inner healing no clinic or hospital is accredited to Calvary Christian Church.

All three Churches have the scripture, the Bible in common and all responded that the homily was critical in their Church services.

#### **5.4. Preliminary Summary**

The researcher is convinced that the Churches and their Preachers with their homilies, done in with holistically balance can change the plight of many rural and urban poor. The radical Preaching of transformation, development and healing of society can release many from a mindset that blocks their own empowerment. Presently, there is a need for the majority of the village Preachers to revisit their approach to holistic homilies that are emancipating, developing and healing the people they preach to; in order to bring the much needed uplifting of the quality of life. The missionary era comes under vehement attack at times by some leftist mentality saying, that they were mere tools of colonialization of the third world. However, one observes that these pioneers worked hard with barely no resources to sacrifice their lives for the transformation, development and healing of societies in the mission fields; which were of dire need and severely underdeveloped and most cases naturally hostile against them.

It must be noted that during their hard times, they brought civilization although the merits and demerits of it is still debatable by people who themselves have not contributed significantly despite that resources are more and better than their predecessors. In some instances, the same criticized work has remained to be the best development ever seen and experienced in those rural villages. Give some of the missionary Preachers the credit which is due to their selfless lives, which against all odds, they brought transformation, development and healing in very trying times. We now speak of education, hospitals, Churches and a focused fight against illiteracy, ignorance, disease, poverty, underdevelopment, spiritual formation unto salvation because of these selfless people who spread the gospel light. It is proper to give credit where it is due; Preachers sacrificed and the reasonable progress traced cannot delink this critical role to the phenomenon in the study.

However, it is also true that in every human endeavour, there are those who abuse their positions and calling, but that should not over crowd the good work of the honesty majority of these pioneer Preachers.