

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 Relevance

Considering the pressure regarding the term ‘mission’, and the misunderstanding thereof in many sectors, it is the view of the researcher that an analysis of the role of churches in the black community in South Africa in terms of their missionary obligation is vitally important and long overdue. Moreover, there is a need for practical guidelines for local churches with regards to the manner in which to approach mission comprehensively. Therefore this study discusses the missionary endeavour under the rubrics of the three dimensions of mission: kerygma, koinonia, and importantly, leitourgia. The aim of this study is to:

- Assist church leaders and their congregations to view mission more holistically;
- Empower church leaders to be more effective in their missionary endeavours; and
- Provide a hands on and workable mission plan that could be user-friendly in the local churches of South Africa.

1.2 Problem Statement

According to Braaten (in Bosch, 1992:372) a church without a mission or a mission without a church are both contradictions. Such entities do exist, but only as pseudo-structures. Bosch (1992:372) states that in the emerging ecclesiology, the church is seen as being essentially missionary. However, in the South African context many black churches appear not to have taken their missionary obligation seriously, for which many reasons may be offered. The aim of this study is to research the lack of missionary élan in these churches, to discover the missionary challenges these churches face in South Africa at the outset of the 21st century, and to develop a model to inform and empower these churches in their missionary obligation.

1.3 Aims

1. To acquaint myself with the relevant and current mission research and publications in the fields of Theology and Theory of Mission, as they pertain to the subject of this thesis;
2. To analyse and determine the current role of black churches in missions in Southern Africa; and
3. To develop a sustainable model to inform and empower clergy as well as laity in these churches with regard to missions.

1.4. Hypothesis

The hypothesis for the research is:

The often expressed view that African churches generally have failed to become self-propagating churches seems to hold true. There are however mitigating circumstances that go a long way in explaining the lack of missionary enthusiasm and action within these churches. If the African churches are properly informed about their task, challenged to fulfil their obligations, and empowered to do so, they may yet play an important role in proclaiming Christ's salvation to millions of people in Africa as well as other continents of the world.

1.5. Research Methodology

The study adopts a quantitative approach as well as exhibiting a qualitative dimension. Firstly a literature study was undertaken, taking into consideration all the relevant published material – books, articles, research and reports, etcetera – that pertain to the subject under discussion. Secondly, empirical research was carried out with the help of Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical Research (IMER) at the University of Pretoria. A questionnaire was developed, enabling the researcher to analyse the missionary commitment or lack thereof in twenty carefully selected black congregations in South Africa. All relevant protocols concerning the empirical

research were honoured. More information on the churches selected will be given in chapter three of this study.

The researcher conducted his work from the vantage point of a participant observer. Being an ordained pastor in the Care Bible Church, he endeavoured to treat the subject matter as objectively as possible, although some of his own experiences and viewpoints necessarily do surface in this study.

1.6. Definitions of Terms

1.6.1. Mission

The term *mission*, as it has become to be understood and used by virtually all missionaries and missiologists in recent times refers, firstly, to the *missio Dei*, to God's mission on earth (Bosch, 1991: 389ff; Kritzinger, *et al.*, 1994: 40ff). Mission is *God's* mission, and it has a Trinitarian base: The Father sent his Son into the world; the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit. Mission, as the missionary statute of one South African church aptly puts it, is the action of the Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – with the whole world, through which He gathers a church for Himself from the entire human race through his Word and Spirit (Dutch Reformed Church Mission Statute (cf. Kritzinger *et al.*, 1994: 41)).

But mission also implies the *missio ecclesiae*, the sending of the church. 'As the Father has sent Me, so I send you' (John 20:21) was Jesus' message to his disciples on the day of His resurrection. In the Book of Acts Jesus added to his first statement: 'When the Holy Spirit comes about you, you will be filled with power, and you will be my witnesses...' (Acts 1:8). As Kritzinger, *et al.* (1994: 42) explain:

The triune God, Father-Son-Spirit, invites the church, us, to join him in his venture. The *missio Dei* avails itself of the *mission ecclesiae*, the mission of the Church. Mission, one might argue, is the reason for the existence of the Church.

Mission and church cannot be separated; they go hand in glove. One cannot exist without the other. This study focuses primarily on the importance of the *local* church as an instrument of God's mission.

1.6.2. A comprehensive approach to mission

In the past, especially in evangelical and Pentecostal circles, a relatively narrow definition of mission was used, implying that mission is first and foremost interested in the spiritual salvation of sinners. This meant that mission mainly referred to the preaching of the Gospel, to witnessing verbally and through the written word. Souls need to be saved from eternal damnation. This researcher, however, agrees with the majority of missionaries and mission organizations who, in recent times, insist that a far wider definition of mission is needed, through which the manifold needs of people in the world – spiritual, physical as well as psychological – may be addressed. People, not only their souls, need holistic salvation!

1.6.3. Missionary church and missional church

Missionary church refers to a church that is involved in providing and supporting missionaries to be sent to the ends of the earth. Mission is viewed as the activity that is executed by the local congregation, and programmes in this regard are run by special committees by certain selected individuals. *Missional* church, on the other hand, refers to the priesthood of all believers in the local church. This means that all church members function as a mission band, while the congregation is involved in mission including children's ministry.

1.6.4. Syncretistic movement

The syncretistic movement has to do with the mixing or fusing of Christianity and African traditional religious practices, as especially expressed by and experienced in the African Initiated Churches, where traditional beliefs, ceremonies, customs (such as polygamy), as well as traditional music play an important role in communal worship as well as every day life.

1.6.5. Discipleship

The term refers to the practice of winning people to Christ, and building them up for Christ. A disciple is a person who has accepted Christ as his/her Saviour and Lord, a person who is being taught and trained in the way of living for Christ and serving Him in continuing the process of winning, building and sending (1 Timothy 2: 2). Ultimately, the disciple is being conformed to the image of Christ.

1.6.6. Black churches

According to the South African Government, different cultures may still be classified into different groups, i.e. whites, blacks, coloureds, and Indians. In this study *black churches* refer to congregations in the Gauteng Province who have an exclusive (or almost exclusive) black membership.

1.6.7. African Initiated Churches

The acronym AIC refers to a number of names given to a specific group of churches that exist on the African continent. In some studies they are referred to as *African Independent Churches*, in others as *African Instituted Churches*, or *African Indigenous Churches*. In some publications they are called *Native Separatist Churches* or *African Initiated Churches*. This study has chosen the last mentioned name. Mission practitioners agree that these churches originated in Africa, founded by Africans and primarily intended for Africans. Most of these churches have adapted the gospel for African needs, and they are seen by many to be more relevant in their approach, style, and the manner of worship for African people, than the traditional main line churches.

1.7. Overview of the Thesis

1.7.1. Chapter 1: Introduction

The researcher firstly discusses the relevance of the research work, as well as the problem statement and the aims of the study. The hypothesis of the research and the methodology employed are discussed, a list of definitions of concepts and institutions used in the study is added, after which a brief overview of the thesis is offered.

1.7.2. Chapter 2: Mission, the fundamental task of the whole church

This chapter focuses firstly on the rediscovery of the close relationship between Church and Mission in the 20th century. Developments in the Roman Catholic, Mainline Protestant as well as Pentecostal-Charismatic churches are analysed. African views on mission during the past decades are studied in terms of the following questions: Did the developments in Catholic and Protestant circles find their way into Africa? Are there African theologians and church leaders who also stated their views on mission as the primary task of the church? Attention is given to; inter alia, *Ecclesia in Africa* (Catholic Bishops' statement), statements from the AACC and AEAM, as well as from Pentecostal/Charismatic, and AIC circles. Voices from within Southern Africa are noted and evaluated.

Developing a holistic definition of mission, that answers to the needs of our time, is the second issue. This entails:

- A description of the *kerygmatic* dimension in mission (for example, evangelism, conversion, reaching across the cultural divide, etc).
- A description of the task of *diakonia*, in all its dimensions (poverty alleviation, development, the quest for justice, ministry to HIV/Aids infected and affected, etc).
- A description of the perennial responsibility of *koinonia* in mission (planting churches, nurturing and empowering congregations, etc.)
- A description of how a church, fully committed to its mission, partakes in the *leitourgia*, the glorification of God.

1.7.3 Chapter 3: Overview of the missionary commitment of the black churches in South Africa

For generations the black churches were primarily seen as ‘receiving churches’, i.e. the objects of mission. Why? Why are so many African churches introverted, not extroverted, seemingly failing to rise to the challenge to become ‘sending churches’ in their own right? Why are most black churches not motivated to undertake missions? Do the typical missionary motives that played a part in galvanizing the Western churches to fulfil their missionary obligation, play a similar role in the African churches?

In order to begin to answer these questions, an analysis of the circumstances of twenty churches in Gauteng region is made with the help of a questionnaire (IMER). The understanding of clergy and laity in twenty selected congregations is measured, together with the commitment (or lack thereof) they have, the peculiar problems they face, the challenges they recognise, the hopes they have, as well as the needs for future empowerment are scrutinised.

1.7.4 Chapter 4: Towards the development of a sustainable missionary programme

Here the researcher discusses the development of a comprehensive programme, with special attention to the demands of *kerygma*, *diakonia*, *koinonia*, and *leitourgia*. Furthermore, an appropriate model is developed, together with a strategy against the backdrop of the South African context. Lastly, the researcher discusses a model that could be used in local churches.

1.7.5 Chapter 5: Conclusion, findings and recommendations

In the final chapter, the main findings in the research are summarised. A number of recommendations are offered for the attention of both the churches in South Africa, and of all who are interested in the study of missions in the South African context. Furthermore, areas for future research are noted.

CHAPTER 2: Mission, the Fundamental Task of the Whole Church

2.1. Introduction

It goes without saying that we need to see mission as not merely an activity of the Church. Guder (1998: 4) correctly reminds us that mission is the result of God's initiative, rooted in God's purposes to restore and heal creation. Furthermore, 'mission' means 'sending', and it is the central biblical theme describing the purpose of God's action in human history. Briefly, mission is nothing less but the way in which the Church gets involved in the salvation of the universe and the glorification of God (Bosch 1987: 11). This issue will be discussed further under 2.5.5.6.1.

2.2. Mission: the fundamental task of the Church

2.2.1. *Missio Dei*

One of the most fundamental discoveries of our times is that mission is not any person's initiative, but rather it is God's. Mission is God's activity. 'Mission is first and foremost to be regarded as *missio Dei*, God's mission on earth' (Kritzinger, Meiring, & Saayman 1994: 40). According to Bosch, mission needs to be understood as being derived from the nature of God, and to be placed in the context of the doctrine of the Trinity. The classical doctrine on the *missio Dei* as God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit, was expanded to include yet another, namely the *missio ecclesiae*: Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit sending the church into the world (1991: 390).

Mission was not always seen in this light. Mission was understood in a variety of ways by the past generations. Sometimes it was interpreted primarily in *soteriological* terms: the activity of people crossing the globe, saving individuals from eternal damnation. Or mission was understood in *cultural* terms: as introducing people from the East and the South to the blessings and privileges of the so-called Christian West. Often mission was regarded in *ecclesiastical* terms: as the expansion of the church across the globe. Sometimes mission was defined as salvation —historically: that is, the process by which the world would be transformed into the kingdom of God

(Bosch 1991: 389; Kritzinger *et al.*, 1994:41). Finally, at the Brandenburg missionary conference in Berlin in 1932, Karl Barth defined mission as the activity not of men [sic], but of God himself. Soon other theologians and missiologists identified themselves with his position. Since the Second World War, many theologians in different parts of the world have identified themselves with this viewpoint. In Germany, Holland, England, even in South Africa, missiologists defined mission in forms of *missio Dei / mission ecclesiae* – and in recent times American theologians have followed suit (Bosch 389ff; Meiring 1968:172ff; Verkuyl 1975: 269ff; Orchard 1964: 28ff, etc). At numerous ecumenical and missionary conferences – inter alia the Willingen meeting and the IMC (1952) – the concept was further developed (Bosch 1991: 398). In the present time and era, virtually all Christian traditions, that is, Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, Charismatics etcetera, align themselves with this view (Chin Chung 2006: 15).

2.2.2. *Missio Ecclesiae*

Mission understood as God's mission does not exclude the *mission ecclesiae*, that is the mission of the church. Rather, it should be noted that the *missio Dei* avails itself of the *mission ecclesiae*; the former leads to the latter. The main reason for the existence of the mission is the church (Kritzinger *et al.* 1994: 42). Conversely, it is widely accepted by noted missiologists and theologians that practically speaking, church and mission can never be separated, that the one cannot exist without the other. Conversely, mission is at the heart of the church's life: rather than to be seen as one aspect of its existence, it is indeed defining its essence. Furthermore, the church is by nature missionary to the extent that, if it ceases to be missionary, it has not just failed in one of its tasks, but it has ceased to be the church (Kirk 1999: 30). It is noted that, theologically and practically speaking, church and mission are inseparable; one cannot exist without the other, but as Kritzinger *et al.* (1994) and Kirk (1999:30) all agree, it took many centuries for the church to rediscover this biblical truth, that it was the essence of the church, not of other organizations or agencies, to be involved in missionary enterprise. Mission is the task of the entire church (Verkuyl 1975: 269 ff).

According to leading missiologists, the paradigm shift towards understanding mission as the main task of the whole church has been made in the twentieth century. Kritzinger *et al.* (1994:43) succinctly point out that already at the Edinburgh Conference (1910) it had been stated that the entire church is a missionary organization. Referring to the church, Neill (1968: 76) quoting William Temple, observes that the church is the only society in the world which exists for the sake of those who are not members of it. He further expresses the matter in theological language in the following way: ‘the Church is that body of men through which it is the will of God that the Gospel of everlasting salvation through Christ should be proclaimed to all men everywhere, to the ends of the earth and to the end time’.

In her missionary involvement, the church was frequently confronted with tensions and temptations which frustrated and sometimes totally sabotaged her mission. Bosch mentions the following: firstly, it was said that the church’s own spiritual inadequacy, including uncertainty about the foundation, aim and method of her calling in the world had a paralyzing effect on her involvement in missionary enterprise. Secondly, there was the perennial problem of the relationship between church and state, a problem which repeated itself in many different forms. Thirdly, an issue involved the church’s attitude to social questions, which includes slavery, the position of women, race relations, the attitude of Westerners towards people of the Third World, and the disparity between the rich and the poor. Lastly, there is the problem of the attitude as regards Christian mission to other religions (1980: 90).

Bosch (1980: 80) maintains that the four tensions and temptations mentioned above virtually cover all aspects of the involvement of the church-in-mission in the world. The ‘four fields of tension, time and again present themselves in new forms, so that yesterday’s solutions may be irrelevant today, and today’s legitimate action out of date tomorrow’.

2.3. The Church’s Mission in Africa: A Brief Historical Overview

In order to establish the role which the church at the beginning of the 21st century should play, it is important to focus, albeit briefly, on the way the churches in Africa, in the past, had understood their calling in this regard. To recapitulate: How did they

understand their mission? What were the main issues they had to face? What answers did they provide to the challenges of the time? What lesson may we learn from history?

2.3.1. Roman Catholic Church mission in Africa

The Roman Catholic Church (RCC) has been involved in mission in Africa over many centuries, proclaiming the Gospel and planting churches in a large number of countries. During the 1990s the African bishops, called together by the pope John Paul II in Rome, met a number of times to evaluate the work accomplished by the Catholic Church in the past, and to develop new strategies for the future. Whilst the role of the RCC has been recorded in many publications over the years, the report *Ecclesia in Africa* offers a fresh and inspiring record of the mission of the RCC, past and present. The African Synod Fathers, assisted by qualified representatives of the clergy, religious and laity, presented the pope, as well as the church, a detailed and realistic study describing the lights and shadows, the challenges and future prospects of evangelization in Africa on the threshold of the Third Millennium of the Christian faith (EIA: 7).

The Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops thoroughly examined the topic placed before it: ‘The Church in Africa and her evangelizing mission towards the year 2000’: ‘You shall be my witness, from Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the remotest parts of the World’ (Acts 1: 8). The document considered the current situation of the *Church in Africa*, recalling the different phases of missionary commitment. The researcher will examine, with the document at hand, the development of the Catholic understanding of mission in Africa, as well as the way in which the Catholic Church understands its missionary responsibility at the beginning of the 21st century (EIA: 7-11), given the important role the Catholic Church is playing in Africa – according to the researcher it is estimated that nearly half the Christian community profess to be Catholic, and it is confirmed by notable missiologists that the Roman Catholic Church has by far the largest number of adherents of any Christian Church in the world.

2.3.1.1. A brief history of the Roman Catholic Church's contribution to the evangelizing of Africa

African bishops report that the history of the Catholic Church goes back to the period of the Church's very birth. The first centuries of Christianity saw the evangelization of Egypt and North Africa. The second phase took place in the fifteen and sixteenth centuries. The third phase, marked by extraordinary missionary effort, began in the nineteenth century (Paul II EIA: 30). Referring to the history of RCM especially in Africa, Paul II (EIA: 31) stated that:

We think of the Christian Churches of Africa whose origins go back to the times of the Apostles and are traditionally associated with the name and teaching of Mark the Evangelist. We think of their countless Saints, martyrs, Confessors and Virgins, and recall the fact that from the second to the fourth centuries, Christian life in the North of Africa was most vigorous and had a leading place in theological study and literary production. The names of the great doctors and writers come to mind, men like Origen, Saint Athanasius, and Saint Cyril, leaders of the Alexandrian School, and at the other end of the North African coastline, Tertullian, Saint Cyprian and above all Saint Augustine, one of the most brilliant lights of the Christian world.....

It is noted that these Christians and martyrs laboured faithfully for the Lord. They offer examples of a committed and dedicated Christian life. Most of them suffered much for their Christian faith. 'They continue to give evidence down to our own times of the Christian vitality which flows from the apostolic origins. This is especially true in Egypt, and in Ethiopia, until the seventeenth century, in Nubia. At that time a new phase of evangelization was beginning in the rest of the continent' (EIA: 31).

The second phase, involving the parts of the continent south of the Sahara, took place in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The exploration of the Portuguese was soon accompanied by the evangelization of the regions of Sub-Saharan Africa. Remarkably, on Pentecost Sunday, 7 June 1992, at the commemoration of the five hundred years of the evangelization of Angola, Paul II (EIA: 32) said the following in Luanda:

The acts of the Apostles indicate by name the inhabitants of the places who participated directly in the birth of the Church and the work of the breath of the Holy Spirit. They all said: ‘We hear them telling in our languages the mighty works of God’ (Acts 2: 11). Five hundred years ago the people of Angola were added to this chorus of languages. In that moment, in your African homeland the Pentecost of Jerusalem was renewed. Your ancestors heard the message of the Good News which is the language of the Spirit. Their hearts accepted this message for the first time, and they bowed down their heads to the waters of the baptismal font in which, by the power of the Holy Spirit, a person dies with Christ and is born again to new life in his resurrection... It was certainly the same Spirit who moved those men of faith, the first missionaries, who in 1491 sailed into the mouth of the Zaire River, at Pinda, beginning a genuine missionary saga. It was the Holy Spirit, who works as he wills in people’s hearts, who moved the great King of Congo, Nzinga-Nkuwu, to ask for missionaries to proclaim the Gospel. It was the Holy Spirit who sustained the life of those four Angolan Christians who, returning from Europe, testified to the Christian faith. After the first missionaries, many others came from Portugal and other European countries to continue, expand and strengthen the work that had been begun.

Conversely, it was during this period that Pope Gregory XV permanently erected the Congregation *de Propaganda Fide* for the purpose of better organizing and expanding the missions. It is remarked that due to various difficulties, the phase under discussion in regard to evangelization in Africa came to an end in the eighteenth century. Regrettably, missionary endeavours disappear altogether south of the Sahara.

A third phase, marked by an extraordinary missionary effort, began in the nineteenth century. This was organized by the great apostles and promoters of the African mission. During this phase, it was evident that this was a period of statistical church growth, and of evangelization. For example, Pope Paul VI (EIA: 33) commented when he canonized the Ugandan Martyrs in Saint Peter’s Basilica on World Mission Day, 1964:

These African Martyrs add a new page to that list of victorious men and women that we call the martyrology, in which we find the most magnificent as well as the most tragic stories. The page that they add is worthy to take its place alongside those wonderful stories of ancient Africa... For from the Africa that was sprinkled with the blood for these martyrs, the first of this new age (and, God willing, the last, so sublime, so precious was their sacrifice), there is emerging a free and redeemed Africa.

Indeed, Africa was responding with great generosity, and thousands of people responded positively to the claims of Christ. The Church in Africa has experienced such growth over the last hundred years, that there is only one possible explanation: all this is a gift of God, for no human effort alone could have performed this work in the course of such a relatively short period of time (EIA: 34). The Synod Fathers wished to celebrate God's wonderful deeds for Africa's liberation and salvation by quoting the following Scriptures: 'This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes' (Ps 118: 23) and 'He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name' (Luke 1: 49) (EIA: 34).

2.3.1.2. Problems facing the RCC in Africa

According to EIA, the Bishops of Africa were faced with two fundamental questions: Firstly, there was the issue of how the Church could carry out her missionary obligation as the year 2000 approached. And secondly, in what way could African Christians be a witness to the world? The major challenges facing Christians in Africa were examined, and it was concluded that 'the Church which is evangelized must be in constant conversion and renewal, in order to evangelize the world with credibility' (cf. EIA: 47). It was agreed that there was an urgency and need to proclaim the Good News to the millions of people in the entire continent of Africa who were not yet evangelized.

The Synod Fathers (EIA: 48) 'affirmed that a true and balanced enculturation is necessary and vital, in order to avoid cultural confusion and alienation in our communities'. They further proclaimed a challenge to Christians to reject a way of living which does not correspond to the best of their traditions, and their Christian

faith. They further stated that, many people in Africa look beyond Africa for the so-called ‘freedom of the modern way of life’, rather they should look to their inner selves for the riches of their own traditions; furthermore, they should look for the faith which they have been celebrating (EIA: 48).

Apart from the challenges which are mentioned above, there were various forms of divisions that the Synod Fathers identified which prevailed in Africa. They observed that within the borders left behind by the colonial powers, the co-existence of ethnic groups meets serious hostility. Tribal conflicts are affecting peace in many African societies. This situation makes it difficult for churches to accept missionaries or pastors from other ethnic groups. This is one of the reasons why ‘the Church in Africa feels challenged by the specific responsibility of healing these divisions’ (cf. EIA: 49). The Synod emphasized the importance of ecumenical dialogue with other Churches, which must include the communities at large. They also encouraged dialogue with African traditional religion and Islam.

Indeed, honest dialogue means sincerity in Christian relationships and transparency in the process of missionary work. It must be admitted that while honest efforts are being made and have been made in many African communities, to heal and remove these divisions, in contrast, some churches seem to be moving within these divisions, thereby maintaining and consolidating them. Nonetheless, promoting and encouraging unity in the Church will help accelerate the rate of furthering God’s mission in Africa and in South Africa in particular.

2.3.1.3. Evangelization and inculturation

The Synod Fathers accepted the missionary obligation of the Church as a given factor in the life of the Christian community. According to them, ‘the task of evangelizing all people constitutes the essential mission of the church...Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the church, her deepest identity’ (EIA: 55). They believe that the church exists in order to evangelize the world, as a ‘depository of the Good News to be proclaimed...having been sent and evangelized, the Church herself sends out evangelizers. She puts on her lips the saving Word’ (EIA: 55).

It must be noted that according to the Synod Fathers, the purpose of evangelization is ‘transforming humanity from within and making it new’. This means that the proclamation of the Gospel to the world will eventually result in transformed hearts as people are changed radically from inside-out.

The Church in Africa, having become ‘a new homeland for Christ’, ‘is now responsible for the evangelization of the continent and the world. Pope Paul VI said in Kampala: Africans, you are now your own missionaries’ (EIA: 56). It is evident that this statement implies that the Church in Africa should stand up and become involved in her missionary endeavours, as there are many people in the continent and the world who are in need of the Gospel.

The Synod Fathers stated that ‘the Synod recalls that to evangelize is to proclaim by word and witness of life the Good News of Jesus Christ, crucified, died and risen, the Way, the truth and the life’ (EIA: 56; see Bosch 1987: 100-103). It is a fact which is well-known that Africa itself is menaced by outbreaks of hatred and violence, in the form of conflicts and wars. The Gospel of hope and reconciliation must be proclaimed to all the people. Furthermore, they stated that:

It was precisely when, humanly speaking, Jesus’ life seemed doomed to failure that he instituted the Eucharist, ‘the pledge of eternal glory’, in order to perpetuate in time and space his victory over death. That is why at a time when the African continent is in some ways in a critical situation the Special Assembly for Africa wished to ‘*the Synod of Resurrection, the Synod of Hope... Christ our Hope is alive; we shall live*’. Africa is not destined for death, but for life (EIA: 57).

Based on the quotation above, it is clear that the evangelization should be centred on a transforming encounter with Jesus Christ, where He calls each one to follow him in an adventure of faith. Furthermore, they stated that the task of evangelization is made easier simply because ‘the African believes in God the Creator from his traditional life and religion and thus is also open to the full and definitive revelation of God in Jesus Christ, God with us, Word made flesh’ (EIA: 57). Evangelization should reach every aspect of life, as the Synod Fathers indicated, encompassing inters alia:

‘proclamation, inculturation, dialogue, justice and peace and the means of social communication’ (EIA: 57). They also emphasize the role and the importance of the Holy Spirit in the evangelization of the world.

The need for inculturation was accentuated. The Fathers regarded this as a process by which catechesis ‘*takes flesh*’ in various cultures. For example, ‘inculturation includes two dimensions: on the one hand, ‘the ultimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration in Christianity... and the insertion of Christianity in the various human cultures’ (EIA: 59). According to their view, inculturation is one of the essential elements in world evangelization. Indeed, this should be encouraged as all churches in Africa need to become involved in world evangelization.

2.3.1.4. Agents of evangelization

The Fathers (EIA: 88) emphasized the important role played by agents in the evangelization of the world. For example, they quoted and amplified the following Scripture: ‘How then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?’ (Rom 10: 14-15). Indeed, the preaching of the Good News should be carried out not only by the few selected in the Church such as the leadership or priests, but rather, all believers in the universal church are responsible to convey the Good News.

According to the Fathers, it should be a special concern for the local Church, entrusted to the responsibility of the Bishop, to empower the faithful and to confirm them in their faith through the work of the priests and catechists, supporting them in the fulfilment of their respective tasks of evangelism (cf. EIA: 88). The idea of small Christian communities was also emphasized by the Synod Fathers. They believed that the Church must be divided into communities, small enough to foster closeness and warmth in relationships. The following is a brief explanation of how these communities should function:

They should be engaged in evangelizing themselves, so that subsequently they can bring the Good News to others; they should moreover be communities

which pray and listen to God's Word, encourage the members themselves to take responsibility, learn to live an ecclesial life, and reflect on different human problems in the light of the Gospel. Above all, these communities are to be committed to living Christ's love for everybody, a love which transcends the limits of the natural solidarity of clans, tribes or other interest groups.

The evangelization of the world is one of the RCC thrusts, but in addition to that focus, these small community groups are vital in reaching out to the world (see Onwubiko 2001: 82-83). The entire church, that is, laity and clergy, were involved in the proclamation of the Gospel in Africa. Lay people were trained to do the work of evangelism. Christians who occupied positions of influence in society, and in the work-place, were trained to become more effective as Christians in their respective places of work, for example, politics, economic and social works etcetera. The goal for equipping these Church members was that they should be faithful in their evangelization and be the light and the salt to the world. This emphasis should prevail in churches of the 21st century (Silvoso 2002: 153-164).

According to the Fathers, the role of catechist has been and remains a determinative force in furthering God's mission in Africa. The Fathers (EIA: 91) recommend that 'catechists not only receive a sound initial formation...but they continue to receive doctrinal formation as well as moral and spiritual support'. It was emphasized that bishops and priests should take catechists to heart, as this is part of carrying out their missionary obligation to the world. .

2.3.1.5. The Roman Catholic Church in South Africa

The researcher will look briefly at the position of the Roman Catholic Church (Thereafter referred to as RCC) in South Africa, today. It is regarded as one of the largest traditional churches in South Africa, and one of the faster growing churches as well. Kritzinger (1988:18) states that due to many external and internal reasons, the RCC was late in entering South Africa, but they did so, prior to 1850, with an investment of many priests, sisters and brothers.

The first small beginning of mission work of the RCC was in and around Cape Town and Eastern Cape, and during the 1850s a great effort was also made in Natal, although initially it was not successful. Mariannhill became a landmark. It should be noted that, before the church mission work could show much fruit in Natal, the RCC began some missionary work in Bloemfontein, which became a vantage point from where the interesting and fruitful work in Lesotho was able to begin. Moshesh, the king at that time, cooperated with missionaries to do their work in Lesotho. He further sent his two sons to accompany missionaries to the place he had chosen for the establishment of the missionary work. Kritzinger (1988: 18) states that in Lesotho, the place commonly known as Roma was established in 1861, and later, the RCC proceeded into Griqualand West and the Transvaal, and then into the up to South-West Africa and Namibia.

On the other hand, Bassham (1979: 300) confirms that the RCC mission work has increased enormously during the 20th century as successive popes in the first six decades encouraged support for the new methods of missionary obligation.

It is said that the Roman Catholic Church has continued to grow in South Africa, and it has been regarded as one of the largest churches, being second only to the AICs which will be discussed later in this research work. Hofmeyr *et al.* (1994: 79) provide the following comparative statistics with regards to the AICs, the RCC, and the DRC: 30, 1% of its membership is among the black constituency. The Roman Catholic Church has the third largest Christian following in the country as a whole – the AICs 21.2%, the DRC 13.5% and the RC 9.6%. It is remarkable that the Roman Catholic Church takes a lead in membership, which indicates that it does excel in its missionary endeavours. The following section will focus on Protestant and Mainline churches.

2.3.2. Protestant missions in Africa

Protestant missions followed in the wake of the Catholic missionaries, although, as remarked, they may be regarded as relative ‘late comers’ to the scene. Many reasons for the lack of missionary enthusiasm among Protestants may be offered. And when Protestants did awake to the challenge, missionaries were sent to the different

continents of the world. Jongeneel (1995: 222) describes three historical processes in the development of the Protestant missionary movement: *firstly*, the sixteenth century as the century of the initial unfolding, *secondly*, the seventeenth century as the century of the initial shaping, and *thirdly*, the eighteenth century as the century of the further definition of the Protestant mission.

2.3.2.1. Lack of missionary endeavour in Protestant churches

Neill (1964: 210) points out that during the sixteenth century, the Orthodox and Protestant churches were glaringly weak in comparison with the efforts put forth by the Roman Catholic Church. I will give a brief review of the weakness of the Protestant Church in this respect during the time of the Reformation.

According to Neill (1964: 220) during the period of the Reformation, the Protestant Church had little time for any thought of missions.

Until 1648 the Protestants were fighting for their lives; only the Peace of Westphalia in that year made it certain that Protestantism would survive – and in France its survival was precarious, as was made clear by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in 1685. Instead of standing together and waiting for better times to clear their theological differences, Protestants everywhere wasted their strength, with honourable but blind and reckless zeal, in endless divisions and controversies – strict Lutherans against ‘Philippists’, Lutherans against Reformed, Calvinist predestinarians against Arminians, Anglicans against Puritans and Independents.

Due to this weakness on the part of the Protestant Church during the sixteenth century, the church could not spread outside Europe. For example, Spain and Portugal controlled the sea-routes, and combined a certain religious imperialism with the political imperialism of their rulers. The geographical limitations were strongly reinforced by the psychological limitations of the concept of the regional Church, as Neill observes (1964: 220). It will be evident that it was difficult for a church which was so confined within the boundaries of a given geography to become involved in the missionary enterprise. Porter (2004: 16) also argues that the Protestants were

largely unproductive either of conversions or of more than temporarily improved relations among their own people. It is striking that at the end of the sixteenth century, the so called Roman Catholic controversialist Robert Bellarmine remarked on eighteen marks of the true Church and its activity. Neill (1964: 221) argues that Bellarmine made it a subject of reproach to the Protestants that they were poor in their missionary endeavours:

C 12: The effectiveness of its teaching. Heretics are never said to have converted either pagans or Jews to the faith, but only to have perverted Christians. But in this one century the Catholics have converted many thousands of heathens in the new world. Every year a certain number of Jews are converted and baptized at Rome by Catholics who adhere in loyalty to the Bishop of Rome; and there are also some Turks who are converted by the Catholics both at Rome and elsewhere. The Lutherans compare themselves to the apostles and the evangelists; yet though they have among them very large numbers of Jews, and in Poland and Hungary have the Turks as their near neighbours, they have hardly converted even so much as a handful.

This was indeed a damaging statement levelled against Protestants, but it is clear that there was an element of truth in that criticism, against which they could not defend themselves. To confirm this accusation, the Protestant Church had a saying that ‘missions are neither obligatory nor desirable, and our lack of them cannot be held against us as blindness or unfaithfulness’ (Neill 1964: 222).

2.3.2.2. The Protestant revival

According to Porter (2004: 16), the Presbyterian John Eliot’s story was taken up by later generations of missionaries as a shining example of selfless devotion to the missionary cause. It is noted that in 1632 he became a pastor at Roxbury in Massachusetts. He further learned the language of the Pequot tribe of the Iroquois.

After much labour, he realized that it was almost impossible for the converted Indian to live a Christian life, and took a leaf out of the Roman Catholic book, and began to form ‘praying towns’ (see Porter 2004: 17 & Neill 1964: 225). Porter (2004: 17)

stated that the fate of Eliot's fourteen Indian 'praying towns' provided evidence of the persistent problems such as prompting Indians to conversion and encouraging them to adapt to the ways of whites, including adopting their attire.

This led to the destruction of many Indians when their communities joined the hostile Indian forces against the colonists. Remarkably, Neill (1964: 225) and Jongeneel (1995: 224 - 226) argue that by 1671, Eliot, regarded as the 'apostle to the Indians', had gathered about 3,600 Christian Indians into fourteen settlements, and managed to train twenty-four preachers at the time of his death. His converts who dwelled in the settlements entered into a startling covenant: 'the grace of Christ helping us, we do give ourselves and our children to God to be his people. He shall rule over us in all our affairs, not only in our religion and the affairs of the Church, but also in all our works and affairs of the world'.

During that century Christians carried on their mission work enthusiastically. According to Neill (1964: 230), missionaries were accused of being pietists, meaning that they were only concerned about rescuing individuals from burning in hell, and would have nothing to do with community involvement. However this was not the whole truth. For example, 'in 1709, only three years after the foundation of the mission in India, Ziegenbalg wrote that one member of the mission ought to be given the *potestas ordinandi*, in order that the organization of the Church might be complete' (Neill 1964: 230). Therefore the approach to mission was holistic, considering the whole person so that s/he should be complete.

Importantly, the mission expansion continued through Ziegenbalg and Plutschau into India, and they were succeeded by C. F. Schwartz and J. P. Fabricius. Their aim was to establish an Indian Church, and apparently they succeeded in having the first Indian pastor by the name of Aaron ordained in 1733. From then on, the missionary work expanded to other parts of the world including the African continent (cf. Jongeneel 1995: 227). The following section will discuss the impact of Protestant mission in Africa.

2.3.2.3. Protestant mission in Sub-Saharan Africa 1700-1890

The history of mission in Africa south of the Sahara began in the fifteenth century, with the arrival of the first missionaries carrying the gospel from Europe. The story of these missionaries equally represents Catholics, Protestants, liberals and Evangelicals, etcetera. The document *African Christianity* (p.1) suggests that the story of the spread of Christianity in Africa during the last five centuries is far more the story of African Christians spreading the gospel in Africa than the story of European or American Christians spreading the gospel in Africa (<http://www.bethel.edu/~lethie/AfricanChristianity/Sub-saharahomepage.html>). The document further states that,

African Christians rarely recorded their stories, while European and American missionaries regularly sent letters to their relatives, mission boards and financial supporters in Europe and America. As a result we know far more about European and American missionaries than we do about the African catechists and evangelists whose role in bringing Christianity all over Africa is far more significant. The least here on earth, they are assured of greater honour in heaven.

The above statement confirms that indeed, even in South Africa, the story of the black missionary pioneers was not documented or properly told. Crafford (1991: vii) argues that white missionaries received all the attention they needed, whereas their black colleagues were relegated to the shadowy background. He points out that their names, including their surnames, were unknown, and that they were often referred to merely as ‘old David’, or the ‘black helpers’. He further argues that the fact of the matter is that these co-workers were the pioneers of the nineteenth century who prepared the way for the spreading of the Gospel in South Africa and beyond. Many of them started witnessing before the white missionaries commenced their work. Hofmeyr *et al.* (1994: 27) add that not only prominent and leading missionary figures took part in establishing Christianity in South Africa, but the lay and local black community and women also played a vital role in the first centuries of Christian history in South Africa. The Sub-Sahara Christianity Homepage (<http://www.bethel.edu/~letnie/AfricanChristianity/Sub-SaharaHomepage.html> p.1)

states that the Modern African Churches can be divided into the following three main groups:

- **Roman Catholic Churches** were founded by the Roman Catholic missionary orders. They have, by and large, retained the Roman Catholic Church's stress on the unity and authority of the Church, in the latter half of the 20th century, taken their place as full and equal partners in the world-wide Roman Catholic Church.
- **Protestant Churches** were founded by Protestant missionaries and retain significant identity with European or American protestant churches. They tend to stress the authority of the Bible and the need for an individual relationship with Jesus Christ as one's personal saviour. African Protestant Churches range from the churches of the Anglican Communion, which have much in common with the Roman Catholic community, to Pentecostal mission churches under African leadership, virtually indistinguishable from AICs, with regards to their practices.
- **AICs** are African Initiated Churches, African Independent Churches, or African Indigenous Churches, depending on who is describing them. They have typically grown out of a Protestant mission context, but, often in frustration over the Western missionaries, have pursued their own way and function without reference to overseas churches. They range from independent versions of western Protestant churches to highly syncretistic Christian versions of traditional African religions, which may use Christian language in reference to the supreme deity, but have no real reference to Jesus Christ.

2.3.2.4. The first missionaries in South Africa

Van Riebeeck, who was commissioned by the Dutch East India Company to establish a victualling station at Cape Town, arrived there on April 6, 1652. He was considered to be a religious man, and desired to spread the knowledge of the Christian faith amongst the native population (Robinson 1915: 309). It seems clear that Van Riebeeck was determined to maintain a good and sound relationship with the

nationals of South Africa. He was vehemently against any ill-treatment of the indigenous people. According to Cronje (1982: 11), Van Riebeeck succinctly stated that whoever ill-treated the indigenous people in whatever way should in turn be punished, and that this should be seen as against the will of indigenous people. However, Hofmeyr *et al.* (1994: 22) contend that the first goal of the Dutch East Indian Company was not to convert people but rather to become a successful commercial enterprise. The limited amount of mission work among the Khoikhoi and the slaves during this period was carried out as a private initiative of certain individuals and was disorganized in nature. Apparently, their attempt to evangelise the indigenous people was disheartening, and in 1655, they reported to Amsterdam that their attempt to evangelise was to no avail. In their own words, ‘we have attempted without success, to instruct them in reading and writing because they will not remain with one... for they are so accustomed to run wild’ (Cronje 1982: 12).

The first successful move was performed when mission work was pioneered amongst the Hottentots during the era of Pieter van der Stael. It began when a young Hottentot girl became a servant of Commander van Riebeeck’s wife. They took an interest in the girl’s spiritual growth, and on the 3rd May 1662, the girl was baptised as Eva, who became ‘the first indigenous person to become a Christian in South Africa’ (Cronje 1982: 12).

Furthermore, according to Neill (1964: 310) a few efforts had been made by the Moravians to evangelise the African people of the South; their first pioneer, George Schmidt, regarded as the first Protestant missionary to South Africa, arrived in 1737. However, according to Robinson (1915: 309), he was forced to return to Europe in 1743, after baptizing five Hottentots, as a consequence of the opposition of the Dutch Ministers. He left behind 49 adherents, including those who had been baptized.

In 1775, during the course of the Napoleonic war, the British took over the Cape; and what was then called the ‘Cape Colony’ remained a part of the British Commonwealth of Nations, effectively until 1960. The British Christians took the lead in missionary work, but the racial clash between black and white affected their efforts in reaching out with the gospel. However, a few individuals left a mark with regards to their missionary efforts.

The first individual who tried to escape his religious home was John Theodore Vanderkemp, who served as a deacon for a period of 15 years away from his parents. When he was only 15 years old he witnessed a terrible scene where his wife and daughter drowned before his eyes in a boat accident, and that scenario led him to repent and dedicate his life to the missionary enterprise. He offered himself to serve with the London Missionary Society (LMS). He was accepted and was assigned to Cape Town where he arrived in the year 1799 (cf. Neill 1964: 311).

In his missionary endeavours, John Theodorus Vanderkemp is remembered by his compassion for the needy and the poor people to whom he ministered. He for example, did much work which was concentrated amongst the Hottentots for whom he established a city of refuge at Bethelsdorp about 400 miles east of Cape Town. He defended the rights of the oppressed. To crown it all, he married a black lady, a practice which was vehemently rejected by whites in that era, and as a result was accused of immorality, and treason. By 1806 he and his partner James Read had established a small school where Matilda Smith had run a knitting class for women and girls for some time (De Gruchy 1979: 12; Craffort 1991: 4). It appears that John Theodorus Vanderkemp and James Read enlisted a few converts, Jochim Vogel, Cupido Kakkerlak, Kruisman, Boezak, Samson, Jocham and Jacob, to carry the gospel as travelling preachers from Bethelsdrop to their own people in the scattered areas and amongst the wandering remnants of the Khoi-Khoi tribes (Craffort 1991: 4-5). He died in 1811, and left a lasting legacy of the virtues of pioneer missionaries who feared God and loved his creatures unconditionally (cf. Neill 1964: 313).

The second great figure of South African missionaries was John Philip. He arrived in the Colony in 1820 and was appointed superintendent of the LMS mission in South Africa. He held this office until 1848, and died in 1851 (cf. Hofmeyr *et al.*, 1994: 54). It is noted that Philip was an uncompromising candidate and supporter of the rights of the blacks against their white counterparts and therefore, he was best known and most hated of all missionaries, especially by whites. He further held the view that if a black person could be given the opportunity of education and training, without any shadow of doubt, the black person would prove himself to be in every way the equal of the white (Hofmeyr *et al.* 1994: 54 and De Gruchy 1979: 12). Neill (1964:312),

discussing the sentiments of whites during this time, states that the policy of Philip and his supporters led many Afrikaners to feel that life under British rule was unbearable, a scenario that contributed to the massive treks to the northern states of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal which later came into being. Anna Steenkamp (De Gruchy 1979: 19) furnished the following reason why she joined the Great Trek:

It is not their freedom that drove us to such lengths, as their being placed on an equal footing with Christians, contrary to the laws of God and the natural distinction of race and religion, so that it was intolerable for any decent Christian to bow beneath such a yoke; wherefore we withdrew in order to preserve our doctrines in purity.

Owing to his convictions, Philip was also strongly criticized by Dutch and British settlers and historians, including the LMS missionaries who had sent him to South Africa. It is remarkable that the criticism of both Vanderkemp and Philip arose simply because they were not serving the apparent needs of the white settlers and farmers, but striving to be relevant to the conditions and struggles of the coloureds and blacks (De Gruchy 1979: 12).

The third great figure was Robert Moffat (1795-1883). He was also sent out by the LMS at an early age with little education and no formal theological training. Dr. Richter remarked of Moffat that 'he is one of those in whom the vocation of a missionary has in outstanding degree manifested its power to produce great men and splendid characters'. After his apprenticeship, Moffat settled among the Bechuana at Kuruman, which was his home for forty-eight years. It is noteworthy that he laboured diligently at Kuruman for nine years before there were any conversions (cf. Neill 1964: 312 & Hofmeyr *et al.* 1994: 58). It is remarkable that, whilst in England, Moffat was a gardener, yet at Kuruman, in his mission field, he brought waters from the river through a long irrigation canal to the borders of his dwelling, and the nationals benefited from that adventure. However, in spite of all these commendable deeds, Moffat exhibited both weaknesses and strengths in his life. Neill (1964: 313) states that Moffat had no interest in the background, culture and intelligence of the African people. He left behind no legacy, or treasure of anthropological observation.

Furthermore, he underestimated their religious traditions, introduced the so-called unaltered fervent evangelical Christianity of his own tradition and ignored the possibilities of its adaptation to an African world. Bosch (1991:298) later highlighted this idea:

The western missionaries enterprise of the period under discussion (the post-Enlightenment period) proceeded not only from the assumption of the superiority of western culture over all cultures, but also from the conviction that God, in his providence, had chosen the western nations, because of their unique qualities, to be the standard-bearers of his cause even to the uttermost ends of the world.

It need hardly be said that Moffat wished to import his culture and tradition to the mission field. He might have believed that European culture is Christian and free from other ideological commitments. Simply stated, African culture was customarily rejected by Moffat and many others as being heathen or at least inferior (De Gruchy 1991: 45; 210). Bosch (1991: 304) states that consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, they were referred to as ‘the missionaries [who] became pioneers of western imperialistic expansion’. However, the positive aspects of Moffat should be noted. His work included linguistic studies and he became well known for his translation of the Bible. Hofmeyr *et al.* (1994: 58) state that by the 1850s, ‘Moffat had translated the entire Bible into Tswana’. Indeed, this was commendable. He remained at Kuruman with his wife until he returned to England in 1870.

The fourth great figure was David Livingstone, who married Moffat’s daughter Mary. He was one of the famous missionaries who served his apprenticeship under the influence of the older man, and demonstrated the qualities of a leader. As Hofmeyr *et al.* (1994:58) remark, Livingstone blazed new horizons to the north by means of his pioneering drive as a missionary and explorer. He drew many missionaries into Africa for missionary work and adventure. He is well known as a man who stood in support of the blacks with his zeal and compassion. At the same time, Livingstone did not always take into account the practical difficulties in the missionary schemes he promised; in other words, he tarnished his integrity. For example, in spite of his fame and influence, he failed dismally to prepare adequately for the ill-fated mission at

Makololo in 1857 (when seven out of a party of eleven died from tsetse fly fever) and also for the tragic start of the Universities Mission to Central Africa in the same year.

2.3.2.5. The Dutch Reformed Church versus the English Church

During the late 1820s, many Afrikaners in the Eastern Cape were resentful towards the British administration as indicated above. They comprised a small number of people and farmers who amounted to 10% Afrikaners in South Africa (cf. Saayman 2007: 37). It was not only the disenchantment that caused dissatisfaction amongst emigrants but also the abolishment of slavery five years later in 1833, which they found difficult to accept, while regarding this move as a threat to their independence (De Gruchy 1991: 18-19; Hofmeyr 1994: 165). Importantly, the ‘essence of slavery is dehumanization, for a slave is left as naked as a beast at an auction’ (Saayman 2007: 24-25). It is sobering that the Afrikaners knew very well that there was no moral justification for this atrocity, but they sanctioned it, and were highly disturbed when it was abolished. The emigration from British control was a process which took place over some time, but 1834 saw the beginning of the journey (Saayman 2007: 37).

Some of the reasons which contributed to this movement were: language (it was legislated that English should be the official language to be used in the colony); economic factors; and the acquisition of land and labour, which was extremely difficult to accept (De Gruchy 1991: 19-20). Apart from the loss of relationships among themselves, it is said that there was a serious difference of opinion in the church especially amongst the pastors, including the synod who vehemently condemned the trek (Saayman 2007: 38). Hence, as mentioned, only 10% decided to leave for the north to seek greener pastures and the land in which they could settle and enjoy with their families. Apparently, they were accompanied by lay preachers in spite of the fact that the church leadership neither approved nor blessed their trek (De Gruchy 1991: 19-20). Their journey towards the north was eventful and beset with dissension and divisions amongst them which resulted in two separate white Afrikaner Reformed churches, the Nederdindse Gereformeerde Kerk(NGK) or Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), and Neelesduidse Hervorinde Kerk(NHK), and the so-called Gereformeerdes. One of the areas of disagreement concerned religious matters, for example, the well known Doppers (Gereformeerdes) observed a religious practice

which involved singing only psalms in church, simple forms of worship, and a preference for outdated styles of clothing etcetera. Conversely, the cultures and traditions of the Afrikaner churches became more dominant in certain parts of South Africa other than the Cape Colony from whence they had fled (cf. De Gruchy 1991: 22-23; Sales 1971: 94-95; 144).

Saayman (2007: 38) states that the Great Trek proved to be very influential in Christian mission in South Africa for two reasons. Until then, the colonists had been confined to the Cape Colony and there was no contact with the larger population of blacks who were regarded as ‘heathen’ mainly because of the colour of their skin. The dispersal of the Great Trek experienced by Afrikaners made it possible for them to meet with more blacks, and this led to a greater DRC’s understanding and practice of its own missionary enterprise. The second reason was the growing importance of the Old Testament in Afrikaner self-understanding, as illustrated in the Old Testament imagery regarding the trek into the desert without Moses leading them; in their case, without ministers leading the way. It is said that the notion of Afrikaners being chosen by God gained momentum, especially individuals like the well known figure of Paul Kruger who later became the Transvaal president (Saayman 2007: 38-39).

Importantly, of all the mission stations in the Orange Free State, the well known locality of Thaba Nchu was the place where the various groups of trekkers came together in 1837 and 1838. It is noteworthy that here they elected their officials and drew up their first constitution for the republic of South Africa. Rev. James Archbell did an excellent job helping the trekkers to be more organized, together with Moroka, who was the Barolong chief, and who rescued Potgieter’s party after Mzilikazi had stolen their cattle. Thaba Nchu is also historically important since it is the place where the trekkers split up, with some forging their way to the Transvaal, and others to the region north of Thaba Nchu at Winburg (Sales 1971: 94). A quarter of a century later, most of the original mission stations which were known only as Thaba Nchu remained on the list of churches in the Bechuana District. However, the mission work continued to other towns such as Bloemfontein, Smithfield, Fauresmith, and Kimberley (Sales 1971: 94).

The basic reason for the Dutch Reformed people being in opposition to the English settlers emanated from the fact that English speaking missionaries were not only interested in evangelising the indigenous peoples, but also took an interest in other dimensions of their well-being, such as fighting for their justice, rights and land distribution, which caused bitterness and a rift amongst the Afrikaners. However, it is generally accepted that the real church's struggle against racism and injustice in South Africa only began to escalate seriously during the nineteenth century (De Gruchy 1979:13).

2.3.2.6. Further development of mission in the 20th century

Indeed, the Dutch Reformed Church increased its missionary activities during the twentieth century. Most of the mission churches developed the idea of ordaining African clergy and training teachers who could take over some of the work of the missionaries. For example, churches like the Methodists, Anglicans and Roman Catholics, were still recruiting their missionaries from overseas, but they further pursued that effort by recruiting from within South Africa, and as a result, the control shifted from overseas to South Africa. Furthermore, due to the lack of support for the emerging newly established black churches, or the so-called independent churches, they encountered challenges in regard to funding, and some had to compromise on control from overseas simply because of the inability to be self-supporting, but that problem was solved by the passing of time (cf. Sales 1971; 144).

Due to this rift between black and white Christians in South Africa, alternatives began to emerge by the beginning of the twentieth century. Firstly, they were at liberty to join the churches of white missionaries and their mission boards in Europe, North America, or those of South African whites, who were mainly DRC. Secondly, they could be members of multiracial denominations which largely had their origin in Britain. The problem with the latter option was that the black members were under the subjugation of white leadership and customs, experienced discrimination, were treated unfairly because of the colour of their skin, and suffered a great deal of paternalism. Thirdly, they could leave the so-called mission and all other options which were available, and start their own churches (De Gruchy 1991: 41). Little did the

missionaries realise that the Native Churches were maturing and that they could stand on their own. Let me fully quote Villiers *et al.* (in De Gruchy 1991: 42):

The missionary churches have been slow to recognise that the native Church is quickly leaving its childhood behind, and is able to take upon itself an increased measure of self-control. It is conscious of new powers and is impatient of dictation. Because the parent has been slow to observe the development which was bound to come, and has not been quick enough to recognise the need of directing these new energies to work on useful and absorbing enterprises, the Native Church has in these separatist movements wrested from the parent's hand what it regards as its rights, and has asserted its ability to manage its own affairs.

The revolt of independent churches was in way a blessing; it contributed towards their growth. They were able to move on with the vision of multiplying their churches amongst their own people and culture without any hindrance from the control exercised by the missionaries; they were able to contextualize their message in the culture of their own people. They taught stewardship to their people, and the importance of giving in order to advance God's kingdom. Apparently, they were able to develop the principle of self-government and self-propagation. According to De Gruchy (1991: 46), there were different opinions about the rapid growth of independent churches, but they continued with evangelisation to their own people, in spite of certain criticism, which was commendable indeed.

2.3.4. Orthodox Church in missions in Africa

Firstly, the author will furnish a brief general overview of the missions of the Orthodox Church world wide; after this the focus will fall on mission in Africa.

Since its origin, it has been fashionable in the West to say that the Orthodox Church is not a missionary church, a church that has often failed to perceive its missionary responsibilities. However, that is not a fair judgment. Ware (1964: 194) correctly asserted that anyone who will reflect on the mission of Cyril and Methodius, on the

work of their disciples in Bulgaria and Serbia, as well as the story of Russia's conversion, will agree that Byzantium can claim missionary achievements as great as those of Celtic or Roman Christianity during the same period. Remarkably, the furtherance of God's kingdom was closed in other parts of the world, for example, Turkey, but in Russia, where the church remained free at that time, it is said that the missions continued uninterrupted – although there were periods of diminished activity – from Stephen of Perm (and even before) to Innocent of Kamchatka and the beginnings of the twentieth century (Ware 1964: 194). It is easy for other countries to conclude that the Russian continent has not been involved in the missionary enterprise, but in reality, Russian missions have extended outside Russia, for example, Alaska, China, Japan, and Korea (cf. Ware 1964: 195), and these still exist.

It was remarkable that the then new Orthodox mission had suddenly spread spontaneously in Central Africa. Ware (1964: 195) argues that the Orthodox in America and the older Churches in the eastern Mediterranean, were beginning to exhibit a new missionary awareness.

The Chinese mission at Peking was set up in 1715, with its origins dating back to 1686, when a group of Cossacks entered service in the Chinese Imperial Guard and took their chaplain with them. Conversely, mission work was accelerated towards the end of the nineteenth century, although one should note that by 1914 there were still only approximately 5,000 converts, although there were priests and a seminary for Chinese theological students. After the 1917 Revolution, missionary work increased considerably, and a large number of Russian clergy and priests fled eastward from Siberia. In China and Manchuria, in 1939, there were approximately 200,000 Orthodox (mostly Russians, but including some converts) with five bishops and an Orthodox university at Harbin (Ware 1964: 195). However, the situation radically changed in 1945, when the government of China ordered all non-Chinese missionaries to leave the country and gave no preferential treatment to the Russians. Consequently, the Russian clergy, together with the Christians, were either repatriated to the U.S.S.R., or had escaped to America (cf. Ware 1964: 195). It is noted that in the 1950s, there was at least one Chinese Orthodox bishop with 20,000 faithful Christians, a remarkable figure indeed.

2.3.4.1. Orthodox mission in Southern Africa

It is remarkable that most histories of Christian mission, that is, ecumenical or pan-Christian, make little or no mention of Orthodox Church missions on the continent of Africa. The two possible reasons were (1) a bias on the part of many historical missions that were established before 1950, and that (2) even those Orthodox missions that began before 1950 were not regarded as ‘mainstream’ by the known historical mission churches, because they aligned themselves with the AICs (Hayes 2006:1). Furthermore, the Orthodox Church identified themselves with the struggle against colonialism, which happened to be an embarrassment during that time. One Kenyan author referred to ‘those who in their calculated ignorance misinterpret African-Christian-Orthodoxy as “paganism”’ (Lemopoulos in Hayes 2006: 1).

In 1908, Father Nicodemus Sarikas was sent to a community in Johannesburg, the recently-conquered British colony of the Transvaal. His main focus was that of a chaplain to the immigrants, but his interest extended beyond the confines of the Greek community. Since his views were at variance with those who sent him, after few years of operation, he decided to leave for Tanzania (cf. Hayes 1996: 385).

A few years earlier, in 1892, a group of black Methodists, unhappy with racism in the Methodist Church, broke away to form the Ethiopian Church. The Ethiopian Church later split into several groups, some of which were interested in episcopacy, and formed links with the African Methodist Episcopal Church of the USA, or with the (Anglican) Church of the Province of South Africa. In the 1920s one of the clergy of the Ethiopian Church, Daniel William Alexander, made contact with the African Orthodox Church, which had recently been formed in the USA, and eventually was ordained a bishop of that church (Hayes 1996: 385-386).

Alexander was consecrated bishop by Patriarch Macguire of the African Orthodox Church, and he returned to South Africa and established the African Orthodox Church among his followers. It is interesting that the African Orthodox Church was one of the few African Independent churches to receive government recognition in South Africa. One sign of recognition was that they were allowed to purchase wine for Holy

Communion. Conversely, before 1962, blacks in South Africa were prohibited from buying wine or white liquor. Hayes (1996: 386) remarks that

- This was one factor that led other groups, such as some from the Ethiopian Catholic Church in Zion, to join the African Orthodox Church.
- In early 1993 some of the bishops and clergy of the African Orthodox Church in southern Africa were received into membership of the Coptic Patriarchate of Alexandria, and became known as the African Coptic Orthodox Church.
- Not all the members or clergy of the AOC joined the Coptic Church.

In the following section, we will discuss the Orthodox Church and how it developed in Uganda and Kenya, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

2.3.4.2. The Orthodox Church in East Africa

It is interesting that the African Orthodox Churches in Uganda and Kenya did not arise through the preaching of missionaries from the traditional Orthodox countries, but spontaneously among Africans themselves. Ware (1964: 197) notes that, the founders of the African Orthodox movement were two native Ugandans, Reuben Sebanja Mukasa Spartas and his friend Obadiah Kabanda Basajjakital. The two were brought up as Anglicans and were converted to the Orthodox Church in the 1920s as a result of reading and studying the Orthodox literature. Over a period of forty years, Reuben and Obadiah preached their new found faith unceasingly to their fellow Africans. According to our study, they were involved in missionary work among their own people. Their report states that the number of conversions amounted to more than 100, 000, mostly in Kenya. Three bishops were responsible for the flock.

In 1958, the Patriarchate of Alexandria appointed a metropolitan of Irinoupolis (Dar es Salaam) to care for Orthodox Christians in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. Metropolitan Nikolaos moved his headquarters to Kampala as his base from which he extended his missionary work to other countries. According to Bosch (1991: 207),

Orthodox mission is centripetal rather than centrifugal, with people being attracted to Orthodoxy from the outside, rather than Orthodox churches sending missionaries out to the world. Hayes (1996: 391) argued that the growth of Orthodox Churches in Kenya and Uganda certainly appears to confirm Bosch's statement. It was largely the result of people in those countries seeking Orthodoxy, rather than the missionaries of the church from elsewhere seeking the people. Remarkably, the Orthodox Church in those countries may truly be said to be an African initiated church.

In Tanzania the same pattern as above occurred with few variations. As noted earlier, Fr Nicodemus Sarikas went to Tanganyika from Johannesburg, partly because the Greek community in Johannesburg was not interested in mission. Hayes (1996: 391) argues that Sarikas played an important role in East Africa in enabling the African Orthodox Church to become canonically Orthodox. His mission was not confined to the Greek community; he also reached out to outsiders.

In Zimbabwe, Orthodoxy was only confined to immigrants from Orthodox countries, mainly of Greek descent. A young Zimbabwean, Raphael Ganda, went to Greece for military training. There he learned Greek and Orthodoxy through attending the church services. On his return to Zimbabwe, he attended the services at an Orthodox Church; later on he and his family were baptized. He was sent to a seminary in Nairobi. After completing his studies, he went back to Zimbabwe and worked in the rural areas.

In these instances, it would seem that the methods of mission appear to resemble those of the pre-Nicene Church. From the fourth century onwards, most Christian missionaries were monks, but in East and Southern Africa, monastic mission has not been much in evidence (cf. Hayes 1996: 391-392).

According to Bosch (1991: 207), in the Orthodox mind set, mission is thoroughly church-centred. The 'ecclesial character' of mission means 'that the church is the aim, the fulfilment of the Gospel, rather than an instrument or means to mission'. Furthermore, in Orthodox missiology, the place of the liturgy in mission is crucial. 'Liturgy is the key to the Orthodox understanding of the Church, and therefore the importance of liturgy for the Orthodox viewpoint on evangelism cannot be overemphasized.' According to this statement, there is no message on evangelism or

mission that should take place before a reference is made to the liturgy or sacraments of the church. Bosch further considers that Orthodox churches tended to become introverted and excessively nationalistic, and were not concerned for those outside their camp (1991: 212).

In conclusion, the Orthodox mission in tropical Africa has been initiated by people of all kinds in the church, for example, a charismatic evangelist in western Kenya, a priest in north-western Tanzania, and many other bishops, priests and laity in all kinds of places. Mission has been both centripetal and centrifugal. What is more interesting is that missionary enterprise has been the result of African initiative, and the approach was relevant to the African people. This was contrary to that of their counterparts from Western missions who also brought some foreign elements from their original countries. Ware (1964: 199) aptly summarizes our discussion thus: ‘Missions are still on a small scale, but Orthodoxy is showing a greater awareness of their importance...yet despite its many problems and manifest human shortcomings, Orthodoxy can at the same time look to the future with confidence and hope’.

2.3.5. African Initiated Churches

Invariably, various mission organizations spawned churches everywhere, and these churches were engaged in missionary work in different ways, that is, denominationally as well as inter-and non-denominationally. Kritzing (1988: 18) succinctly states that in the twentieth century, many other organizations arrived from North America and Europe. However, he noted that an important development was the growth evident in South Africa where a multi-faceted movement of indigenous and independent churches was taking place. In the words of Kritzing (1988: 18): ‘These churches, together labelled as the African Indigenous Churches (AICs), have become one of the significant phenomena on the religious scene of contemporary South Africa’. The next section will discuss how the African Initiated Churches played a vital role in mission in the South African context.

The acronym AIC may stand for a number of churches, inter alia: African Independent Churches; African initiatives in Christianity; African Instituted Churches; African Indigenous Churches, Native Separatist Churches, African

Christian Initiatives, and several more besides. However, according to Pobee, *et al.* (1998: 3) the acronym specifies a category of church in Africa to be distinguished from ‘mission’ or ‘historic’ or ‘mainline’ or ‘established’ churches. What is unique about the AICs is their character as African initiatives and, therefore, their being in accordance with the African genius, culture and ethos.

2.3.5.1. The historical background of African Initiated Churches

The beginnings of AICs in South Africa may be traced to a prominent black leader by the name of Ntsikana. He was the son of Gaba who was a counsellor to Ngqika and who belonged to an important clan. Ntsikana, by nature, was a poet (also called a laudatory, praise-singer). As a teenage herd boy, he had overheard Van der Kemp preaching the gospel to the followers of Ngqika a few times. It is also assumed that, probably, he had listened to James Read on one of his rare visits to the Xhosas (Ngada *et al.*, 2001 & Crafford 1991: 19). He could not forget the gospel message which he had heard, and God prepared him to receive the message preached by Van der Kemp.

The notion that ‘Ntsikana quite possibly could have had his conversion experience even before the arrival of Van der Kemp, clearly rests on the theological presupposition that Christianity did not bring anything essentially new to Africa’ (Crafford 1991:21).

Remarkably, Ntsikana was only a Christian for about five years, and was never formally catechized or baptized, yet he was able to communicate the gospel clearly to his people, particularly in an appropriate and relevant way. Crafford (1991: 27) asserted that Ntsikana ‘was indeed a remarkable person’; God equipped him to establish the Church in the Ciskei.

In 1884 Nehemiah Tile became the first black Christian to break away from the Methodist Church to form an independent church which was first called the Thembu National Church (TNC). A notable missiologist agrees that this first AIC was called the Ethiopian Church. It was a proven fact that Tile was the first black in the history of the church in South Africa to openly and permanently break away from the church of a Western tradition (Ngada *et al.*, 2001: 4; Crafford 1991: 64). The establishment

of TNC was a breakthrough, in that it fulfilled the desires of the Thembu tribe by being relevant.

According to Tile's perspective, independent churches produce a truly African type of Christianity which is more relevant and meets the needs of the blacks, instead of copying the Western culture (Crafford 1991: 65). Whereas other notable missionaries felt that the African Initiated Churches served as a bridge over which Africans are brought back to the old heathenism from whence they once came (see Daneel 1992).

It is interesting that some mainline churches were concerned about the growth of AICs while at the same time losing their church members to these churches. For example, Thomas (1995: 17) quoted one of the Anglican priests as saying: 'our people are leaving the church to join the *separatist*', this he was writing to an independent Baptist friend in South Africa.

African Initiated Churches are also labelled as parasites, sheep-stealers, separatists, sectarians, syncretism, prophetic, nativistic, witchcraft eradication churches, messianic, Spiritual or Pentecostal Churches (Thomas 1995: 17-18, & Barrett in Daneel 1980: 105-106). The argument advanced by Barrett and others is that these AICs are heretical movements consisting of people who have failed to live up to the standards of the mission orientated churches.

However, Pobee held the strong conviction that to render Christianity indigenous to Africa, it is essential that it be watered by native hands, turned by the native hatchet and tended with native earth. It would be unfortunate to try and import foreign cultures and ignore the wealth that Africa should enjoy (Pobee 1996: 54). Importantly, the faith of the African should be sustained without any compromise to the foreign cultures. Indeed, the Western cultural orientation which is so prevalent must be rejected. Apparently, there must be an undiluted gospel that communicates specifically to Africans through the pre-historical symbol of their existence (Pobee 1996: 54).

Against this background, it is crucial to consider the AICs with their appropriate missionary outreach, a dimension which is overlooked in the church today. Daneel

(1980: 106) asserted that whatever our criticism of these churches, ‘it remains an undeniable fact that while a large number of mission churches have stagnated or shown little growth for a while now, most independent churches have shown consistent and even a remarkable expansion.’ The following section will reflect how AICs are growing.

2.3.5.2. Remarkable growth

In some parts of South Africa, 50 to 65 percent of the total Black population belongs to one or other of the African Independent Churches, which signifies an increase of between 50 to 70 percent during the decade 1970 to 1980 (Bosch 1983: 41). On the other hand, according to official census figures, AICs made up a massive 46% of the total black population of South Africa in 1991, compared to 33% for the older ‘mission churches’ (CSS in Maimela *et al.*, 1998: 400). Anderson (1992:58-59) made the reasonable assumption that at least ten million people could therefore be members of AICs in South Africa. Remarkably, more blacks in South Africa today belong to AICs, which originated within African initiatives, than to those churches which stemmed from foreign missions.

The classical example is that of Engenas Lekhanyane, who in 1925 founded the Zion Christian Church with its headquarters situated at Moriah, in Limpopo Province. Later in that year, Lekhanyane claimed 926 adherents in fifteen congregations. To date, this church has become one of the largest AIC churches in Africa with more than three million estimated adherents (Hofmeyr *et al.*, 1994: 262).

Furthermore, it is noted that AIC churches are among the fastest growing in the entire world. For example: according to an estimate of Barrett and Johnson, by 2025 the AICs, that numbered half the size of the Protestant churches in 1971, will have nearly 115 million more members than Protestants. The AICs in Africa alone have grown faster than those on any other continent in the world. Since 1960 the growth of the AICs has amounted to over 400%, and it is estimated that by the year 2010 no less than 70% of all AICs world-wide will be in Africa (cf. Kritzing 2002: 41). The preachers of AICs are succeeding in their efforts because they communicate the gospel from an African world view.

2.3.5.3. Unique contribution

In spite of the criticism of them voiced by the Western world and locally by historical and established churches, AICs have not only been growing numerically, but are also doctrinally based on the Bible. It should be self evident that ‘AICs are part of the universal church and have much to contribute to her life’ (Pobee *et al.*, 1998: 69). The historical church can learn a lot from the AICs, and the manner in which they approach the African people.

In conclusion, a remark which was made by Professor Mugambi should be noted: that ‘a serious danger exists that the church in Africa may be expanding rapidly at the periphery while it falls apart at the centre’ (in Bevans *et al.*, 2003). Conversely, the church must keep this truth in mind while we observe the rapid growth in AICs and in historical churches in general.

2.3.6. The Pentecostal and Charismatic missions in Africa

2.3.6.1. The emergence of the Pentecostal movement

Coleman (2000: 20) points out that ‘the term *Pentecostal* is derived from the Greek, and refers to the fiftieth day after the second day of the festival of the Jewish festival of Passover’. According to the book of Acts in the New Testament, the word *Pentecost* is linked to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit when the first Church was empowered for its global witness and received the gift of tongues (*glossolalia*).

The beginning of the Pentecostal movement can be dated back to 1901 when Agnes Ozman was baptized in the Spirit and spoke in tongues. This happened in the Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas, US, with Charles F. Parham (a Methodist minister) as Principal (1873-1929) (Maimela *et al.*, 1998:179). It is noted that Parham’s theology later had a considerable influence on the Pentecostal Movement. Goff Jr. (in Maimela *et al.*, 1998: 179-180) writes the following of him:

Born amidst a panorama of religious ideas and persuasions, he connected the basic tenets that later defined the movement: Evangelical style conversion, sanctification, divine healing, pre-millennialism, and the eschatological return of the Holy Spirit power evidenced by *glossolalia*.

Indeed, Parham gave the first impetus to the Pentecostal Movement. However, it is well-known that it was only with the so-called ‘Azusa Street Mission’ in Los Angeles, California, that the Pentecostal Movement experienced its first upsurge. Maimela *et al.*, (1998: 180); Coleman (2000: 21); & Anderson (1991: 26-27) observe that the name ‘Azusa Street Mission’ refers to what happened from 1906-1909 in an old building in 312 Azusa Street that had previously been a Methodist Church. William J. Seymour, a black preacher, held services in which some special manifestations of the Spirit occurred. As a result, numerous people gave their lives to the Lord, and many were also healed, and many people were baptized in the Spirit and experienced the accompanying tongues, including Seymour himself. Azusa Street became the centre to which people flocked, ‘received the Spirit’, and then carried the message of ‘Pentecost’ all over the world. Burgess (in Maimela *et al.*, 1998: 180) writes that

The first persons to receive the experience (of baptism in the Spirit) were poor and disinherited people from the mainline churches, primarily those from the Methodistic and Holiness Movements that flourished in the late 19th century.

The first avowedly Pentecostal Churches were the Pentecostal holiness Church led by Joseph King, the Church of God (C. G. Cleveland, Ten) led by A. S. Tomlinson, and the Church of God in Christ led by C. H. Mason. These churches were formed as Holiness denominations before the advent of the Pentecostal Movement.

Notably, the Pentecostal Movement spread far beyond the Holiness Movement and soon after 1906 Pentecostal Churches were found all over America, including various countries of the world. As Burgess (in Maimela *et al.*, 1998: 180) indicates, ‘In time, Pentecostal converts without roots in the Holiness Movement formed newer churches. Led by E.N. Bell, the Assemblies of God was formed in 1914...’ It should be noted that John Lake and other American Pentecostal missionaries to South Africa received

the teaching of ‘Spirit-baptism’ in Azuza Street (cf. Anderson 1991: 26-27). The Pentecostalism Movement also grew in South Africa as we will see below.

The Pentecostal Movement is undoubtedly one of the most vigorous and fastest growing religious movements in South Africa, as it is in several other parts of Africa. Anderson (2000: 26) alluded to the fact that ‘Pentecostalism has been successfully incarnated into a uniquely African expression of Christianity because of its emphasis on spiritual experience and its remarkable ability to adapt to any cultural background in the world’. Smith (1992: 47) describes how the Pentecostal Movement emerged in Africa and South Africa in particular:

It is generally accepted that the message of Pentecostalism was first introduced to the African continent by American missionaries. Two reputed disciples of Alexander Dawie who had been converted to Pentecostal faith, John G. Lake and Thomas Hesmälch, began holding services in a South African native church in late 1908 or late 1909. Out of curiosity, many whites attended. A large number received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Larger facilities had to be obtained, and they were filled at every service. David du Plessis, in a sermon delivered in 1938, said of their mission that it stirred the city (of Johannesburg). Jews and gentiles were saved. About that time, a Canadian, Charles Chawner, came to South Africa from Hebden Mission in Toronto. He was an evangelist primarily to the Zulu people.

Significantly, the Pentecostalist emphasis on ‘freedom of the spirit’, rendered it inherently flexible in different cultural and social contexts, and made the transplanting of its central tenets in Africa more easily assimilated. Anderson (2000: 28) concludes that indeed, the strength of the Pentecostal church lies in her power to combine an aptitude for the language, the worship services, which are moving, the cultural artefacts, the religious tropes, and the setting in which it lives amongst other factors.

The growth of Pentecostalism was indeed remarkable. Four well known groups made an impact in South Africa: the African Gospel Church, the Apostolic Faith Mission, the Full Gospel Church of God, and the Assemblies of God in South Africa. However, according to Kritzinger (2002: 20), the three oldest amongst the four groups are the

Apostolic Faith Mission, the Full Gospel Church and the Assemblies of God. These churches were established as independent missions mainly for Blacks in South Africa in the early 20th century prior to 1910. They grew substantially into fully-fledged denominations. There were renowned leaders who established these churches, like Job Chiliza, Elias Letwaba, Nicholus Bhengu, and Richard Ngidi. These men made a significant contribution to the growth of such churches in South Africa. For example, Job Chiliza founded the African Gospel Church in the Durban area, and made a tremendous contribution in Pentecostalism: he was involved in evangelism, healing, training in discipleship, and sent his people forth to plant churches in other parts of South Africa. He believed in discipling a few and sent them to continue the process of discipleship according to 2 Timothy 2: 2. To date there are more than a thousand churches established in all nine provinces of South Africa. Nicholus Bhengu also contributed immensely to the expansion of Pentecostalism in South Africa. Chiliza and Bhengu both left the Full Gospel Church and each started a church, one of which was the Back to God Movement, and the other the African Gospel Church. It is interesting that, in his formative years, Bhengu was discipled by Chiliza. Through the Back to God Movement there was an expansion of Pentecostalism which later contributed to the emergence of Charismatic Evangelicalism in South Africa. Bhengu has been rated amongst the pioneers of Evangelical Pentecostalism in Africa (cf. Mathole 2005: 184). Richard Ngidi was also popular in the AFM. God used him in divine healing, miracles, and pastoring. In his pastoral work, his local church comprised a mixed audience, including whites. This was indeed remarkable because of the apartheid laws which forbade that practice.

2.3.6.2. The emergence of the Charismatic Movement

According to Burgers (in Maimela *et al.*, 1998: 180), the Charismatic Movement started in the late 1950s:

The term charismatic Movement is here understood in its most common usage to designate what Donald Green in the late 1950s called the new Pentecost, namely the occurrence of distinctively Pentecostal blessings and phenomena,

baptism in the Holy Spirit with the spiritual gifts of 1 Corinthians 12: 8-10, outside a denominational and/or confessional Pentecostal framework.

A sizable number of ministers and members of non-traditional Pentecostal Churches experienced being baptized in the Holy Spirit with the accompanying spiritual gifts. Due to the openness and accommodative attitudes between Pentecostal and main-line churches, many of the people who experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit remained in their churches. According to Thompson (2004: 131), the beginnings of the Charismatic Renewal Movement in South Africa during the late 1960s to the mid 1970s were viewed as an ecumenical impetus between the various denominations. For example, it was observed that an experience of spirit-baptism, inter-denominationally, did enable Pentecostals for the first time, to meet with Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Methodists, Baptists and Dutch Reformed Christians. Various charismatic groups were initiated, which in most cases operated inter-denominationally. Moller and Burgess (in Maimela *et al.*, 1998: 181) provide the following brief list:

The Full Gospel Men's Fellowship International founded by the American Demas Shahariah; Mother of God in Gaithersburg, Maryland, founded in 1966 by two newly Spirit-baptized housewives, Edith Difato and Judith Tidings; The Word of God Community in Ann Arbor founded in 1967 by Ralph Martin and Stephen Clark; Emmanuel founded in Paris in 1972 (by far the largest of the European communities); and Maranatha Community in Brussels.

The impetus to the charismatic movement provided by The Full Gospel Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI) has been remarkable. According to Smit (1992: 118), the charismatic thesis is that 'the person who is filled with the Holy Spirit will prove more successful in business, make better tractors and automobiles than his competitors, live in a finer house... than the person who is ... not baptized with the Spirit'. Generally in their seminars, speakers are laypeople who testify about the power of the Holy Spirit and how they are prosperous in their lives. During their church services, the emphasis is on the healing and receiving of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Today, the Charismatic Movement comprises some 29,000,000 mainline denominational members throughout the world. In North America it represents about 18 percent of Roman Catholics, 18 percent of Methodists, about 20 percent of Baptists and Lutherans, and sizable portions of other denominations (Smith 1992: 117). In the South African context, some have formed independent associations of independent charismatic churches like the International Federation of Christian Churches (IFCC) (Maimela *et al.*, 1998: 181). These churches are mostly referred to as charismatic churches, although some of them prefer to be called Pentecostal Churches, which they regard as their real name.

Renowned leaders in South Africa who gave the Charismatic Renewal movement impetus to grow were Archbishop Burnett in Cape Town, Reverend Derek Crumpton in East London, Reverend Charles Gordon in Durban and Reverend Edmund Roebert in Pretoria. Most of these leaders came to find a renewed faith in Christ. The efforts of inter-denominational organizations enhanced renewal movements such as the Christian Fellowship International of South Africa and the distribution of their magazine, *New Vision*, the influence of the Roman Catholic inspired 'Life in the Spirit' seminars, and the numerous Full Gospel Christian Businessmen's meetings (Thompson 2004: 132).

2.3.6.3. Pentecostals and charismatic missions

According to Dempster *et al.*, (1991:261), an emerging lens through which to interpret the move of the Holy Spirit in the twentieth century distinguishes three distinct but interrelated surges or 'waves' of the Spirit.

The 'first wave' is focused primarily on the classical Pentecostal movement which started at the turn of this century and is represented today by, Assemblies of God, Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), United Pentecostal Church International, Pentecostal Holiness Church, Church of God in Christ, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, plus numerous smaller groups in various countries of the world. The 'second wave' is the charismatic movement and has its primary influence in the Catholic Church and mainline Protestant denominations. Although Charismatics would agree with the first wave of Pentecostals that the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the

contemporary demonstration of the gift of the Spirit are for today, classical Pentecostals would affirm that the Holy Spirit baptism is experienced subsequent to salvation and confirmed by speaking in tongues. Charismatics usually would not demand such a specific mode by which a person may enter into the baptism of the Spirit. The ‘third wave’ began early in the decade of the 1980s and finds its adherents primarily among evangelicals who heretofore did not want to identify with either the Pentecostal or charismatic movements. Distinctive features of the third wave include an affirmation of signs and wonders, particularly healing and deliverance from demonic forces and activity. The baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues do not tend to be a focal point for the third wave participants, who view themselves as neither Pentecostal nor Charismatics but simply open to the moving of the Holy Spirit.

For the purpose of our study of mission, it is suggested that the third wave movement has penetrated deeply into the ranks of ‘evangelical’ missiologists. As Dempster *et al.*, (1991: 261) state, a ‘groundswell of affirmation for ‘power evangelism’ among missiologists found specificity in the notable Academic Symposium on Power Evangelism held in Fuller Theological Seminary in December 1988’. It is noted that over forty professors of missions from seminaries and evangelical colleges, all affirmed the long-held conviction of the Pentecostal movement – the empowerment of the Holy Spirit carries with it an inherent motivation towards global mission.

2.3.6.4. The expansion of the Pentecostal /Charismatic evangelization world wide.

The distinction between Neo-Pentecostals and Charismatic Pentecostals has been replaced by referring to both groups as Charismatic Pentecostals. However, the term ‘Pentecostal’ can be used narrowly to mean classical Pentecostals, or as has been explained in 2. 5, it can be used broadly to include not only Pentecostals but also the kindred movements it spawned later in the twentieth century, the charismatic movement and the third wave. In this research, I will use both broader and narrower perspectives. Let us look at the overall expansion in a broad sense. Wagner (1991:

266) argues that while Pentecostals grew significantly during the first half of the twentieth century, the most explosive growth did not begin until after World War II. He adds:

By 1945 there were some 16 million in the first wave of classical Pentecostals. Joined by the second wave of the charismatic movement around 1960, the numbers had risen to 50 million by 1965. Then they rose to 96 million in 1975 and to an amazing 247 million by 1985. David Barrett's projection, which also includes third wavers and pre-Pentecostals, for the year 2000 is 562 million. I do not profess to be a historian, but I doubt if all of human history has ever recorded similar growth of a non-political, non-militaristic, voluntary movement. The Pentecostal church stands by it... In 1965 there were around 16,000 Assemblies of God congregations and by 1985 there were over 107,000. This is an average of 12-13 congregations per day or 88 per week for a period of 20 years. Such numerical growth was not the direct result of a large missionary force. The missionary work began slowly in 1914, and by 1939, only 380 missionaries were in service. The figure rose to 1,464 regular missionaries from the U.S.A. in 1987, joined by significant numbers from other Western nations and the third world.

In addition to the argument of Wagner (1991: 267), McClung, Jr. (1991:65) also provides some of the more prominent features of the Pentecostal / Charismatic contribution to world evangelization which are noteworthy (mid-1988 appraisal):

- 332 million affiliated church members worldwide (updated by Barrett to 351 million by July 1989);
- 19 million new members a year;
- 54,000 new members a day;
- \$34 billion annually donated to Christian causes;
- Active in 80 percent of the world's 3,300 large metropolises; and
- 66 percent of membership is situated in the Third World.

Based on these figures, we can safely say that Pentecostal Churches have the highest Christian market share in as far as expansion is concerned. Wagner (1991: 267) noted that in Latin America, with only 10% of the foreign missionary force, Pentecostals account for over 75% of Protestant believers. What are the Pentecostals doing that other churches are not? Some kind of research must be done to determine the reason for both Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals. The following section will highlight the positive growth factors on Pentecostal/Charismatic movements.

2.3.6.5. The positive growth factors of Pentecostal / Charismatic Movements

Wagner (1991:267-268) and McClung, Jr. (1991: 65-68) both identified some positive church growth factors prominent in the twentieth-century Pentecostal missionary movements which have contributed to explosive Pentecostal growth around the world. However, we need to bear in mind that the expansion of God's kingdom is a work of the sovereign God. For example, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit themselves constitute the overriding church growth factors for Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals alike. There are insights and factors common to the expansion and growth of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements, which impacted hugely on Africa, as well as South Africa.

2.3.6.6. A Biblical theology of evangelism

McClung, Jr. (in Wagner 1991: 268) aptly says, 'Pentecostal mission theology has tended to be 'theology on the move', its character often having been more experiential than cognitive'. Pentecostal theology is seen most clearly in pulpits and on street corners. Biblical authority determines the beginning point for Pentecostal / charismatic missions theology and strategizing, even if this comes in the form of the informal oral theology of illiterate Pentecostals in many parts of the Southern world. McClung Jr. (1991: 65) argue that though middle-class theologians and ideologues in academic circles may relax previously held theological positions, practitioners who are in the field will continue to emulate biblical commands and models in their mission practice. It is noted that the strength of Pentecostal missionaries has been not so much in the area of missiology as in 'mission-praxis' (Spittler 1988: 421).

The proclamation of Jesus Christ is central to Pentecostal and Charismatic movements; it is the primary element of evangelization, without which all other elements will lose their cohesion and vitality. This has been their drive, irrespective of any socio-political or economic ramifications. Furthermore, it implies winning people for Christ in order for them to be transformed as individuals and enhance their lives so that they may become better citizens. McClung Jr. (1991: 268) concurs that the ‘Pentecostals have understood an obedience to evangelize as one of the primary steps in obedience in Christian discipleship’. According to their conviction, sinners who are without God are lost and are without forgiveness. If only they could hear the Word of God, they would be converted, changed and receive eternal life.

The Pentecostal and Charismatic movements are unashamedly conversionist. Wagner (1991: 269) argues that

They hold that Muslims or Hindus or Jews, along with atheists, good people as they might be, will spend an eternity in hell unless they believe in Jesus as Lord and saviour and are born again. The doctrine of universalism – that a loving God will see to it that all get to heaven sooner or later – is as foreign to Pentecostal theology as a belief in reincarnation. This theological view helps Pentecostals keep a strong focus on outreach and has been a major contributing factor to their worldwide growth.

Stemming from their convictions, Pentecostals and Charismatics have been known to consider evangelism their first priority in social ministry involvement. Thus they have been accused of being one sided in their approach to mission.

2.3.6.7. The baptism of the Holy Spirit

Pentecostal / Charismatics have been misrepresented in their tradition as the ‘Spirit movement’ at the expense of a firm, biblical Christology in the tradition of historical theology. Nothing could be further from the truth. McClung Jr. (1991: 65) argues that it is ‘their confession that the presence of the Holy Spirit will only give more and more honour to the unique and indispensable revelation of God in the powerfully

present person of the Lord Jesus Christ'. Glasser (in McClung Jr. 1991: 65) also relates this witness of the Holy Spirit to the Lordship of Christ by stating that

Many evangelicals have been challenged by the immediacy and reality of God that Pentecostals reflect along with their freedom and unabashed willingness to confess openly their allegiance to Christ. The achievements of their churches are equally impressive, reflecting their settled conviction that the full experience of the Holy Spirit will not only move the church closer to Jesus at its centre, but at the same time, press the Church to move into the world in mission.

Pentecostal and charismatic theology maintains the necessity of the baptism in the Holy Spirit as the indispensable endowment of power for Christian mission according to (Luke 24: 49; Acts 1:8). They also hold to the fact that Jesus, the exalted mediator between God and man, is the baptizer in the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3: 11; Mark 1: 8; Luke 3:16; John 1: 33), and that Jesus Christ continues today to do all that he began in his earthly mission (Acts 1: 1) (McClung Jr. 1991: 65).

According to Smit (1992: 129) the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian brings a deeper sensitivity to the reality of Satan and evil. In this process, the Christian who has experienced this power is better equipped to combat the evil powers which torment Christians on a daily basis. Furthermore, the baptism of the Holy Spirit empowers the Christian to teach, preach, and employ the supernatural power of healing, tongues, prophecy and other gifts of power, discernment, faith and the word of knowledge.

Wagner (1991: 272) contends that non-Pentecostal missiologists and missionaries are now learning new lessons about spiritual power from their brothers and sisters in the third world as well as from their Pentecostal and Charismatic counterparts. Remarkably, 'Power evangelism', to use John Wimber's term, is now being taught virtually across the denominational spectrum around the world. The classical example is Ralph Winter, the Editor of *Mission Frontiers* and the General Director of the Frontier Mission Fellowship, who argues that the Evangelicals' great problem is that they cannot see clearly how they can effectively fight the most serious types of evil.

He contends that ‘We need our eyes opened. Getting more and more people to believe in a God of love and heaven is not all that is necessary for His will to be done on earth’.

It is time that most non-Pentecostals and Charismatics pursue a careful study of the forces behind the scene controlling human, political, social, and economic institutions. Conversely, this power must be recognized as a spiritual evil power that controls the whole world according to 1 John 5: 19, ‘...and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one’.

2.3.6.8. A high level of faith

In Christian circles, faith is generally admitted as the universal quality and an important component in serving the Lord. Pentecostal and Charismatic movements have elevated faith to an art form. It is their belief that through faith, God will use them extraordinarily for the extension of his kingdom. They believe that through faith, that God’s promises become reality, as they are fulfilled in a believer’s life. Behind this tenet of faith, is the belief that all believers are Abraham’s heirs according to Galatians 3. Therefore, all Christians are entitled to the entire divine blessing that was promised to Abraham by God.

Coleman (2000: 28) concisely states that ‘as a born-again Christian, the believer is a possessor of faith, and learns to draw upon new found power not only through obedience to God, but also through specific acts that draw divine influence into the world’. It should be noted that Pentecostals and Charismatics normally say that they draw their faith from the Scriptures. Through faith they claim that they have discovered a new way of thinking and living which changes sorrow to joy, weakness to strength, failure to success, despair to hope, and defeat to victory etcetera.

In contrast, the term ‘triumphalism’ has appeared as a dirty word among many Christians. It has become disputable to expect every Christian undertaking to meet with success. Wagner (1991:270) indicates that the doctrine of the cross has been interpreted to suggest that Christians who are losers may please God the most. Small

is beautiful they say. This type of thinking experiences difficulty over time, coming to terms with the burgeoning Pentecostal and Charismatic growth in the world.

At the same time, Pentecostal and Charismatic movements are remarkable. For example, when they preach the gospel, they expect people to be saved because they issue altar-calls after the sermon. When they pray for the sick, they anticipate that people will be healed from their sicknesses. In the same vein, when they rebuke demons, they believe that they will flee. Biblically, they cite the Apostle Paul who says, ‘Now thanks be to God who leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place’ (2 Cor. 2: 14 NKJV).

In like manner, faith is applied in practical goal setting among these groups. According to Hebrews 11: 1, ‘...faith is the substance of things hoped for...’ (NKJV). Wagner (1991: 270) maintains that nothing past or present is hoped for. Only future things are hoped for. Affording substance to that which we expect God to do in the future is a description of goal setting and must be understood as an act of faith. The Pentecostal and Charismatic power of the baptism of the Holy Spirit has enabled them to see the future through eyes filled with faith and extraordinary hope. They attempt great things for God. For example, in 1976, Pastor Paul Yonggi Cho trusted that God would provide 50,000 church members. In 1985, on the 100th anniversary of Protestant Christianity in Korea, Pastor Cho believed that God would provide 500,000 more members. In most instances, the goal was accomplished. Later on he trusted God to provide 10 million Japanese Christians by the year 2000. Cho is a classical example of what is happening in Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. Non-Pentecostals may learn something about the significance of setting goals as an exercise of faith in expanding God’s kingdom.

2.3.6.9. A burden for the poor and social involvement

In His speech in the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus announced: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because he has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor...’ (Luke 4: 18). It is the researcher’s view that while God loves all people, irrespective of colour, nation or creed, in most instances the Bible indicates that he has a special bias toward the poor and oppressed.

McClung Jr. (1991: 66) argues that Pentecostals and Charismatics need to correct negative assumptions such as, for example: emotionalism, prioritizing personal experience over Scripture, a preoccupation with tongues, demons, and the miraculous, a minimal if nonexistent social concern. Sepulveda (in McClung Jr. 1991: 66-67) firmly asserted:

Pentecostalism – in spite of its popular origin – did not develop a social ethic which would encourage the participation of believers in social, labour union or political organizations, which promote social change. This does not mean that Pentecostalism failed to have any social impact. In contrast, the Pentecostal communities meant a powerful offering of life-meaning for wide sectors excluded from our societies. ‘What is overlooked’, says William Menzies, ‘is that Pentecostals have quietly gone about social renewal in unobtrusive ways, working with the poor of this world in unheralded corners.’

Furthermore, it should be noted that when the social activist Ronald Sider summoned representatives from the evangelical and Pentecostal/Charismatic churches for a dialogue on social action and their involvement therein, importantly, there was an interesting blend of ‘*words*’, *works*, and *wonders*, seen from the Pentecostal/Charismatic circles (McClung Jr. 1991: 67).

It is important to observe that in the twenty first century, Pentecostal/Charismatic churches are emphasizing social action as forming part of their evangelism. Such action is not an appendage as some would argue. These churches would agree with Bosch (1991: 404) that ‘Evangelism relates to social responsibility as seed relates to fruit; evangelism remains primary ‘the church’s main task’ but it generates social involvement and improved social conditions amongst those who have been evangelized’.

2.4. Towards the Definition of Mission

In the opening paragraphs of this chapter it was established that mission is primarily God’s work on earth (*Missio Dei*), in which He in his infinite grace involves his

Church (*Missio ecclesiae*). Jesus invited his disciples – also his followers at the beginning of the 21st century – to join Him in his mission, to be agents of his love in the world. But what does that encompass? This is not a question with an easy answer.

Indeed, mission has become a controversial topic in the church today. Not only is mission activity under pressure, but often the use of the term itself is called into question. According to Kritzinger (1988: 33) it can no longer be taken for granted that people mean the same thing when they speak of ‘mission’. Conversely, many Christians have their own perception and interpretation of the word mission. It has been understood in a variety of ways.

After having discussed the close relationship between church and mission we look at insights and experiences from many African churches through the centuries. The next important question needs to be asked: what then is mission? If the past missionaries and church leaders developed their own views on the theory and practice of mission, how can a satisfactory missionary definition for our time be developed? What does a comprehensive missionary programme entail? The following section will address these questions.

2.4.1. What is mission?

Bosch (1991: 11) describes mission in terms of ‘a sign in the sense of a pointer, symbol, example or model; it is a sacrament in the sense of mediation, representation or anticipation’. In another publication he defines mission as ‘the Church in the form of a servant reaching out over boundaries’ (1979: 248). The popular definition of missions is defined as *cross-cultural evangelization*.

Bosch (1991: 389) and Kritzinger (2000: 93) concur that some people interpreted mission primarily in soteriological terms: simply, as the spreading of the good news about the salvific work of Jesus Christ, or rather, of saving individuals from eternal damnation. They contend that this is the church’s main and central task: to seek the lost, and gather them into churches. Kritzinger (1988: 33) argues that according to

these missiologists, the means of mission are the preaching, witnessing, and proclamation. He adds:

The methods will be a combination of the different oral, visual and audio-visual communication media. All mission activity ought to be directed towards the ultimate goal, namely the conversion of people to the Lord Jesus (discipling). The planting and growth of living local churches would not only be the end result, but also the measure of the success of the mission. Mission therefore is evangelism, i.e. the communication of the good news of salvation to those outside the church.

The missiological discussions according to the argument above centre on the question whether all people should hear the gospel preached in an intelligible way, or whether, the evangelistic task could be seen as completed when every person (*panta ta ethne* – Math 28: 19; 24: 14) has heard it in his / her own language and idiom, according to (Bosch 1992: 64). Kritzinger further argues that

These people prefer to use the term ‘missions’ (in plural), indicating the many cross-cultural outreaches to the ‘unreached peoples’. Mission is the task of evangelizing the unreached, ‘discipling the nations’. The church in its mission should not be tempted to give too much attention to other worthy issues, such as denouncing discrimination, working for justice, battling poverty, or seeking a better life for all, but focus on the main issue of people’s eternal bliss. The task of missions researchers is first and foremost to identify and study these unreached peoples, and secondly to concentrate on devising strategies to reach them.

This is rather a one-sided approach to mission. Furthermore, it should be said that this teaching was influenced by a paradigm shift during the Enlightenment which considered the physical and spiritual as being quite separate and distinct entities. According to this approach, the emphasis is on the redemption of individuals from this corrupt world. Conversely, sin is viewed as a personal issue without the social dimension, and salvation is regarded as personal. Normally, people with this view perceive salvation chiefly in spiritual and futuristic terms. In contrast, Cone (1984:

138) cogently states that ‘the human future cannot be separated from being in the present’. Mission should be comprehensive, and thus be engaged in liberating people from political, economic, and social systems that cause injustice in society, as will be explained later on in this study.

On the other hand, others understand mission very broadly and would prefer to say that while the above is generally speaking acceptable, it represents only an aspect of mission, even if it is an essential (yes: even the primary) dimension of mission. Kritzinger (1988: 34) argues that mission is more than merely communicating the gospel of salvation. Conversely, a person is more than only a soul. Certainly, mission encompasses and addresses the whole of life, soul and body. Kritzinger (2000: 94) astutely states that the church’s mission is to be the church:

God’s people, Christ’s body on earth, living his (Jesus’) life. God’s mission (the *missio Dei*) is the starting point. The *missio(nes) ecclesiae* is the continuation, in a different way, but in God’s name, of God’s mission. The church is a missionary people. The church finds its identity and purpose in nothing else than her obedience to this calling. Ecclesiology is only a footnote to missiology. The church has only one task: mission. To know what mission is, is to observe God at work in the world – through history, but also today, especially through the good things his church is doing, but mission is definitely not restricted to what the church is accomplishing.

Indeed, the church is the continuing mission of God in the world. The church finds her identity in her obedience to God’s will and calling. However, mission is not everything the church is doing, as Neill (1959: 81) so often remarked: ‘if everything is mission, nothing is mission’. Conversely, the church is peculiar. It belongs to the essence of being a church, but it is not all there is to the church. Yes, it should be noted that mission is the church at work in the world, and the mission takes place where the church meets the world. Kritzinger (2000: 95) concurs that this meeting takes place when the Word of God is preached in a worship service and the darkness of unfaithfulness is revealed. Mission also means reaching out to people still ignorant of the salvific life and death of Jesus Christ and being relevant in our approach to them.

Missiologists who differentiate between the concepts of mission and social involvement formulate a variety of definitions. However, Bosch builds on the definition of Stott, and concludes that mission is the totality of the church, with the salvation of the world as a goal. Executing this task, the Church steps out of its limited existence and crosses geographical, social, political, ethnic, cultural religious and ideological barriers. To all these different spheres of life, the Church-on-mission carries the Good News of salvation. Eventually, mission is nothing less but the way in which the Church gets involved in the salvation of the universe and the glorification of God (Bosch 1987: 11; Stott 1992: 337-355). Dempster (1991: 22-24) asserts from the Pentecostal point of view that ‘the rapidly changing social face of Pentecostalism intensifies the need for a theology of church ministry that can inspire and direct the church’s moral engagement with society without diminishing the church’s historic commitment to evangelism’. Hoekendijk (in Kritzinger *et al.*, 1994: 36) stated that ‘the intense universality of salvation and the radical application of Christ’s kingship over the whole of life demand that we address people in their total environment’. The next session will deal with a holistic and comprehensive understanding of mission.

2.4.2. A holistic understanding of mission

The word holistic (stemming from ‘holism’, the philosophical notion that ‘the whole is greater than the sum of its parts’) is perhaps not a very satisfactory epithet to apply to the Christian mission, according to Stott (1992: 337). Yet it is intended to emphasize that authentic mission is a comprehensive activity which embraces evangelism and social action, and refuses to let them divorce.

It is important to note that the idea of holistic mission possesses deep biblical roots. This is not a human being’s concept or that of missiologists. In both the Old and New Testament, we read about the significance of a holistic approach. In the New Testament, for example, we see from the Gospel of Luke that Jesus’ personal example and teaching does not draw a distinction between the religious, political and economic life, which others do as we noted above. For example, Luke’s description of Jesus’ development as a young man includes the notion that Jesus was growing physically, spiritually, mentally and socially (Luke 2: 52). This is one excellent example of the topic under discussion.

As we read through the New Testament, we realize that Jesus was concerned about the wholeness of life. For example, the image of the Good Shepherd is instructive in this regard: ‘The thief comes only to steal and to kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly’ (John 10: 10). This quotation alluded to the fact that Jesus’ intention was to give life in abundance to people, which should be the present day mission paradigm. These verses, and others in the New Testament, provide a clear picture that Jesus ministry was holistic: apart from saving the souls of people, he also liberated them from the evil exploitation which was prevalent in his contemporary world.

2.4.3. A comprehensive definition of mission

It is imperative to view the Church’s missionary endeavour to the world more accurately. Bosch (1980: 227) argues that ‘since the nineteen-twenties, when the concept of ‘comprehensive approach’ in mission began to develop, there has been a recognition that mission is more than proclamation’. The development of a more comprehensive approach to mission led to the most adequate formulation that the ‘total *mission* of the Church should be viewed from the biblical concept *martyria* (witness) which can be subdivided into *kerygma* (proclamation), *koinonia* (fellowship) and *diakonia* (service). The Willingen Conference (1952) concurs with this view and further stated that witness ‘is given by proclamation, fellowship and service’. However, Bosch and other missiologists add another dimension: that of *Leitourgia*, *liturgy*, or the encounter of the Church with her Lord (cf. Bosch 1980: 227, Kritzinger *et al.* 1994). More will be said about these dimensions later.

Whenever we consider the *kerygma*, *koinonia*, and *diakonia* as the three elements of witness, we should be careful not to dissect them in such a way that witness loses its integrated, holistic dimension. According to Bosch (1980:227), there is a tendency to, juxtapose the word and deed elements into distinct, separate and self-sufficient concepts. God’s word is a ringing deed and his deed a visible and tangible word. The images used in Christian community in Matt. 5: 13-16, do not allow us to ‘establish which of these refer to the Church’s *kerygma* and which to her *diakonia*’.

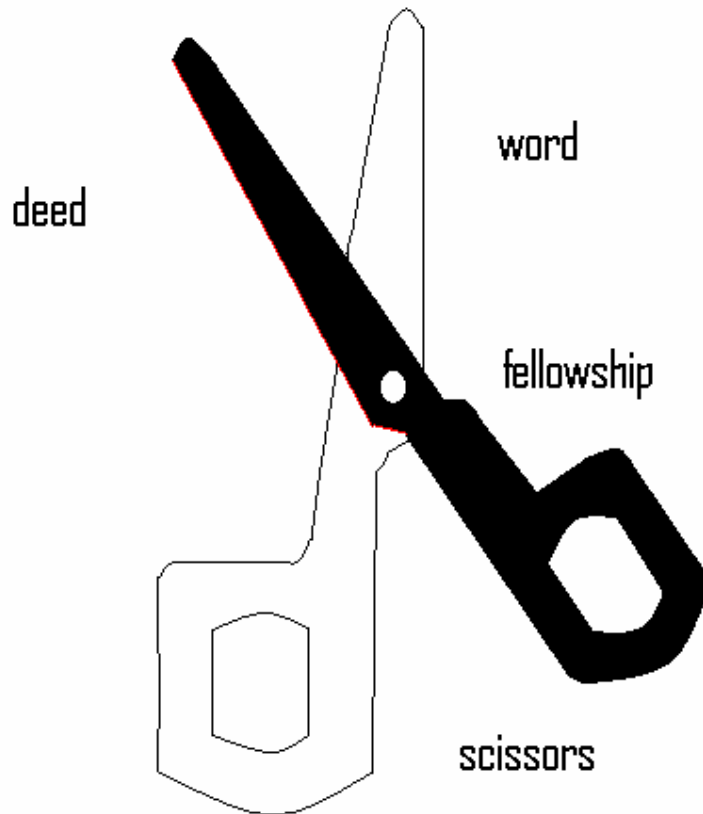


Figure 2.1 (Kritzinger 1988: 35)

Sider (in Bosch 1980: 227) argues that the ‘Great Commission’ (Matt. 28: 18-20) in *kerygma* and the ‘Great Commandment’ (Matt. 22: 39) in *diakonia*, resemble the two blades of a pair of scissors as pictured, which operate in unison, held together by the *koinonia*, the fellowship, which likewise is not a separate part of the Church’s task, but rather the axle which keeps *kerygma* and *diakonia* together. Kritzinger (1988: 35) contends that sometimes the word (*kerygma*) and deed (*diakonia*) are played off against each other as if there might be an either/or choice. But the truth of the matter is that they cannot function separately, just like the blades of the scissors need each other. Furthermore, they need to be fastened to each other by the pin, in terms of our analogy, the fellowship (*koinonia*). In the same way, God’s mission of word and deed cannot be fulfilled without the energizing power of fellowship between the person and God and human beings and other human beings.

In studying the Bible, there are other images of Jesus in the New Testament which portray him as someone concerned with the comprehensiveness of life. He combined *kerygma* and *diakonia* in his ministry. For example, the image of the Good Shepherd is instructive in this regard: ‘The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I come that you may have life, and have it in abundantly’ (John 10: 10-11). This Scripture briefly describes Jesus’ intention to give life in abundance to people, and this should serve as a reminder to the Church in our time. The New Testament describes Jesus’ ministry as the liberator of human kind from the world of exploitation and oppression. Bosch (1980: 63) writes that ‘in the Jewish religion at the time of Jesus, everything was prescribed and determined, first relations with God and then relations among human beings. Conscience felt itself oppressed by insupportable legal prescriptions. Jesus raises an impressive protest against all such human enslavement in the name of law’. Sider (in Bosch 1980: 228) correctly stated that ‘the time has come for all biblical Christians to refuse to use the sentence: “the primary task of the Church is ...”’ He does not care how one completes the sentence, whether with the word evangelism or social action. He considers that either way is unbiblical and misleading. Both dimensions are indissolubly bound together. If you lose the one, you lose the other.

Having made this point, it does not imply that we should have to check that every fragment of witness contains all the necessary elements of mission. Then we would not be practising the ‘theology of balance’. For example, the New Testament mentions a variety of gifts: healing, prophecy, knowledge, service, and so on. Consequently different Christians play different roles in the Body of Christ. The Good Samaritan did not preach to the victim of the robbers. He played the part of pouring oil on his wounds. This is what the situation demanded. Somebody who is hungry needs food, while a thirsty person needs water (Matt 25: 35) (cf. Bosch 1980: 228). John Stott also emphasized the significance of the comprehensive mission of the Church: ‘authentic mission is a comprehensive activity which embraces evangelism and social action, and refuses to let them be divorced’ (1992: 337). Stott’s concern to bring evangelism and social action together as equal parts of mission has been influential for many years. He holds that evangelism and social responsibility should not be separated; in fact, he believes that Christ sends the Church into the world to

witness and to serve; therefore, the mission of the Church cannot be limited to the proclamation of evangelism (Ayebo 2005: 205).

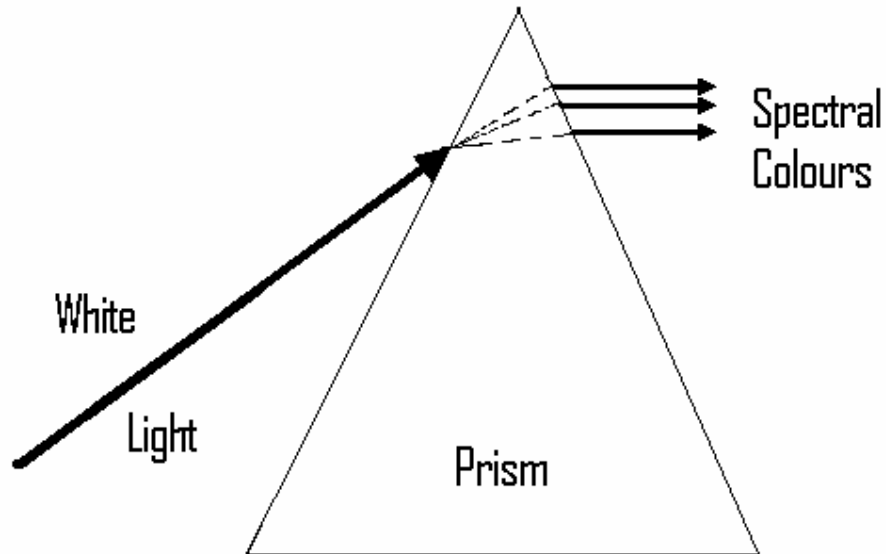


Figure: 2. 2 (Kritzinger 1988: 35)

According to Kritzinger (1988: 35) the prism pictured above may represent the real world. When the united beam of white light (the totality of mission) strikes it, normally the light is broken up into its constituent colours. The prism helps us to distinguish between the colours, but these colours should be seen for what they are: inextricably part of the one light beam. Mission is more than the sum total of the constituent parts: it should be viewed as being comprehensive. The next session will reflect the four dimensional understanding of mission.

2.4.4. The kerygmatic dimension

The Greek word *kerygma* means proclamation, and it is usually linked to the gospel or good news. As Kritzinger *et al.* (1994: 36) indicate, the *kerygmatic* dimension refers to all the various forms of the ministry of the word in mission, inter alia: preaching, witnessing, providing literature and theological education. The gospel begins with a major emphasis on the *kerygma*, as we see in the New Testament. For example, John the Baptist comes proclaiming, 'The kingdom of heaven is near' (Matt. 3:2). Jesus

declares that the reason he has been sent is to ‘preach the good news of the kingdom of God’ (Luke 4: 43). No sooner does the Holy Spirit come at Pentecost, than the disciples take to the street and Peter proclaims, ‘God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ’ (Acts 2: 37). Paul’s first sermon emphatically repeats the point: ‘I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Everyone who believes is justified from everything you could be justified from by the Law of Moses.... For this is what the Lord has commanded us, ‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles’ (Acts 13: 38-39, 47; cf. Luke 2: 32; Isa. 49; 6). Years later, under house arrest in Rome, Paul continued to proclaim the same message. ‘Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ’ (Acts 28: 31) (Van Engen 1991: 92-93). According to Dempster *et al.* (1991: 25-26), there are four implications which emerge from this interpretation of evangelism and the church’s *kerygmatic* ministry:

- First, when the church’s preaching ministry is intimately tied to Jesus’ own proclamation of the ‘evangel’, evangelism focuses on inviting people to respond to the kingdom of God. Despite this intimate connection between evangelism and the kingdom, theologian Mortimer Arias observed that ‘we have instead been preaching ‘the plan of salvation’, or some other evangelistic formula, and we have called that ‘evangelism’. It should not be left unsaid: conversion to a plan is one thing, conversion to a personal God and his gracious reign is quite another. Therefore, all these various humanly contrived evangelistic formulas, as Arias forcefully suggested, need to be brought under the penetrating light of the apostolic preaching of the New Testament, particularly the searchlight of Jesus’ kingdom proclamation.
- The Church’s *kerygmatic* activity also relates to the task of shaping moral identity. Conversion from a moral point of view means that the shift to a new centre of life provokes a transformation of a person’s moral identity and the system of values by which human life is lived. A vision of a new moral world – with its own set of character traits, obligations, and values – is resident in the story of Jesus and his kingdom praxis of love and justice. In the process of preaching the gospel, identifying its values and evangelizing people into the

kingdom, the church becomes, in the words of Bruce Birch and Larry Rasmussen, ‘a community of moral identity formation’.

- Third, the *kerygmatic* activity of the church aims to encourage individuals to become missionary agents of God’s new order of life. While conversion is a profound personal experience, its goal is to bring about a sense of existential participation in what A. Christopher Smith has characterized as ‘the eschatological drive of God’s mission’. Conversion within the Church’s framework also means that one has been transformed from being a subject in need of evangelism into being empowered as an agent of evangelism in God’s mission.
- Fourth, the Church’s *kerygmatic* ministry is crucial in bringing about meaningful social change. The eschatological and ethical vision within the Church perspective provides a meeting point between evangelism and social change. ‘As the self is delivered from itself and reoriented so that God is at the centre’, Mott observed in his study on *Biblical Ethics and Social Change*, ‘the hampering hold of self-will is released and the person’s latent creative and benevolent impulses are given free play’. Genuine conversion does create a transformation of personal character that alters one’s immediate network of social relationships and also has potential to stimulate activism for social change.

From Dempster and his co-authors, it is clear that the *kerygmatic* ministry of the Church should not only aim at converting people in order to go to heaven, but every person including the poor, needs to experience a deep personal conversion in which God’s reign becomes the transforming centre of life. It goes without saying that changed lives in the form of conversion are foundational for activating moral behaviour, missionary zeal, and social change.

2.4.5. The diaconal dimension

The Greek word *diakonia* literally means ‘service’, or ‘ministry’. The various community outreach programmes constitute the Church’s *diakonic* ministry. Kritzinger *et al.* (1994: 37) asserted that the diaconal dimension of mission simply refers to the various forms of ministry and service in which the Christian community, in imitation of Jesus of Nazareth, puts itself at the service of the whole world. As Dempster *et al.* (1991: 32) argue, while it is important to keep the Church’s *diakonic*, *koinoniac*, and *kerygmatic* ministries conceptually discrete, it is imperative that the Church’s programmes and activities, instituted in order to minister to the needs of people outside the Christian community, should be understood in concert with proclaiming and modelling the gospel. Simply put, the Church’s *diakonic* ministry is more than a theologically based version of the international Red Cross.

It should be noted that by fulfilling its *diakonia* role the Church can rightfully and meaningfully be involved in establishing justice, righteousness, and peace. According to Van Engen (1991: 96-97), the New Testament teaching assumes that the diaconal dimension focuses beyond the Christian community. It calls the Church to make a contribution to the world where there is a need for justice, peace, and mercy. Conversely, the Church that only preaches the gospel and sustains its own congregational life, is, by definition, a selfish institution. Dempster *et al.* (1991: 32) put it bluntly: that ‘a Church that only views its mission in terms of preaching the good news and nurturing its own spiritual life has a proclivity to degenerate into a self-absorbed verbal community’. Furthermore, they asserted that consequently, the same Church ‘can readily develop into a religious expression analogous to the one that the prophet Amos saw among God’s people in his own day – a religion of ritual and piety with no ethical content’.

It is true that the programmes and deeds of social service should be understood as theological activities that express God’s love to all his people in the world, but the Church should take heed of what Kritzinger *et al.* (1994: 37) suggest, that the Church should not be limited to charitable service to correct the structural imbalances and injustices which cause various endemics in our society. The Church is encouraged to help assist people in forming associations such as cooperatives, parents’ clubs,

etcetera which will provide a platform in order to be heard by those in authority. Moberg (1965: 81-82) refers to two areas of the Church's *diakonic* ministry which are very important:

All programs and activities of Christian social service boil down to being expressions of 'social welfare', on the one hand, or 'social action', on the other. 'Social welfare', Moberg explains, 'consists of ministries to help the victims of personal and social problems'. Because social welfare focuses on the welfare of people, this aspect of the Church's social service 'aims at removing or alleviating their suffering by direct treatment of themselves and their environmental circumstances.... In contrast, 'social action has the goal of changing or reforming basic conditions in society which cause human need'. Considering that social action focuses on a reforming basis of undesirable or unjust conditions in the social system, this aspect of the Church's social service 'aims at eliminating the sources of human suffering or, if this is impossible, alleviating the specific conditions which cause it'.

Whether the Church focuses on the welfare of the people or structural changes, it is important to keep in mind the two fundamental approaches elaborated by Moberg above. It should be noted that the good deeds are not mere addenda to the missionary enterprise, but should form an integral part of the present manifestation of God's kingdom; they point back to the kingdom that has already come and forward to the kingdom that is yet to come (Dempster *et al.*, 1991:34).

2.4.6. The *koinonian* dimension

In the Greek New Testament, *koinonia* literally means 'fellowship' or 'community'. Dempster *et al.* (1991: 27) correctly stated that

The Church's corporate worship, fellowship gatherings, small groups ministry, educational programs, counselling services, discipleship training, Bible study, and prayer meetings, are normally classified as the Church's

koinoniatic ministry, because through these activities the Church aims to strengthen its own congregational life, moral boldness, and spiritual unity.

It should be self evident that unless the Church intentionally concentrates on nurturing its own spiritual life, it will find it virtually impossible to fulfil its God-given mission in the world. The Church does not sustain its own life for its own sake. Dempster *et al.* (1991: 27) maintain that ‘a Church that is exclusively focused on itself without an evangelistic thrust and a commitment to serve the world and its needs is a travesty of the gospel’. Kritzinger *et al.*, (1994: 38) remind us that it is essential to remember the implications of Christian koinonia that the Church is a pilgrimage of people of God. Our abode on this planet earth is temporary, however: ‘... we are looking for the city which is to come’ (Heb. 13: 14). They alluded to the fact that the Church has often become domesticated in certain contexts (for example in the entanglement between mission and colonialism), but in reality, as mentioned, the Church is in diaspora everywhere, called out of the world to be sent back to the world with the message of God’s kingdom. A noted missiologist in his address asserted that indeed, the Church is ‘a sociological impossibility’ in our world, on its way to the ends of the earth.

For Bosch (1991: 368-389) the missionary Church must become a ‘church-with-others’. As God’s pilgrim people, the Church must incarnate the essential *koinonia* of the Christian community. Furthermore, the Church needs only two things according to Bosch: ‘support for the road, and a destination at the end of it’.

However, *koinonia* can also function negatively and turn inward upon itself to such an extent that the kind of *koinonia* of which Jesus spoke no longer exists. Instead of propelling the Church towards a lost world, it can create stagnation and spiritual indulgence. Wagner (1979: 78) argues that if the Church develops to that stage, it will fall into an unhealthy situation which he calls ‘*koinonitis*’. He further stated that

Fellowship, by definition, involves interpersonal relationships. It happens when Christian believers get to know one another, to enjoy one another. But as the disease develops, and *koinonia* becomes *koinonitis*, these interpersonal relationships become so deep and mutually absorbing, they can provide the

focal point for almost all Church activity and involvement. Church activities and relationships become centripetal.

Wagner means that fellowship, which he defines as interpersonal relationships, is evident where Christian communities come to know one another, enjoying the fellowship as they care and minister to one another. But when they allow disease to disturb their fellowship, *koinonia* becomes *koinonitis*, and the purpose for which the fellowship exists is lost, and the fellowship probably dies. Dempster *et al.* (1991: 29-31) provide four points of interpretation of the Church's *koinoniac* ministry and its social witness. The researcher will give only a brief summary:

- First, when the Church's *koinoniac* ministry is brought into line with Jesus' kingdom ministry, it validates the truthfulness of the Church's *kerygmatic* announcement that God's reign has already broken into the history of the ministry of Jesus Christ. When the Church assumes its responsibility to live out the gospel, then, Leslie Newbigin's statement holds true: the Christian community itself assumes its theological role of functioning as a 'hermeneutic of the message' of God's reign.
- Through its *koinonia*, the Church also demonstrates its character as a counter-community. By this means the Church witnesses to the world that the existing global order secured by the alliances between various power blocs is not ultimately normative and is already in the process of passing away. As the new emerging, alternative society that boldly witnesses to God's present and future reign, the Church in its *koinonia* already embodies a social criticism of the existing social order that is dominated by the economic interests of the power and the national interests of political rulers.
- The Church's *koinoniac* ministry plays a third function in fulfilling the church's mission. Through its *koinonia* the Church demonstrates that it understands its social responsibility to function as a moral community, or in the words of Birch and Rasmussen, to function 'as a bearer of moral tradition'...The social witness born by the Church in its fellowship is to

demonstrate that the new social order of God's reign is constituted by the basic moral virtues, obligations, and values of love, peace, justice, generosity, and respect for persons as God's image-bearers.

- A fourth and final role of the Church's *koinonia* is as 'a signpost' that points to God's future reign. Having already experienced a taste of the not yet eschatological future of God's reign, the Christian community is simultaneously both 'a sign' of the presence of the kingdom and 'a signpost' to the future consummation of the kingdom. Because its social witness is tied to God's own future, the Church's fellowship is capable of nurturing hope for a world of love and justice that is not yet come.

The *koinoniac* ministry of the Church takes on its responsibility to be a witnessing community, a counter community, a moral community, and an anticipatory community. Furthermore, it embodies its own life and activities to its members, and demonstrates what life looks like where God reigns.

2.4.7. The liturgical dimension

The Greek term *leitourgia* strictly means the public service rendered to God, especially through worship. According to Kritzinger *et al.* (1994: 38), this service can be rendered directly to God or it can be rendered indirectly to God through serving fellow human beings. This dimension is an expression of the Christian community to praise and worship God for who he is; it is where Christians enter into the presence of God. Furthermore, it serves to place each one of the previous three dimensions in perspective: 'we proclaim (*kerygma*) the good news, we serve (*diakonia*) God and our fellow man, we have fellowship (*koinonia*) with the Christian community, this we do because as followers of Christ, we do not have any option, but to be obedient to God's command'.

The mission of Jesus is binding on all his disciples. For example, they cannot confess that Jesus is Lord without at the same time proclaiming his Lordship over all people. Van Engen (1991: 94) argues that the implication of this intimate, inseparable connection between confession and commission is that the fulfilling of the

commission to the world over which Christ is Lord is itself a mark of the missionary Church (Phil. 2: 9-11). Similarly, this is where worship and liturgy needs to fit into the perceptions and programmes of missionary congregations. It is interesting to note that for Paul even the Eucharist is a matter of proclaiming Christ's death until he comes again (1 Cor. 11: 26). The verbal proclamation of the gospel in the *kerygma*, and the visual proclamation of the gospel in the sacraments empower the Church's confession that Jesus is Lord.

Piper (1993: 11) writing about the supremacy of God in missions through worship asserts that mission is not the ultimate goal of the Church, but worship is. He maintains that missions exist because worship does not. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not the human being. 'When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever'. Piper continues:

Worship, therefore, is the fuel and goal in missions. It's the goal of missions because in missions we simply aim to bring the nations into the white-hot enjoyment of God's glory. The goal of missions is the gladness of the peoples in the greatness of God. 'The Lord reigns; let the earth *rejoice*; let the many coastlands *be glad*' (Psalm 97: 1). 'Let the peoples praise thee, O God; let all the peoples praise thee! Let the nations be *glad and sing for joy!*' (Psalm 67: 3-4).

It should be noted that Piper does not diminish the significance of mission per se, but rather brings it into the right perspective. The primary task of the Christian community is to worship and glorify God for who He is. As he states categorically, when the flame of worship burns within the heart, of God's true worth, the light of missions will shine to the most remote peoples on earth (Piper 1993: 11).