

## CHAPTER 3: Overview of the Missionary Commitment of the Black Churches in South Africa

### 3.1 Introduction

The approach employed to systemize, gather, record, and interpret the empirical data with regards to the missionary commitment of Black churches in South Africa, took the form of questionnaires which were distributed to twenty churches in the Gauteng Region. Within each of these churches, twenty people were given questionnaires by their church leaders or pastors, and these were distributed among different officers such as senior pastors, church board members, departmental heads, ladies' groups, men's groups, young adults, teenagers, children's ministries, and other church members or laity. The reason for this distinction is that these groups of people view and perceive mission from diverse positions. Although the results will be integrated later, it is necessary at this point to segregate the inputs.

It should be noted that the researcher adopted the drop-off survey technique which involves a representative (researcher) hand-delivering the questionnaires to the respondents (pastors or church leaders) and collecting these once they have been completed. The researcher adopted this technique because the pastors and church leaders were available for the orientation regarding the sample questionnaire, and they were willing to answer general questions, screen the potential respondents and spur interest amongst their congregants in completing the questionnaire. The questionnaire sample was well-coordinated by experienced people, and resulted in 269 respondents, a rate of 67% in total.

In chapter 2, a comprehensive definition of mission was offered. In order to be consistent with this logic, and ultimately identify those factors that influence a comprehensive mission in churches, the data in this study will be analyzed according to the three rubrics, that is, *kerygma* (proclamation), *koinonia* (communion of fellowship), and *diakonia* (ministry of service). However, according to our understanding of a comprehensive approach in mission, the researcher will add the fourth rubric, *leitourgia* (liturgy), which simply denotes the encounter of the church

with her Lord, or the public worship service of God. In its deepest sense, the church's mission is her glorification of God, through faithful and obedient service to the Lord.

The researcher analyzed the responses from twenty churches in the Gauteng region, which are divided into three categories: (a) Roman Catholic Churches, (b) Mainline Protestant Churches, and (c) Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches. The original purpose of this study was to undertake an empirical research into African Initiated Churches in order to analyze and compare them with these mainstream churches. Due to the numerical strength of the adherents and proliferation of these churches, it would have been interesting to gather information and learn more about their involvement in their missionary obligation. However, after several attempts by the researcher to conduct an empirical study at most leading AICs in South Africa such as the International Pentecostal Church (IPC), the Zion Christian Church, and the Shembe Church which originated in Kwazulu-Natal with a large following in South Africa, when he tried to approach the church members and the leadership of these churches, there was an unwillingness to collaborate. For example, the researcher was told that according to their ethos, it was heretical to carry out research on a church, and that normally they are not willing to divulge any information about the church as they have been instructed from a higher hierarchy. They are also suspicious of anyone from outside their churches, as they have been continuously criticized for their numerous strange practices that differ from the main-line churches. For example, they claim that a person becomes a Christian through baptism by immersion in water, and they use various symbolic objects such as blessed water, rope staves, papers, ash etcetera for healing people. Confirming the observation of the researcher, Mofokeng (in Setiloane & Peden, 1988: 220) succinctly stated that many books have been written about the AICs, but that the contents of most of these books is not 'palatable' at all. He further argued that certain writers did not bother to search for the real truth; rather, they were in a hurry to obtain their doctorates and enjoy being called doctors when in truth, they were not, because they did not attend the AICs' services nor approach them through the correct channels.

The actual questionnaire put to the various respondents in the present study is presented in Annexure B.

**Table 3.1: What is the Structure of the Roman Catholic Church?**

Church Groups	No of Respondents	%
Senior Pastor	2	12%
Board Member	3	18%
Dept Head		
Ladies	6	35%
Men (not officials)		
Young Adult	2	12%
Teenager	1	6%
Children's Ministry	0	0
Others	3	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100%</b>
Sample Size	40	
Response		43%

Table 3.1 indicates that ladies play a vital role in the church with a higher score of 35%, whereas men, other than the officials, are not reflected at all. However, it is assumed that men do appear amongst the board members or under other groups in the church set-up. According to the questionnaire, there may be other groups which are not indicated in terms of the structure of the church. According to table 3.1, the next major group consists of board members with an 18% score, followed by senior pastors and the youth, each with the same score of 12%. The score for ministers amongst teenagers is lower and it is amazing that those working amongst children do not feature at all. The question that arises is why they are not represented in the sample. According to the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church, children normally play a vital role.

**Table 3.2: What is the Structure for a mainline Protestant church?**

<b>Church Groups</b>	<b>No of Respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
Senior Pastors	6	5%
Board Members	23	19%
Dept Heads	6	5%
Ladies	37	30%
Men's		
Young Adults	21	17%
Teenagers	10	8%
Children's	4	3%
Others	17	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>100%</b>
Sample Size	180	
Response Rate		69%

The question regarding different positions in the mainline Protestant Churches according to table 3.2 indicates the ladies with a higher score than in the previous table with 32%. The 29% that forms the management team (senior pastor, board members and departmental heads) of the church includes ladies. The two tables 3.1 & 3.2 reflect that men other than officials do not play a major role in as far as building up the local church are concerned. Children's ministry is also less represented in this table. Again, the question can be asked: Why is children's ministry being ignored in these churches? Perhaps the men are represented in the score of 14% which refers to others. However, it is encouraging to see a higher score for those working amongst the young adults with 17%.

**Table 3.3: What is the Structure for Pentecostal /Charismatic Churches?**

Church Groups	No of Respondents	%
Senior Pastors	5	4%
Board Members	21	16%
Dept Heads	20	16%
Ladies	21	16%
Men (not officials)	12	9%
Young Adults	22	17%
Teenagers	9	7%
Children's	4	3%
Others	14	11%
Total	128	100%
Sample Size	180	
Response Rate	71%	

On the question of different offices in Pentecostal / Charismatic churches, table 3.3 indicates that 36% comprise the leadership and management in 128 churches. Amongst them, board members and departmental heads indicate the same score of 16%. The score for the ladies (16%) is still higher than that of men (9%) in regards their involvement in the church. Table 3.3. Indicates a slightly higher score amongst the young adults, which is remarkable. Teenagers and children combined indicate a good score of 10%, which is encouraging. In contrast to the previous tables, men evidence a good score in this table, which demonstrates that they play a vital role and are active in building up the local church. The overall response rate of 71% from these churches is encouraging.

**Table 3.4: Total number of responses from the groups above**

<b>Church Groups</b>	<b>No of Respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
Senior Pastors	18	7%
Board Members	45	17%
Dept Heads	26	10%
Ladies	63	23%
Men's	12	4 %
Young Adults	44	16%
Teenagers	20	7%
Children's	8	3%
Others	33	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>100%</b>
Sample Size	400	100%
Response Rate		67%

Collectively, the three groups of churches reflected above depict an interesting scenario. For example, the leadership and management team indicates a higher score, whilst ladies' groups indicate a considerably higher score when compared with other groups. In considering the total response, youth and teenagers are a cause for concern with the lowest score. Why is it that the youth score so low? How can the situation be improved? In regard to men's involvement, it should be assumed that most participants in leadership / management are men, which should increase the number of men and their ministry in churches. However, it is generally known that ladies are in the majority in as far as church attendance is concerned.

**Table 3.5: How did you become a Christian? Response from the church groups above**

Churches	Reasons	No Respondents	of%
Roman Catholic Churches	Baptized at birth	10	62%
	Introduced by parents	6	38%
		16	100%
Mainline Protestant Churches	Church attendance	4	4%
	Born and baptized in a church	71	65%
	Invited by friends	3	3%
	Because they love God	5	5%
	Because of family influence	1	1%
	By believing in Christ	15	14%
	Due to encountering problems	2	2%
	By getting involved in youth choir	2	2%
	By reading the Bible	4	4%
	By joining the church	1	1%
	By dreaming about the church and the priest	1	1%
		109	100%
Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches	By inviting Christ to come into my life	64	48%



	Brought up by Christian parents and decided to invite Christ into my life	9	7%
	Invited by a relative to the church	11	9%
	By attending the church	12	6%
	Invited by a friend	8	2%
	Through encountering hard times	3	2%
	Attending a Sunday School	1	1%
	Attending a youth meeting	1	1%
	By listening to music or radio	2	1%
	By attending SCM	3	2%
	Someone shared the gospel with me	20	15%
Total		134	100%

With respect to how they became Christians, both Catholics and Mainline Protestant Christians in table 3.5. record similarities with regards to being born into the church and baptized as infants, with high scores of 62% and 65% respectively. On the other hand, respondents from Pentecostal and Charismatic churches scored high on conversion and inviting Christ to come into their lives. Further comment will be given in the summary of this chapter. However, according to table 3.5, it should be noted that there are similarities amongst Mainline Protestant and Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches in regard to the following: inviting Christ to come into one's life and believing in Christ implies the same thing; attending the church or the fellowship of believers; being invited by a Christian friend etcetera. Pentecostal Churches also use the opportunity of inviting their relatives to the fellowship of believers (*koinonia*) and the response is telling. Furthermore, it is also remarkable that 15% of Pentecostal/



Charismatics share their faith as a part of reaching out to the lost, an experience which is not common to other churches.

**Table 3.6: How many new members regularly join your church?**

Church Type	No of 'YES' Respondents	No. of 'NO' Respondents	% yes	% No	Total	Participation
Catholic Churches	15	1	94%	6%	16	6%
Mainline Protestant	99	24	80%	20%	123	47%
Pentecostal / Charismatic	94	27	78%	22%	121	47%
Total	208	52			260	100%

Table 3.6 indicates the similarities amongst the Mainline Protestant and Pentecostal Charismatic Churches regarding new members regularly joining their churches, with scores of 80% and 78% respectively. However, although the Catholic church recorded a lower number of participants, their score was reasonably higher by 14% compared to their two counterparts under discussion. It is generally assumed and accepted as a fact that the Pentecostal Charismatics in particular should score very high regarding this question but the situation reflects differently.

**Table 3.7: How many members regularly join your Church? RC Response.**

	No of Respondents	%
Evangelistic outreaches?	9	33%
Invited by friends?	9	33%
Invited by church members?	3	11%
Open air outreaches?		
Others?	6	22%
Total	27	100%

It is remarkable that table 3.7 indicates the same score for those who become new members through evangelistic outreaches and those who are invited by friends. This is the evidence that Christians in Roman Catholic Churches are actively involved in sharing their faith and expanding the church in these two respects. However, those who are invited by church members scored low, which implies that this church's members do not invite non-Christians into the church unless they have a friendship with them. The questions that arise in this regard are: Why are church members not engaged in inviting the lost? Is there any training geared to equip church members to reach out to the lost?

**Table 3.8: How many members regularly join your church? Mainline Protestant response**

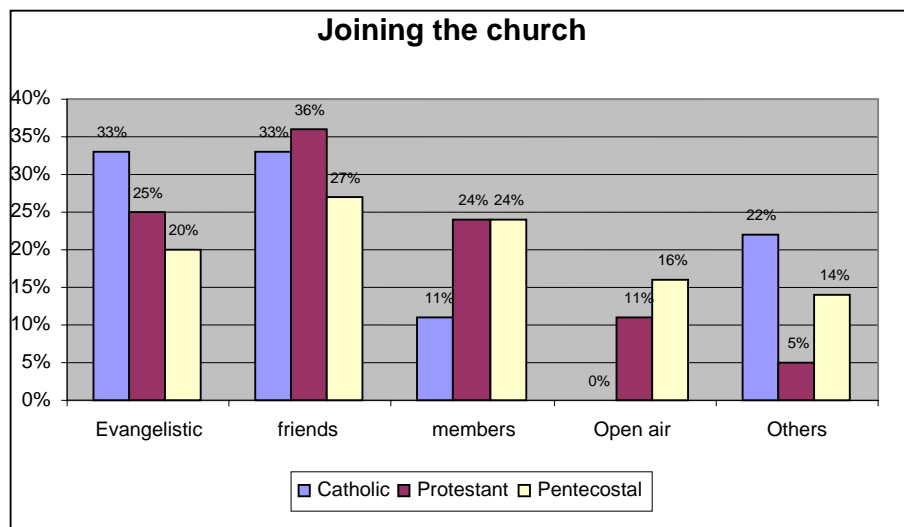
	No of Respondents	%
Evangelistic outreaches?	43	25%
Invited by friends?	63	36%
Invited by church members?	42	24%
Open air outreaches?	19	11%
Others?	8	5%
Total	175	100%

It should be noted that both tables 3.7 and 3.8 indicate the highest scores for new members who are attracted through invitation by friends. It is interesting that those who are attracted by church members and through evangelistic outreaches score the same percentage. Furthermore, the mainline churches use the opportunity of open air outreaches as well as other strategies which would indicate a reasonable score according to the tables under discussion. It would be interesting to find out what other strategies have been used to reach the lost.

**Table 3.9: How many members regularly join your church? Pentecostal / Charismatic response.**

	No of Respondents	%
Evangelistic outreaches?	51	20%
Invited by friends?	70	27%
Invited by church members?	62	24%
Open air outreaches?	41	16%
Others?	37	14%
Total	261	100%

In all three tables above, there are similarities in that the highest score is reflected for members who are invited by friends, but it should be noted that Pentecostals score lower regarding the other two options. However, table 3.9 also indicates a similar score amongst Protestant and Charismatic churches for those attracted by church members. Conversely, in all three tables, Pentecostals / Charismatics dominated the sample, comprising 24% of church members inviting the lost. Furthermore, table 3.9 indicates that outreach by means of other strategies that are not reflected in the table is reasonably high amongst Roman Catholics, and less so amongst Pentecostals, and even less amongst Protestants.



Graph 3.1 New members joining the Church

Graph 3.1 summarizes tables 3.7-9. For example, Roman Catholics polled the highest percentage of 33% in both evangelistic outreaches and invitations by friends as opposed to Protestants (25%) and Pentecostals (20%) respectively, whereas Protestants polled the highest (35%) regarding the new members who are attracted by an invitation from friends. It is noteworthy that amongst the Catholics and Pentecostals, those who were invited by church members scored the same percentage of 24%. Pentecostals also employ an open air strategy which polled 15% of respondents as opposed to Protestants (11%) and Catholics (0%). According to graph 3.1, the 22% score reflected by Roman Catholics and 14% by Pentecostals is clear evidence that there are various other outreach strategies used by these churches which are not discussed in this study.

**Table 3.10: Do you find it difficult to share your faith?**

Church Type	No. of 'Yes' Respondents	No. of 'no' Respondents	% 'Yes'	% 'No'	Total	Participation
Catholic Churches	3	13	4%	6%	16	6%
Mainline Protestant	40	98	59%	47%	138	50%
Pentecostal/Charismatics	25	99	37%	47%	124	44%
Totals	68	210	100%	100%	278	100%

Table 3.10 indicates that mainline Protestant and Pentecostal / Charismatic Churches dominate the sample, each comprising 47% of the overall sample. The Catholics polled the lowest score of 6% respondents who do not have difficulty in sharing their faith with the lost. However, the score of respondents who have difficulty in sharing their faith with the lost is alarming, especially those from the Protestant churches. The questions that arise in this regards are: What is the problem? Are members of the leadership of the church aware of this dilemma? Is the church involved in her missional obligation?

## **3.2 The Typical Comments Made by Respondents:**

### **3.2.1 Roman Catholic Churches:**

By sharing I am doing God's work.

It is for me to spread the good news with others.

Sharing with others strengthens my faith.

I am excited about my faith and feel obligated that I need to share with others.

It is because I am a practising Catholic that I feel obligated to share with others.

My faith can easily be explained to the next person.

It is because I never compromise my religion.

### **3.2.2 Mainline Protestant Churches**

It is because I feel relieved.

I have been equipped and that makes it easy for me to share.

Because as I share, my faith grows.

Because of my conviction as a Christian.

I always ask God for a divine appointment to share my faith.

Because it is an enjoyment and I'm obligated to share my faith.

Because of God's command to all Christians.

Because it is God's will for people to be saved.

### **3.2.3. Pentecostal / Charismatic Churches**

We are obligated to share our faith.

God commands us to share our faith.

It is my lifestyle to share my faith.

Because I desire that every person should know about the Lord.

I have been equipped to share my faith with the lost.

I become fulfilled as I share my faith.

Note: amongst those who indicated fear in sharing their faith, they all highlighted one common element: *the lack of training and empowerment to share one's faith to the lost.*

**Table 3.11 How easy do you feel to make the link between your Christian faith and the following? RC Response**

- **How does the following scale apply?**

Scales 1-2 represents bad for the respondents regarding the practical application.

Scale 3 represents medium for the respondents regarding their practical application.

Scale 4 represents good for the respondents regarding such an application.

Scale 5 represents very good for the respondents regarding their practical application.

**Scale**

	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>Total</b>	
Family	1	6%	1	6%		0%	2	13%	12	75%	16	100%
Marriage		0%		0%		0%		0%	9	100%	9	100%
Social Life	1	13%		0%	2	25%	1	13%	4	50%	8	100%
Work	1	7%		0%	2	13%	2	13%	10	67%	15	100%
Politics	2	11%		0%	4	22%	2	11%	10	56%	18	100%
School	1	9%		0%		0%	4	36%	6	55%	11	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>100%</b>

Regarding the question of how to make a link between one's faith and different spheres of everyday life, it is noteworthy that amongst Roman Catholics, marriage polled higher with 100%, followed by the family, which scored 88%. In contrast, social life scored lower with 63%. It should be noted that the Roman Catholic Churches are known to be inclined towards social and political issues, but this study reveals that marriage and family are their highest priorities. However, it is striking to see their Christian praxis in the work place which polled 80%. The political involvement is also commendable, but when compared with other institutions in this study, it is rather low.

**Table 3.12: How easy do you feel to make the link between Christian faith and the following? Mainline Protestant response**

**Scale**

	1		2		3		4		5		Total	
Family	5	5%	3	3%	11	11%	14	14%	70	68%	103	100%
Marriage	2	2%	6	7%	21	23%	18	20%	45	49%	92	100%
Social Life	5	6%	7	8%	24	28%	12	14%	38	44%	86	100%
Work	3	4%	17	20%	22	26%	10	12%	33	39%	85	100%
Politics	15	24%	6	10%	11	18%	9	15%	21	34%	62	100%
School	2	3%	13	20%	14	21%	12	18%	25	38%	66	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3.13 How easy do you feel to make the link between Christian faith and the following? Pentecostal/ Charismatic response**

**Scale**

	1		2		3		4		5		Total	
Family	4	4%	6	7%	19	21%	18	20%	45	49%	92	100%
Marriage	4	6%	1	1%	13	19%	19	28%	32	46%	69	100%
Social Life	6	7%	5	6%	15	18%	24	29%	33	40%	83	100%
Work	6	8%	5	7%	18	24%	22	30%	23	31%	74	100%
Politics	10	17%	6	10%	15	25%	13	22%	15	25%	59	100%
School	5	10%	4	8%	12	23%	9	17%	22	42%	52	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>100%</b>

Pentecostals / Charismatics polled the highest (74%) for marriage, and 69% for the family. This denotes that their faith is well matched with their families and marriages. It is interesting that social life also polled 69%. On the contrary, the work place and school polled the lowest (61% and 57%) respectively. Their involvement in politics is minimal (17%). From table 3.13 we notice that in spite of the low poll regarding politics amongst the Pentecostal / Charismatic churches, the reflected score indicates that there is an improvement in their view of politics as a church. For example, during the Apartheid era, Pentecostals / Charismatics were not involved in political issues or anything related to these.

**Table 3.14 Collective responses**

	1		2		3		4		5		Total	
Family	10	5%	10	5%	30	14%	34	16%	127	60%	211	100%
Marriage	6	4%	7	4%	34	20%	37	22%	86	51%	170	100%
Social Life	12	7%	12	7%	41	23%	37	21%	75	42%	177	100%
Work	10	6%	22	13%	42	24%	34	20%	66	38%	174	100%
Politics	27	19%	12	9%	30	22%	24	17%	46	33%	139	100%
School	8	6%	17	13%	26	20%	25	19%	53	41%	129	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>

Collectively, the three groups of churches under consideration scored the highest percentage of 76% with regards to family, followed by marriage (73%). This denotes that church members give priority to applying their faith to both family and marriage. Social and school life is their next priorities. However, politics still plays a minimal role in the life of the church. From these tables, one may conclude that the majority of churches are seen to be careful about being labelled ‘political’; hence their involvement is minimal, leading to the following questions: How can this issue be addressed? Are church leaders willing to learn about the importance of this issue in a church setup?



**Table 3.15 What are the main social problems in your community if any Collectively?**

	Protestant		Catholic		Pentecostal		Total	
Spiritual Renewal	81	11%	8	10%	59	11%	148	11%
Moral Regeneration	79	10%	9	11%	75	14%	163	12%
Socio-Political	56	7%	5	6%	31	6%	92	7%
Unemployment	121	16%	11	13%	99	18%	231	17%
Poverty	117	15%	15	18%	95	17%	227	16%
Crime	108	14%	12	14%	93	17%	213	15%
Bad Health (HIV/AIDS)	115	15%	15	18%	86	16%	216	16%
Environment	78	10%	9	11%	14	3%	101	7%
Total	755	100%	84	100%	552	100%	1391	100%

Table 3.15 indicates that the churches collectively polled the highest (17%) regarding the unemployment problem in their communities, followed by the social problems of poverty and bad health (HIV/AIDS) each of which polled 16%. Looking at the individual groups of churches, Catholic churches indicated the greatest (18%) concern for issues of poverty as opposed to Protestants (15%) and Pentecostal churches (17%). On the other hand, Pentecostals polled the highest (18%) regarding un-employment as opposed to the Catholics (13%) and Protestant churches (16%). It is amazing that the problem of crime which is prevalent in most of our communities in South Africa received the lowest poll (15%). However, it is also striking that, overall, all the churches collectively polled only 7% regarding both socio-political and environmental issues. It is further amazing that churches polled only 11% with respect to spiritual renewal problem in their communities. These results lead to the questions: Did the respondents clearly understand the questionnaires? Does the church see the problem of tending and keeping the environment clean? Do they see it as part of their responsibility?

**Table 3.16 What are the main social problems in your community if any? Roman Catholic response**

Problems Addressed	Response
Spiritual Renewal	By daily prayers and Holy Mass.
Moral Regeneration	They instil moral values in people in light of the gospel.
Unemployment	The church assists its members & outsiders to find work. For example, a certain percentage is employed in various outreaches to help overcome unemployment. Furthermore, the church invites various companies in order to challenge people to apply for suitable jobs and get involved in learnership projects.
Poverty	The church distributes food parcels to the poor and needy in the community. They have an old age care home for the elderly, an orphanage, pre-school, crèche, and feed over 1000 people per month depending on the area.
Crime	The church is involved in a 'stop crime' programme
HIV/AIDS & Bad Health	They are helping people who are affected and infected. They provide for their needs i.e. clothes and material needs.

Table 3.16 indicates the specific ways in which the Roman Catholic Churches are addressing the community problems as reflected in the previous table. The researcher will give a brief summary: Regarding the question of unemployment, the church helps both members and people from the community to find suitable employment. They invite various companies to advertise and orientate people to the available posts; many have been helped as a result of this strategy. With regards to the alleviation of poverty, food is provided for many, while they also establish old-age homes, orphanages, etcetera. It should be noted that the help is not provided only for ardent members, but is extended to outsiders as well. Perhaps this is one of the reasons that the church attracts new members. For example, victims who are affected and infected by HIV/AIDS are also being helped according to their needs.

**Table 3.17: What are the main social problems in your community, if any?**

**Mainline Protestant response**

<b>Problems Addressed</b>	<b>Response</b>
Spiritual Renewal	The church encourages people to attend church regularly. Spiritual revivals, youth programmes for empowerment. Encourage church members to live a cleansed life and be a model to the community at large.
Unemployment	The church provides job referrals to the unemployed
Poverty	Some churches have developed social responsibility programmes which take care of the needy of the church and the community around. Furthermore, they establish programmes where people grow vegetables in order to curb poverty. They also distribute clothes to the needy.
Crime	One of the churches has a partnership with the government and has established a community crime safety programme in the Gauteng region. Furthermore, police are invited to address the church on how to cooperate in curbing the escalating crime.
Bad Health HIV/AIDS	These churches are playing a major role in this area. They run workshops with people from the health department; they promote awareness programmes in their churches. Some have built hospices for HIV/AIDS victims, and provide counselling, treatment and food parcels for their families. Lastly, they provide moral support and prayers.

Table 3.17 indicates that Mainline Protestant Churches regard spiritual renewal as one of the issues to be addressed in their communities. They conduct spiritual outreaches such as revivals, or special programmes geared to empower the youth in order to face the challenges of the world. On the question of poverty, they develop programmes such as growing vegetables to feed the hungry in their communities. It is noteworthy that they address crime by partnering with the government and establish community safety forums. They invite police to address church members on how to combat crime

on a regular basis. They also play a vital role with regards to HIV/AIDS sufferers for whom they conduct workshops and build hospices. Lastly, they provide moral support groups and prayers. However, not much is being done in regard to unemployment and poverty.

**Comments on Table 3.18: Pentecostal / Charismatic Churches’ Response**

In terms of addressing spiritual renewal, some of the Pentecostal / Charismatic Churches are using the Jesus Film as a tool to reach the lost. Furthermore, they conduct spiritual revivals, rallies, and crusades to bring the lost to their churches. They also use a one on one personal evangelism strategy to enhance their outreach. The moral regeneration is addressed by instilling good moral values into their communities. With regards to the issue of poverty, these churches provide feeding schemes and clothing to the needy. In respect of those who are affected and infected by HIV/AIDS, they provide support groups, prayer and counselling to the victims. Lastly, in regard to unemployment, workshops for interviews are conducted, and announcements are made from the podiums concerning vacancies, and possible candidates utilize those opportunities. This is indeed commendable.

**Table 3.18: Does your church train and empower its members for the witness to the world? Collective response**

Church Type	No of ‘Yes’ Respondents	No of ‘No’ Respondents	% ‘Yes’	% ‘No’	Total	Participation
Roman Catholics	15	0	100%	0%	15	6%
Mainline Protestants	91	26	78%	22%	117	44%
Pentecostal/Charismatics	120	6	95%	5%	126	50%
Total	226	32	273%	72%	258	100%

On the question of teaching and empowering church members, Roman Catholics polled the highest percentage of 100% with 15 participants, followed by Pentecostals and Protestants with 95% and 78% respectively. It is interesting that the Roman

Catholics are committed to equip their members in various aspects of life in order to face the challenges of the world. It would be interesting to learn and discover more about some of the programmes in which they engage in this regard. The score reflected by the Pentecostal / Charismatics is also encouraging. In regard to the church's missionary responsibility, it is evident that most of these churches are empowering members to reach out to the lost, except for a few of them. For example, one church in Soweto is able to plant churches in Europe, Russia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, etcetera. This church is empowering its members to focus not only on South Africa, but the entire world. Questions in this regard are: What type of teaching and empowerment are other churches giving? Is it an inward focus, or outward to the world?

**Table 3. 19: What are the reasons people prefer not to be Christians? R. C. response**

Reasons for not Being Christian	No Respondents	%
Secularism/Materialism	6	40%
Living in Sin & Darkness	3	20%
Bad Reputation amongst Christians	2	13%
Ancestral Worship		
Christians not sharing their faith		
Ignorance	4	27%
Other		
Total	15	100%

On the question of why people, in their experience, prefer not to be Christians, Roman Catholic Churches scored the highest poll of 40%, the reason being that participants in secularism/materialism prefer not to be Christians, as opposed to 27% of participants and 20% who live in sin and darkness. In this table, the lowest poll of respondents (13%) was assigned to people who prefer not to be Christians because of the bad reputation of Christians. Amongst the Roman Catholics, there was no score given for

ancestral worship and Christians not sharing their faith. In addition to the reasons reflected in table 3.20, the respondents made the following comments:

Bad experiences which they have undergone convinced them that God does not exist; thus they choose the easy way of not believing in God.

Confusion about the question: Why so many churches?

**Table 3.20: In your opinion, why do some people prefer not to be Christians?**

**Mainline/Protestant response**

Reasons for not Being Christian	No of Respondents	%
Secularism/Materialism	6	6%
Living in Sin & Darkness	15	15%
Bad Reputation amongst Christians	28	28%
Ancestral Worship	6	6%
Christians Not Sharing their Faith		
Ignorance	31	31%
Other	14	14%
Total	100	100%

Table 3.20 indicates the highest score of 31% of people who prefer not to be Christians because of their ignorance about the faith, followed by the reason that Christians have a bad reputation amongst the non-Christians (28%). In contrast, the table under consideration reflects the lowest score of 6% for people who are reluctant to be Christian due to ancestral worship. The respondents gave the following comments as the reasons why people prefer not to be Christians:

Lack of commitment to God.

They feel that Christian principles are not realistic, e.g. living by faith etc.

They are not in favour of Christianity.

Lack of information about Christianity.

Lack of outreaches to the lost from the church.

Because some are rooted in African Religion.

Due to failure and unfulfilled expectations.

Some people think that it is a burden to become a Christian, because in Christianity we are taught morals, therefore some people just like to live the way they like.

They don't believe the church has any benefit to their plight.

**Table 3.21: In your opinion, why do some people prefer not to be Christians?**

**Pentecostal / Charismatic response**

Reasons for not Being Christian	No of Respondents	%
Secularism/Materialism		
Living in Sin & Darkness	18	19%
Bad Reputation Amongst Christians	28	29%
Ancestral Worship	9	9%
Christians Not Sharing their Faith	7	7%
Ignorance	24	25%
Other	10	10%
Total	96	100%

Table 3.21 indicates that, in terms of the Pentecostal / Charismatic response, the main reason people prefer not to be Christian is the bad reputation of some Christians, followed by ignorance on the part of non-Christians. It is interesting that no respondents indicated secularism/materialism as a reason. However, there are similarities between the Mainline Protestants and Pentecostals in regard to 'other' reasons not reflected in this study, (10% and 14% respectively). All church respondents cited living in darkness, a bad reputation amongst Christians and ignorance on the part of unbelievers as reasons. However, it is interesting that only the Pentecostal / Charismatic churches responded to the issue of Christians not sharing their faith to the lost. Hence the questions: Are the churches aware of the importance

of mission in their churches? Are they aware that every Christian must be involved in carrying out God’s mission?

**Table 3.22 Collective response**

Barriers	Catholics		Protestants		Pentecostals		Totals	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Fear People	1	10%	5	7%	13	12%	19	11 %
Lack Empowerment			2	2%	17	16%	19	11%
Lack Commitment			7	10%	11	10%	18	10%
Lack Models			17	25%	20	19%	37	21%
Lack Resources			4	6%	20	19%	24	13%
Irrelevance	1	10%	3	4%	2	2%	6	3%
Others	8	80%	30	44%	19	18%	57	32%
Total	10	100%	68	100%	108	100%	180	100%

With regards to the question relating to the barriers that impede the church’s witness to the world, Pentecostal and Protestant churches scored higher on the issue of the lack of morals amongst many Christians. The world does not see the difference amongst Christians and non-Christians. In a nutshell, Christians are not reflecting their being light and salt to the world: they polled 19% and 25% respectively. On the other hand, Catholics scored the lower (10%) for Christians who fear sharing their faith to the lost. On the issue of lack of resources to further God’s kingdom, Pentecostals scored 16% on the lack of empowerment. According to table 3.22, only 2% reflect the lack of empowerment for Protestants while the Catholics do not report this as being a reason at all which leads one to ask the question: Is there something which is happening in regard to the empowerment of Christians with these churches? It should be noted that most of the respondents from all churches under consideration cited ‘other’ barriers which do not appear in this study (80% amongst the Catholics). Another study is needed to find out what some of these barriers are that impede the church’s involvement in her missionary obligation.



**Table 3.23 Does your church send missionaries to other parts of the world?**

**Responses**

	Catholics		Protestants		Pentecostals		Total	
SA	11	32%	42	48%	29	34%	82	40%
Africa	10	29%	25	28%	30	35%	65	31%
World	13	38%	21	24%	26	31%	60	29%
Total	34	100%	88	100%	85	100%	207	100%

Regarding the question as to whether, as a missionary obligation of the church, the churches are involved in mission, the extent of the involvement of each of these three groups is considered. According to table 3.23 the highest degree of involvement in South African mission is assigned to the Protestant Churches (48% of respondents) as opposed to Catholics and Pentecostals who scored 32% and 34% respectively. On the other hand, with regards to a focus falling on Africa, the Pentecostals score the highest (35%). while Catholics and Protestants indicate a slightly lower score. However, in terms of the world mission focus, Catholics are scoring the highest (38%) as opposed to the Pentecostals / Charismatics (31%) and Protestants (24%).

It should be evident that drastic measures are required with regards to the missionary obligation of the church.

**Table 3.24 How would you describe the level of financial giving?**

**Collective.**

Financial Giving	Catholics		Protestants		Pentecostals		Total	
Very Positive	4	27%	50	39%	39	36%	93	38%
Quite Positive	8	53%	47	41%	47	43%	102	42%
Poorly/Negative	3	20%	23	20%	23	21%	49	20%
Total	15	100%	110	100%	109	100%	234	100%

On the question of the level of financial giving amongst the churches, Catholics scored the highest (53%) on 'quite positive' as opposed to Protestants and Pentecostals who scored 34% and 41% respectively. On the 'very positive' level,

Protestants scored the highest with 39% as opposed to the lowest score of 27% reported by Catholics. It is interesting that on average most churches under consideration (80%) give to the churches which is encouraging indeed. But, what proportion of those funds is geared towards mission? The following are typical responses from the respondents:

### **3.2.4 Catholics**

Funds are used for the parish and outreaches, local, diocese and community projects and collections for missionary work of the universal church.

The Catholic health care system runs 32 clinics and 10 hospices, and day care centres.

They also offer education bursaries, and operate centres for orphans of HIV/AIDS.

Funds are raised, and if sufficient, we also give towards mission.

### **3.2.5 Protestants**

One of the churches recorded that about 30% of the funds is devoted to missions and 10% to community projects, but nothing to outreach.

About ¾ to 5% of funds are distributed towards mission.

Most of our funds are towards the pastor's salary and to our church building in most cases.

A sizable number of respondents admitted that they know nothing about how funds are working in the church.

A few of the churches stipulated that they are struggling financially; hence, the question of giving to their missionary responsibility is not relevant to them.

### **3.2.6 Pentecostals**

Most funds are geared towards community projects and church conferences.

Much of the money is used to maintain the church.

Two churches responded that they give 50% and 80% respectively from their budgets towards missions and community projects.

A sizable number of respondents documented that they know nothing about how funds are operating in their churches.

From these comments, the questions that arise are: Why are church members ignorant about their giving? Why are so many churches not giving towards their missionary obligation? Why are churches giving towards maintenance and not mission?

### **3. 3 Conclusion**

#### **3.3.1 How did one become a Christian?**

The findings indicated that there is a longstanding theological difference between the Catholics / Mainline Protestant Churches and Pentecostal / Charismatic Churches in regard to the issue of how one becomes a Christian. For example, Catholic / Mainline Protestant Churches hold the view that infants are baptized into future repentance of sin and into faith, and, even though this has not yet been formed in them, the seed of both lies hidden within them by the secret working of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, Pentecostals /Charismatics reject infant baptism, arguing that baptism is properly reserved for those who have undergone a conversion experience and can make a personal confession of faith. They hold the view that baptism is a sign of faith that is present already and represents a public declaration of this faith.

#### **3.3.2. Are new members regularly joining the church?**

The high score reflected for the Roman Catholic Church as opposed to Mainline Protestant and Pentecostal /Charismatic churches is indeed alarming. Practically, the latter use various strategies to attract new members to their constituencies, for example, crusades, friendship, and evangelism. Perhaps the church must be innovative and try new strategies to attract new members. Indeed, the days of tent campaigns which were used extensively in the past are over; churches should do surveys in their community, and establish the reasons why people are not interested in joining. Are the programmes of the church relevant to the new members in the community? Are the church members loving and accepting towards their new members? Are the church members enthusiastic about the Christian life?

### **3.3.4 How are new members attracted to the church?**

According to the results reflected in table 3.1., only 40% of the church members are attracted to the church. It would be interesting to find out other strategies that are employed to attract new members. However, it compels the church leadership to be prepared to face the reasons why new members are not attracted to the churches. The researcher would advise the church leadership to conduct an accurate and balanced assessment regarding both the church and non-Christians in an open and frank spirit. This exercise could help the church to strategize new methods that will attract new members. For example, perhaps, the majority of the congregants are not an attractive force (centripetal) to which new members would be attracted, while other churches do not set clearly defined objectives, and, apparently, there is no cohesive programme in place.

### **3.3.5 Difficulty in sharing one's faith**

The 47% score in Mainline Protestants and Pentecostals/ Charismatics on the question of the difficulty in sharing one's faith is alarming. What prevents 53% of Christians from sharing their faith? Most of the respondents cited the lack of training and empowerment as the main reason for not sharing their faith. Church leaders and pastors must realize that they need to empower and train the laity in order to be effective in their missionary obligation to the world. It should be noted that, often, people feel incompetent to witness, which in a substantial number of cases is the result of a lack of understanding of what witness really means. Through training and empowerment, Christians should be assisted to understand that it is God, through His Spirit, who equips and gives the competence to witness (Hancke 2005: 152). Through empowerment and training, people will develop a sound biblical understanding of what witness really means. Ultimately, there must be an understanding that every Christian is called to spread the good news of Jesus Christ by word (*kerygma*) and deed (*diakonia*), which should constitute permanent features for every Christian (Ayeebo 2006:110).

### **3.3.6 Practical application of one's faith**

It is interesting to note that most of the respondents from different churches score reasonably high in matching their faith with family and marriage, but low in social life, work, and politics. In order for the church to be effective and a witness in society and to the world, it needs to be complemented by social action in order to express the kind of service that God intends to render to the world in His reign of love, justice, and peace. There must be a balance between one's faith and other dimensions (as reflected in the questionnaire under consideration). It should be noted that the political dimension is still scored the lowest and more discussion follows in the following paragraph. The question of a balance between one's faith and family, marriage, social, work, politics, and school, has dominated church life for centuries. Are social and political matters not seen as worldly affairs that have nothing to do with the spiritual concerns of the church? It would seem that in many churches, spirituality has been understood to be purely private and individualistic (Kairos 1987: 16).

### **3.3.7 The view of politics in the church**

The sub-question regarding the churches' minimal participation in socio-political issues in table 3.15 is alarming. While few indicated their active involvement, the 7% who did respond, is a rather low percentage. However, it is encouraging to realize that even the Pentecostal/ Charismatic churches are gradually becoming more involved in this new dispensation of our country. It should be assumed that, from the perspective of the low rating of the church's involvement in socio-political issues, a majority of the churches are seen to be careful about being labelled 'political'. It is said that people with this perspective do not ascribe blame to the church, but perceive it as unfortunate.

Furthermore, Kretzschmar & Nthla recorded for almost all Christian churches (Catholic and Protestant, Evangelical, Pentecostal and Charismatic) that, they unanimously confessed to having failed God, the gospel and the people of South Africa. For example, TEASA represented over two million of its members when it confessed to the TRC:

By its failure to develop a theology and practice that took adequate stock of social reality, and relying only on private morality to guide people through the complexities of socio-political ideologies and conflict, the evangelical community virtually made believers easy prey to the forces of conflict. In effect, believers became socially, politically and culturally incapacitated to act decisively, authentically and in integrity either way ... [the confession added] Evangelical believers attempted to justify the system of apartheid and rationalize their support for it. This led to the embrace of a racist ideology in the values, theology and structures of the church (2005: 14-15).

It is clear that the confession of the churches will remain a permanent and embarrassing record for all time in the history of South Africa. The score under consideration confirms that the church in general is still dragging her feet on the question of her responsibility to the socio-political issues. Why does the church possess an inadequate understanding of the need to engage in political issues? Why does it make a virtue of neutrality and sitting on the sidelines? (Kairos 1987: 15)

### **3.3.8 The issue of unemployment and poverty**

With regards to the sub-question concerning unemployment and poverty, the study sheds light on the fact that the churches under consideration are minimally involved. For example, Roman Catholics are developing social responsibility programmes to care for the needy in their communities. They regard these exercises as part of their regular worship through Bible studies, sermons and prayer, with the hope that members will be inspired and equipped to be catalysts of change in their communities. It is interesting that other churches are also involved with soup kitchens, and distributing clothes to the needy. However, it is evident from the study that much must still be done in regard to the service (*diakonia*) component of the church. There should be a balance between the proclamation of the gospel (*kerygma*) and service.

It should be acknowledged that unemployment is probably the most severe problem in our societies. Consequently, it leads to many problems such as a high crime rate, and abject poverty.

### **3.3.9 Environmental problem**

The minimal score of 7% is evidence that churches are poorly involved in caring for their environment as good stewards of what God has entrusted to them. The researcher holds the opinion that if the church could be involved in her environment, this will serve as one of the commendable strategies for attracting people to the church community. The church should learn from the AIC's objectives as outlined in 2.4.5.4. The restoring of God's creation is theologically grounded in two important convictions that 'salvation is manifested by total liberation' and that 'life in Christ commits us to an all-out and non-violent struggle against all forms of evil, personal and social' (Aldal-za-Fwa in Thomas 1995: 25).

### **3.3.10 Empowering church members**

On the question of the churches empowering their members, the highest score recorded by the Roman Catholic church is indeed remarkable, although the number of respondents was low. Overall, the churches polled high, and it is encouraging to note that churches are committed to empower their members in order for them to excel in the world. It should be noted that the idea of 'empowering' church members refers to the comprehensive activity of the church to enable members, as a group or as individuals, to be involved in the world in a missionary way. However, Pienaar (2006: 245) issues a warning that, in using the term 'empowerment', the church should move away from the idea of power or authority and focus on the process of growing the possibility of service and the sphere of influence of the believer.

### **3.3.11 Reasons why people prefer not to be Christian**

In answering the question why people outside the church prefer not to become Christians, Catholic respondents referred to ancestral worship as a factor, while Protestant respondents mentioned that many Christians are hesitant to share their faith with outsiders. It is the assumption of the researcher that one of their reasons is indeed that most of the members *practise* ancestral worship and a sizable number of Christians in these churches are indeed not sharing their faith with others. Mainline

Churches indicated ignorance as the major reason why people prefer not to be Christians. Table 3.21 (Mainline/Protestant churches) furnishes comments which should be taken seriously regarding the question: Why do people prefer not to be Christians? Furthermore, Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches reported ‘a bad reputation’ as being the main reason why people prefer not to be Christians. This should serve as a warning to Christians to be the salt and light of the world as Scripture exhorts.

### **3.3.12 Financial giving to mission**

This study shows clearly that churches are contributing little to the advancement of God’s kingdom. For example, Catholic Churches indicate that the funds are geared to community projects, old age homes, and hospices for HIV/AIDS victims etcetera, but very little is given to missions, whereas Mainline Protestants alluded to the fact that, most of the church’s funds are allocated to paying their pastors. Some respondents expressed the view that their churches are struggling financially; hence, there is no surplus for missionary activity. At least some responses indicated that 30% of their church giving is geared to mission, which is encouraging. On the other hand, Pentecostals / Charismatics indicated that their financial giving is geared to community projects, building their churches, holding conferences, and maintenance. Only two newly established churches indicated that 50% and 80% of their financial giving is set aside for mission to South Africa and the world respectively. However, there is a similarity in all the churches in that the respondents are ignorant of how the funds are being administered in the church. It seems that to some respondents, it was the first time that they have heard that the church has a responsibility to give towards mission in order to advance God’s kingdom.

The overall mission of the churches under consideration is not meeting with expectations. However, it is encouraging that these churches are embodying some dimensions of mission according to this study. It is worth mentioning that these churches are failing in regard to their missionary responsibility and there is a gap between these churches and their missionary obligation. The following chapter will therefore provide a model that can be adopted and used maximally in churches.