

**Developing a Sustainable Missionary Programme for  
Black South African Churches: An analysis of the Role  
that Churches in Black Community are Playing in  
Terms of their Missionary Obligation.**

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Philosophiae Doctor  
in the  
Faculty of Theology  
University of Pretoria  
South Africa

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Department: Science of Religion and Missiology

November 2008



## DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis ‘Developing a sustainable missionary programme for black South African churches: an analysis of the role that churches in the black community are playing in terms of their missionary obligation’ is my own work and that all the resources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Signature

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Date



## **DEDICATION**

To my mother (Pontsho) who will not be privileged to read this thesis because she has been promoted to be in glory.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research would not have been possible without the valued assistance and guidance of several people.

- Firstly, my very sincere thanks to my promoter, Professor P G J Meiring, for his incomparable tuition and practical example of involvement in missions. He has motivated me to complete this study. Indeed, it would be difficult to thank him adequately for his help. May God grant him grace to continue with this good work.
- To the leaders of twenty churches in Gauteng, who permitted me to conduct my empirical research in those churches. Many thanks for your generosity and willingness to interact with your people.
- To the Librarian of the University of Pretoria, Reetha Kruidenier, for her kind hospitality and understanding. At times I thought I was nagging her, but she exercised patience towards me: My deepest thanks.
- To my wife, Mabatho, who endured many late nights, early mornings, as well as the good and bad that the labour of research brings out of me. She was a source of energy and inspiration when needed, and also a calming influence during the times of pressure; my gratitude and love to you my sweetheart.
- To my children: Pontsho and her husband Thami; Dimakatso and her husband Jabu; Motlatsi (Bantu), and Teboho (Kew): My gratitude for your moral support.
- To the University of Pretoria, for their financial support: it was deeply appreciated.
- To Alex Mthimkhulu, for his help in organizing the table of contents. You are superb, and thanks for your availability and invaluable help, in the midst of a busy schedule.
- To Blackie Swart, my director, who gave me permission for three months study leave in order to finish this study.
- Acknowledgement is due to so many people that it would be impossible to mention them all.
- Finally and most importantly, I express my sincere gratitude to my Heavenly Father who made the impossible become possible. To Him be the glory.

## SUMMARY

The concern is often expressed that African churches in general seem to have failed to become self propagating churches – missional churches – that are not living up to the commandment of Jesus Christ to proclaim the gospel of his love to all people in the world. The thesis entitled: *Developing a sustainable missionary programme for Black South African Churches*, firstly sets out to test this notion, and then – against the backdrop of the mission history of the main Christian traditions in Africa – researches the missionary endeavours of a number of churches in the Gauteng Province of South Africa. Learning from their experience, the researcher then develops his own model for missionary engagement, which may help to empower South African churches in their quest to be true to their missionary calling.

In **Chapter One** the relevance of the thesis is discussed, together with the necessary information on the research problem, the hypothesis, the methodology employed, as well as the definitions of some of the more important terms used in the thesis.

**Chapter Two** focuses on the close relationship that has developed between Church and Mission in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, taking special note of developments in the following church traditions: Catholic Churches, Mainline Protestant Churches, Orthodox Churches, African Initiated Churches, and Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches. African views on mission during the past centuries were also studied. The researcher further develops a holistic definition of mission which answers to the needs of the church to proclaim the love of Christ in a comprehensive manner, one that makes sense at the beginning of the 21st century. The following topics were defined:

- The *Kerygmatic* dimension in mission which involves evangelism, conversion, follow-up, and also reaching across the cultural divide, etc.
- The dimension of *Diakonia*, which refers to poverty alleviation, quest for justice ministry in social issues, the church taking care of the HIV/Aids infected and affected etc.

- The *Koinonia* dimension in mission that includes the planting of churches, ecumenical co-operation, and the nurturing and empowering of the saints for their ministry.
- The dimension of *Leitourgia* in mission which refers to mission as, ultimately, an act of worship, bringing glory to God, and proclaiming His name over all the earth.

In **Chapter Three**, the researcher conducted an empirical study in twenty selected churches in the Gauteng region; that is, in Pretoria, Alexandra, Soweto, Auckland Park, and Sebokeng and Sharpville. The findings in general, confirmed the hypothesis that indeed, for generations, African churches have been introverted, seemingly failing to rise to the challenge of becoming the sending churches in their own right. However, through the findings in this study, it was indicated that there were mitigating factors which prevented black churches from becoming involved in their missional obligation. The following reasons were identified. One issue which continued to stand out is that different views are harboured by the Catholic Churches / Mainline Protestant Churches and Pentecostal / Charismatic Churches with regard to the question: How does one become a Christian? The study indicated that Catholics / Mainline Protestant Churches hold the view that infant baptism, guiding the child towards future repentance and faith in Christ, is the right way, whereas Charismatic / Pentecostal Christians believe that baptism should be limited only to adults who can make an intelligent decision to confess their faith. According to literature review, this argument has existed for many centuries.

Other questions that arise are: Do new members regularly join the local church? How are new members attracted to the church? Which difficulties do members have in sharing their faith with others? How practical is one's faith in day to day activities, such as work, home, school, social life, politics, and etcetera? What is the Christian view of politics? Taking the answers to these questions into consideration, this study indicated that most Christians are not very effective in reaching out to the non-Christian communities within our broader community. Christians often do not reflect the light of Christ, and find it difficult to be the salt of the earth.

Regarding the issue of mitigating circumstances that explain the Christian's lack of missionary élan, a number of reasons were offered, in particular, a deficiency of information as to their calling to be witnesses of Christ, as well as an inadequacy of empowerment and equipment. For many, the notion that all believers share an obligation to be missionaries of Christ, was quite novel. Generally, it appears that involvement in a missionary ministry was open only for specially elected individuals or clergy. On the issue of empowerment of church members, Roman Catholics indicated a high score, but unfortunately, this was not related to a missionary focus.

Regarding the question of the socio-political involvement of local churches and their members, the low score was alarming – although progress is being reported in Pentecostal / Charismatic Church circles. Some Christians, however, are still cautious with regards to the issue of their involvement in the socio-political issues of the day. Importantly, the submission that was made by The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa (TEASA) on behalf of the majority of Evangelical, Pentecostal and Charismatic churches to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1997) was remarkable. This was a sign of true repentance. However, the question remains: has there been any improvement since that confession? As stated in the previous chapter, the church needs to be equipped for its socio-political witness and involvement.

In terms of community service, such as combating unemployment and poverty, the churches indicated some measure of involvement, which is commendable. Many programs have been generated to help the poor, such as soup kitchens, or distribution of clothes to the needy. However, churches in this study realize that they should be more innovative in creating job opportunities in order to alleviate poverty and crime in their communities. With regards to the issue of ecological and environmental challenges, in contrast to the AIC churches, the minimal score of 7% among mainline churches was evidence that these churches are weak in maintaining their environment. It was clear, according to the present study, that as God's stewards of that which God has entrusted to them, the church should restore and maintain God's creation.

In **Chapter Four**, a sustainable model which the researcher has developed to enlarge the missional involvement of the local church is presented. The researcher describes a number of strategies which the different mission organizations and churches in the

country are employing in terms of *kerygma*, *diakonia*, *koinonia*, and *leitourgia*. Against this background, the researcher developed his own model / programme for a local congregation based on the findings discussed in chapter three. In the opinion of the researcher, one must differentiate between a *missionary* church and *missional* church. For example, the former refers to the traditional way of doing mission which involves a few church programmes and selected individuals who are involved in a local church. In contrast, in the missional church, every member of the church is involved, including the children's ministry. It was highlighted that the church should return to her core fundamentals regarding the priesthood of all believers and renew her focus on missiology.

The stewardship of giving to mission was also discussed. In as much as the churches under consideration indicated a fair amount of giving, it was clear from the ignorance of the respondents towards mission that the funds were geared towards other church related programmes apart from mission.

Ultimately, the researcher addressed the needs of the local church by applying all four dimensions of mission in his planning and programmes. Furthermore, it was evident that the clergy and key members of church leadership need to undergo thorough training with regards to these models/principles, so that they in turn could continue the process of training their congregations. In this way a multiplication process takes place, and the church will honour her missionary obligation.

**Chapter Five** summarizes the conclusions, findings, and recommendations for further research of this study. However, some churches indicated that their monthly budget will not allow any extra financial burden since they had to pay salaries to their pastors and cover other church related expenses.

Kane (1981: 117) states categorically that all missions, denominational and non-denominational, experience the same common issues since they all find it difficult to raise funds to advance God's mission. He considers that it is easier to raise support for candidates going into Foreign Service than for those going into home missions. For example, it is easier to raise funds for famine relief than for a missionary enterprise. Certain of the churches under consideration, who indicated their involvement in soup

kitchens to the poor, for example, have developed social responsibility programmes that care for the needy of the church and the local community. Indeed, this is excellent, and covers the service dimension of mission. It is always easier to describe physical need – poverty, disease, malnutrition, hunger – than to depict spiritual need. It goes without saying that it is impossible to portray spiritual need in a visual way (Kane 1981: 117).

In our South African context, in order to make a mark in our missionary obligation, the church will have to take stewardship seriously. The church should not wait until it is rich before giving towards mission. Church members generally should be faithful in tithing their total income. If one of the churches interviewed in this study is able to give between 50% and 80% of their budget to missions, a classical example, it is possible and can be done, if church leaders have vision and are committed to their missionary obligation. Kane (1981: 118) cautioned us that the churches must never reduce their commitment to world missions. The church will be greatly assisted in her resolve if she remembers, and really believes as the Scripture declares: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’ (Acts 20: 35). Kane suggests that ‘[i]f every church member acted on that principle, our financial worries would disappear overnight’.

There is a spiritual harvest to those who give sacrificially to the advancement of God’s kingdom. (Galatians 6: 8) states that, ‘he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting’. Olford (1972: 73) argues that this text actually means that as we respond to the indwelling Spirit in love, sacrifice, and stewardship, we shall be adding interest to the capital of eternal life which we already have in Christ. Bright, the late founder and president of Campus Crusade for Christ (a mission organization), who was concerned about believers who do not take their stewardship responsibilities seriously, asserted:

I am amazed at the life-style of the average Christian, a life-style that differs little from that of non-believers in terms of attitudes, actions, motives, desires and words. Many Christians are experiencing financial difficulty, emotional turmoil, even physical illness as a result of the kind of seed they are sowing. Unlike Job, who suffered for the glory of God, they are being disciplined for

sowing un-righteously, as was King David after he committed adultery and murder (1 Samuel 25).

It should be noted that God controls the returns because he owns everything. He knows us and our motives in our giving, and he is the one who returns a harvest of blessing to us. Conversely, Scripture reveals that we can add to our spiritual capital by continual enrichment as a result of our generosity and the ministry of giving to God's mission. Smith (1959: 61-62) used a 'Faith Promise' which he regards as a Pauline method of raising funds for mission. From the Scriptures, chapters 8 and 9 of 2 Corinthians (in *Living Letters*) are normally referenced in this regard. In terms of a 'Faith Promise Offering', the individual has to pray about it and ask God how much he/she would have to give, and then trust God for the amount. Month by month, the individual goes to God in prayer and asks Him for the amount promised, and waits upon the Lord until God provides the amount. Smith considers that this is the offering that brings blessings. One or two churches known to the researcher are still using this method to support their missionary work.

Vargo (1995: 20) states that the failure of many churches is, unfortunately, due to a lack of budgeting, which results in frustration and distress for many church leaders. He further warns that, if budgeting is done correctly, it is time consuming, but the dividends are incomparable. It involves making numerous assumptions and obtaining considerable cooperation and promises from the people. Importantly, for the vast majority of churches, the benefits of sound budgeting will outweigh all the associated problems that may be anticipated. The following are the ten reasons why budgeting is important for any churches, since it:

- Formalises planning;
- Reduces emotion-charged discussion;
- Is a basis for performance evaluation;
- Is a basis for control;
- Assists in communication and coordination;
- Gets members involved;
- Increases the commitment to giving;

- Generates confidence in the church's leadership;
- Allows for continued operation when cash receipts and disbursements are mismatched; and
- Allows time to lend or borrow prudently (Vargo 1995: 20-24).

It is vitally important that churches prepare budgets for the smooth running of their financial operations. This is one area that cannot be ignored by the church as it forges ahead with its missionary obligations. Unfortunately, failure to budget has contributed to the death of many churches in our communities.

The churches will be helped in doing their strategic planning as this is one of the findings in this study. Much time should be spend with church leaders in doing a strategic planning in view of developing their own goals and objectives which will guide their every action, especially their missional obligation. It is noted that without proper planning, goals are dreams, objectives are hazy, programmes are vague, priorities are confused, and evaluations impossible (Vargo 1995: 16). Callahan noted in his famous book entitled: *Twelve Keys to an Effective Church* that

The first and most central characteristic of an effective, successful church is its specific, concrete, missional objectives... 'specific' refers to the fact that the local congregation has focused its missional outreach on a particular human hurt and hope – for example, by being in mission with alcoholics and their families, with housebound elderly, or with epileptics and their families. Missional outreach is not best accomplished by developing a purpose statement or some generalized approach to a given age group in the surrounding area. Nor is mission best accomplished by the church seeking to engage in helping everyone with everything. The church that does that ends up helping anyone with anything... Objectives refers to missional direction stated in a sufficiently clear fashion that it is possible to know when they have been achieved ... The local church that is effective ... has moved forward toward the substantial accomplishment and achievement of very clear, intentional goals. The effective congregation is not engaged in wishful thinking with a

generalized purpose or goal statement that just lists its sentiments to do something noble, worthwhile, and helpful (1983: 1-2).

Vargo (1995: 17) argues that, as churches operate as non-profit sectors, and usually with a large cadre of volunteers who need focus, it is essential that they plan more effectively in order to reach maximum results. He further outlines his proper planning formula as follows:

- Identify needs;
- Stating goals – statement of intent, general purpose, or broad direction;
- Stating objectives – the desired ends that are to be achieved in a specific period of time;
- Being specific ( as opposed to generalizing);
- Establishing priorities;
- Being able to evaluate progress toward reaching goals and objectives;
- Considering both short-term and long-term perspectives.

My strategic planning process has been adapted from Athletes in Action (Campus Crusade for Christ Outreach Strategies to Sports). The strategy is user friendly and can be adapted to different ministries such as those in churches, university campuses, the field of sports etcetera. I argue that churches under consideration need a strategy as they focus on missionary endeavour.

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## **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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 eighteen 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 Bethelsdorp 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 100<sup>th</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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. Kritzing (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. Kritzing (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. Kritzing (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*’.

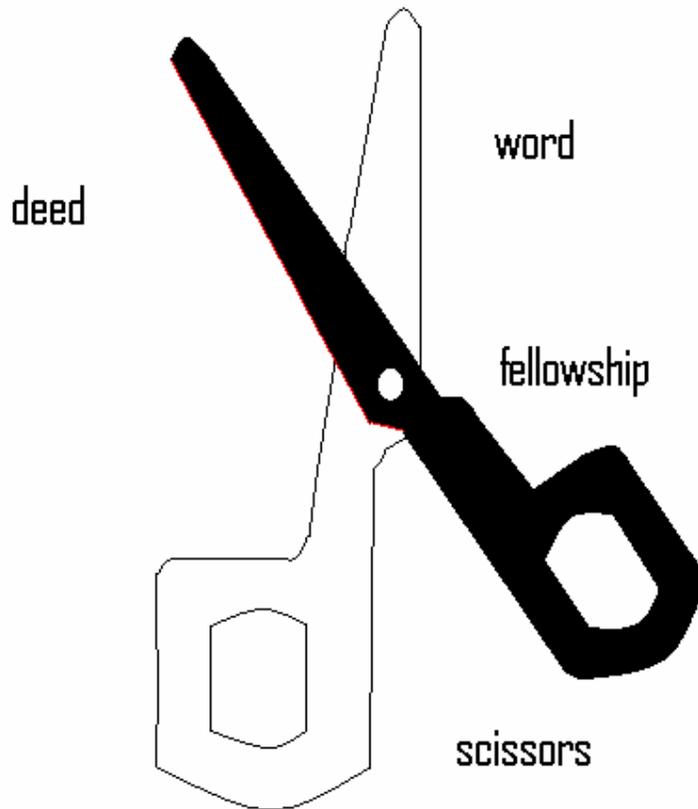


Figure 2.1 (Kritzinger 1988: 35)

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 abundance’ (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).

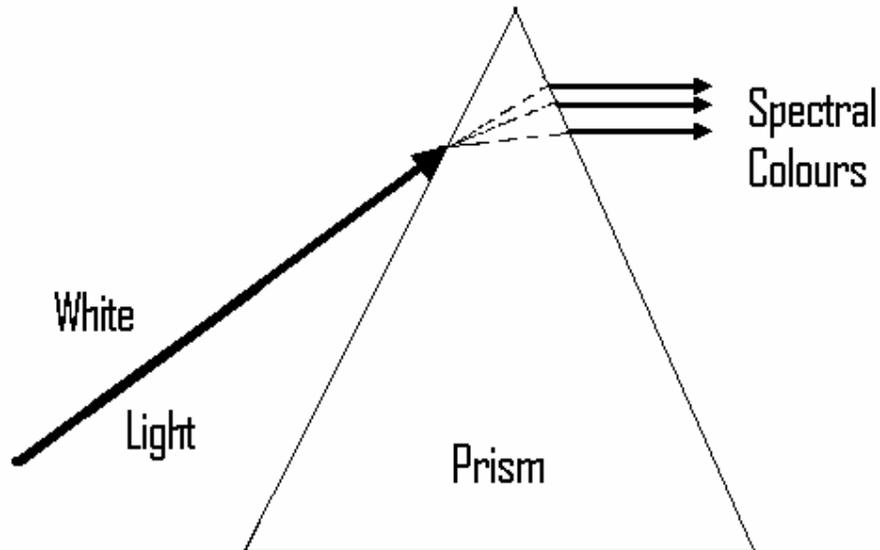


Figure: 2. 2 (Kritzinger 1988: 35)

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*, *koinonic*, 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

koinoniac 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).

## 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**

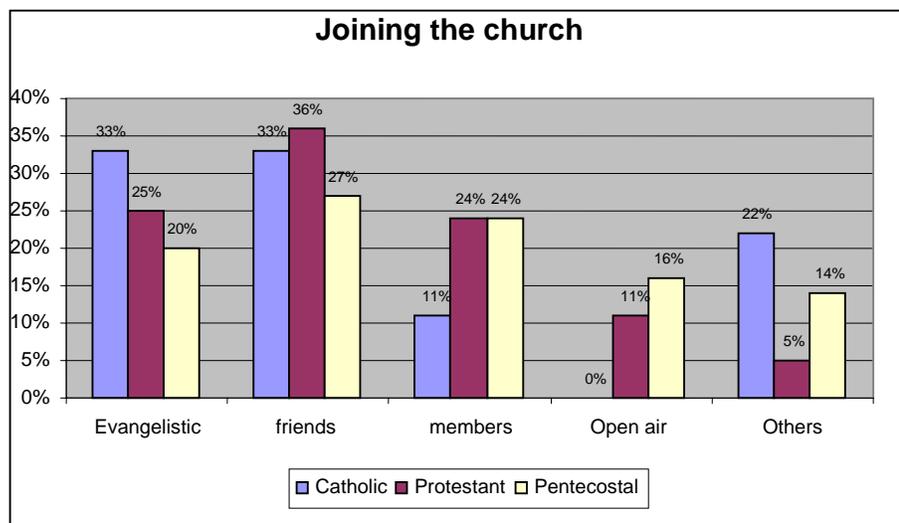
	No of Respondents	%
Evangelistic outreaches?	43	25%
Invited by friends?	63	36%
Invited by church members?	42	24%
Open air outreaches?	19	11%
Others?	8	5%
Total	175	100%

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	of%
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	
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.

## CHAPTER 4: Developing a Sustainable Model to Enlarge the Missional Involvement of the Local Church

### 4.1 Introduction

For the purpose of developing a comprehensive and sustainable model to enlarge the missional involvement of a local church, attention needs to be given to the demands of *kerugma*, *diakonia*, *koinonia*, and *leitourgia*. A full discussion on these dimensions was furnished in chapter two; to recapitulate briefly:

- *Kerygma* implies the proclamation of the gospel to the world in need. The churches under consideration, and many others in South Africa, should passionately proclaim and preach the Good News of Jesus Christ as mandated by Jesus Christ.
- *Diakonia* implies service. Simply put, mission means to be of service to the whole world. According to the empirical research recorded in table 3.15, the churches under consideration inadequately understand their responsibilities in terms of socio-political and social justice. They are neutral and on the sidelines as regards this dimension.
- *Koinonia* involves building up the fellowship of believers, the unity of the church and ecumenical co-operation. The church's responsibility is to strengthen the communion of believers, and to help young Christians build up their personal faith, so that they will thrive in the world where God has placed them, that is, in the work-place, educational spheres, community, etcetera.
- *Leitourgia* involves the public service rendered to God through worship. For example, according to Kritzinger et al., (1994: 38), worship can be rendered directly to God or it can be rendered indirectly to God by serving one's fellow human beings.

## 4.2. The Challenges Awaiting the Church in her Mission

For the Church to fulfil her missionary obligations, it is essential to understand *where* the world, and particularly *where* in South Africa, the need is at its greatest. This will assist the church to focus on its *real* task, and enable the congregation to become involved in *their* ministry of *kerugma*, *diakonia*, *koinonia* and *leitourgia*.

### 4.2.1. Reached and unreached areas

Where is the need the greatest? The following tables, adopted from a lecture given by Willem Malherbe (2006), provide us with answers:

The world's population can be subdivided, in religious terms, approximately as shown in table 4.1a:

**Table 4.1a : World Population by Type of Religion**

Religion	Adherents	Percentage
World population	6 billion	100%
Christian	2 billion	33%
Muslim	1, 2 billion	20%
Hindu	780 million	13%
Buddhist	660 million	11%
Others	1,32 billion	23%

At first glance, the Christian majority is rather impressive and comforting. But statistics can be very misleading. 2 000 million people, one third of all people on earth, indicate in some way or another that they align themselves with a Christian environment. Exactly how misleading this can be, will be shown later on. In the meantime, one should consider the following table: 4.2b.

**Table 4.1b : World Population by Type of Religion**

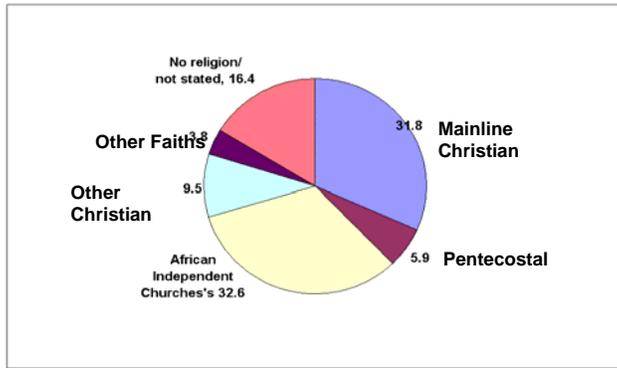
Religion	Adherents	Percentage
World population	6 000 million	100%
Christian-aligned people	2 000 million	33%
Committed Christians	700 million	12%
Other 'christians'	1 300 million	21%

This approach makes a dramatic difference. Of course, the figure of 700 million is extremely difficult to establish or prove. A great many Christians dwell somewhere between being committed or not caring deeply about Christianity being and no human can really say with certainty where they fit in. Also, many will claim to be true Christians while they have no conviction in their hearts. The fact is that those Christians whom we accept to be true ones, whether we call them committed, re-born, evangelical or practising, form only a minority. It is scant consolation that the other major religions probably face the same problem of half-hearted followers.

Where do we stand in South Africa?

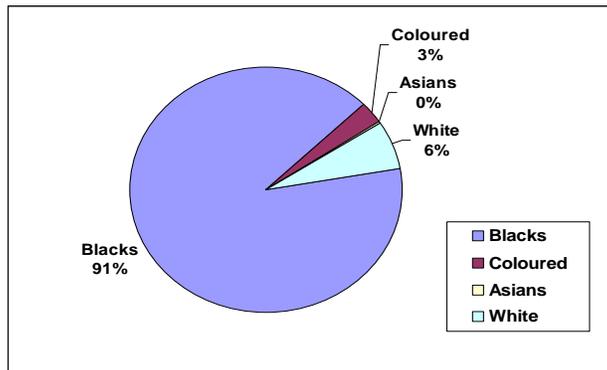
It is certainly astonishing to learn and understand where South Africa is today in regard to the statistics concerning the church's involvement in her missionary obligations. Karl Teichert in his article (2008) suggests that there are two main challenges of which the church needs to be aware: (1) the numbers of people who claim to have no religion, (2) and the number of people who say they are *Christian*, but do not regularly attend church, simply being called 'nominal Christians'.

The following four graphs have been adopted from Teichert (2008). According to the South African 2001 national census, 8,400,000 people (20.2% of the population) stated that they followed no religion, or they belonged to other faiths or did not state their religious preference. Over 14,600,000 people (32.6% of the population) belonged to the various African Independent Church groups (See Graph 4.2).



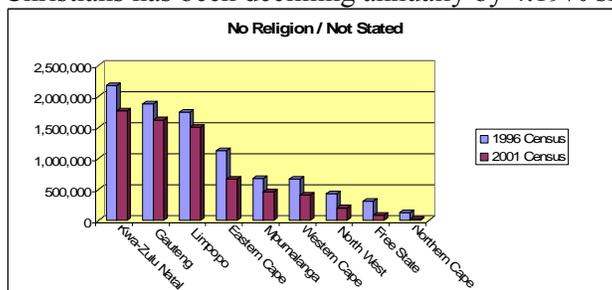
**Graph 4.1 – Religious Affiliation (2001 Census)**

The vast majority of those who claimed no religious affiliation stemmed from Black cultural backgrounds, numbering 7,640,000 (91%) (See Graph 4.3).



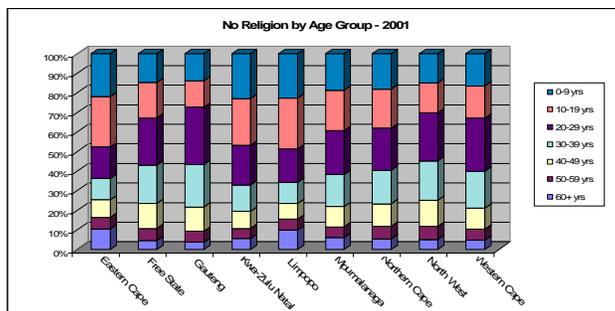
**Graph 4.2 – No Religion / Not Stated by Cultural Group (2001 Census)**

Of those with no religion, 72.4% live in the Kwa-Zulu Natal, Gauteng and Limpopo provinces. We can take encouragement from the fact that the percentage of non-Christians has been declining annually by 4.19% since the 1996 census (Graph 4. 4).



### Graph 4.3 – No Religion / Not Stated by Province

For the Church to effectively reach out to these people, it is also important to discern their age group. Of those who follow no religion, 62.6% are under 30 years of age. Nearly 47.5% of all irreligious people living in the Eastern Cape, Kwa-Zulu Natal and Limpopo provinces are under 20 years old (See Graph 4. 5). This should dramatically affect how we view and approach the youth in our communities.



### Graph 4.4 – No Religion by Age Group (2001 Census)

The second segment of the unfinished task consists of *unchurched Christians*. There are 10,500,000 to 14,000,000 people in South Africa (30-40%) who claim to be Christian, but do not regularly attend a local church. These people would be nominal in their faith and not actively growing in their relationship with Christ.

Some challenges of reaching those with no religion and discipling the unchurched Christians include the lack of space, large numbers and access to local churches. It is estimated that over 30,000 new and different kinds of churches are needed across the country to effectively disciple the unchurched people. Only when the church obeys God's command to become involved in her missionary obligations, can we successfully transform South Africa and the world for Christ. Furthermore, field assessment is needed to correct the mistakes and gather pertinent information which will allow more strategic decision making at the grassroots level (Bills in Mani 2008: 71)

#### 4.2.2 The dialogue with people from other faiths

One should note that the word *dialogue* has been discussed for many years, particularly in the context of the relationship between Christians and adherents to other faiths. Missiologists often refer to the fact that the word dialogue is used in the Bible. Paul's famous sermon on the Areopagus (Acts 17) could, for example, be described as a dialogue (cf. Kritzinger *et al.*, 1984: 51). According to the observation of the researcher, most churches in South Africa do not know how to relate well to other faiths. There has been a poor track record and vicious intolerance that has been unleashed on adherents of other faiths by Christians (Bosch 1991: 485). Therefore, it is high time that the church be informed and taught, and be equipped, regarding how to relate to other faiths without compromising its convictions. Bosch (1991: 484) reminds us that we need to approach every other faith and its adherents reverently, taking off our shoes, as the place we are approaching is holy. On the other hand, Verkuyl (1978) distinguishes three forms of dialogue that need to be thoroughly comprehended: 1) dialogue aimed at a better mutual understanding (that is, to remove misunderstanding); 2) dialogue aimed at better co-operation on social problems between people of different faiths; and 3) dialogue as a medium of missionary communication.

In helping the church to discharge her missionary obligation, Kritzinger *et al.* (1984: 53-54) and Ravelo-Hoerson *et al.* (in Mani 2008: 169-170) have summarized some invaluable points to consider in regard to dialogue with other faiths:

- There must be an attitude of openness and humility to these faiths.
- We must gain a realistic knowledge of them, and not settle for the library versions or the politically correct ones. The degree to which the Church is realistic about these religions will determine the accuracy of her discernment of the significance of the Gospel for their followers and her role as the community entrusted with the gospel.
- We need a more precise theological definition of dialogue, and also to empower every member in order to be engaged with other faiths through creative resources which are relevant.

- There must be more clarity concerning the relationship between mission and dialogue, and on overcoming the barriers that separate the church and other faiths.
- True dialogue must always be open to becoming ‘trialogue’. Here the ‘trialogue’ refers to another partner, the ‘Holy Spirit’.

As the church is engaged in dialogue, it is important that the partners involved should listen to one another. If the persons dialoguing are not interpreting the gospel, then, according to Kritzinger *et al.* (1984: 54), the dialogue becomes superficial, and they miss the mark. The church should hold the view that the faith professed is both true and just, and it should be proclaimed without any compromise. Importantly, the members of the church should proclaim the gospel ‘not as judges or lawyers, but as witnesses; not as soldiers, but as envoys of peace; not as high-pressure sales-persons, but as ambassadors of the Servant Lord’ (Bosch 1991: 489). The researcher will offer a classic example of how to evangelize the Islamic world as one example of other faiths under discussion in section 4.2.4.

#### **4.2.3. Christian-Muslim dialogue in South Africa**

It is agreed by notable missiologist that the largest bloc of unreached people in our world today is the Muslims. In South Africa the Muslim community is relatively small, but very influential. Dialogue with our Muslim neighbours is on the agenda for every church in the country. It is therefore essential for Christian leaders and missionaries to explore the dynamics of cross-cultural and cross-religious communications, and to be aware of their own cultural trappings coming to the surface as they dialogue with Muslims. The missionary amongst the Muslims needs to be aware of his/her own deficiencies and distinguish what is Christianity from what is cultural. There are three important things to remember:

- **Muslims are people.** In presenting the Christian message to Muslims, we must realize that they are people with emotions like us; they experience fears and hopes, with their joys and sorrows, their burdens and anxieties, their failures and their sins. We should seek to know them so well that they will

trust us, and will open their hearts and tell us their deepest needs. The Scriptures make it clear that each human being is the object of God's undying love and affection.

- **Muslims are people of community.** Islam is more than just a religion. It is a 'law' which governs Muslims' culture and touches every facet of life – personal, social, economic, religious, and political. The Islamic teachings create an awareness of the duties each Muslim must fulfil in all these areas of his / her life. A Muslim belongs to a community in which s/he functions as a member. From birth to death, s/he lives a life related to other members of this community. This is one reason why it is difficult for a Muslim to become a Christian. To detach oneself from one's community is like cutting off a member of one's body.
- **Muslim conversion.** Although religious conversion results in a change in a person's way of life, it does not imply cultural conversion. Muslims should continue speaking their language, and, for example, they should not stop eating with their hands. They do not have to learn Western hymn tunes in order to make music to the Lord. They should not stop arranging marriages to cousins nor need they follow the Western dating pattern. The missionary who desires to witness needs to examine his/her own culture and ask whether it reflects the love of God. Essentially, Christians should consider, can we come to terms with our own ethnocentrism? (Royer 1996: 123-132; cf. Cooper 1993: 55).

From this brief example, it is clear that before the church can think of strategizing for evangelism within the Islamic World, it is imperative that its members understand not only the history of Islam but also the factors which cause Islam to be resistant to Christianity, unlike Animists, Buddhists, Hindus, and communists who may know nothing about Jesus.

#### **4.3 The Need for a Comprehensive, Sustainable, Missionary Programme**

Jesus Christ sent his disciples into the world to proclaim the good news of salvation to all its people. This mandate was given to the disciples and all those who will believe

in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in the following generations, until the end of the world. Examples of how this has been carried out in South Africa will be discussed in the following sections.

#### **4.3.1 Serving the need of *Kerugma* (witnessing)**

In South Africa many examples of missionary programmes focussing on the preaching of the gospel in some way or another may be listed. Among the churches involved in this research, reference was made to the following *kerygmatic* initiatives:

##### **4.3.1.1. Evangelistic campaigns**

Evangelistic campaigns are undertaken by an individual church, separate denominations or by forming partnerships with other churches, especially in saturating a big area like a city. The researcher has been involved through Campus Crusade for Christ in evangelistic outreaches like the Operation Sunrise project where thousands, and millions of people were won for Christ in South Africa and other parts of Southern African countries (Campus Crusade for Christ unpublished document 2001) . This strategy should be included for a major spiritual harvest by the churches.

##### **4.3.1.2. Bible study classes**

The Bible study method is effective and needs to be encouraged as one of the tools in evangelising non-Christians. For example, it starts by training a few potential Bible study leaders from 15 to 20 churches at a time. About ten leaders per church attend the training. The organizers should trust God for 200 potential leaders in one session. With such a large-scale outreach from different churches, whole communities are reached, and the new converts are not easily turned back due to the leaders who are continuously nurturing and caring for them.

The content of the Bible study is systematic and user friendly. Importantly, new believers are taught the Bible chapter by chapter, and are encouraged to start to multiply themselves by continuing the process of starting their own Bible studies; thus obeying and honouring God's great commission with willing hearts.

#### 4.3.1.3. Literature, pamphlets, tapes

According to the findings in this study, most churches are not using these invaluable tools as part of their missionary work. Church leaders should be encouraged to consider these tools. For example, literature and pamphlets deal more widely with different spectrums of the ‘spiritual decision process’, and according to Kritzinger *et al.* (1994: 134), there is probably ‘no other medium that has the same potential to assist the spiritual growth of a Christian as a book is able to do, being cost effective and not bound to time or place’. Kritzinger *et al.* (1984: 48), mention three reasons why literature and media should be considered in missionary endeavour: 1) increasing numbers of people can read and write; 2) a population explosion is taking place; and 3) the ever faster rate of social, political and technological change. Generally, not many churches are aware of these tools. It is part of the researcher’s assignment to make the church aware of these significant tools.

#### 4.3.1.4. Literature evangelism

It goes without saying that the printed media constitute one of the tools which can be used successfully in spreading the gospel message. For example, Campus Crusade for Christ is utilizing this method as a pre-evangelistic tool, during follow-up, and in building up the new believer in his/her faith.

Operation Mobilization is also known as using this strategy successfully. T Gospel Publishers are using tracks and supplying them to churches and organizations. As one of the invaluable tools, churches need to be encouraged to utilize and adapt the tracks to the relevant culture as they reach out to the unchurched.

Jim Engel (in Kritzinger *et al.*, 1994: 136), suggested the three following guidelines for using the media: (1) we need to recognize that there is always not only one audience; there are people from different backgrounds and cultures, and this should be considered. This will imply doing research before involvement; (2) we need to work out a strategy which is appropriate; (3) we need to always measure the effectiveness

of the particular tool that has been used and ask the question: are we reaching our goal?

#### 4.3.1.5. Media

Different strategies could be employed for media outreach, and the researcher will only discuss the following few:

- *Heartlines*: The Heartlines Programmes were broadcast on the South African TV3 station with a phenomenal outcome. This programme is a non-profit initiative of the Mass Media Project that utilises television, radio and print media to tell stories that encourage the nation – not only to profess Christianity – but to live out values such as acceptance, responsibility, forgiveness, perseverance, self-control, honesty, compassion and second chance. It was broadcast nationally for eight weeks, and after viewing each film, discussion ensued in people’s homes. This was a resource for teaching and discipleship, designed to challenge young people to live godly lives. The feedback from this adventure was striking. The programme was linked to churches, and para-church organizations etcetera. In our efforts at using media, it is essential to integrate it into the programme of the church (Kritzinger *et al.*, 1994: 135), unlike some independent TV evangelists who have built up their own empires, which has left bitterness in the body of Christ.
- *Truth-Media Internet*: Campus Crusade for Christ (CCC) is evangelizing through a network website that reaches out to many segments of society, by means of truth-media internet ministries directed to hundreds of thousands of people every month in a non-traditional environment and with a non-threatening approach. The focus falls on connecting seekers in need with committed people who can help others accelerate God’s mission. The desired outcome of this strategy is to touch lives nationally, and beyond, by using the internet, and churches under consideration should be encouraged to utilise it as one way of reaching out to the world.

- **Jesus Film and Video**

The Jesus Film project distributes the film ‘Jesus’, a two hour docudrama about the life of Christ based on the Gospel of Luke. The Jesus film has been seen in every country of the world and translated into more than 900 languages, and has had more than 6 billion viewings from all around the world, possibly making it the most watched film in history (Worldwide Challenge 2004: 16). The goal of using this film is to reach every nation, tribe, people and tongue, helping them to see and hear the story of Jesus in a language they can understand.

Many mission organization experts have acclaimed the ‘Jesus Film’ as one of the greatest evangelistic success stories of all time, and more than 1,500 Christian organizations have used the film with success (cf [www.jesusfilm.org](http://www.jesusfilm.org)). According to the Campus Crusade for Christ leadership, the ultimate success of this film will not be measured by the number of people who are viewing it, but rather, by the people who are following and are committed to Christ after doing so. The same film has been converted into video as well as into a DVD, in order to be user friendly in homes.

#### **4.3.1.6. Saturation evangelism**

Saturation evangelism can be well illustrated in various places in the New Testament. For example, in (Acts 5: 28) the city council reported that the apostles had filled Jerusalem with their doctrine. Luke further writes that ‘the churches throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria’ grew in numbers, living in fear of the Lord. Furthermore, ‘All that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him (Aeneas) and turned to the Lord’. Also, all Joppa was informed of the Gospel (Acts 9: 31, 35, 42). This type of saturation evangelism resulted in many people being converted to the Lord Jesus Christ: ‘...thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the Lord’. The same report was documented for other cities like Antioch in Pisidia and Ephesus. In the former city, the Bible says ‘The Word of Lord spread through the whole region’.

Saturation evangelism is a transformative return to the New Testament method of evangelizing. Peters (1970: 39-40) provides a succinct, qualitative, distinctive definition of saturation evangelism in the following; it:

- aims at gospel saturation of the community and country, and also of the believers and churches;
- makes a strenuous attempt to reverse an age-old practice in evangelism, best described as church *centripetalism*, and transforms it into dynamic, evangelistic *centrifugalism*;
- follows a predetermined and coordinated schedule of simultaneous activities throughout all cooperating churches;
- earnestly endeavours to enlist into the movement as many churches, missions, and denominations as will cooperate in an evangelical and evangelistic programme in order to express the unity of the body of Christ.

One of the weak areas in the study of the churches, evident in chapter three, is a lack of networking and cooperation in saturating a city or an area. Many factors come into play: fear; lack of confidence; fear of sheep stealing; lack of knowledge; and pride etc. However, churches that have a kingdom mindset can easily overcome these weaknesses and concentrate on reaching the unchurched in their communities; Coomes (2002: 242-243) provides a workable solution in implementing a city's saturation:

- Each congregation will be invited to design and execute its own mission with the help of the training and resources provided.
- The approach will emphasize the importance of both homogeneity and diversity in evangelism.
- There should be a number of projects organised for city labourers, businessmen, domestic helpers, college students and high schools youth, which will be geared specifically to homogeneous audiences. Everyone and all groups should be involved in mission.
- Each church or group would be expected to pay for its own mission outreach. No paternalistic attitude would be encouraged. It is the observation of the researcher that some churches display a tendency to a handout approach. The approach is 'what will my church benefit out of this effort?'

- The existing structures of churches should serve as a vehicle for planning for the mission, and churches would be encouraged to own the vision of mission.
- A small overall mission committee would be put together, and its job would be solely to coordinate the project. However, the executive power would be vested in the congregations.
- Training will be provided to church leaders and congregations. Caution will be exercised in regard to bringing church leaders at one place for training purposes, as this can create resentment to other leaders due to sheep stealing etc.

Indeed, saturation evangelism is possible, and the church can reach far more people in the community than a solo ministry stemming from one church. This should be encouraged among the churches' leadership as they envisage reaching not only their own Jerusalem, Judea or Samaria, but also the remotest parts of the world.

#### **4.3.1.7. Personal evangelism**

It is logical that mass evangelism will lead to personal evangelism, in terms of personal evangelism or sharing Christ on a one to one basis. In implementing this strategy, the famous booklet called *The Four Spiritual Laws* has been used successfully in many communities both nationally and in other parts of the world. The booklet develops four main points as follows:

- God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.
- People are sinful and separated from God; thus they cannot know and experience God's love and plan for their lives.
- Jesus Christ is God's only provision for one's sin. Through Him one can know and experience God's love and plan for one's life.
- We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives.

This tool and others are relevant and transferable to any culture. A transferable concept is a truth that can be communicated to another generation after another without distorting or diluting the original truth. This is what the apostle Paul stated to Timothy, his spiritual son in the faith: ‘For you must teach others those things you and many others have heard me speak about. Teach these great truths to trustworthy men who will, in turn, pass them on to others’ (2 Timothy 2: 2, *Living Bible*). On the contrary, most of the churches under consideration lack tools to evangelize their communities. There is a need to train, equip, and mobilize churches for a one to one evangelism.

#### **4.3.1.8. Sport balls for Christ**

Another effective tool that is being used is a *Sports ball for Christ*. The balls have four colours on them:

- Black: Sin; ‘everyone has sinned and is far away from God’s saving presence’ (Rom 3:23).
- Red: Blood of Jesus; ‘For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life’ (John 3: 16).
- White: Purity; ‘Try to be at peace with everyone, and try to live a holy life, because no one will see the Lord without it’ (Heb. 12: 14).
- Green: Growth; ‘Instead, by speaking the truth in a spirit of love, we must grow up in every way towards Christ, who is the head’ (Ephesians 4:15)

The team plans together with churches in a certain city for the outreach to sportspeople. Much prayer and intercession is organized for much spiritual fruit. A strategic soccer field is identified and the teams are organized to play. Most players are disciples who have been trained to share their faith effectively. Scores of people are invited through a loudspeaker and by person to person, at times through radio and the spreading of pamphlets. At the end, people are invited to convene at a certain spot, and they listen to the gospel message which is shared. Many people respond to the claims of Christ, and some churches are providing follow-up. In their outreaches they

may include: basketball, football, tennis, bowling, golf, chess etcetera. This strategy could be used by churches in their endeavour to do mission work.

#### **4.3.1.9. Tent campaign crusades**

These were effective in the 70s and 80s. One of the well known evangelists, Reinhard Bonke, founded the organization called Christ for All Nations. He was effectual from South Africa to the rest of Africa: thousands of people were won through those campaigns. He also followed a strategy of networking with churches, and effective follow-up was undertaken by the remaining churches, especially, the Apostolic Faith Mission Church and others. However, lately, this strategy is no longer effective.

However, there were a number of pitfalls regarding this strategy. Firstly, the evangelists demanded an huge amount of money upfront in order to pitch a tent and local pastors were unable to meet the demand; secondly, many attendees attracted were Christians and the meetings ended up serving as an entertainment instead of reaching out to non-Christians; thirdly, some evangelists enriched themselves and left the pastors disillusioned; fourthly, the publicity given to these efforts often marred their spiritual effectiveness. Lastly, the preaching was geared to one dimension of mission, the salvation of souls, and other important dimensions were ignored.

#### **4.4. Serving the Needs of Diakonia**

Kritzinger *et al.* (1994: 143) accurately state that “‘word’ and ‘deed’ are absolutely intertwined as dimensions of the one ‘good news activity’”. The two cannot be divorced, but, unfortunately, in most of the churches under consideration, the situation is different. More emphasis falls on evangelism, and very little is done in terms of deeds. It goes without saying that the churches under consideration display an inadequate understanding of the needs of and involvement in socio-economic issues. However, according to table 3.16, on a small scale churches are addressing these issues, for example: unemployment, poverty, and crime. Some mainline Protestant churches do balance between ‘word’ and ‘deed’. They conduct spiritual revivals, empowering young people to thrive in the world; they develop programmes such as growing vegetables to feed the hungry in their communities and so forth. Still to come

in the chapter, the researcher indicated that much still needs to be done regarding the issue of ‘service’. It is important that there be a balance between the two. Furthermore, the following areas need attention in the churches under discussion:

#### **4.4.1 Political and Social Justice**

According to the findings in this study, table 3.15 indicates that the church inadequately understands her responsibility towards socio-political and social justice. Cassidy (in Coomes 2002: 423) observes that ‘the matter of how Christian faith intersects with and relates to politics has always been a vexed one’. Most of the churches under consideration are still neutral and on the sidelines. Newbigin (1986: 95) states that there are loud voices which insist that the church has absolutely no business meddling with matters of politics and economics. He further noted that the main task of the church is to focus on the eternal salvation of the human soul. According to this line of thought, the church is about changing people not systems and structures. On the other hand Kritzinger *et al.* (1984: 37) point out that there are churches which widely believe that ‘mission work must be directed primarily at the macro-structures of society’. Furthermore, they strike the balance:

Christians from Third World societies can contribute meaningfully to the dialogue – and do so in no uncertain terms. The belief is steadily growing that the gospel can no longer be confined to micro-structures, the sins and problems of individuals, but should also encompass macro-structures – the crucial economic and political problems of today.

Newbigin (1986: 97) brings in another perspective: that from the church’s beginning and throughout, God has viewed the individual person realistically as someone always involved in relationships with other human beings and with the world. The Torah of Yahweh, his loving guidance and instruction for his people, concerns the whole of their life as persons, as families, and as a nation. Significantly, faith, obedience, repentance, and love are not confined under the category of religion; on the contrary, they are embodied in ways of behaving that cover much of what we would describe as jurisprudence, public health, education, welfare, and economic policy. The Bible is

full of references that relate to the real issues of life. Therefore, there is no point to the church trying to dichotomize spirituality and social involvement.

Sider (in Bosch 1980:229), himself an evangelical, expressed his concern to his fellow evangelicals who divorced themselves from social issues and made the following statement:

Only if we Biblical Christians throw ourselves into the struggle for social justice for the wretched of the earth so unequivocally that the poor and the oppressed know beyond all question that we will risk all in the struggle against economic and political oppression -- only then will Third World theologians be willing to hear our critique of unbiblical definitions of salvation. And only then will the oppressed of the earth be able to hear our Good News about the risen Lord Jesus.

It is essential that the church be a part of the solution for the ills of our society. It is true that only genuine solidarity will give the church credibility, so that people will be attracted and willing to listen to the preaching (*kerygma*) of the gospel. For example, at the Tambaram conference which took place near Madras, India, it was affirmed that witness should not only be understood as an oral proclamation of the *euangelion*. Witness was 'to present Christ to the world' in such a way that 'the vision and hope of social transformation and of the realization of such ends as justice, freedom and peace will be realized. This does not imply that mission at Tambaram was packaged as the 'social gospel'...God's goal is a new earth and we should not be discouraged by the broken reality around us. The doctrine of salvation teaches us that everything can be changed. God's Kingdom 'acts both as ferment and as dynamite in every social system' (Bosch 1980: 168-169).

Joseph Sittler's introduction of the cosmic Christ, basing his argument on (Col. 1:15-20), leads to the interpretation that God was regarded as being active in every facet of world history. Through this view the contrast between Church and world was in principle abandoned (in Bosch 1980:188). This has fundamental implications for our understanding of the transformational impact of social and political involvement on

as the church of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Likewise, the 1966 Conference of the World Council of Churches in its declaration on ‘Church and Society’ had this to say:

Mission has the grave responsibility of joining in the struggle to free the masses throughout the world from political and racial domination and economic and cultural exploitation. Not only theologians and missionaries but also sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists, journalists and development experts, can co-operate in studying the macro-structures of society with a view to changing them... this is at least a primary task and goal of twentieth-century mission (Kritzinger *et al.*,1984: 37-38).

The reality is brought into being in all the churches. *Doing* mission not only involves preaching, and other dimensions of mission, but is also involved in the socio-political dimension of life. It is ‘wholistic’ in its nature, and the goal is to bring *all* of the gospel, to *all* people, in *all* of the world, and to teach them to obey *all* of God’s commandments and His Great Commission (cf. Kritzinger 1994: 146). As the church becomes involved in political and social injustices, it should never ignore the spiritual dimension of people. In this scenario, the church should make sure that it is not involved in party politics, but political principles should be drawn from Scripture and the socio-political implications thereof. Cassidy (in Coomes 2002: 433) states that the main task of the church should be to ‘present politicians, statespersons and government leaders with the Judaeo-Christian moral and ethical principles that should guide, shape and be enshrined in political policies. The church’s basic concern is to see society operate under the kingship of Christ’.

#### **4.4.2 HIV/AIDS**

This sickness threatens and debilitates a large portion of our society both young and old. Proper care and love from the church can make a huge difference. According to the research in this study, some churches are doing well in this area, but many are still not involved. There should be a structured programme in partnership with non governmental organization (NGOs) to assist churches to become involved in communities as part of their *diakonian* responsibility. Most of the victims of

HIV/AIDS are black; from January 2004, the Government started distributing free anti-AIDS drugs to national hospitals, but could not keep its pledge to provide free anti-retrovirals to the more than 50,000 people who were infected in the same year, let alone in subsequent years. It is important that the church takes part in addressing this issue by providing more training to the community, as well as care and love to those who have been victimized.

It is noted that Africa is faced with a crisis as regards AIDS. Horrifyingly, it has already resulted in the death of more than 25 million people to date, most of whom are in Africa. It is further noted that over 40 million people are infected with HIV/AIDS, of which 28.5 million live in sub-Saharan Africa. In South Africa only, there are about 5.5 million people living with HIV/AIDS. It is the number one cause of death amongst adults, youth, and children under 5 years. AIDS has already left an estimated 600 000 children without parents in South Africa (Wilson 2007: 1).

Most churches in this study indicated that in one way or another, they are involved with HIV/AIDS patients. For example, support groups and home based care are provided, including prayer and counselling. Furthermore, the church communities are encouraged to accept and love the HIV/AIDS affected and infected patients. Churches must be committed to develop an innovative understanding of HIV/AIDS and offer their services to diverse communities, which include: marginalized youth, learners, teachers, children in institutional care and tuberculosis patients etc. However, it is the observation of the researcher that most churches in our communities are rather passive in regard to their involvement with HIV/AIDS awareness as part of their missionary responsibility.

Conversely, as the statistics above indicate, more young people are dying in most communities due to living 'loose' lives and have thus promoted the spread of HIV/AIDS. The loss of adult members in the communities has also reduced the number of wage earners and has decreased work production and associated income. The standard of living has greatly decreased during the last 10 to 15 years. It is safe to say that no family is untouched by HIV/AIDS; conversely, most people are involved with someone who is sick and dying from the disease, and with someone for whom

they have had to arrange a funeral. Extended families find their resources further stretched as they take in the increasing numbers of HIV/AIDS orphans.

It goes without saying that the churches urgently need to develop a strategy to combat HIV/AIDS. This implies, *inter alia*, that:

- The churches must network with NGOs to combat this epidemic.
- The churches should unite and form a project that addresses the lack of care for HIV/AIDS patients and their families, and the sexual promiscuity that promotes the spread of this epidemic.
- The churches must serve as forums through which volunteers could be trained and mobilized to help their communities.
- HIV/AIDS and other biblical training should be integrated into the church.
- Support for children in distress should be introduced through various programmes in the churches. This program should also involve orphans and children affected by HIV/AIDS.
- This project should further be considered a health project with a focus on HIV/AIDS prevention and improving the care of patients, as well as addressing the psychological needs of their families.
- Some ‘best practices’ and experiences in the areas of prevention, care and treatment, and impact mitigation should be investigated.

The church in South Africa must learn from the churches in Uganda as to how they have combated the HIV/AIDS endemic in the last few years, and won. The following critical assumptions were developed in that fight:

- A changed lifestyle is fundamental to defeat HIV/AIDS.
- Commitment to Jesus as Lord changes one’s lifestyle, which defeats HIV/AIDS, and allows people to go beyond meeting basic needs to fulfil their God-given potential.
- God answers prayer.
- God has called us to be involved in the work under his will.
- People attend church for cultural rather than religious reasons.

- Culturally adapted communications will result in a greater knowledge of God's Word and a better understanding of how to deal with HIV/AIDS; music and drama are effective ways to communicate in this culture.
- HIV/AIDS can be conquered as people respond to God's call to repentance.
- Existing church institutions and structures are a good foundation on which to build the programme, and will lead to a greater possibility of a sustainable impact (Yamamori *et al.*, 1996: 33).

A few observations on the Ugandan approach to their HIV/AIDS programme: The local churches were involved in the programme from its inception; it was not imposed. The programme began with the pastor and a staff person from Food for the Hungry International (FHI) who shared their burden to do something about the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The church members were trained to further implement the programme in the communities. This strategy spread like wildfire, as the church members showed their love of Christ by visiting ostracized members in their communities, bringing them gifts of love, showing a desire to listen to their problems and praying for and with them (cf. Yamamori *et al.*, 1996: 34). The churches under consideration can adapt this strategy to suit their context.

#### **4.4.3. Poverty**

According to Kritzinger (2000: 105), the eradication of poverty should be the priority task of the government and all economic role players in the country, including the church. It is further stated that the question of unemployment is central to the issue of poverty. For example, in a February 2000 poll, the HSRC found that a majority of the population now rate this as a higher priority than the fight against crime.

It is generally pointed out that the first Carnegie Commission, in the 1920s, did study the conditions of poor whites. Its report and findings formed the basis of effective state intervention to alleviate the 'poor white problem' – often at the expense of 'poor blacks'. However, the second Carnegie Commission was a very different study. It was initiated in 1980 at the University of Cape Town, and its premise was that black South

Africans were the main victims of the widespread poverty and destitution in the country (cf. Hilary Joffe, *Weekly Mail*, January 27 to February 2 1989: 15).

As noted in the previous chapter, the Second Carnegie Commission inquired into the poverty and development of the black majority (Wilson & Ramphele 1989: xi). These authors further argued that the people who were competent to bring about impact and change, to empower the poor and lay foundations which would help determine the shape of societies in the long run were people or organizations outside of the (then) state (Wilson & Ramphele 1989: 261). Note should be taken that as a result of this view, various organizations were established such as organizations for change, the trade union movement, collective actions for job creation, rural development, para-legal clinics and advocacy organizations, business and private enterprise, research and training organizations, and religious organizations (Wilson & Ramphele 1989: 276-303). Most of these organizations but very few churches were dedicated to bringing about change and transformation amongst the majority of blacks in Southern Africa. The former, but not the latter, pointed to hope in regard to the poor and the marginalized in Southern African communities.

On the issue of poverty, it is obvious that the Bible makes it clear that the poor and the outcasts represent people who are created in the image of God; because they are the social groups who are located on the margins of society they are also worthy of missionary outreach. The church must be reminded that the gospel is the good news to the marginalized or economically deprived in society, whose dignity and rights must be respected. Ayebo (2005: 21) contends that ‘working with the poor against the economic and political systems and social structures that are the origins of misery, depravation, discrimination, sin, and poverty can lead to immense suffering and mockery’ according to Luke 7: 34. However, the church should rejoice and continue her good work, because this is one of the costs of being followers of Christ.

However, it is encouraging that according to the findings of this study, some churches are involved in distributing food parcels to the poor and needy. For example, one church, the Roman Catholic, has gone as far as establishing an old age home for the elderly, orphanages, pre-schools, and schemes for feeding over 1000. If the majority of churches were to adopt that strategy, they could be a living testimony in

communities, and many lives could be won for Christ. Nicholls *et al.* (1996: 137) concur that ‘drawing together members of our churches to consider evangelization and service to the poor within our economic context will bear both spiritual and material fruit’. The South African Government is inviting the church to a partnership in combating the poverty in our communities. NGOs may also, in the light of ‘new political and social environments’, need to begin with religious organizations such as the church, according to Swart & Venter (in Kretzschmar *et al.*, 2005: 255). As the church responds to the call from the government and partners with NGOs, this should open more doors to accelerate God’s mission in our communities.

#### **4.4.4. Unemployment**

According to the findings of this study, the Roman Catholic Church (table 3.16) is responding well in helping the unemployed in the community. The church itself is employing members of the community in various outreaches to alleviate poverty. Furthermore, it is creative by inviting various companies to challenge the community to apply for suitable jobs.

Unemployment is a serious issue in South Africa and elsewhere. One unemployed man commented as follows:

I have been staying here for four years now without work but I cannot think of anywhere else where I can go...I cannot say anything about my future now because my heart is now ‘dead’ since I am not working. But when I was working, all that I was concerned with was wealth in the form of cattle. Livestock was going to help me in times of starvation and illness because I was going to sell some of my stock. Now, I never achieved that, I am just staying here hopelessly and doing nothing (Wilson & Ramphele 1989: 84).

Unemployment in South Africa has affected the church’s work. For example, unemployed church members have difficulty in sustaining their livelihood, let alone contributing financially to the mission of the church. Some pastors are severely

affected by this scenario. There are a number of reasons why unemployment is rife in South Africa. The researcher will mention but a few of them here: lack of job opportunities; rapid population growth amongst the majority of people; large numbers of school leavers from primary and higher education, most of these remaining unemployed owing to the educational system that creates a dependency syndrome, rather than empowering learners for entrepreneurship; corruption which prevails in different sectors including our government; poor governance; political conflicts – which often lead to destruction and mismanagement of resources; and nepotism (Ayebo 2005: 60).

To combat unemployment in our community, the researcher has developed a strategy which is based on two elements: the *spiritual* and the *social*.

- *The spiritual aspect:* It is noted that one of the major challenge that prevails in our communities is the disintegration of morals. Cassidy (in Coomes 2002: 426) aptly states that whenever there is erosion of morals in a society this leads to the degeneration and the demise in society. One has simply to look at history and see the reality of this truth. Indeed, we are reaping the results of this truth because of men and women who seem not to have a regard for morals. Conversely, Cassidy further contend that ‘to be moral...for the Christian, whether in personal, family or political ethics, is not to be narrow, prudish or politically obtuse, but simply to cooperate with the moral and spiritual structure of reality. Moral obedience is not obedience to an arbitrary decree, but to the way things are’ (in Coomes 2002: 426).

In the many years that the researcher has worked with churches in Soweto, he has perceived that the spiritual element is as vitally important as any social project that one might endeavour to bring to people. He also witnessed the failure of many projects which have focused only on the dimension of social needs.

- *Social needs aspect:* Indeed, while spirituality is essential to help build the moral fibre of communities, the churches need to help reinforce the moral

fibre of their people. Simply put, meeting the felt needs, including that of unemployment, is fundamental. Furthermore, there is also a necessity to combine both the spiritual element and the social needs of people, and equip them with skills to realize some of their needs.

Owing to this imbalance, then, the researcher developed a project which equips women with skills to help address the unemployment question. One pastor in Soweto and the researcher initiated a fact finding mission to help identify what was one of the needs among women in Soweto. Many unemployed ladies felt that they would be in a position to do something with their lives if they were helped with certain kinds of life skills.

We put together a group of several women from within the community to assist in identifying possible areas of need for development and how we should go about implementing the project. The goal was to help people to be more creative, and we wanted them to take ownership. In this fact-finding endeavour, three areas were identified as possible areas of involvement in this respect: sewing; baking; and flower arranging. These findings were jointly arrived at by some of the community leaders, including church leaders, teachers and other leaders. Funds were raised, and by God's grace, God provided funds in the way of equipment to make it possible for the ladies to carry out their mission. It is encouraging that after a five year period, about 80 ladies have been trained and that most of these have started their own small businesses in Soweto and the surrounding areas. The researcher will continue to empower the churches to continue with this strategy as one of the ways to combat unemployment in their communities.

#### **4.4.5. Illegal Immigrants**

South Africa is known for her long history of formal labour migration to mines and farms. The number of official immigrants is far outnumbered by illegal ones. Owing to the opening of borders and the relaxation of border controls since the early 90s and especially because of Zimbabwe's lack of food and unemployment, there is a large and increasing flow of illegal, low skilled immigrants into South Africa from

neighbouring African countries. These people are coming to look for employment, and many are starting their small businesses which are doing very well. The church should view this scenario as an opportunity to share the love of God and bring good news to these people. Indeed, this is a mission on our doorstep for the church in South Africa. It is the goal of the researcher to encourage the church to aim at eliminating the source of human suffering in these communities as an integral part of fulfilling her missionary obligation.

The migrant labour system of the old South Africa recruited mineworkers from countries such as Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia. These workers were legally brought into the region on work permits, but when the gold price dropped to below \$200 per ounce massive retrenchment exercises resulted in huge job losses and a major unemployment problem. As a result the foreign migrant workers were without a place to stay in the mine hostels and informal settlements grew in the region. It is estimated that over 100 000 jobs were lost in this region in the gold mining sector.

Most mine workers opted to stay in the country illegally in search of the South African dream locally. Some brought their families to stay with them, living in backyard rooms and overcrowded shacks. This imposed a social burden on the already ailing public service and welfare system which could not cater for the growing number of illegal immigrants facing poverty and competing for already strained resources in municipalities.

During 2002, this ministry launched a feeding programme and a food parcel scheme to help alleviate the social situation. Government services catered for legal residents and citizens while the ministry extended its help to all members irrespective of their residential status. Families were targeted by this assistance. The mayor of Westonaria launched the initial grocery distribution to 30 families. Local government supported the efforts of the ministry by offering endorsement because a social burden on it was benefiting from alleviation. No financial assistance was given to the ministry throughout this programme. Where sick members from foreign countries left children behind or died the ministry stepped in to assist within its financial ability and resources.

One of the churches in the western part of Johannesburg decided to accommodate the non-English and indigenous language speaking immigrants from Portuguese speaking Moçambique and Shona speaking Zimbabweans. Furthermore, the ministry adopted a multi-medium language policy for all its services, and introduced a performing arts ministry (for example, drama, dance, etcetera). The mineworkers' culture is very strong as regards song and dance and this medium was found to be more relevant to these communities than traditional pulpit preaching. Awareness and education concerning the social ills of alcoholism, drugs, HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy, xenophobia and moral degeneration are conveyed through these educative media which have a large appeal.

During the recent events of the xenophobic attacks which swept throughout Gauteng and many regions in South Africa, various churches and organizations known to the researcher were in solidarity with the foreigners. They provided shelter, food parcels, clothes, blankets, and money etcetera. Unfortunately, not many churches were involved, especially those in this study. Much still needs to be done to bring awareness, and provide vision to churches; indeed, foreigners should be treated as human beings, and not like animals. Mission should start with addressing members in the local church, by equipping them to be ambassadors of goodwill, justice and peace in the local communities. They should transfer and transport this influence into their respective families, labour sending communities and the foreign countries from where they originate.

Furthermore, some churches are providing programmes which transfer skills from the skilled migrant workers and ex-workers to the unskilled young school leavers in the church and the community.

#### **4.4.6. Environmental involvement**

The researcher will employ the terms environmental and earth keeping interchangeably in this study. According to the 7% poll recorded in section 3.1.5, it is obvious that the church is weak in regard to her responsibility for looking after her environment as a good steward of what God has entrusted to her. It is indicated in section 2.4.5.4 that the church should utilize all available resources of information in

regard to environmental involvement, and this should form a dimension of all social concern.

#### **4.4.6.1. Why should the church be engaged in taking care of her environment?**

Is it proper for the church to be concerned with environmental destruction? For many, as this study has shown, the answer is quite obvious. However, the church can ignore environmental threats only at her own peril. Hancke (2005: 8) contends that all environmental hazards are indeed threatening to human life. For example, on a daily basis, we are confronted in the news with the impact of environmental destruction on people's lives. They suffer or die from lead or asbestos poisoning, increasingly regular intervals of drought or flooding, degraded and deforested lands, new forms of cancer, panic attacks especially amongst young people, so that many drop out from their education as a result. We hear about polluted water supplies, unhealthy levels of air pollution, exposure to radio-active waste or pesticides, and so on. The ecological moral of this news is more than evident in our societies. As the church, it is our responsibility to care for the earth so that the earth can care for us. The church should also think of the next generations since they will be involved in earth keeping. It should be noted that the right to a clean and healthy environment is included in the Bill of Rights. For example, Section 24 of the Bill of Rights in South Africa's new constitution (1996: 11) contains the following environmental clause:

Everyone has the right –

- a) to an environment that is not harmful to their health and well-being;  
and
- b) to have an environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that –
  - i) prevents pollution and ecological degradation;
  - ii) promotes conservation; and
  - iii) secures ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.

This boils down to the fact that the rights of human beings to a clean and healthy environment focus on a concern for humankind. In answering the question, ‘why should Christians be engaged in earth keeping?’ the traditional answer is based on the famous text in Genesis 1: 27-28. According to this text, human beings are called to be *fruitful and multiply*, to *subdue* the earth and to *have dominion* over it. According to this text, human beings are created in the image of God, and are called to control the forces of nature and use them as they develop any available resources for their benefit (Hancke 2005: 11).

Hancke (2005: 11) adds that many Christians have argued that Genesis 1 should be interpreted in a different way. He suggests that Christians should move away from a model of domination to one of dominion. The church should rather propose a theology of stewardship in which humans are portrayed as stewards, guardians, gardeners, priests, custodians, or caretakers of creation. Genesis 1: 27-28 should be read in the light of Genesis 2: 15 which calls on human beings to cultivate and foster the land. Human beings are responsible to ‘tend the garden’ that God has entrusted to them to care.

#### **4.4.6.2. How should Christians be engaged in earth keeping?**

Hancke (2005: 13-14) proposes four levels at which the church can become involved in environmental issues:

- *Christian congregations can (themselves) become ecologically conscious communities.* Christian communities can make an extremely important contribution by setting an example of an ecologically conscious community. They can embody amongst themselves the vision of a sustainable earth community where justice and peace will prevail. In this way the church will become a concrete and visible sign and witness for the rest of the world of the coming of God’s reign. This can be done in many ways, e.g. through liturgical renewal, through environmental education in the church, through fostering people of moral vision, integrity and character, through teaching members to appreciate and to love God’s creation, through church resolutions regarding the environment and through prophetic witness.

- *Christians can make a difference where they live and where they work.* We spend most our daily lives where we live and work. That is also where we can really make a difference in creating a healthy environment and sustainable lifestyles. Conradie and Field (in Hancke 2005: 11) point out that in secular and Christian literature, there are numerous suggestions that Christians may consider to influence and make a difference in their work place.
- *Christians can co-operate with and support numerous other organizations concerned with the environment.* There are numerous organizations in South Africa that are involved in environmental issues. There is, of course, little need for Christian churches to duplicate the work of other environmental organizations. Churches should rather support the work of these organizations as far as possible, establish the necessary channels and networks of communication and encourage its members to participate in the work of these organizations. While Christians may ultimately hold to a distinct ecological vision, they could share the ‘penultimate’ goals of many other environmental organizations. Perhaps churches should take the initiative only if no other organization is addressing a particular problem. This would continue the approach followed by many churches and mission organizations in the past. They established schools, hospitals, centres for the disabled and elderly people, and agricultural projects, whenever no one else was doing it properly. Many of these projects were eventually funded or taken over by the government. Recently some churches have again taken some responsibility for schools in areas where the local government is struggling to manage these schools efficiently.
- *There are numerous possibilities for and examples of environmental projects initiated by Christians.* Christian from all over the world have responded to environmental degradation by initiating their own local environmental projects. These stories have been collected, told and retold to inspire others to address specific environmental problems within their own local contexts.

It is inspiring to hear about what the church is doing elsewhere, and this can serve as a motivation and vision to the churches in this study to care and minister to all its creatures. Importantly, the church should catch the vision that the earth is the Lord's, and everything belongs to Him. It should offer unconditional love to all God's creation, and be a model to the broader society in which its members live as they care for his creation.

*Diakonia* implies service. Mission means to be of service to the whole world. Yet it was established earlier in this thesis that the churches inadequately understand their responsibility in promoting socio-political and social justice.

Christians from Third World societies can contribute meaningfully to the dialogue – and do so in no uncertain terms. As mentioned, the belief is steadily growing that the gospel can no longer be confined to micro-structures but should also encompass macro-structures.

Churches should therefore be helped to change their mindset in regard to their missionary obligation. They ought to pay more attention to the following needs:

#### **4.4.7. A paradigm shift**

There must be a paradigm shift in most churches: that the issue of mission is not only going out to preach, but rather to 'learn and serve'. Van Engen (1991: 96-97) confirms that 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. It has been said that the church that only preaches the gospel and sustains its own congregational life is, by definition, a selfish institution. The *diaconal* dimension further implies care for the poor and marginalized, attending to the sick, assisting the homeless and unemployed, etcetera. For example, unemployment is a very worrying structural feature of the economic field in South Africa. This study has indicated that there are a few churches that are addressing the issue of unemployment, in ways described earlier.

#### 4.5. Serving the Needs of Koinonia

The understanding of the Christian mission should not ignore the implications and dimensions of *koinonia*. The church should be aware of and fully understand that she is part of a pilgrimage and there is no permanent abode in the world. ‘The church is everywhere in Diaspora, called out of the world to be sent back into the world with the message of the world to come (Kritzinger *et al.*, 1992: 38). The two following sections will discuss (1) strengthening the community of believers and (2) church planting.

##### 4.5.1 Strengthening the community of believers

*Koinonia* involves building up the fellowship of believers, the unity of the church and ecumenical co-operation. Dempster *et al.* (1991: 27) provide a comprehensive definition of koinonia:

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

It has been remarked that one of the main tasks of the church is to strengthen the communion of believers in its local church, and to help young Christians to be built up in their personal faith. Unfortunately, there is little statistical evidence of real *koinonia* in the churches under consideration. There are a few instances where *koinonia* is evident, such as a ministers’ fraternal, and some kind of Bible study where Christians are being nurtured and empowered (table 3.19). However, Bosch (1991: 368-389) aptly states that the missionary church must become what he called: church-with-others. He implies that the church must incarnate the essential *koinonia* of the Christian community. Churches must be encouraged to demonstrate *koinonia* in every sense of the word.

The church must be aware of the danger of being inward looking instead of outwardly reaching to the lost, and Wagner (in Van Engen 1991: 91-92) warns that if the Church becomes inward looking, it will fall into the unhealthy situation which he calls: ‘*koinonitis*’. He further explains 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.

For Wagner, fellowship, which he defines as interpersonal relationships, is evident where Christian communities get to know one another, enjoy relationships as they care and minister to one another. But when *koinonia* becomes *koinonitis*, the purpose for which the fellowship exists is lost, and apparently, the fellowship dies. Furthermore, Bosch (1991: 425) states that when the church looks inward, at least for too long, it can lose a sense of itself and the world it is called to help redeem. Then it becomes sectarian and toxic, obsessed with orthodoxy rather than orthopraxis, whereas each is adversely affected when sight is lost of the other.

It should be emphasized that *koinonia* is built on the truth that God is with people by means of other people because he so uniquely came to us through the Word made flesh (Nel 2000: 92). Christians are people through whom we live and discover our humanity. Warren (2002: 133-136) provides some invaluable reasons why the church needs fellowship:

- A church family identifies you as a genuine believer. One cannot claim to be following Christ, if one is not committed to any specific group of disciples.
- A church family moves out of self-centred isolation. The local church is the classroom for learning how to get along in God’s family.

- A church family helps you develop spiritual muscle. You will never grow to maturity just by attending worship services and being a passive spectator. Only participation in the full life of a local church builds spiritual muscle.
- The Body of Christ needs you. God has a unique role for you to play in his family. This is called your ‘ministry’, and God has gifted you for this assignment.
- You will share in Christ’s mission in the world. When Jesus walked the earth, God worked through the physical body of Christ; today he uses his spiritual body. The church is God’s instrument on earth. We are not just to model God’s love by loving each other; we are to carry it together to the rest of the world.
- A church family will keep one from backsliding. None of us are immune to temptation. Given the situation, one is capable of any sin. God knows this, so he assigned us as individuals the responsibility of keeping each other on track.

Most people in our churches associate the fellowship with paying dues, meaningless rituals, silly rules and handshakes, and having one’s name on some dusty roll. But, for example to Paul, fellowship meant becoming a vital organ of a living body (Rom. 12: 4-5; 1 Cor. 6: 15; 1 Cor. 12: 12-27). Warren (1995: 310) contends that, ‘any organ that is detached from the body will not only miss what it was created to be, it will also shrivel and die quickly’. In the same manner, Christians who ignore fellowship will ultimately die spiritually. It is vitally important that Christians meet together, in order to recognize one another; to accept one another; to love one another; and to walk the spiritual journey together. In this scenario, the church must provide for the discovery, the development, and the deployment of each member’s God given abilities for ministry and to the mission. Therefore, fellowship should serve as (1) a place to discover and use the gifts in ministry; (2) the place where believers are under the spiritual protection of godly leaders; and (3) it should give believers the accountability they need to grow. The next section will discuss another important aspect of *koinonia*, which entails church planting.

#### 4.5.2 Church Planting Movement

‘A Church Planting Movement is a rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting churches that sweeps through a people group or population segment’ (Garrison 2004: 21) This definition implies more than the common strategy of a church planting. It describes what is happening in church planting movements rather than prescribing what could or should be done. This approach implies that church planting is not a human effort but God’s work. These endeavours belong to God and no person can take credit. ‘We need to let him be God and we will alter our understanding and behaviour to be on mission with him’ (Garrison 2004: 21). Garrison analyzed this definition by examining each of its five points (2004: 21-23). The researcher will briefly summarize these:

- First, a church planting movement reproduces rapidly. Within a very short time, newly planted churches are already starting new churches that follow the same pattern of rapid reproduction.

‘How rapid is rapid?’ one may ask. Perhaps the best answer is, ‘faster than one thinks possible’. Though the rate varies from place to place, church planting movements always outstrip the population growth rate as they race toward reaching the entire people group.

- The second key word is multiplication. Church planting movements do not simply add new churches. Instead, they multiply. Surveys of such movements indicate that virtually every church is engaged in starting multiple new churches. These movements multiply churches and believers just as Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes. It is to be noted that through this strategy, as each church realizes that it has the capacity and responsibility to reproduce itself, the numbers start compounding exponentially.
- The third word is indigenous. Indigenous literally means generated from within, as opposed to being founded by outsiders. In the said movements, the first church or churches may be started by outsiders, but very quickly, the momentum shifts from the outsiders to the insiders. Consequently, within a

short time, the new believers coming to Christ in church planting movements may not even know that a foreigner was ever involved in the work. In their eyes, the movement looks, acts, and feels home-grown.

- The fourth part of the definition is churches planting churches. Though church planters may start the first churches, at some point, the churches themselves become active. When churches begin planting churches, a tipping point is reached and a movement is launched. This occurs when the new churches founded reach a critical mass and, like falling dominoes, cascade into an out of control movement, flowing from church to church to church. When the momentum of reproducing churches outstrips the ability of the planters to control it, a movement is underway.
- Finally, such movements occur within people groups or interrelated population segments. Because these movements involve the communication of the gospel message, they naturally occur within shared language and ethnic boundaries. However, they rarely stop there. As the gospel works its changing power in the lives of these new believers, it compels them to take the message of hope to other people groups.

From the foregoing definition, we realize that the church planting movement is more than just a mass evangelism, or a tent campaign crusade. It results in a rapid multiplication of new churches. Most churches under consideration need this type of strategy in order to fulfil God's calling in their missionary obligation.

#### **4.6 Serving the Needs of *Leitourgia***

Doing mission itself is an act of worship. One of the best ways of proclaiming the gospel and worshipping God is by offering ourselves in his service, according to (Romans 12: 1-2). This is why early missionaries like Voetius, a Dutch theologian, and others all held the view that the first motive or goal for mission is *glorificatio*, glorifying God through our mission (Kritzinger *et al.*, 1994: 1ff.).

According to the present study, most churches are not attractive enough to draw new members due to poor worship services and other reasons such as Christians not being the light in their communities, etcetera. Overall, churches polled less than 40% in attracting new membership. Furthermore, from table 3.21 it is evident that a bad reputation is the strongest reason why people are not interested in coming to church. It is self evident that worship and liturgy in the church should draw the non-Christians into the church; the non-Christians should fit into the perception and programmes of missionary churches.

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 mission exists because worship does not. Worship is ultimate, not mission, 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, mission will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever’. Piper adds that

Worship...is the fuel and goal in mission. It’s the goal of mission because in mission we simply aim to bring the nations into the white-hot enjoyment of God’s glory. The goal of mission is the gladness of people 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) (1993: 11).

Piper does not diminish the significance of mission per se, but rather, he places it in the right perspective; the foremost task of the Christian community is to worship and glorify God for He is majesty, sovereignty, and He is greatness. Indeed, when the flame of worship burns with the heart of God’s true worth, the light of missions will shine to the most remote peoples on earth (cf. Piper 1993: 11).

Warren (1995: 241-242) concurs that *worship* can serve as an instrument of a powerful witness to unbelievers if God’s presence is felt and if the message is simple and understandable. In Acts 2, on the day of Pentecost, God’s presence was so evident in the disciples’ worship service that it attracted the attention of many unbelievers

throughout the city. It is obvious that the main reason why 3,000 people were converted was that they felt God's presence, and they also understood the message. In most of the churches under consideration, one factor that is needed is God's presence through a vibrant worship service and liturgy. It is very true that more people are won to Christ by feeling God's presence rather than by all our apologetics and arguments combined.

The gathered congregation is the basic form of the functioning of the local church and its ministries, asserts Firet (in Nel 2000: 90). As part of their missional responsibility, the churches under consideration must seriously take account of their worship service. This should be part of evangelism, and non-Christians should be attracted to worship services.

According to the findings in this study, churches are scoring low in attracting new members into the church. It is the observation of the researcher that one reason for this failure is a lack of enthusiasm in worship services. A few mega-churches are attracting more members each Sunday, and most of them have demonstrated a vibrant worship service. Indeed, worship should help bring the people, including the visitors, to the place which God has prepared them to hear from him. Marshall (in Ayebo: 2005: 111) puts this bluntly:

We should not underestimate the sheer power of good worship to meet people, to touch and to move them, precisely because, like some peers claim to do, it most certainly can reach the parts that so many messages cannot reach – those very parts of our make-up which are starved and neglected in a world of more and more information and less and less communication. In this sense it is possible for good worship to commend the gospel experience (and not just the idea) and to reach and refresh not only regular worshippers but also the uninitiated and enquirer.

The church might well improve her missionary effectiveness, if attention were focused on her worship service. Christians who are participating in worship, within the church structure, must go out as Christ's ambassadors and impact on their world through evangelism and discipleship. It has been noted in some of the churches under

consideration that the worship services are being imported from America, and this might be another reason why people are not being attracted. It is therefore, essential that the churches should be relevant in their worship services, incorporating the cultural and traditional values of the people they are targeting to reach for Christ.

Warren (1995: 239-249) mentions twelve deeply held convictions as to why his church is attracting new members through its worship services:

- Only believers can truly worship God. The direction of worship is from believers to God.
- You don't need a building to worship God. Acts 17: 24 says, 'The God who made the worlds and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands'.
- There is no correct style of worship. Jesus only gave two requirements for legitimate worship: God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth' (John 4: 24).
- Unbelievers can watch believers worship. Unbelievers can observe the joy that Christians feel *and be attracted*. (The present author's emphasis.)
- Worship is a powerful witness to unbelievers if God's presence is felt and if the message is understandable.
- God expects us to be sensitive to the fears, hang-ups, and the needs of unbelievers when they are present in our worship services.
- A worship service does not have to be shallow to be seeker sensitive. The message doesn't have to be compromised, just understandable.
- The needs of believers and unbelievers often overlap. They are very different in some areas but are very similar in many areas.
- It is best to specialize in one's services according to their purpose. Most churches try to evangelize the lost and edify believers in the same service. When one sends mixed signals, one will obtain mixed results. Trying to aim at two targets with one gun only results in frustration.
- A service geared toward seekers is meant to supplement personal evangelism, not replace it.

- There is no standard way to design a seekers' service. This is because unbelievers are not all alike. Some want a service that makes them feel a part of it, others want to sit passively and watch.
- It takes unselfish, mature believers to offer a seeker-sensitive service. Church members demonstrate incredible spiritual maturity when they are considerate of the needs, fears, and hang-ups of unbelievers and are willing to place those needs before their own in a service.

The church must always consider how it can attract new members. The goal should always be to reach out to the world through a worship service.

## **4.7. Empowering the Church for her Mission**

### **4.7.1. Training**

Preparation and equipping the churches by missions and agencies has been poorly attended to, so that neither pastors nor congregations are ready to absorb and care for a large contingent of new converts ( Peters 1970: 133).The concept of training and sustaining mission can be perceived from the ministry of Jesus Christ. For example, to ensure the sustainability of his ministry, Jesus first disciple his followers: he trained them, and subsequently entrusted the work to them. Apparently, he sent his disciples out only after imparting skills to them, and his work continued for generations. Paul articulates this process well when he states: 'And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others' (2 Timothy 2: 2).

According to this study, churches are scoring low in equipment and training of laity in discipleship and missionary endeavours. However, only a handful of the churches have physical facilities to accommodate new converts, and have devised a thorough-going and comprehensive programme of follow-up. Hence, prompt attention and wise action are needed, in order to assure success in these churches.

Peters (1970: 133) contends that pastors should acquaint themselves with effective methods of follow-up ministries and materials that are available for this purpose. Some are obtainable at Campus Crusade for Christ, an international para-church organization, where the researcher is presently working. Church leaders, including lay people, should be taught the rudiments of pastoral care and counselling in order to build and grow new converts. Reverend Waylon B. Moore (in Peters 1970: 134-135) in an article entitled 'Evangelism in Depth', has this to say about following-up:

How can we retain the results of our evangelism? The answer is follow-up; conserve and multiply the fruits of evangelism. It is all that goes into building a soul to spiritual maturity and fruitful witnessing. Follow-up is not giving some material to a new Christian so much as it is sharing personally the life of Christ with another through the Word and prayer.

A baby in Christ must have something better than a class or service where he is a part of the crowd every Sunday and Wednesday and left to himself spiritually the rest of the week. There are certain truths that are vital to the life of a new convert immediately after his decision for Christ. But sometimes he must wait months to study the Bible for himself or to learn who the Holy Spirit is, and what it means to be controlled by the Spirit...

For the churches to have lasting results, they cannot ignore the importance of training and of undertaking effective follow-up of new converts. Peters (1970: 136) expresses this accurately: 'a more radical return to the New Testament in patterns of evangelism; the incorporation of additional principles and phases; and fuller cultural, sociological and psychological adaptations are demanded than any of the present great movements are manifesting, if genuine, lasting and impressive results are to be achieved, and if justice is to be done to the present overwhelming possibilities in many parts of the world'. For the church to achieve this goal, it will take time, commitment, and dedication, in fulfilling God's mission in this generation. But by God's grace, the researcher is positive that this will happen, and it can be done, and it will be done.

#### 4.7.2. The empowerment principle

According to the empowerment principle, the findings in this study indicated that most churches are somehow empowering their members in a small way. However, the question the researcher asked was: where does empowerment focus? Is it to carry out missionary obligations? Or is it for other reasons? Many respondents indicated that they need empowerment specifically as regards mission. This response compels us to consider the empowerment question by equipping churches in their missionary obligation. According to the rating of churches under consideration, concerning the question of difficulty in sharing one's faith (table 3:10), the 47% score was indeed alarming. Most churches indicated that there was a lack of equipment and empowerment from their denominations about missions, and that this contributed to the lower score. In this section, the researcher will discuss the importance of 'empowerment' as part of preparing the church to fulfil her God given missionary obligation.

Empowerment happens through structural changes which lead to changes in disposition, opinions and perceptions. One should note that empowerment is not a quick fix solution for any organization or structure but a long term process (Pienaar 2006: 203). Importantly, empowerment is intended: (a) to increase quality in the areas of explanation, motivation, and liberation, and (b) to bring these three dimensions into balance (Schwarz 2005: 107). However, there are varied definitions and approaches that have made it difficult to compare and integrate empirical findings across empowerment studies (Robbins, *et al.* 2002: 420). In this study, we will adopt the view of Ayeebo and other notable writers. For example, Ayeebo (2006: 204-205) argues that the word 'empowerment', in missiological terms, should be the indissoluble link between mission and the Holy Spirit. Yes, if we claim that God is a source of mission, and certainly He is, then, the Holy Spirit is God's power and implementer of God's mission through the Church.

According to (Luke 4: 1, 14, 18), Jesus had to be anointed by the Holy Spirit before he embarked on his ministry, thereby portraying the Holy Spirit as the initiator and guide of mission as well as the one who empowers us to undertake mission (Acts 4: 13, 29; 9: 27). It is therefore imperative that the church should always stress the

missionary dimension of the Holy Spirit. For example, during the days after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the disciples were instructed to wait for power, ‘*empowerment*’, from on high before they could be engaged in their missionary work. As Jesus promised, ‘But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth’ (Acts 1: 8). The work of the Holy Spirit is to empower, enlighten, and propel Christians into worldwide service until persons from every tongue, tribe, and nation acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord (Steyne 1997: 266).

The issue of empowerment from on high is vitally important in furthering God’s mission, because in establishing God’s kingdom in the world dominated by Satan, there is bound to be a power encounter. As people respond to the preaching of the gospel, Satan has a vested interest in resisting the expansion of God’s kingdom. Therefore, there is a need to engage Satan in spiritual warfare for the realization of God’s rule here on earth. Importantly, there is a great need for the church leadership to provide an atmosphere where the Holy Spirit will empower Christians as they forge ahead in furthering God’s mission (Ayebo 2006: 205).

Pienaar (2006: 245) warns us that with ‘power’ as a root word of ‘empowerment’ the latter should not be used naively in the church. In using the word ‘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. It should always be noted that all power and authority belongs to God who has created everything on the planet earth. However, God uses His power within the context of his covenant with the aim of redeeming the fallen man. He transfers his power to Christians through the teachings and the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit to the lives of the community of faith. According to Pienaar (2006: 245) the legacy of Jesus transfers authority to people within the context of scripture, the church and its traditions, human reason and human experience. He argues that the power that is received from God is internalized through the reception of grace and faith. Hence this internalized power must always point to God and his glory through the promotion of the commitment and discipleship of believers in such a way that they may live out the truth and be engaged in furthering God’s kingdom. Furthermore, the concept of empowerment displays two facets: firstly, on an individual level, it is aimed at

creating a sense of belonging, and secondly, on the corporate level, it aims at equipping believers to further God's mission to the broken and dying world.

### **4.7.3. Discipling / Discipleship**

#### **4.7.3.1. What is discipleship?**

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (in Watson 1981:19) argues that 'When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die'. In this statement, we have the essence of the radical, uncompromising nature of true Christian discipleship. Conversely, every Christian is called to a clear and devoted discipleship, whatever the personal cost may be. What is discipleship? The English word 'disciple' is derived from the Latin word (*discipulus*), which means a pupil or a learner (Douglas 1962: 312). The Hebrew term is *limmud* and the Greek *mathetes*. In the Old Testament the word retains its meaning of a teacher-pupil relationship, but is seldom used (Kretzschmar *et al.*, 2005: 102). In the New Testament, various authors indicate that the general concept of discipleship was not new when Jesus called men and women to follow him. Although the verb 'disciple' (*manthano*) is used 25 times in the New Testament (six in the Gospels), the noun 'disciple' (*mathetes*) appears no less than 264 times, exclusively in the gospels and Acts, and as a noun (*mathetes*). Furthermore, in the Scriptures we read about the disciples of John the Baptist (Mat. 9: 14; John 1: 35); the disciples of the Pharisees (Mk 2: 18 and Luke 5: 33); and the disciples of Moses (John 9: 28). However, the word disciple is commonly referred to those who followed Jesus, and specifically, the twelve disciples (Douglas 1962: 312). Jesus had created a radical and unique pattern of discipleship as will be mentioned later on in this chapter.

According to Kretzschmar *et al.* (2005: 103) the word 'discipleship' can also be defined as denoting 'both [the] moral and spiritual formation' aspects of our Christian life. They refer to moral formation as the progressive development of a noble character and conduct. On the other hand, spiritual formation is the process by which Christians are formed into the likeness of Christ. According to this definition, we cannot separate moral life from spiritual life. They both work hand in glove. For a Christian, 'the formation of character and conduct is a result of love for and obedience

to God' (Kretzschmar *et al.*, 2005: 103). Christians as the followers of Christ must continuously be transformed in their moral and spiritual lives, so that they will be conformed to the image of Christ.

Jesus Christ was the supreme disciple-maker during his ministry in the world. For example, he first made the twelve into disciples before he made them into apostles. Fellowship preceded apostleship. Learning preceded teaching. Having made them into disciples and constituted them into apostles, he commanded them to go forth and make disciples. Importantly, the first believers remained under the teaching influence of the apostles. They too, were being moulded into disciples by the example and words of those whom the Lord himself had shaped. It was only after this process that the Lord permitted them to be scattered and continue the process of spreading the gospel and make disciples of all nations (cf. Peters 1970: 32).

As the local church focuses on her missionary obligation, it should conduct a discipleship programme; in fact, this programme should be a way of life in the local church. Christians should not be allowed to settle into a routine, mechanical and mediocre church life. The aim should not be to build a baby nursery, but rather, an army which will make a mark in God's kingdom as its members are involved in a discipleship process like our Master Jesus Christ and his disciples. There is a need to look for people who will be faithful, available, and teachable (FAT). Through a programme of discipleship, Christians should be assisted to understand that it is God, through his Spirit, who equips and gives the competence to become involved in his missionary enterprise. It should be noted that, as long as Christians are 'following some good things, virtues, confessions or doctrine', living a lifestyle of mission will be of secondary concern (Hancke 2005: 181).

It should be evident that, unless Christians are discipled, it would be futile to expect them to be obedient to the Lord's command to 'go ye unto the world'. Hancke (2005: 181) states that Christians should be nurtured through discipleship; otherwise they will be passive observers in the congregation. He emphasizes that leaders must play a major role in equipping Christians into discipleship and releasing them to further God's kingdom in the world. Discipleship is one of the most significant influencing

factors of witness and may be one of the keys to unlocking a biblical worldview and witnessing the lifestyle of the local church in fulfilling her missionary obligation.

In his book, simply entitled *Discipleship*, Watson (1981: 20-34) outlines the key elements of a radical and unique discipleship as follows:

- A person is called by Jesus (and not by another person, the church or themselves).
- Disciples are also called to Jesus (to be in an ongoing relationship with Jesus and committed above all else to Jesus).
- Disciples are called to obey (to submit their human will to the will of God).
- Disciples are called to serve (which means avoiding the temptations of ambition, self-pity and self-centredness).
- Disciples are called to a simple life (lives of generous sharing, not lives of luxury, greed or selfishness).
- The disciples of Jesus are also called to suffer (at times to endure, for example, physical persecution, mental and emotional pain, and spiritual grief).
- Finally, disciples are called irrespective of qualifications (Jesus called a cross-section of people, united only by their commitment to him).

Indeed, the true Christian church is not a club that a person belongs to in order that his/her needs might be met according to the prosperity gospel that is so prevalent in our communities. It is a body, an army of God, called by Christ, and accepting that call; and willing to fulfil the great commission. Indeed, this call is accompanied by responsibilities that cannot be avoided if we are to be his real disciples. It is not a question of our feelings and personal choices, it is a matter of taking with the utmost seriousness the conditions and demands of discipleship that Jesus lays upon us. We are reminded that we are no longer our own. We have been bought by a special price, the blood of Jesus, and chosen by him; we therefore now belong to him, and by virtue of this fact, we also belong to one another, however easy or difficult, joyful or painful, we may find this to be (Watson 1981: 32-33). The disciples of Jesus Christ practised intense mutual love (*koinonia*), caring for the poor and the sick, the widows and the

orphans, and extending hospitality to travellers (*diakonia*). Contemplating the Christian community, the Romans were allegedly moved to exclaim, ‘See how they love one another’. Conscious of the demands of discipleship, the faithful were prepared for imprisonment, exile, and even death. Ignatius of Antioch, writing to the Romans on the way to his own execution, describes the martyr as the ‘genuine disciple of Jesus Christ’ (Dulles 1987: 212).

#### **4.7.3.2. Discipleship in mission**

The church is to go forth from its assemblies to carry on Christ’s work in the world. Dulles (1987: 220) argues that the ‘discipleship would be stunted unless it included both the centripetal phase of worship and the centrifugal phase of mission’. Evangelization is not only the work of a selected few (priests and other leaders); it is the responsibility of every Christian to carry out God’s mission. Vatican II (in Dulles 1987: 221) concurs; ‘every disciple of Christ has the obligation to take part in the spreading of the faith’.

Recording Christ’s unquestionable command in (Matt. 28: 19, 20), *The New American Standard Bible* reads as follows:

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

They were instructed to *go* and make his gospel known to all groups of people. Steyne (1997: 261) states that it was in the process of their ‘going’, wherever that might take them, in all spheres of life, that they had to make disciples. Christ commanded his disciples to go to all people everywhere, to cross all barriers, whether racial, sociological, political, cultural, or geographic. Adsit (1988: 42) argues that taking into account the location of the word ‘going’ in the construction of the original Greek sentence, the word would mean ‘*as you are going...*’ This presupposes that the hearers are already going. This relates to discipleship in two ways according to Adsit (1988: 42):

*Firstly*, it corresponds to the idea of evangelism. It is self evident that one cannot make a disciple out of a non-Christian person. The first criterion in leading people to Christian maturity, is, first, to invite them to be born again into the family of God. *Secondly*, it directs us to take the initiative. There is absolutely nothing that will happen if we do not make any move as Christians. In both our evangelizing and discipling, we need to step out, make a move, shun pacifism and become activists. We need to go out to where people are: across the ocean to a foreign world, or going across the street to a neighbour. Jesus Christ is mandating us to go to the people, and not to wait for them to come to us. For example, if I need to fish, I will either go to the river or the sea (Adsit 1988: 42).

Making disciples takes commitment and perseverance. Verkuyl (1978: 107) states that to make a disciple is to move a person ‘to surrender to Jesus Christ’s liberating authority’ and to involve him or her in God’s new order. Making disciples also involved moulding a person into a functioning member of Christ’s kingdom (Steyn 1997: 261); for him or her to be totally committed to the things pertaining to God’s kingdom; to walking in Christ’s way; to living Christ’s life and sharing Christ’s love and truth with others (Watson 1981: 66). ‘It takes a disciple to make a disciple who, in turn, will make more disciples to participate in his mission’ (Steyn 1997: 261). ‘His disciples were to make disciples who would make disciples, *ad infinitum*’ (Watson 1981: 66).

The discipleship process takes on the aspect of teaching, which involves initiation, a thorough introduction and practical participation in the life, death and resurrection of Christ (Steyn 1997: 262). Paul declares, ‘I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his suffering, becoming like him in his death’ (Philippians 3: 10 NIV). Teaching about discipleship does not refer to head knowledge. It should be applied in order to bring about a changed life. In the words of Steyn (1997: 263), this teaching must be transformed into action. David Dawson, the founder and director of ‘Equipping the Saints’ (in Adsit 1988: 44) states that:

Biblical principle requires application, which results in methodology, which allows for production in the life and reproduction in others. But biblical

principle not applied results in activity without productivity, which precludes both production in life and reproduction in others.

Therefore, application to the teaching of Jesus Christ is essential. There will be no spiritual growth without applying the teachings of Christ. Furthermore, there will be no imitating Jesus in furthering his mission by obeying his Great Commission. Verkuyl (1978: 108) reminds us that ‘the real aim is to get disciples walking along Jesus’ way and then to nourish them... from the Law and the Gospel’. It should be noted that our job is not done when our disciples know and memorize the Scriptures and the things we have taught them. Indeed, we would only have done our job, when they apply and do what the scriptures command them. This is what we need to see in churches in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### **4.7.3.3. The discipleship process**

Coleman (1964) proposes eight principles in his book that summarize the discipleship process: Selection, Association, Consecration, Impartation, Demonstration, Delegation, Supervision, and Reproduction. The church will be offered a brief summary of the discipleship process that is used in training local churches for their missionary obligations:

##### **Expose and win**

- The goal here is to evangelize by explaining the gospel clearly to as many as possible and win as many as possible to become true believers.

##### **Build**

- The goal is to establish the new believer by obtaining a commitment to grow in Christ and walk in the Spirit so as to become a faithful disciple.
- The context goes from basic friendship to intermediate friendship.
- The content includes the basic follow-up material for new believers.

### **Train**

- The goal is to motivate and equip the disciple to live a consistent walk with God, and to reach out and help others with the gospel and, thereby, become a faithful Christian worker.
- The context goes from intermediate friendship to deep friendship.
- The context will include a workshop on how the local church can be involved in reaching the world for Christ.

### **Multiply**

- The goal here is to expand the faithful worker into a spiritual multiplier who is able to help others with their walk with the Lord so that they become a spiritual multiplier in their own sphere of influence.
- The context is developed from deep friendship to an intimate friendship and deeper friendship.
- The content includes leadership workshop and some other relevant material which will help these people to more effective in reaching out to the world.

### **Send**

- The goal here is to enlist spiritual multipliers as world Christians who live a life of integrity and join the church in recruiting others to become spiritual multipliers.
- The context goes deeper and deeper, as one describes a growing relationship.
- The content will include the challenge to serve the Lord as a full-time missionary candidate.

Douglas Smith (in Engen 1991: 42) concurs with this formula and points out that there is a cyclical pattern to what is called the emerging of the missionary church. He further suggests that the cycle is one of ‘going, teaching, equipping, and sending’.

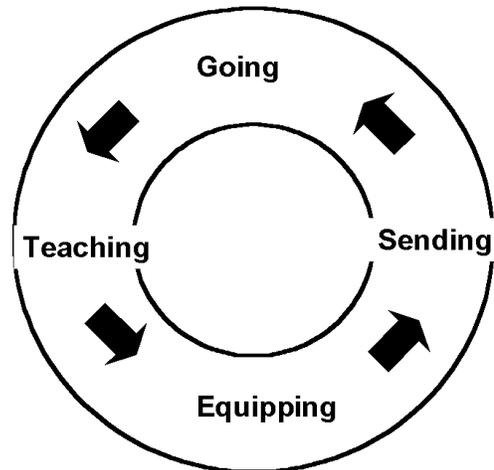


Figure 4.1 – The cyclical pattern of the witnessing Church (adapted from Hancke 2005: 23)

#### 4.7.4. Financial giving

According to this research study, financial giving towards missionary endeavours leaves much to be desired. Some respondents indicated the lack of teaching as regards stewardship and the importance of giving towards mission. Most churches under consideration confirmed that they are not involved in missionary work, let alone supporting the cause. Furthermore, some churches indicated that their monthly budget will not allow for any extra financial obligations as they must pay a salary to their pastors, and cover other expenses of the church.

Kane (1981: 117) states categorically that all missions, denominational and non-denominational, experience the same common issue as all find it difficult to raise funds to advance God's mission. He considers that it is easier to raise support for candidates going into foreign service than those going into home missions. For example, it is easier to raise funds for famine relief than for the missionary enterprise. Some churches under consideration indicated their involvement in for example, soup kitchens to the poor, have developed social responsibility programs that care for the needy of the church and the nearby community. Indeed, this is excellent, and covers the service dimension of mission. It is always easier to describe physical need – poverty, disease, malnutrition, hunger – than to depict spiritual need. It is obvious that it is impossible to portray spiritual need in a visual way (Kane 1981: 117).

In our South African context, in order to make a mark in our missionary obligation, the church will have to take stewardship seriously. The church should not wait to be rich before it can give towards mission. Church members in general should be faithful in tithing their total income. If one of the churches which was interviewed in this study is able to give from 50% to 80% of its budget to missions, this offers a classical example that it is possible, and it can be done, if church leaders have vision and are committed to their missionary responsibility. Kane (1981: 118) has cautioned us that the churches must never reduce their commitment to world missions. The church will be greatly assisted in her resolve if she remembers, and really believes as the Scripture declares: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive' (Acts 20: 35). As Kane suggests, 'If every church member acted on that principle, our financial worries would disappear overnight'.

- There is a spiritual harvest for those who give sacrificially to the advancement of God's kingdom. (Galatians 6: 8) states that, 'he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting'. Olford (1972: 73) argues that this text actually means that as we respond to the indwelling Spirit in love, sacrifice, and stewardship, we shall be adding interest to the capital of eternal life which we already have in Christ. Bright, the late founder and president of Campus Crusade for Christ, was concerned about believers who do not take their stewardship responsibilities seriously, as mentioned earlier.
- It should be noted that God controls the returns because he owns everything. He knows us and our motives in our giving, and he is the one who returns a harvest of blessing to us. Conversely, the Scriptures reveal that we can add to our spiritual capital by a continuing enrichment through our generosity and the ministry of giving to God's mission. Smith's 'Faith Promise' and Vargo's remarks on budgeting were discussed above.

It is vitally important that churches prepare budgets for the smooth running of their financial operations. This is one area that cannot be ignored by the church.

#### 4.7.5. Planning aspect of missional goals

The researcher's intention to help the local churches in planning for their missionary responsibility is fundamental to this study. Unfortunately, many churches, including the ones under consideration, ignore the planning phase so there is poor planning and a lack of a clear cut goals and objectives. It is the conviction of the researcher that each church must force itself to spend time in planning and as an outgrowth, developing its own goals and objectives to guide its every action, especially its missional obligation. Without proper planning, goals are dreams, objectives are hazy, programmes are vague, priorities are confused, and evaluations are impossible (Vargo 1995: 16). Callahan's views on the effective church were summarized previously: it sets specific, concrete, missional objectives (1983: 1-2).

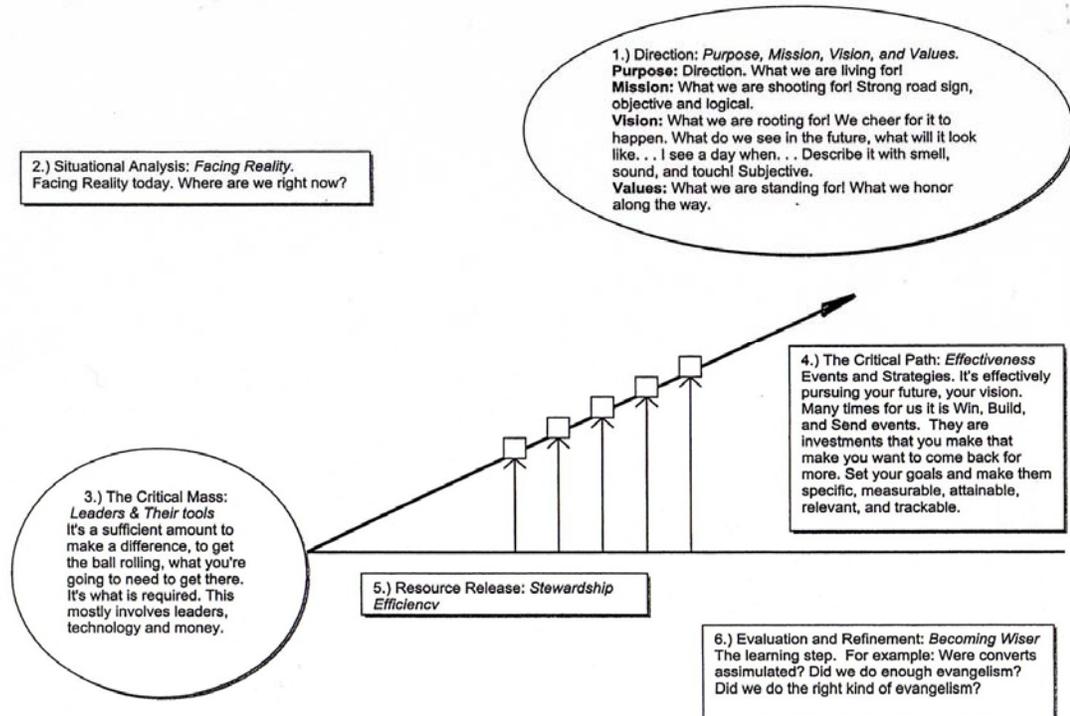
Vargo (1995: 17) argues that, as churches operate as non-profit sectors, and usually with a large cadre of volunteers who need focus, it is essential that they plan more effectively in order to reach maximum results. He further outlines his proper planning formula as follows:

- Identify needs;
- Stating goals – statement of intent, general purpose, or broad direction;
- Stating objectives – the desired ends that are to be achieved in a specific period of time;
- Being specific (as opposed to generalizing);
- Establishing priorities;
- Being able to evaluate progress toward reaching goals and objectives;
- Considering both short-term and long-term perspectives.

The following is my strategic planning process which I have adapted from Athletes in Action (Campus Crusade for Christ Outreach Strategies to Sports). The strategy is user friendly and can be adapted to different ministries such as churches, university campuses, sports etcetera. Churches under consideration need to develop a strategy for their focus on missionary endeavour.

## 4.7.6. The Strategic Planning Process

### The Strategic Planning Process



#### 4.7.6.1. Direction

The first step of the strategic planning process is to clearly articulate our direction. The components of 'direction' are *purpose, values, mission and vision*. 'Purpose' serves as the 'north star.' It can be general, sweeping and vague, but at least it tells you that you are going north and not east or south. It tells us what 'business' we are in. The purpose of each church should be to fulfill God's mission. 'Mission' flows from purpose and is the 'road sign' that answers the question, 'What will we do for whom?' This needs to be answered with 'painful specificity' to be useful. Vision flows from purpose and mission. It is 'the emotive, artful, 'Monet' part of our direction. While purpose and mission are static, vision is dynamic, in constant interaction with the present situation, opportunities, realities, values and aspirations of the leadership.' The church should ask a question: 'Lord, how can we be involved in carrying out your mission? Remember, vision, no matter how grand it is, is still subject to 'purpose' and 'mission.' In other words, in churches, a vision for a soup

kitchen may fit under the ‘purpose’ of glorifying God but not under the ‘mission’ of turning lost people into Christ-centred co-labourers with God. To summarize:

- **Purpose**-what we live for;
- **Values**--what we stand for;
- **Mission** – what we shoot for;
- **Vision** – what we root for.

The direction setting step should accomplish two things for the leadership and those they are leading. *‘It should communicate 1) hope--our best years are ahead of us and 2) vital necessity--these are the few things we are going to take personal and public responsibility for. By the time you are done, you should have communicated the direction in an emotionally compelling (vision) and intellectually credible (mission) manner. The process of alignment should have begun. It's part Monet (vague) and part Rockwell (clear and specific).’* For this reason, it is often beneficial to ‘quantify the vision’ through specific time-bound goals.

#### **4.7.6.2. Situational analysis - facing reality**

The second step in the strategic planning process for doing missional work is to acquire all the facts we can about our present situation. Here we consider the strengths (assets) and weaknesses (liabilities) of our external environment and internal (ministry) situation. One can never align people to a vision of the future unless they agree with one’s perception of the present.

#### **4.7.6.3. Critical mass - leaders and their tools**

The third step is to define with clarity and precision the key components critical to beginning - to launch a church in its missional endeavour. To define critical mass is to define ‘how much of what’ it will take to get one started (and to continue and eventually fulfil one’s mission). The church’s *initial* critical mass must be sufficient to:

- Break gravity--get the mission off the ground ... enough to get it launched;
- Ensure at least two ‘wins’ along the ‘critical path.’ Without a couple of initial wins, one will not have the momentum to sustain this critical path.
- Generate the capacity to build the resource base required to fulfill your vision

The church does not need all of these resources in place to begin accomplishing the mission, but it does need to take the first step. It does not need to persuade every person or even half of those involved. It needs to target those 15% of ‘early adapters’ who will lead the ‘middle and late adapters’. The ‘laggards’ may never come on board, but that is acceptable. When Moses used this process, he knew that his mission was to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. His critical mass was to simply convince the elders (Exodus 3:16, 4:29). He had to persuade them before trying to convince the people (6:9) and Pharaoh (7:1-6). He did not need a plan at that time to cross the Red Sea or provide food and water for the multitude – God would provide that later. But he did need enough to launch.

In determining the critical mass one is asking and answering the question, ‘What do we need to launch?’ Perhaps it is as simple as R50-00 and five people. One successful entrepreneur defined critical mass as simply ‘a vision and people to share it with.’ He understood that if the vision was powerful and compelling enough and he had the right audience to share it with, the vision would act as a powerful magnet and attract the right leaders and resources to achieve it. Is the church’s vision compelling?

#### **4.7.6.4 Critical path**

The fourth step in the strategic planning process is to determine the critical path. That is, to determine the absolute and essential things we must do to move us toward the vision and mission without which these two purposes cannot be fulfilled. These steps are ‘mission defined’ in that they are done ‘on behalf of and have direct bearing on the mission being fulfilled for the “mission customer” --in our case the lost people’. Hence funding development would not be ‘critical path activities.’ More likely it is a

‘critical mass’ and ‘resource release’ activity. In short, the critical path serves as the most effective way to take a church from where it is to where it wants to be. In determining the critical path, we are answering the following questions:

- What will we do that will take us the furthest, or position us to go the furthest, in accomplishing our mission?
- How (or to what) will we allocate our resources to best accomplish our mission?
- What will occupy our discussions during staff meeting and our activities during the week?

#### **4.7.6.5 Resource release – stewardship efficiency**

It should be remembered that ‘efficiency’ has to do with achieving the maximum results for the minimum cost and effort. Resource allocation is about:

- assigning resources wisely;
- getting enough of the right resources to the right need in time;
- matching resources with necessity and opportunity, doing the right thing at the right time.

#### **4.7.6.6 Evaluate and refine**

The last step of the strategic planning process is that of evaluating and refining everything from direction to releasing resources. Here it should be recalled that strategic planning is a dynamic process that continually takes into account new information from our environment and what God might be doing. We are continually solving problems and taking advantage of opportunities that help us fulfill the mission with a ‘whatever it takes’ spirit. This is not a yearly activity but must be done continually. The plan is not carved into stone but rather written on a chalkboard. The commitment to evaluate and refine forces us to become a learning organization (church) and commits us not merely to a plan but to a process of continual improvement. Evaluation and refinement are about:

- giving oneself permission to get smarter and wiser;
- making necessary adjustments to the strategic plan in light of changing situations;
- establishing success criteria by which the strategic plan will be evaluated;
- obtaining precise, accurate, meaningful feedback.

#### **4.7.6.7 Putting the plan into action**

Strategic planning must be followed by strategic action. Tactics and strategies are the small scale actions which accomplish the critical path steps. What will we start doing? What will we stop doing? To think that we will get different results from doing the same thing is insanity. We must answer, ‘Who will do what by when?’ Then we can effectively measure the progress that we are making in achieving the mission. If we cannot identify who is responsible for achieving a given goal or accomplishing a given task, then no one can be held accountable, and it will be impossible for us to assess whether we are making significant progress. We will never be able to learn from our successes and mistakes.

#### **4.7.6.8 Counting the costs**

**Ask for no less than the conversion of the church:** The church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must take heed of what Guder has reminded us: that ‘the church once reformed is always in the process of being reformed according to the Word of God’ (2000: 150). Whilst the church is incarnating its message in her involvement in mission, it should not reject the fundamental fact that every Christian community is sent, and that sending is defined by the gospel and the context in which witness is to happen. Guder (1999: 54) observed that the continued conversion of the church will be effected as the church recognizes her own cultural arrogance and seeks God’s forgiveness and cleansing. It is pathetic that many people in churches regard their own traditional way of doing things as inspired. As Guder (1999: 54) suggested, many equate ‘Christian’ with ‘the way we do things here’.

Significantly, it is in this ongoing conversion process that the church will incarnate its mission. Churches need to allow the Holy Spirit to guide them through God’s Word

as they constantly experience re-shaping, reforming to what God wants them to be in reaching out to the world. Guder (2000: 150) made it clear that the church's crisis is one of the fundamental vocations, of calling to God's mission, of being, doing, and getting involved in faithfulness to Jesus Christ, the Lord. Our missional challenge is a crisis of faith and spirit, and it will be met only through the continuing conversion of the church. 'The continual conversion of the church happens as the congregation hears, responds to, and obeys the gospel of Jesus Christ in every new and more comprehensive ways'. Indeed, with respect to the work that God has begun in us, he is faithful and he will continue it and complete it. As the Scriptures declare: 'The one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ' (Phil. 1: 6).

**The Need for Incarnation:** the so-called *tabula rasa* practice in Africa was characteristic of mission in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; it held the view that non-Christian culture could never be a *preparatio evangelica* and therefore, had to be destroyed before Christianity could be built up: this viewpoint amounted to denial of the incarnation, according to Pobee (in Saayman *et al.*, 1996: 56). However, the issue of the incarnational aspect of mission reminds us of a non-negotiable gospel of Christ, communicated in the simple, and specific, cultural situation of the people it intended to reach. It is interesting that even some African theologians were often worried about the usage of such terms as indigenization and inculturation, which basically meant 'incarnation'. For example, Solomon M. Muthukya, onetime General Secretary of the East African Christian Alliance, wrote: 'the secret behind the Africanization of Christianity is the work of Satan himself, the spirit of the Anti-Christ. He aims at the heathenism of the African Church'. Pobee (in Saayman *et al.*, 1996: 56) in contradiction argues that, if natural culture and religious customs are acceptable to God, why did Christ send his disciples to preach the Gospel to every creature in the uttermost parts of the earth? It goes without saying that Muthukya's critiques represent those of certain theologians who experience the fear of living the spirit of incarnation, and who are ignorant of incarnational aspects of mission.

This study has indicated that God's mission is comprehensive and universal. Conversely, mission should represent the gospel within the cultural context of the target place, in order to provide the conditions in which ordinary people's experience

of faith can become more significant for theological reflection. According to (John 1: 14 ASV), ‘And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us... full of grace and truth’. Jesus Christ took on human flesh and blood, and he became a real person, affirming God’s identification with human culture (Ayebo 2006: 216).

Importantly, practicing incarnational mission would mean among other things: learning the cultures into which we are sent; learning what they think and how they think, what it feels like to be part of their world and culture; and how to communicate on their terms, and so forth ,(Guder 1999: 54). Furthermore, Lesslie Newbigin (in Guder 1999: 54) holds the view that the Christian missional community must become what he calls ‘culturally bilingual’. Consequently, one way in which the missional community incarnates God’s love is to learn the plausibility structure(s) of the world in which we are called to be Christ’s witness, and to translate the gospel from its own plausibility (which it possesses) into the context of a particular cultural subgroup. From this explanation, we realize that incarnation is not only the translation of the language of the people, but it also implies the learning of the culture, so that the preaching of the gospel will be accepted and understandable in a new area. Ayebo (2006: 216) further provides deeper insight on the topic under discussion in stating that incarnation includes: ‘understanding the language, philosophy, psychology, politics, economics of each situation and generation, before it can boldly and meaningfully communicate the gospel to those outside the church’.

Similarly, Kritzinger *et al.* (1984: 158) emphasized that the church must live, think and operate within a context. These authors stated that:

Its mode of existence must be compatible with it. Within the societal structures, the church must offer an alternative ideal – and serve a different Master. The church must clothe its message and formulate its theology in terms of the thought structures of modern man [sic]. It must be understood; it must speak to the people on their own wavelength. But its actions too, what it does, must be done in a way that can be understood by and have significance for the people... It has now become a question of the missionary role of the church in a total situation.

It is obvious that in doing mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the church will not neglect the significance of the incarnational aspect of mission which is congruent with the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, this is an indication that the church is obedient to her call, and committed to do His will as it communicates His message to the world.

#### **4.8. A Proposed Model for a Local Congregation**

In order to develop a model for the empowerment of local congregations the following needs to be taken into consideration:

I will need to approach the church leaders in the local churches in regard to their missionary endeavours, asking a few questions, initially to establish where the church is: has the church established a clear vision statement of mission; is the church leader with his/her council committed to reach the world? Is there a systematic programme which focuses on mission for the entire congregation, including the children's ministry? Does the church leadership agree that mission should be an integrated part of every department in the church? These questions and others would be asked of potential church leaders, and then an agreement must be reached to train and equip them as discussed in the following sections. It should be spelt out clearly that God should be the main focus, and subsequently the nurturing of the growing intimate relationship with Him through which mission and reaching the world is being fuelled. God should be in the centre of everything that the leaders do and the main purpose of all the efforts of mission involvement should be to expand God's kingdom.

Furthermore, many attempts to define mission may be theologically sound but fail to convey the essence of the biblical mission to the laity. In this study, I will attempt to state that the essence of the simple definition of mission is God using His people individually and collectively to reach out to unbelievers through word, deed and concerted prayer. The first question that needs to be addressed to church leaders has to do with the difference between a missionary and a missional church.

#### **4.8.1 Creating an understanding of a missionary church / missional church**

A significant difference in approach towards mission has developed lately. Traditionally the Church was described as ‘missionary’ in character and by nature. This understanding implied that the Church should be involved as a ‘sending Church’ - providing and supporting missionaries to be sent to ‘the ends of the earth’. Many churches known to the researcher are involved in this manner. Importantly, this paradigm led to an approach whereby mission largely became an activity or programme executed by the local church. Programmes were driven by committees and few people in the local church exercised much influence on them or on the implications for the corporate body of believers. In most cases the understanding of lay people was that mission was something that missionaries do. The extent to which the local church was ‘missionary’ in nature was therefore largely dependent on the attitude of the leaders and their willingness to send and support missionaries.

As missiologists come to grips with the increasing challenges of a postmodern era, there is a new type of church emerging which is called the ‘missional church’. Questions asked by many Christians concern what this new expression of the church means; where would it lead the Church to in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; and finally if this is truly a new paradigm?

Trying to define exactly what a ‘missional church’ means is not a simplistic exercise because the concept and content is still developing in the minds of theologians and missiologists. Nonetheless, some observations can be made.

Firstly, what it is not. It is agreed by missiologists that a missional church is not simply a church with a mission programme: that would define many churches

throughout the West to a certain degree. Nor is it necessarily a church with a thriving missions programme. In fact, if the church is programme-driven, there is an excellent possibility that it is not missional at all. When the church offers 'programmed solutions', it is relying on modernist solutions for a postmodern problem, and this negates the fact that the church is not an institution, but rather a movement and a living organism.

Secondly, what is the missional church then? It is a church returning to some of the core fundamentals of regarding the priesthood of all believers (addressing ecclesiology) and a renewed focus on missiology. This means that all believers are called to function as a mission band, directed toward the world and moving toward a destination other than its own self-preservation or inner growth. It is the whole congregation on mission; a church whose global concern is energised by its local effectiveness and whose local effectiveness is energised by being an authentic Christian community.

This study indicated that most believers are not aware of their missionary obligation, let alone the definition or the meaning of the word missional church (cf. Table 3: 10). It was noted that the low score of respondents which indicated difficulty in sharing their faith is alarming. The question was posed: Is the leadership of the churches aware of this problem? Is the church a missional church? I trust that this new understanding of missional church on the part of the church leadership will provide support to meet the challenges of postmodernity. Given that postmodern influence has already stretched beyond the boundaries of western culture and is now a global concern, this understanding will have increasing relevance for the global Church. Furthermore, this approach will bring a new and fresh understanding to ordinary believers that they are also being sent into the world. They do not have to undergo certain training in order to qualify as missionaries, but everyone is mandated according to (Matt. 28: 18-20; Acts 1:8ff). Every believer is expected to take the gospel to the market place, offices, schools, colleges, neighbourhoods, towns, malls, etc. Simply put, the best missionaries according to this new approach are those in the churches who live and work in the frontline every day.

According to Table 3.1.4, one of the reasons why Christians are not sharing their faith is a lack of equipment and training. During the questionnaire, some Christians

indicated that they have been accused from the pulpit as ‘frozen assets’, and reluctant to share their faith. They were not equipped to do the expected sharing. This study stated that, often, people feel incompetent to witness due to a lack of understanding of what witness really means (cf. Table 3. 1. 4). In chapter 4.4, there is a discussion about empowering the church for its mission. This includes, inter alia: training, empowerment, what discipleship is, discipleship in mission, and the discipleship process. A curriculum will be written which will reflect the principles which can be adapted in different contexts according to the needs of the target group.

One should note that the training will be given to church leaders, and they in turn will transmit the teachings to their constituencies. I will also enlist more trainers who will help in this process. Through this effort, the entire congregations should develop a sound biblical understanding that every Christian is called by God to spread the good news of Jesus by word (*kerygma*) and deed (*diakonia*) (cf 3.1.4). The two latter dimensions will be more fully discussed later.

#### **4.8.2. Nurturing stewardship (giving)**

Church leaders require teaching and equipment regarding the stewardship of their resources, including church finance. The researcher has suspected that some churches are still maintaining a paternalistic approach on issues relating to finances. This study confirms this view as many respondents indicated that they are not involved in supporting missionaries. According to this study (Table 3. 14), generally, the churches under consideration indicated that they are giving substantially to the church i.e. (80%). However, it was clear from the respondents that these funds are only geared towards other projects like helping the needy (*diakonia*), meeting the overheads of the local church, and paying the salaries of their church leaders, but nothing was being contributed towards missionary endeavours.

As a matter of urgency, the church leadership will be orientated to and taught about stewardship. Although Christian stewardship is far broader than the use of finances, nonetheless financial giving occupies a prominent part in this process. Church leaders should realize that financial giving is part of worship; it is more important for its spiritual connotation than for its financial significance. Simply put, the stewardship of money is an indication of the reality and depth of commitment to Jesus Christ. The churches in the community will be requested to come up with a profile of the average person in the area they are planning to evangelize. Evangelism should happen naturally through friendships that are formed and believers should share their testimonies with their friends and kin, and once any of the non-churched people become converts, they should be incorporated into a 'house church' and be trained to share their testimonies with their friends and kin etcetera. Those who grasp this vision will be able to become involved in missionary endeavours anywhere in the world. Furthermore, mission should happen naturally to believers who are relocating for the purposes of work, as business people, managers, teachers, medical personnel, engineers, caregivers, seamen, even domestic helpers and so forth; each one needs to find someone to evangelize and disciple a few of their converted contacts who will be able to disciple others according to (2 Tim. 2: 2). Even tourists could combine their sightseeing with a disciple-making objective by developing friendships with one or two people and starting to share the life of Christ with them. Importantly, evangelization should become a way of life for the entire church membership. Moreover, it is noted that lay-missionaries will be more effective witnesses than the normal clergy, because they will have greater credibility and a more contextualized witnessing approach to their communities who need to be taught the importance of stewardship and ploughing back into the furtherance of God's kingdom. On the question of whether mission is included in the church budget, casual conversations between the researcher and leaders of the churches under consideration revealed that the response was not favourable. Therefore it was evident that teaching is necessary. The following section will consider the programmes which will be utilized in the four missional dimensions which have been discussed already.

### **2.8.3. Developing a comprehensive programme**

The congregation needs to develop a comprehensive, balanced, mission programme. All the dimensions of mission need consideration.

The aspect of **kerygma** must find its proper place in the programme. As stated above, the 47% score indicated in both Mainline Protestant and Pentecostals/Charismatic on the lack of a *kerygmatic* dimension of the churches under consideration is alarming. Due to the lack of spreading the good news amongst the believers, the researcher will develop a curriculum which will be utilized to alleviate this problem. A few points should be considered in this process: The church should undertake thorough research into her community, including how many cultures and age-groups are represented, and the predominant languages, and taking into account spiritual ebbing etcetera.

The same holds true of the aspect of **diakonia**. Church leaders in this study should be aware that the local church is the most visible and permanent representation of God's kingdom in any community, and it could exercise more influence than any other institution as it reflects God's concern in each domain of the person's need. However, according to this study, the church under consideration is failing dismally in her responsibility towards serving her community and socio-political involvement. The indicated score of 7% in Table 3.15 of community involvement is rather frightening. The teaching and equipping of church leaders in this area is absolutely essential.

Workshops should be conducted in various places, in order to make the teaching available to many churches. In order to accomplish this goal, the researcher will enlist a number of competent people to help accelerate this process. These workshops would facilitate a process in which the church strives to increase her socio-political capacity to satisfy the fundamental human needs. This can be done through mobilizing and managing their own locally available resources to God's benefit. It is clearly stated in 4.3.2. that the church should be a part of the solution of the ills of our society. This

will occur only through genuine solidarity which will accord the church credibility, and this will be a witness and part of the missionary outreaches to the world.

Regarding the issue of political involvement, Christians should be aware that God is calling them to be good citizens as part of the witness of their faith. They should realize that an interest in political action is not secular in the sense that it is not important for the believer. God instituted government, and He gave Christians responsibility and desires His people to promote love, justice, and righteousness. Christians who are occupying positions such as those of a lawyer, judge, police officer, civil servant, soldier, social worker, or who are serving the nation's government in any capacity, should bear in mind that they have a high calling from God. They are challenged by Scripture to be God's extension and missionaries of His justice to the people whom they serve. For example, it does not matter if one is under a system that is unfair, such as Solomon was in, or the somewhat unjust government under which Joseph and Daniel lived; as God's representative, one needs to be faithful and be an ambassador for Christ and the community. Furthermore, the church should advise the local government and community leaders on issues of local economic development through the collective expertise of its members who are managers, executives and professionals in the corporate world.

With respect to the issue of xenophobia, the church should consider Leviticus 19: 33 which states that 'when an alien lives with you in your land, do not mistreat him. The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were once aliens in Egypt. I am the Lord your God'. Indeed, the church ought to care for the aliens and strangers in their midst. There must be a concern for the weak and the oppressed. It is unacceptable that our fellow Africans have been mistreated in such a dastardly manner as in the recent xenophobic attacks. The church is called to care, love, and minister to the needs of our fellow Africans, and these acts should be condemned in the strongest terms.

It is vital that the church translate the good news that it produces in its *kerygma* and models in its *koinonia* into *diakonia* service for God. The three dimensions are interrelated and should be regarded as such whilst the church pursues her missionary responsibility. Furthermore, she should develop programmes that minister to the needs of hurt people, regardless of race, culture, gender, economic status, or religious creed. She should provide skills transfer programmes from skilled migrant workers and ex-workers to the unskilled young school leavers in the church and community as a way of *diakonia*. Finally, in serving the world, the church should desire that underprivileged, powerless, needy, and hurting people experience the meaningful and abundant life that God created them to live.

The importance of **koinonia** must also be kept in mind in the development of a missionary programme for the church. The Bible study and regular prayer meetings are normally classified as the koinoniac dimension of the local church. Through these activities, the church aims at bonding and strengthening its own congregational life where everyone belongs to one another in God's inclusive family of equality irrespective of colour, gender, race, or creed. Unless the local church develops this aspect in her life, it will not succeed in fulfilling its missionary obligation to the world. According to this study (3.1.3), churches reported a low score on attracting new members to the church, and one of the reasons is a lack of *koinonia*. In its koinoniac ministry, the church takes on its responsibility to be a witnessing community so that when visitors attend, they are attracted and feel that they want to belong to this community. Another aspect of *koinonia* is that it also demonstrates the church's character as a counter-community.

Furthermore, *koinonia* involves the dimension of church planting. Due to the lack of evangelism in the churches under consideration, as part of their missionary obligation, they will be assisted to develop vision and be helped to plan effectively to start new churches, and send church-planting teams from their congregations. The goal of this exercise should be to expand God's mission to other regions, and give every person the opportunity to respond to the gospel. On the other hand, the mother churches

should provide prayer, encouragement, the needed finance and the counsel to the people to whom they send.

Lastly the aspect of **leitourgia** may never be forgotten. The concept of worship as part of a comprehensive dimension of mission is foreign to many church leaders under consideration: according to casual conversations with the researcher, most of them are being contaminated by a consumer-mentality and prosperity gospel. Therefore, as part of the training, the issue of worship is vitally essential. It should be noted that the entire service in the congregation culminates in corporate worship of God, and he is served through worship, songs of praise, thanksgiving, which includes the confessions of sins, faith and offering of prayers, and the like. Simply put, *diakonia* (service) in all its forms leads to *leitourgia*: service to God. It goes without saying that the worship in turn nourishes the full *diakonia* of the congregation as the church seeks to fulfill her task in missionary endeavours. The question to pose of the local church's focus on mission is whether worship evidences the elements of a true worship service such as songs of praise, acts of thanksgiving, the opportunity for commitment to serve God wherever he leads, financial giving and so forth.

The churches must regularly evaluate and review their strategies for relevance, appropriateness and healing impact as they continue with their missionary responsibilities. A number of concluding suggestions in this regard are advanced in the last chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5: Conclusion, Findings and Recommendations**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This final chapter sets out to summarize the main findings of this research, and to make certain contributions for the purpose of a better understanding of mission amongst black churches in South Africa, in particular. This is necessary, as it provides a comprehensive perspective for understanding mission and helps black churches, particularly in Gauteng region and beyond, to identify their role in God's mission. The content of this chapter is organized under two main headings:

- The findings of the study, and
- Proposals for further research.

### **5.2. Findings of this Study**

The hypothesis of this study indicated that African churches are generally perceived to have failed to become self-propagating communities. This, to a point, may be true, but - according to the findings of this study - there are mitigating circumstances that are contributing towards a lack of missionary enthusiasm amongst the African churches. The research, however, pointed to the fact that if these churches could be properly trained and informed about their missionary responsibility, they may yet play a vital role in spreading the gospel throughout the world according to the Great Commission (in Mat. 28: 18-20) and other Scriptures.

### **5.3. The South African Churches in front of a Missiological**

#### **Mirror**

Having discussed the close relationship between church and mission in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in chapter two, the objective of chapter three was to carry out empirical research into twenty selected churches in Gauteng region with the help of a questionnaire from IMER.

Some of the more important findings are the following:

- a) On the issue of how one becomes a Christian, the findings indicated that there is a vast difference between Catholics/Mainline Protestant Churches and Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches. It is evident from church history that this difference has existed since the beginning of these churches, and therefore this issue cannot be resolved overnight. It is the view of the researcher that these churches should rather form a formidable force in pursuing the missionary enterprise for which God has mandated them. Ecumenical co-operation is a *sine qua non* for mission.
- b) In terms of creating missional churches, the high score which was indicated by the Roman Catholic Church as opposed to Mainline Protestant and Pentecostal/Charismatics in particular, came as a surprise. One would have expected the findings to be the other way round. According to the observation, Pentecostal/Charismatics are employing various methods to attract new members to join their churches, such as, for example, healing crusades conducted by itinerant evangelists with healing ministries; and church members are continuously inviting their friends to the church, and as a result, many decide to join their churches. The study is of the view that a new fresh way to address the context and spiritual needs which will cause new members to regularly join the local church is needed.
- c) It is clear that innovative creative strategies are needed to attract new members to the church. Furthermore, the study noted that there is a need for an accurate and balanced assessment that needs to take place within both the church and the community in an open and frank spirit. This endeavour will perhaps assist the church to be a catalyst of mission in her neighbourhood and beyond her borders. According to notable missiologists, the church must exert both (centripetal) attractive force, as well as an (centrifugal) expansive impetus in order to be vibrant in her missionary obligation.
- d) The study noted that many Christians find it difficult to share their faith with people from other faith communities. According to the findings this, precisely, is

one of the reasons why non church members are not attracted to the church. The score of a mere 47% of Christians who are sharing their faith is a cause of great concern. Most of the respondents indicated a lack of training and empowerment from their churches as the main reason for not sharing their faith. This could be remedied. It should be noted that every believer is a missionary, and therefore, obligated to further God's kingdom wherever God has placed them in their community and the world.

- e) On the positive side, the research indicates the strikingly high score in regard to the balance of Christians matching their faith with family and marriage. This should be commended, but most of the churches under consideration polled low in matching their faith with social life, the workplace, and politics. According to these findings, Christians dichotomize between faith and other essential elements of life, and as a result, their witness is negatively affected. It is generally observed that this situation is still prevalent in many churches in our day. Simply put, some churches view involvement in politics or social issues as unholy for any Christian and, therefore, they adopt a passive approach.
- f) In addition to the previous section, this study noted that the church has failed to develop a theology which could be applied to socio-political issues and conflict resolution. In the past the churches often failed to protest against false ideologies such as the ideology of apartheid. Some churches indeed developed theological arguments for apartheid. This must not happen again: the churches should develop a prophetic theology tackling the issues of our day. To do that, in the view of this study, the church needs no less than a paradigm shift on the issues of socio-politics and conflict resolution in order to make an invaluable contribution in advancing her missionary task.
- g) The findings of this research revealed that the Roman Catholic churches are doing fairly well in tackling unemployment and poverty in their communities. It is also interesting that this study indicated that the churches under consideration are involved on a small scale in this endeavour. However, according to the findings, there is much that needs to be done in the area of unemployment and poverty. Owing to the lack of work in our country, the researcher recommends that the

church must empower people to start their small businesses in partnership with the Association of SADC Chambers of Commerce & Industry (ASCCI), which is well known to him. The purpose of ASCCI is to equip those enterprises, including small businesses, who have been running their own businesses without adequate information on how to manage and grow their businesses and so forth.

- h) The findings indicated that the churches being researched scored poorly in their involvement with keeping their environment clean. It could be concluded that the church abuses her God-given stewardship over nature. Therefore this study recommends that, if Christians play their part in tending to and keeping their environment clean, this could serve as a witness to the world.
- i) With regard to the concept of empowering her church members, the study notes that churches are scoring highly, which is commendable. But according to this study elsewhere, Christians have already indicated that they lack training and empowerment; hence they are not involved in missionary work. In order to redress this discrepancy, the study recommends that the church should create an effective programme where members will be adequately empowered for their missionary responsibility. Indeed, Christians should be empowered in order to impact on their communities and be of service in God's kingdom.
- j) Two major reasons why respondents prefer not to become Christians, according to the findings of this study, are ancestral worship and ignorance about Christianity and what it really means to be a Christian. From these findings, the researcher concludes that Christians are not playing their vital role in being the light and salt of the world. For example, if Christians were to fulfil their role faithfully, the issue of ignorance and ancestral worship would be adequately addressed, and non-Christians would know and worship the living God.
- k) One of the signs of a vibrant church with a missionary focus is her budget. According to this study, most churches under consideration are poor in giving, and their budgets are telling. The trend in a few churches is their engagement in community projects, which comprises only a small part in regard to mission. According to the findings, some churches are concentrating on paying their

pastors, and maintaining the church facilities like paying the rates, rentals, and repairing the church. It is the view of the researcher that churches should be reminded about the comprehensiveness of God's mission, and that as part of their obligation to the Great Commission, a certain percentage should be budgeted towards advancing God's mission. In contrast, according to this study, 80% of one church's budget is geared towards mission to South Africa, and the world. This clearly indicates that the church has much potential to play a vital role in furthering God's mission.

#### **5.4. Developing a Model for Missionary Involvement**

The objective of this chapter was to develop a sustainable model to enlarge missional involvement in the local church. This will include the strategizing and planning activities which could help the local church to implement the principles indicated in this study. In the course of the study, attention was accorded to four missiologically known aspects in mission: *kerygma*, *diakonia*, *koinonia*, and *leitourgia*.

As part of its introduction, this chapter discussed the importance of dialoguing with other faiths as one component of missionary responsibility of the church. It was noted that many churches in South Africa do not relate well to other faith communities, and according to the findings of this study, there must be a radical change in this regard. For example, churches should:

- Develop an attitude of humbleness and openness;
- Comprehend the need to know and understand the religious convictions of people of other faiths;
- Acquire a more precise theological definition of dialogue as the church, which should filter through to the entire congregation;
- Be aware that a true 'trialogue' must prevail, including the Holy Spirit.

It was also emphasized that, in the process of dialogue, the churches must be willing to listen to one another, and that judgment should not be practised, but, rather, there must be love and understanding when approaching people of other faiths. A classic

example was furnished: that of the Muslim world. It was mentioned that a missionary amongst the Muslims should be aware of his/her own deficiencies and discern carefully that which is Christian from that which is cultural. Furthermore, cross-cultural communication was also discussed, including a few invaluable steps which were noted in regard to cross-cultural communication.

In regard to serving the need of *kerygma*, the researcher mentioned the following elements that the church could employ in their context to accelerate their missionary endeavours: evangelistic campaigns, Bible study classes, literature, pamphlets, tapes, literature evangelism, media, Heartlines, Truth-Media Internet, Jesus film & video, saturation evangelism, personal evangelism, Athletes in Action, children's games, tent campaigns and crusades.

Serving the needs of *diakonia*, it was observed that the *word* and *deed* can actually be combined as a dimension of the one 'good news' activity. The church should not divorce the two words as has been done traditionally. It was noted in this study that more emphasis is placed on evangelism and very little on deeds. For example, according to the empirical study (Table 3: 5-9), churches are paying less attention to their *diakonian* responsibilities. Furthermore, the study further discussed a few areas to which the church should pay attention:

- Political and social justice;
- Poverty;
- Unemployment;
- Illegal immigrants;
- Environmental involvement and the reasons why the church should be involved in caring for her environment and its engagement therein;
- The paradigm shift that needs to take place in the church.

One of the conclusions of the foregoing chapters is that the church should realize that, indeed, mission is not only the proclamation of the gospel, but it also involves *learning* and *servng*.

In examining the *koinonian* aspect of the churches under consideration, this study indicated discrepancies in this area. For example, the researcher observed that members of most churches are just enjoying coming together, and having fun with one another, which frequently develops into a stage of inward looking, where it falls into an unhealthy situation. Furthermore, the relationships become so deep and mutually absorbing, that ultimately these become a focal point of attention. It was concluded in the findings that the fellowship of believers and the church should be geared to reaching the world. And this is where the study introduced the element of church planting as part of *koinonia* of the church.

On the question of church planting, this study established that church planting must include the word 'movement'. According to Garrison (2004: 21), the church planting movement is a rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting other churches that sweeps through a people group or population segment. This study observed that this definition is comprehensive, and it includes what is happening in church planting movements, which is certainly essential. The researcher concludes that the church planting movement goes beyond the so-called, mass evangelism, church outreach crusades, tent campaigns and the like. The church planting movement produces multiplying churches, i.e. churches which employ multiplication, rather than addition.

Regarding the worship service, this study noted that churches are not sufficiently attractive to draw new members to the church. The findings of this study concluded that worshipping God is paramount in fulfilling the missionary obligation of the church. The church should worship and glorify God for who he is, his sovereignty, majesty, and his greatness. Furthermore, it was observed that worship can actually serve as an instrument of evangelizing the lost world, as they experience the presence of the Lord in their midst.

After discussing all the practical challenges of mission for a local church, the researcher described his own model that could be used in local churches, and the strategy which could help church leaders implement invaluable principles which are indicated in this study. In developing his model, the researcher continued to use the three rubrics in regards to mission, as they constitute the heart of this study: *kerugma*, *diakonia*, and *koinonia*.

Under evangelism, three important key elements were identified: media evangelism, public preaching, and personal evangelism. It is concluded that preaching of any kind is commendable, as long as people are being saved. There might be different methods employed according to the context of the audience, but as long as the preaching of the message is not compromised, and people are saved, these should be encouraged.

On the issue of training churches in the sustenance of the spiritual harvest, the study concluded that the preparation of and equipping the churches has been poorly attended to. Furthermore, it appears that some church leaders are not yet ready to absorb large numbers of new church members. This calls for more training and equipment on the part of the church leadership. The conclusion is that the training should rather be transferable, that is, church leaders should be able to transmit it to the churches. Furthermore, the study pointed out that Jesus is a good model, showing how he trained his disciples, and entrusted them with continuing his work.

Another striking finding was that regarding the principle of empowering the church to become what God has called her to be. One finding of this study is that many members in the churches under consideration indicated that empowerment for mission should be accorded priority in the church. This study indicated that one of the reasons why Christians are not sharing their faith is simply because they have not been taught how to witness. It was concluded that the empowerment is not a quick fix solution to the missionary work of the church, but rather a process which will take time and patience.

As far as discipleship is concerned, the researcher defined discipleship at length and observed that it is lacking, and furthermore concluded that discipleship is to accept God's call, and be willing to fulfill God's mission wherever the person is, such as work, business, school, and so on. The researcher further elaborated on two key points, inter alia: discipleship in mission, and the process of discipleship. It was concluded that discipleship is not head knowledge, but it should be applied in order to bring about a changed and transformed life.

It is evident that financial giving is lacking in the churches under consideration. It was concluded that most churches experience the same common issue, of not giving

towards the mission or advancing of God's work. It was also noted that if the church were consistent in budgeting, the dividends would be substantial. Furthermore, the researcher concluded that the church should take mission seriously, and its budget should reflect its missionary endeavours. Importantly, generosity should not be an issue, no matter how poor people are, but furthering God's mission, as an obligation for every church and believer, is a priority. It was noted that God controls everything, and Christians are stewards of what has been entrusted to them. Therefore, it behooves every Christian to be faithful in giving to mission.

The researcher observed that mission should be incarnation. It should represent the gospel within the cultural context of the target group; in order to provide the conditions in which ordinary people's experience of faith can become more significant for theological reflection. Furthermore, he noted that incarnation implies learning the cultures of the target group; understanding how they think; what it feels like to be in their world; how they view the world; and how a missionary can identify and be accepted in their world. Indeed, this approach is very different from that of the first missionaries who described African peoples in the most degrading terms as brutal savages with no concept of God, of good and evil. According to Saayman (1993: 39) early missionaries maintained that

All their social institutions reflected only depravity and brutality, and it was the God-given calling and privilege of western peoples (who were all good, civilized members of Christendom, after all) to root out the depravity and heathenism and impose, through lesser or greater application of force, standards of 'Christian civilization', thus bringing 'light' to 'the dark continent'.

This study concluded that while doing mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the church should not neglect the importance of the incarnational aspect, which is congruent with the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The findings of the study confirmed that a church which has once been reformed is always in the process of reforming in order to resemble the character of Christ. The

church needs to allow the Holy Spirit to grant continual guidance, and experience reshaping, and remoulding into the image of Christ.

The research established that planning and strategizing for mission is fundamental and cannot be avoided. The researcher observed that most churches under consideration inadequately plan for any activity. Therefore, this study concludes that churches must view planning as vital for the progress of the church and their missional outreaches. The findings noted that churches should develop their own goals and objectives which will guide their actions, especially their missional obligations. For example, the key strategic planning process included the following elements:

- Direction the church is going;
- Situational analysis – facing reality;
- Critical mass – leaders and their tools;
- Critical path;
- Resource release- stewardship efficiency;
- Elevate and refine the process of planning;
- Putting the plan into action.

Missiologists and church growth experts all agree that, in order for the church to be successful and effective in mission, planning and strategizing are paramount. The study concludes that an effective church has a vision, dreams, and reachable goals, and it should not be engaged in useless and wishful thinking.

Ultimately, the findings of this study concluded that saturation prayer should permeate the church's missional efforts. Indeed, it matters not how effective the church becomes in her missionary endeavours; unless prayer is a priority, everything will fall flat. It was noted that God is our source, and our total dependency, and He alone is worthy to be acknowledged as such. The study also discussed the key elements of saturation prayer.

### 5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations can be made in view of the above findings and conclusions. These recommendations are not intended to suggest a complete remedy in regard to the missional responsibility of the local church. They are tentative, limited, and are thought of as temporary bridges until the church finds time to restructure its programme and organization in order to embody the newly discovered missional principles that are indicated in this study. With this in mind, I suggest:

- The church should consider the children's ministry as vital and important for the missional work. According to this study leaves much to be desired. It should be noted that the church will not advance according to God's will without an intentional ministry to children. Children should feel that they are needed in the church, and that they are part of building God's kingdom.
- Church leaders should concentrate on empowering Christians for the work of the ministry. They should not use Christians as helpers in fulfilling their own vision; rather, they should assist them to attain the spiritual potential that God has given them. If leaders are faithful in their responsibility to empower the church, then the missional aspect of ministry will fall into the right perspective.
- It is evident that a Christ-like ministry will yield dividends in attracting people to church. According to our empirical study, various reasons were given why people are not attracted to the church, but it is the conviction of the researcher that, if church leaders were to return to the basics employed by Jesus, their churches would experience tremendous results in attracting new members to their churches. For example, Jesus used three methods in attracting crowds: (a) He loved and accepted people just as they are, including the little ones (Matt. 9: 36; Mark 10: 13-16); (b) He met and ministered to the spiritual needs, before the material needs (Matt. 15: 30); (c) He taught them in a practical and appealing way (Matt. 13: 34; Mark 12:37). Leaders should do research and study their target group well, and then minister appropriately in a way that will attract people to the church.

- There must be a clear vision and purpose statement in the church, and every member must be aware of this motivating vision and be committed to it. It should not be something that belongs to a higher hierarchy of the church; but every member, including children, must be exposed to the vision and mission of the church. I would recommend that at least once a year, the church leader broadcast the missional vision so that it becomes part and parcel of each member of the church.
- There should be a mission structure which will be responsible in the local church. It is true that the pastor of the church cannot do the leading of this ministry by him/herself; nor can any single individual. The researcher would recommend that this ministry be led by one of the inner core people from the leadership team, but with the pastor ex officio as one of the members of the committee. He/she needs to give guidance, but someone must take leadership with authority to execute the work. A clear job description should be drawn up of that leader.
- One of the concerns stemming from the respondents during the empirical research was the lack of training in witnessing and other areas of outreach. I would suggest a systematic teaching programme on mission, including witness and outreach for the whole congregation. The teaching on mission should include youth, children, men, women, and literally every church member should go through mission training. Indeed, mission should be an integral part of every department of the congregation. It is essential that the mission committee take responsibility for developing this ministry by way of planning, and inviting relevant people to visit and motivate the church. They should make sure that they acquire enough material on mission.
- If mission is one of the top priorities in the church, then there must be a definite commitment to pray regularly for mission. Intercession and saturation prayer for mission should be included in the whole church. In every gathering, prayer for mission should be included.

- The church leadership must discover what types of people live in their area, subsequently decide which of those groups their church is best equipped to reach, and then discover which styles of evangelism best match their target. This researcher has established that most churches under consideration do not know their target group well; hence some of the methods employed for outreach are not effective. It should be clear to the church leaders that while their churches may never be able to reach everyone, they will be especially suited to reaching certain types of people. It goes without saying that knowing who one is trying to reach will make evangelism much easier.
- In order for the church to survive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it must carry out ‘exchange’ relationships with its environment. It must exert some degree of influence upon its environment, and the environment must exert some degree of influence upon the church in return. It should be noted that the environment is made up primarily of other social institutions, such as political, economic, educational, family ones, etcetera, with which the congregation has an exchange relationship. For example, the congregation could offer single mothers a free auto repair service. In exchange, these mothers would send their children to the church events or attend certain events themselves, and this could accelerate their missional aspect in their community.
- The whole church must be taught about stewardship and giving towards mission while in the same vein, the leader of the congregation should devise a clear, concise plan for missional work and gain a reasonable idea of costs and time. It may be argued that the lack of written goals and objectives is usually a sign of slothfulness on the part of church leaders, and this must change. I would also recommend the following resources for teaching and equipping the church on how to mobilize Christians on giving for missional endeavours: *The church guide to planning and budgeting* by Richard Vargo; *Using your money wisely: Biblical principles under scrutiny* by Larry Burkett; *Pastors*

*resource package* from Crown Financial Ministries; *The grace of giving: Messages on stewardship* by Steven Olsford.

- Inasmuch as the African Initiated Churches are not involved in the ecumenical stream of South African Churches, much can be learned from them in the area of earth keeping. As part of their theology, AICs are dedicated in cleansing the land as God's creation. The church should take heed of what Jacklyn Cock so aptly stated, that the Christian church should take the lead in addressing environmental problems in SA since (a) it has an organized space at the grassroots level to promote mass environmental awareness; (b) it is a unique ethical source; and (c) a holistic, ecological vision has deep roots in the Christian tradition (unpublished notes page 8).

#### **5. 4 Further Areas of Research**

In this study, the researcher concentrated primarily on analyzing the role that churches in the black community are playing in terms of their missionary obligation.

A number of issues have been left untouched, and these warrant further research. They include:

- Further research into the role of children's ministry in furthering God's mission: taking note of what happened in church history and the role the children's ministry played in advancing God's kingdom.
- Proper curricula and courses in order to empower local churches for their outreaches and missionary enterprise.
- Strategies to empower the laity as well as the clergy in local congregations to meet the challenge of their missionary obligation.



- Further study on African Independent Churches: their strategies for outreach and recruiting more people in their congregations, and their involvement in earth keeping.
- This study focused on black churches and their role in mission. It would be interesting to further examine the churches of other races, and undertake a comparative study on God's mission and how they are faring.
- In addition, it would be commendable if further research could be done into the Biblical theology of missions which would include the biblical themes of *missio Dei* and the kingdom of God, and the evaluation of the church's contemporary involvement in the *missio Dei*.
- In regard to cross-cultural communication there could be an investigation into how to appraise the socio/political and religious setting of any given culture in order to develop the strategies one needs to employ in establishing an indigenous church within the particular culture.
- Further research is needed in assessing the unfinished task in our country and beyond, so as to use that information to motivate and mobilize the church to missions.



## ANNEXURE A

### Dear Church Leader

Research results published 40 years ago by Baker, undisputedly highlighted that the vast majority of Christians are not involved in the missional task of the church. Modern day missiologists generally affirm this tragic conclusion of Baker.

This research project forms part of a PhD study conducted by Jonas Khauoe at the University of Pretoria. The aim of the study is to acquaint myself on the relevant and current mission theology and theories that pertain to the research, and to analyse and determine the current role churches are playing in missions. Through this, I expect to develop a sustainable model to inform and empower clergy as well as laity in their missionary obligation.

Your contribution to the questionnaire is of utmost importance because it would enhance the scope, content and validity of my empirical results. Thank you in advance for your invaluable input. It would also be appreciated if you could encourage key leaders in your church to participate in this questionnaire, and through that effort, a significant contribution could be made towards the results of this study.

I can be contacted at:

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I thank you for your willingness to provide the relevant information for this research.

Jonas M. Khauoe



**ANNEXURE B**

**QUESTIONNAIRE TO CONGREGATIONS**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ your church: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been in this church? \_\_\_\_\_

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Senior pastor  Church Board Member  Departmental Head  Ladies group  
 Men's group  Young Adults  Teenager  Children's Ministry  Other

1. How did you become a Christian?  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. (a) Are new members regularly joining your church?  yes  no and

(b) How are they being attracted?

Evangelistic outreaches  Invitation by friends  Invitation by church

Member  Open air outreach

other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you find it difficult to share your faith with someone else?  yes  no  
Why?

4. How easy do you feel, to make the link between your Christian faith and the following:  Family  Marriage  Social life  Work  Politics  Work  School? (use a scale from 1 – 5: bad...very good)

5. What are the main social problems in your community, if any?

- Spiritual Renewal \_\_\_\_\_
- Moral Regeneration \_\_\_\_\_
- Socio-Political \_\_\_\_\_
- Unemployment \_\_\_\_\_
- Poverty \_\_\_\_\_
- Crime \_\_\_\_\_
- Bad health (HIV/AIDS etc) \_\_\_\_\_



- Environment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Any of the problems you have listed above, how many of them is your church responding to, and how?

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7. Does your church have a defined program for outreach/ evangelism/ church planting?  yes  no. Please explain

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8. Does your church train and empower its members for their witness to the world?

yes  no

9. In your opinion, why do some people prefer not to be Christians?

---

10. In your opinion, what are some barriers that hinder the church's witness in the world?

---

---

11. Does your church send missionaries to other parts of e. g. SA? Africa? or the World?

Please explain \_\_\_\_\_

12. (a) How would you describe the level of financial giving of your church?

Very positive  Quite positive  Poor negative

(b) How much of those funds is devoted to missions/ outreaches/ community projects? Please explain

---

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## **ANNEXURE C**

### **CHURCHES THAT RESPONDED TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. Regina Mundi Catholic Church: Soweto
2. Living Waters Bible Church: Dobsonville
3. St. Huberts Catholic Church: Alexandra
4. Pimville Lutheran Church: Soweto
5. Uniting Reformed Church: Orange Farm
6. Maranatha Uniting Reformed Church of SA: Sebokeng
7. Holy Cross Anglican Church: Soweto
8. Uniting Reformed Church in SA: Alexandra
9. Lutheran Evangelical Church: Sebokeng
10. Orlando East Methodist Church: Soweto
11. Melodi Ya Tshwane (URCSA): Pretoria
12. AFM International: Atteridgeville
13. Abundant Life: Bekkersdal
14. AFM Sunrise Park Assembly: Doorkop X1
15. Auckland Park Baptist Church: Auckland Park

16. Maranatha World Revival Church: Soweto

17. Word Centre Ministry: Thokoza

18. African Evangelical Church: Soweto

19. Saint Cyprians Anglican: Sharpville

20. St. Peters A. M. E. : Sharpville

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