

# **CHAPTER 5: THE IMPACT OF PENTECOSTALISM ON THE REFORMED CHURCH IN ZAMBIA.**

## **5.1. Introduction.**

Much has happened consciously in the lives of African Christians, especially the Zambians, since the first contact with Western European missionaries. It must be acknowledged, however, that Western European missionaries contributed significantly to the Christianization of Africa, especially through the translation of the Bible in vernacular (local) languages. However, in the the process of the contextualization of Christianity in Africa, Africans found unsatisfactory the tendency of Western European missionaries to explain away the supernatural found in the Bible, including God's ability to counter the reality of evil. In response, the African Pentecostalism initiated what some scholars interpret as "renewals" in mainline Churches. This chapter will focus on the "renewals" as a result of African Pentecostalism in the Reformed Church in Zambia.

## **5.2. A brief historical background to African Pentecostalism.**

What happened at the Azusa Street Revival in 1906 among a small circle of Christians, led by an African American Pastor, William Joseph Seymour, caused Seymour to become a national phenomenon, and thereafter, a global phenomenon. That experience led to what is called "Pentecostalism". Historically, Pentecostalism as we know it today traces its roots, according to Hollenweger (1985: 3 – 12), "in the spirituality of nineteenth-century African American slave religion." The emergence of African Pentecostalism was mainly based on the spiritual hunger that needed to be assuaged in a truly African expression of Christianity, and not merely a Western importation of it (Anderson Allan, 1991: 29 – 31). Many of the early manifestations of Pentecostalism were found in the religious expressions of the slaves

and were themselves a reflection of the African religious culture from which they had been abducted (Anderson Allan, 1991: 27). And, Leonard Lovett (1975:138) says:

“It may be categorically stated that black Pentecostalism emerged out of the context of the brokenness of black existence...Their holistic view of religion had its roots in African religion. One cannot meaningfully discuss the origins of contemporary Pentecostalism unless the role of black is clearly defined and acknowledged.”

Similarly, Mac Robert (1988:31) points out that “the influence of African religious ecstaticism and spirit possession is evident not only among black Pentecostals, but also in an attenuated form among the white Pentecostals.” Therefore, the rise of Pentecostalism gave a certain authenticity to American Black holistic Christianity with its motor manifestations. As Horn (1990: 22) points out, “Seymour and his black followers carried their ideals and the liturgy of black Christianity with their emphasis on freedom, equality and community and a good liturgy of shout, song, dance and motoring into the Pentecostal Movement.”

This does not imply that early Pentecostals had a syncretistic understanding of the Holy Spirit. Yet Pentecostalism with its roots in Afro-American religion transplanted its central tenets into South Africa in 1908, and later reached Zambia in the early seventies. This Pentecostal movement certainly had African influences which made it easier for it to flourish in the African soil. In a critique of mainstream Christianity, the World Council of Churches in August 1971 pointed out that:

*“The emergence and growth of Independent Churches in Africa, of Pentecostal Churches and of Pentecostalism within the established churches could point to some deficiency of traditional Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. Theology and practice of these churches has to a large extent neglected the Holy Spirit affirmation about his continuing presence. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit and even more the sensitivity to his active presence in the church and the world were and still are underdeveloped in the Western traditional of Christianity.”* (Williams, 1981: 95) (Italics mine).

The theological neglect of the Holy Spirit and the lack of sensitivity to his active presence in the church and the world are still prevalent in Western traditional Christianity due to the

influence of scholastic thought. According to Pomerville (1982:227) “the post-Reformation period, under the impact of the Enlightenment, produced a scholastic theology.” He says that the “view of scholastic theologians was that they were working with a ‘finished’ theological deposit. And he argues that “in its systematic form, theology consisted of propositional statements rather than an ongoing, dynamic process where biblical revelation was constantly interacting with historical and cultural contexts.”

In an article entitled *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (1979:69-74) William Menzies surveys the development of pneumatology in the history of the Western church and points out areas in which pneumatology is underdeveloped. He gives possible reasons as to why the doctrine was neglected. Tracing the historical development of pneumatology, Menzies shows that until the Reformation the doctrine only in terms of the essential being of the third person of the Trinity (1979:69). The historic creeds of the church, as well as some Western systematic theologies, are testimony to this underdevelopment (1979:71, 74). Little is said concerning the mission of the Holy Spirit in theology in this particular period of the church. Menzies gives two possible reasons for this lack of development: firstly, a practical or ontological subordination of the third person of the Trinity, and secondly, the contextualization of theology in the period; the fact that theology focuses on the issues and questions of the historical moment, and therefore theological development reflects this narrow focus (1979:71). And a third possible reason is that not only does theology naturally narrow its response to certain issues, but also there is often a reaction against certain questions and issues. “Selectivity” is an active principle in theological development, both positive in terms of response to issues and negative in terms of avoidance of other issues. The subjective dimension of the Spirit in Christian experience was one such issue that was greatly avoided. Such avoidance, Menzies points out, was due to excesses that occurred with regard to the experiential-subjective dimension of the Christian faith, both at the beginning of the period (due to Montanism) and at the end of the period (the "Schwärmerei") (1979:73).

Menzies notes however that this neglected dimension began to receive attention in the theological traditions which represent the roots of modern Pentecostalism-Wesleyan holiness and Keswickian theology of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (1979:74-75). However, in this thesis, I will allow the African Pentecostal phenomenon to speak for itself as much as possible.

### **5.3. Defining the term “African Pentecostalism.”**

There is a great deal of discussion among scholars over which terminology is appropriate. And, it seems that whatever term one applies will cause controversy. “African Pentecostal” churches are churches which express and form a distinctively African Christianity. This term, despite its inadequacies, simply refers to African churches which emphasize the “role of the Holy Spirit in the life and mission of the church; particularly with ecstatic phenomena like prophecy, speaking-in-tongues and healing”. My definition and use of the term “African Pentecostal” is therefore intentionally a narrow one. In my narrow definition of “African Pentecostal,” I refer to those “African Pentecostal churches” which share sound historical and theological foundations with the mainline Protestant churches; but that broke away from the mainline Protestant churches. This term, specifically speaks of African Pentecostal churches that have a more definite Pentecostal identity in terms of history, theology and liturgy - African movements initiated by Africans.

Therefore, “African Pentecostalism” is the form of Christianity which can be called, to use Anderson Allan’s term, the “African Reformation” (Anderson, 2000). I would add to this that African Pentecostal churches were not only “reforming” the mainline churches, but also “restoring” that which was lacking in mainline Protestant churches.

### **5.4. The impact of African Pentecostalism on the mainline Reformed Church.**

While it is true that Pentecostalism has been present in Zambia for many years, its greatest impact was felt from the 1980’s. The mainline churches like the Anglican, Lutheran and

Roman Catholic churches are still in existence; but the fact remains that many of these mainline churches, in particular the Reformed Church in Zambia, have been transformed (impacted) by Pentecostalism. At first, the African Pentecostals were looked upon with disdain and disrespect. They were a laughing stock without a strong theological background. The mainline churches took them for granted and never wanted to have anything to do with them. But today the mainline churches are accommodating themselves to the African Pentecostal way in order to avoid the loss of members to the African Pentecostal churches. According to Richard Shaull and Waldo Ceasar (2000:85), “The arrival of Pentecostalism provoked in a certain way a return to the spirit of controversy in relation to the Protestant as well as the Catholic church, producing new manifestations of antagonism and similitude between Pentecostalism and other Christian churches”. Gifford (1999:329) says that “countless thousands are leaving the mainline Christianity to join the Pentecostal churches because mainline Christians do not take seriously divine and demonic interventions and do not seriously expect to replicate New Testament miracles today”.

These mainline churches could not afford to continue losing their members due to the fact that they were not able to provide for them the needed remedy for their problems. So, they had to accommodate Pentecostal practices in order for them to maintain their membership. Johnson Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu (2005:30) calls this the “Pentecostalisation” of mainline churches.

#### **5.4.1. The Pentecostalization of the Reformed Church.**

The renewal which has been happening in Zambian Christianity has been so infectious that even churches standing in historic continuity with western mission and their rationalistic, systematic and credal forms of Christianity have undergone a renewal which has changed their faith and style of worship. These renewal developments have led not only to the “Pentecostalization of the mainline churches”, but also, to the impasse resulting in schisms. According to Gifford (1998:232). “most famously, in 1993, a part of the United Church of



Zambia Youth Wing broke away on dispute over Pentecostal practices, to become Grace Ministries Mission. Then eight years later, in 2001, another split happened over Pentecostal practices; this time in the Reformed Church of Zambia, to become Bible Gospel Church in Africa.

#### **5.4.1.1. The Renewal movements in the church.**

The need for renewal movements in the church is for the purposes of reshaping worship, and revitalizing the mission of the church. The Zambian churches, especially the Reformed Church in Zambia have been undergoing change, reshaping as a result of renewals. In his book, *Signs of the Spirit*, Howard Snyder (1989) helpfully traces God's renewing work, focusing on four movements that illuminate what he describes as "the reshaping of the church: Montanism, the church's first charismatic movement; German Pietism under Johann Arndt's leadership; Moravianism: Count Zinzendorf and the Hermut Community; and Methodism and the cell-based structure initiated by John Wesley".

Except for the Roman Catholic and Anglican versions where the expression "charismatic" is retained, renewal movements in Zambian mainline churches are called "Prayer Groups". Their purpose is to renew churches through restoring effective and fervent prayers, the study of God's word and openness to the manifestations of the Spirit of God.

According to Johnson Kwabena Asamoah – Gyadu (2005: 32,33), "Revival, like renewal, presupposes articulating a response to flagging zeal and spirituality. It also aims at the reformation of what religious innovators may consider an inadequate ecclesiological belief system in order to make it conform to biblical Christianity as they understand it. Such reformation however, tends to put a lot more emphasis on the Holy Spirit. To speak of 'renewal' therefore, is to speak of a response to that which has become static, staid, institutionalized, legalistic, bureaucratized, formalized, reutilized or moribund in the religious and spiritual life of the individual and of the church. Renewal is thus a response to

the church's perceived loss of life and vitality leading to a stultification of her growth and mission." He continues that "in many countries across the world, the Pentecostal movement appeared as a protest movement against 'dry denominationalism' seeking to reverse perceived trends towards 'carnality' in the churches" (2005: 33).

#### **5.4.1.1.1. Renewal prayer groups.**

Renewal prayer groups are established for the purposes of reshaping the faith and life of the mainline churches. The main task of renewal groups is to achieve and provide close, caring, weekly fellowship among the members, and to edify and strengthen the Christians in their "walk with the Lord" (Colossians 1:10). According to Roberts Wuthnow (1994: 347), the "small group movement makes sense only against the backdrop of this emphasis on individual responsibility in matters of faith. It presupposes that members are concerned about developing their spirituality." Spirituality in this context therefore refers to the way in which renewal groups express or live out their faith. This is so because the norm of these groups is to encourage the individual spirituality. And according to Johnson Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu (2005:243 – 244), "Authentic renewal must also place as much importance on practical action against injustice, poverty, oppression, unemployment and economic deprivation as it does on the personal experience leading to new life in Christ and spiritual empowerment."

#### **5.4.1.1.2. Renewal Bible study groups.**

The impact of Pentecostalism on the Reformed Church in Zambia began to be felt through small groups like Bible Study groups. In these Bible study groups, members began to experience new life in Christ which resulted in "spiritual growth and empowerment". This Bible study group fellowship meets weekly for the purpose of studying passages from the Bible, biblical themes, and or inspirational books based on the Bible. The study is what

makes the group distinct, and what gives it a reason to exist. It is also something that the members take seriously. They make God's word come alive in the stories they tell about their everyday lives. What makes this group distinctive is the following three components:

- Bible study
- fellowship
- prayer

The abovementioned three are synthesized to help each individual member to develop a personal relationship with Jesus, which is the group's primary goal. Therefore, small-group methods in the form of Bible studies, and other expressions hold promise to bring "renewal" in the church. Calvin Guy (1979:127) contends that "In the small, caring communities where Christians listen to the Word, share...uphold one another in prayer, and witness...faith will flow as in the first century."

#### **5.4.1.1.3. Renewal youth fellowship groups.**

The primary purpose of the youth fellowship group, like any other group, is to have fellowship together through studying the Word, prayer and sharing testimonies in order to build up one another in faith. This is a place where youths also discover and develop their identity and gifts. The youth fellowship group is one of the renewal movements in the church due to the youth being exposed to Scripture unions at their various schools, attending the crusades, and attending organized youth camps where teaching on the Holy Spirit, prayer, new life in Jesus, etc. are taught by born-again pastors. As a result of these exposures, youth groups experience a new spiritual vitality. A feature of church renewal of this kind is a very significant increase in youth ministry in terms of evangelism. In this way, many young people, when they are 'born again' spend more time in prayer, Bible study, fasting and fellowship. It is essential therefore to offer young people pastoral care and a biblical grounding in their spiritual experiences and growth; so that they are trained how to, for example, evangelize in the streets, schools, etc. and how to engage in unrehearsed person





to person evangelism by personal testimony. This training takes place in these youth fellowship groups and youth camps.

## **5.5. Renewal in worship causes conflict: focusing on praise, prayer and preaching.**

### **5.5.1. The ministry of praise.**

The Gospel according to Dr Luke frames the history of the foundation of the church between fundamental events which were sustained by adoration and praise: A cosmic company of the heavenly host greeted the new-born child at Bethlehem and saluted the Saviour who brought good news and great joy for all the people (Luke 2:10–13). Furthermore, in concluding his narrative of the birth of the church, Dr Luke in the very last sentence of his Gospel makes this very important statement: “And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God” (Luke 24:54).

And ever since, songs, hymns and prayerful powerful worship have borne witness to the greatness of God’s salvation, bringing the praise to reverberate to the ends of the world. Praise is therefore seen as the appropriate response to what God has done for us. It comes from the joy of received blessings. Which means that praise is rooted in something beyond our own potential, beyond our emotions and sentiments.

The joy and gladness of the Lord’s salvation generates spontaneous praise and thanksgiving among the people of God. The Psalmist says, “It is fitting for the upright to praise him” (Ps. 33:1). Praise is a sacrificial offering by the congregation to God (Heb 13:15). In the Old Testament, God is seen as being “enthroned on the praises of Israel” (Ps. 22:3). And, praise for the Hebrews involved noise-making and raucous shouting (Ps. 27:6; 32:11; 33:3), singing and playing musical instruments (Ps.66:2; 71:22; 100:2), hand-clapping and dancing (Exod. 15:20; Ps 149:3; 150:4).

Commenting on this aspect of spontaneous praise, C.S. Lewis (1958:94-95) says the following:

“I had not noticed either that just as men *spontaneously praise* whatever they value, so they spontaneously urge us to join them in praising it. The Psalmists in telling everyone



to praise God are doing what all men do when they speak of what they care about. I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation.” (Italics mine)

Ultimately, the primary purpose of congregational spontaneous worship is to permit the expression of “full giftedness” for the believers as priests in the church. As Robert E. Webber (1982:127-128) succinctly and passionately pleads, “If worship is a meeting between God and his people, then return worship to the people.” In his book, *Let the church be the Church* (1928:120), Aarflot Andreas says that “Christian praise both individually and collectively in the hymns of the church thus constitutes a confirmation of the fact that the Christian Community takes God seriously and gives homage to Him.” He further states that “in this way a singing church may become a missionary church.”

### **5.5.2. The ministry of prayer.**

Prayer, according to Richard J.Foster (1988:30), “is communication or fellowship with God, and many are persuaded it is the most lofty work of the human Spirit.” Prayer expresses the broadest spectrum of response to God, this includes praise (1 Sam.2:1), thanksgiving (Dan. 6:10), loving adoration (Ps.116:1), devotion issuing in a prayer (1 Sam. 1:11), communion (Ps.42:8), confession (Dan.9:4, 20; 1 John 1: 5-10) petition and/or supplication (Eph.6:18-19), and intercession (Num.21:7; Rom. 8: 26-27). But above all, prayer, according to Walter L.Leifeld (1986:931) is worship, and “the ultimate object of prayer in both the Old and New Testaments is not merely the good of the petitioner but the honour of God’s name.”

Prayer is private as well as spontaneous in order to express the trust in and the devotion for God. Verbal or non-verbal, prayer reveals the intense personal bond between God and his people. Prayer, therefore, is a result of the relationship with God: Firstly, prayer is rooted in the knowledge that God is the mighty creator and merciful redeemer ( Neh. 1: 4-11; Isaiah 63: 15-16). Secondly, prayer is rooted in the knowledge that God is holy ( Ps. 25: 4-7;

Isaiah 6:3; 1 Peter 1 :15-16; Rev. 4:8-9). And finally, Prayer is associated with sacrifice in the Old and New Testaments (Genesis 13:4; 26: 25; 1 Peter 2:5). In his book, *Themes in Old Testaments* (1979:167), William Dyrness states that, “in the Old Testament, private and communal prayers are always complementary.” On the question of private and communal being complementary, Walther Eichrodt (1967:175) notes the following: “There is no need for real and living piety to take refuge in private prayer, but real adoration and lively religious feeling lend force even to public worship.”

This is what the prophet Isaiah (Isa. 56:6-7) foresaw when he prophesied that the Lord’s temple would be a “house of prayer for all nations”. Therefore, a powerful house of prayer is a church that has discovered the value of prayer. Like the Apostle Paul who knew the value of prayer to such an extent that he commanded the believers in Thessalonica in his letter (1Thess. 5:17) to “pray without ceasing.”

Therefore, prayer is, according to Orlando E.Costas (1979:34) “the means by which we express our dependence on the Holy Spirit, seeking his guidance, and submit to his will. Thus through submission and intense supplication we may claim the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit and thus we may anticipate...being motivated for witness.”

### **5.5.3. The Ministry of preaching.**

The primary purpose of preaching is to communicate the word of God with the “demonstration of the Holy Spirit and of the power” (1Cor. 2:3-5), so that the word penetrates the mind with full power. The business of a preacher is, therefore, to communicate the word of God in such a way that the word is clearly understood by the listeners. This, combined with personal conviction and authenticity, makes the message acceptable. The Apostle Peter demonstrated this in the Book of Acts chapter two. The force and persuasiveness of his preaching and the strong conviction in what he was saying

under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, led to the winning of three thousand souls in a day (Acts 2:14-41).

The ministry of preaching is one area that must be strengthened in churches if souls are to be won for Christ. Many preachers today are using preaching as a form of entertainment. The audience, it must be remembered, is not in the church to be entertained, but rather to be edified and inspired through the word of God. In his book, *The Integrity of Mission* (1979:33), Orlando E. Costas says that ‘The Word of God, rightly proclaimed and taught, awakens the evangelistic conscience of the church. It reminds believers that evangelism is not a ‘take it or leave it’ affair but a *must* in the life of every Christian.’ He further asserts that “it is neither a ‘franchise’ nor the sole responsibility of the ordained ministry. Rather, evangelism is the responsibility of the *laos*, that whole people of God.”

“A sermon,” according to Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1965:20) “is relevant only when God is there. He is the one who makes its message concrete.” Jean-Jacques Von Allmen (1962:31) agrees with Dietrich Bonhoeffer by declaring that “without the work of the Holy Spirit, the word which God has spoken to the world in his Son can not be effectively translated or made present.” And this is the reason for the preacher-teacher to be a prayerful person. In his book, *Preaching and Preachers* (1971:9), D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones says that “the work of preaching is the highest and the most glorious calling to which anyone can ever be called.” He further asserts that “the most urgent need in the Christian church today is true preaching.” In his preface to Volume One of *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* (1966: vii) D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones writes this:

“A sermon is not an essay and is not meant, primarily, for publication, but to be heard and to *have an immediate impact upon the listeners*. This implies, of necessity, that it will have certain characteristics which are not found and are not desirable in written studies. To prune it of these, if it should be subsequently published, seems to me to be quite wrong, for it then ceases to be a sermon and becomes something quite nondescript.

I have a suspicion that what accounts for the death of preaching at the present time is the

fact that the majority of printed books of sermons have clearly been prepared for a reading rather than a listening public. Their flavor and form are literary rather than sermonic.” (Italics mine).

In concluding this section, there is need to mention that the impact of Pentecostalism on the Reformed Church in Zambia, was through profound spiritual renewal. The core of this renewal was the transformation of the “Reformed worship” towards the Pentecostal style of worship. This Pentecostal spiritual renewal impacted upon the “Reformed worship” to such an extent that during worship services, people began to praise and dance, mass prayers were done and people began responding to preaching in the form of “Amens” and “Alleluias”.

The “Pentecostalization” of the Reformed worship services has not only brought “freedom in worship”, but also bitter opposition to this “freedom” which is considered as “disorder” (*chisokonezo*, a Chewa word meaning, ‘confusion’) from the Reformed Perspective. As a result, this spiritual renewal movement (*Dziwani*, 1995:15) in the Reformed Church in Zambia which ‘Pentecostalized’ some of the congregations, brought tension, conflicts and breakaways.

## **5.6. Schismatic churches/ministries from the Reformed Church in Zambia: Focusing on the historical developments leading to the birth of GOMI and BIGOCA.**

### **5.6.1. Introduction.**

Historically, recorded and unforgettable events have brought changes or imprints which have shaken the very foundations of the established churches. Such events did not just occur spontaneously, abrupt or accidentally, but had been there, latent and boiling for a long time, waiting for an opportune time to erupt like a volcano. One such event was what is today called the Reformation, initiated by a Roman Catholic monk by the name of Martin Luther, who in 1517, courageously and putting his trust in God and his Word nailed “the Ninety-

five Theses” on the Church door in Wittenburg, Germany (Harold J. Grimm, 1954: 109-112).

Another event of this kind is what is globally known as Pentecostalism, initiated by an African American, the son of former slaves, by the name of William Joseph Seymour. He was reared in a Catholic home. In 1906, after many years in prayer, and teaching his followers “the baptism in the Spirit”, he became the initiator of the revival that came at the Azusa Street Mission (Cecil M. Robeck, Jr, 2006:4-8). Harvey Cox (1995:46-47) describes William Seymour and his small band of followers as “praying that God would renew and purify a Christianity they believed was crippled by empty rituals, dried-up creeds, and the sin of racial bigotry.” He further says that “when the fire finally did fall” at Azusa Street, “a spiritual fire roared forth that was to race around the world and touch hundreds of millions of people with its warmth and power.” Like the Reformation, Pentecostalism has become a global movement impacting and bringing change but also facing fierce opposition in many established mainline churches, causing tensions, conflicts and breakaways.

### **5.6.2. Grace Outreach Missions International (GOMI).**

The Reverend Samuel Nathan Phiri (interviewed, July 2008) was a minister of the Word and the sacrament in the Reformed Church in Zambia for many years, and until 1992, when he became “born-again” and started to conduct crusades (under the name “Jesus the Same Ministries”) within the Reformed Church. The Reverend Samuel Nathan Phiri’s life and ministry were transformed through his own first-born son, Paul Phiri. Pastor Paul Phiri (interviewed, July 2008), before going for pastoral training, was an instrument God used to touch and change the Reverend Samuel Nathan Phiri through the word of witness and prayers.

When Reverend Samuel Nathan Phiri began living the life as a ‘born-again’ Christian, he faced opposition from within the church. This opposition grew to such a point that he was summoned by the Synodical disciplinary committee to be disciplined for “confessing his sin

publicly”. This unfair disciplinary action by the church caused him to resign from the Reformed Church as a pastor. Historically, the Reverend Samuel Nathan Phiri, ministered in the Reformed Church for many years (from 1981 to 1991) without having a personal relationship with Jesus as Lord and Saviour. However, several historical circumstances and spiritual developments gave birth to GOMI under the Bishop Samuel Nathan Phiri as the founder: The developments were as follows:

- The Reverend Samuel Nathan Phiri’s radical and unsophisticated message of new birth and holiness, was viewed with disdain by church leaders who eventually stopped supporting him financially;
- His teachings on being “born-again and being filled with the Holy Spirit” with the evidence of speaking in tongues brought bitter opposition and ridicule from the church leaders;
- His revival campaigns or crusades within the Reformed Church in Zambia – it was his desire and effort to bring renewal and make the church more relevant to the needs of the daily people’s life - did not receive much-needed support;
- His gift of healing and deliverance was not appreciated, in spite of the growing demand by some people who needed healing and deliverance from demonic spirits;
- The Reverend Samuel Nathan Phiri’s preaching always ended with an invitation to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour – which is known as the “altar call.” This again was contrary to Reformed preaching practice;
- The Church which reared him and trained him at Justo Mwale Theological College, and sponsored him to go to the United Kingdom for further studies and later appointed him to be the Director at Madzimoyo Lay Training Centre; now turned its back on him – for becoming a “born-again” pastor.

- The Synodical Central Committee (Bungwe la Sinodi la pakati) wrote a letter to summon him to appear before it to answer charges in order to be disciplined for “confessing his sins publicly”.

When the Reverend Samuel Nathan Phiri was summoned to appear before the Synodical Central Committee to be disciplined for accepting Jesus Christ after confessing his sins publicly; he decided not to go to the disciplinary committee, but to “go out” of the Reformed Church. So, he resigned as a Reformed Church Reverend.

After his resignation, he joined Grace Mission Ministry International (G.M.M.I), a church which broke away from the United Church of Zambia in August 1993 (Shaw, 1996: 284). As a pastor, the reverend Samuel Nathan Phiri served and ministered in this ministry (G.M.M.I) for seven years. He resigned from Grace Mission Ministry International in 2001, after attending Amsterdam 2000, a Billy Graham Evangelistic Conference in Holland. In August 2001 he finally launched his own ministry under the name of Grace Outreach Missions International, with its headquarters in Chipata, Zambia.

### **5.6.3. The Bible Gospel Church in Africa (BIGOCA).**

Much of the information regarding the historical circumstances and spiritual developments which led to the birth of BIGOCA comes from the Reverend Moses Odinga Kanyenda, who has written a book entitled *History of Bible Gospel Church in Africa: The First Five Years of Its Existence, 2001-2006* (Interviewed, March 2009; Kanyenda, 2008: *BIGOCA: The first five Years*). Kanyenda was one of the longest-serving General Secretaries of the Reformed Church in Zambia. He was elected as General Secretary in August, 1987 and he was in this position until the day he was excommunicated for being one of the advocates of Pentecostalism, on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2001. For over thirty years, the Reverend Kanyenda served as a Minister in the Reformed Church of Zambia.

Since history has a way of repeating itself regardless of how long it may take, the same was true of the birth of BIGOCA from the Reformed Church in Zambia (R.C.Z.). The R.C.Z. is



one of the mainline Churches in Zambia, and was founded by Dutch missionaries from South Africa who came to Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) in July 1899 (Gerdien Verstraelen – Gilhuis, 1982:41). According to Kanyenda (2008:4), prior to the actual birth of the Bible Gospel Church in Africa, “there were a number of unsubstantiated accusations and counter accusations as to who was behind the wind of Pentecostalism that was blowing in and among some congregations.” In such an environment, Kanyenda said that, “it became so easy to suspect some pastors (Abusa) as being behind the Pentecostal move”. This atmosphere became the source of influence on the decision of the August 2000 Synod of the Reformed Church in Zambia (Kanyenda, 2008: 4). But it seems as though these accusations started as early as 1996. In 1996, the official Reformed Church in Zambia magazine (*Dziwani*) quoted the Reverend Peter Phiri saying:

“Some pastors were saying that some of their fellow pastors, must be kicked out of the church because their preaching was disregarding the church tradition. These pastors are...preaching Jesus Christ, organizing over-nights, intercessory prayers and other types of prayers as the Scripture teaches, gifts of the Holy Spirit, revival meetings, shouts of hallelujah and Amen” (Dziwani, 1996:13).

However, the Reverend Cephas Mbewe (*Dziwani*, 1996:18-19), responded to the Reverend Peter Phiri and wrote that from the Synod resolution, “he learnt that there is a great need for the definition of our reformed tradition... Pentecostalism in the Reformed Church in Zambia is a reaction to cold, stereotype, robot-like methodologies”. And he concluded by saying that “it is the beginning or continuation of defining our so-called Reformed tradition.”

#### **5.6.3.1. The August 2000 Synod of the R.C.Z.**

Prior to this synod, a number of secret meetings were organised by some Lusaka Presbytery elders who were against Pentecostalism (Kanyenda, 2008:4). Elders meeting in these secret meetings made sure that “the decisions passed at the meetings were implemented to the letter”. Before the August 2000 Synod meeting, some of the pastors suspected to be

“Pentecostals” experienced nasty times in their congregations, especially those in Lusaka, such as Garden, George and Chawama. In some cases, the elders told the pastors not to preach or pastors found that elders had locked the church main entrance with a message on the door: “No worship service today” (Kanyenda, 2008:5).

The main fear of the elders and others, argues Kanyenda, was not that “Pentecostal practices were bad per se because not many people in the church really understood what such practices were and why there were practiced; but, *they were protecting the long-standing and idolized Reformed tradition and identity which they were afraid was definitely going to crumble down if left unchecked*” (2008:5) (Italics mine).

The delegates at the August 2000 Synod were divided, according to Kanyenda (2008:5) “on the mode of worship even before the issue was tabled.” And, according to the Synod committee report (SC 2000/70, pg 46.), “after a lengthy debate on the issue of Pentecostalism, Synod resolved the following:

- A committee comprising for and against Pentecostalism be appointed to look into this issue thoroughly and come up with a balanced thought;
- The committee should advise the church whether to have one liturgy or more;
- The appointed committee should report their recommendations to Synod for approval or rejection.”

After the Synod, as the dust gradually settled down, the Moderamen went for a quick retreat at Ibis Gardens, which is situated along Great North Road, on 11 September 2000. But the same “divisive spirit” experienced at the August Synod meeting again manifested itself at this retreat - this time, concerning a controversial pastoral letter, addressing the issue of Pentecostalism arising from the Synod meeting, and which was already in circulation in congregations. This letter had an insertion which divided the Moderamen. The division was on this issue:

*“ to have an Ad hoc committee was not a Synod decision, but rather an insertion into the minutes by the Moderator and the General Secretary”* (Kanyenda, 2008:7) (Italics mine).



Therefore, from the retreat, Kanyenda asserts that “it was becoming every day clear that soon and very soon people would be reading the writing on the Reformed Church in Zambia wall for an inevitable split.” The split, argues Kanyenda, “ was openly caused by the division of the moderamen; the Moderator and the General Secretary on the one hand and the Vice Moderator, the two Synod Secretaries and the Actuarius on the other” (2008:7-8). These developments as displayed by top leadership brought “division” and “stagnation” in the Reformed Church in Zambia. According to Kanyenda (2008:14) “on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2001, the other four members of the Moderamen met at Justo Mwale Theological College and resolved to suspend the Moderator and the General Secretary, on the following charges:

- For bringing ‘disunity in the church’,
- For having ‘abrogated the Constitution’.

#### **5.6.3.2. R.C.Z. elders’ secret fellowship on 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2000.**

The secret meetings or fellowships held by elders resolved to draw up a manifesto which they decided to implement systematically. So far the following have been implemented:

- A court injunction against the General Secretary was taken out;
- One case against the ten Lusaka-based ministers was filed at the High Court, although it was unfortunately thrown out by the High Court as baseless;
- Meetings of elders were convened, disguised as Bible studies;
- In congregations overnight prayers and praise teams were banned’ (Kanyenda, 2008:13).

#### **5.6.3.3. The Madzimoyo Extra-ordinary Synod 2 to 4 March, 2001.**

This was the extra-ordinary meeting of the Synod of the Reformed Church in Zambia that birthed the **Bible Gospel Church in Africa (BIGOCA)** after taking certain decisions against “the nine ministers whom it labelled as ‘trouble-makers’ or perhaps as

‘confusionists’ and originators of the problems the church was going through” (Kanyenda, 2008:18). The problems were identified as “Pentecostal practices.” At this meeting, on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, it was announced to the delegates who packed the Madzimoyo church to capacity that “they are presently ministers who are trying to:

- Change the liturgy of the church, thus the way and mode of worship;
- That Pentecostalism is being advocated in the church, which is against the Reformed tradition and identity;

So this meeting has been called in order to find a lasting solution to this ‘development’ which has so far affected the general life and unity of the church.” (Kanyenda, 2008:18).

After this announcement, immediately “the names of ministers suspected to have fuelled ‘the confusion and disunity’ in the church were called out, one by one, and a charge was laid against each one of the nine. Charges ranged from accusations of being a “Pente” (a short form for Pentecostals) to the abrogation of the constitution through to the insubordination to authority.” (2008:18).

It must be remembered, that before this extra-ordinary meeting took place, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January, 2001 the *Times of Zambia* newspaper carried an article on its first page saying:

“Two factions of the Reformed Church in Zambia (R.C.Z)’s Garden township church in Lusaka exchanged blows and whipped each other using sticks and other missiles on New Year’s Eve”.

The writer wrote that “the clash was as a culmination of a long standing wrangle which has rocked the congregation since 1998”. The writer added that, “The elders, most of whom have been ex-communicated, are demanding the immediate removal of the Reverend Cephas Mbewe whom they accused of introducing the Pentecostal system of worshipping. And the elder, by the name of Mwenda, said, his group was against the Pentecostal mass praying and baptism by way of immersing the whole body in the pool of water which Reverend Mbewe had introduced.” (*Times of Zambia*, 2 January 2001, p.1.).

Kanyenda (2008:19) said that “so as each name and the charge against that name were read out, the meeting was asked by the chairperson for its opinion in the local language, ‘Sinodi atani?’ (meaning what does the Synod say?). And the response was, ‘Adulidwe!’ (meaning excommunicate them). The Synod further concluded that those suspected pastors who failed to attend the extra-ordinary meeting were actually excommunicated.” According to Kanyenda, the nine ministers who were excommunicated are as follows:

- The Reverend Peter R. Ndhlovu – Moderator of R.C.Z (Now Bishop of BIGOCA)
- The Reverend Cephas M. Mbewe.
- The Reverend Elias E. Phiri.
- The Reverend Joram A. Munyunki.
- The Reverend Jefferson D. Nkhata.
- The Reverend Isaac C. Mwale.
- The Reverend Stephen D. Lungu. (deceased)
- The Reverend Abel M. Siwamezi. (deceased)
- The Reverend Moses O. Kanyenda - General Secretary R.C.Z (now a retired administrator of (BIGOCA).

#### **5.6.3.4. The birth of the Bible Gospel Church in Africa.**

Knowing about the decision that the highest body in the Reformed Church in Zambia had taken and that it was practically impossible to lodge an appeal against the decision, the above-mentioned excommunicated ministers decided there and then to proceed “to work on the document required by the office of the Registrar of Societies to register their ‘New Church’.” (Kanyenda, 2008:21).

The “New Church” was registered as *New Reformed Bible Church in Africa* but the Registrars’ office could not proceed with the registration with the name “Reformed”. Therefore, they registered the “New Church” under the name: *Bible Gospel Church in*

*Africa* and it was launched and commissioned on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2001 at the Chinese Restaurant Hall, in Lusaka, Zambia' (Kanyenda, 2008:22-23) (Italics mine).

### **5.7. Assessing the response from the Reformed Church on the impact of African Pentecostalism.**

The response to Pentecostalism within the established Reformed Church in Zambia should have been very cautious. Instead they banned and excommunicated pastors and others, because they were doing things differently from the norms or tradition of the Reformed practice. The Reformed Church's attitude and response to Pentecostalism can be understood when one reads *the Reformed Church in Zambia Theological and Current Affairs Committee Report and Recommendations*. According to the *Report (2000)*, the Synodical Central Committee met on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of November, 1999 "to request the Theological and Current Affairs Committee to study 'these so-called Pentecostal or charismatic trends' and advise the church accordingly."

In my assessment of this *Report (2000)*, I will focus on the impressions and observations of members of the Theological and Current Affairs and their recommendations. The report reveals that the committee "visited a selected *sample* of congregations in Lusaka." On 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2000, Chilenge, Chelston, Northmead and Matero were visited; and on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2000, Garden, Chisomo, Mtendere, Kamwala, Sinai, Kanyama and Kafue Estates.

After a committee (comprising of ten members, of whom five were doctors in theology) visited the abovementioned "sampled" congregations, the following observations were made of what was taking place in some of the congregations visited:

- "Unstructured; normal order not followed; important elements, like the law, creed, are omitted;
- Total control by the lay people;

- Theatrics, singing with clapping of hands, dancing, whistling and ululating leading to mass prayers dominating the service;
- “Praise Team” is treated with favour and given extra-ordinary power and the team leader manipulating the congregation;
- Uncritical imitation in decorating of the liturgical space, distracting the Word which is slowly and systematically being suppressed;
- Strange insertions into the liturgy (e.g. Hymn 158 with a prayer in tongues or the leader abruptly kneels and some congregants imitate);
- Services were highly emotionally charged with some people crying and rolling. There is a strong emphasis on, and manipulation of emotions.
- In the service, some walk about, others shouted repeatedly, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus or in the name of Jesus, in the name of Jesus or Alleluia, Alleluia, etc. Others clinched their fist, while others were clapping, others scratching walls, others crawling around, others acted as though they did not approve of what was going on;
- Worship service was characterized by pathologies of prayer that carry the notion that human effort in prayer causes God to do things. The more and louder the people pray the more the results;
- A completely different order of service, which depended on songs with strong emotional appeal, had been imported and implemented.” (Report, 2000:1-2).

According to the report, there were some congregants whose views were in favour of Pentecostalism. They said that “Pentecostalism is good because there is power in it.” While others said, “This way of worship is more appealing since there is full participation of members and it is not pastor-centered.” But some congregants whose views were critical of Pentecostalism said that “Reformed liturgy has been shelved completely. Preaching comes very late when some people are switched off and the leaders are not time conscious.” (2000:2). So, after many deliberations by the committee, on Pentecostal developments and

on tradition and Reformed identity, the following recommendations were issued based on Reformed theological considerations:

1. ‘The *importance* of the liturgical service as *expression of Reformed identity and theology* be emphasized and honoured by all ministers and members;
2. The *importance of careful planning, thorough preparation and responsible conducting* of the whole liturgical service and all constituting elements be accepted by all ministers;
3. The *standard official liturgical order* of the Reformed Church in Zambia be honoured and followed in every Sunday service and that no liturgical element be omitted or marginalized;
4. The *church calendar* be carefully *followed* throughout the year as celebration of the salvific events of the Christian faith and as expression of unity with God’s people world-wide;
5. The role of the *minister as primary liturgical leader* and the *supervision* of the service by the *church council (resting and serving elders)* be emphasized. The Kalata A and B Report to Presbytery must include reference to this;
6. The role of *non-ordained people* as liturgical leaders be carefully considered by Synod and the access of *preachers from non-Reformed churches* to pulpits be subjected for approval in writing by an official meeting of ruling and resting elders;
7. The following *practices* in the liturgical services be *strictly forbidden* with immediate effect as they are not expressive of Reformed spirituality and its underlying theology:
  - Whistling,
  - Rumba dancing,
  - Mass prayers (one member of the committee objected against this recommendation),
  - Wall scratching and beating,





- Theatrical bodily movements, crawling, rolling on the ground, stamping of feet, shivering, misbehaving in preaching,
  - Prolonged singing of one sentence from a hymn or chorus.
8. A word of caution be raised against excessive use of the following practices in the liturgical service:
- Altar call,
  - Testimonies,
  - Saying of meaningless Amen's, alleluia's, yes, and unnecessary comments,
  - Dancing and clapping of hands,
  - Electrical musical instruments,
  - Playing of music during prayers.
9. The role of the so-called *praise teams* and their *leaders* be curbed in proportion to the actual service of the Word which is the focus of the Reformed worship and be *limited* to a maximum time of thirty minutes. The leader of the praise team is not allowed to say the votum.
10. A stern word of *caution* and *appeal* be issued to *ministers* who have become self-styled "Pentecostals" and agents of disturbing liturgical innovations to:
- Recognize the paradigmatic theological shifts underlying their practices;
  - Recognize the disruptive effect of their practices on the unity of the Reformed Church in Zambia;
  - Display integrity and either (i) adhere and submit to the official Reformed Church in Zambia liturgical policy, or (ii) join a church with a theological tradition congruent with their liturgical practices.
11. All *ministers* in the Reformed Church in Zambia be *required* to witness to their wholehearted acceptance of the Reformed confessional identity and official liturgical tradition and practice by *signing* a document to this effect at the 2000 August Synod meeting.



12. The *Theological and Current Affairs Committee* to (i) guide pastorally and theologically those ministers who have presented genuine objections in writing to recommendation 11 and (ii) make a clear and firm *recommendation* to the Synod Central Committee meeting of November 2000 regarding progress and possible disciplinary measures.
13. The *education* of ministers and congregants in (i) the theology of worship, (ii) the principles of Reformed liturgy and (iii) the theology and practice of the church calendar be emphasized as of utmost importance and be *assigned* as a joint venture to Justo Mwale Theological College and MCLTC.
14. *No liturgical innovation* be allowed without express Synodical approval. All liturgical renewal must be preceded by (i) in depth research, (ii) theological substantiation and (iii) official Synodical approval.

From the impressions and recommendations, one would assess that the Reformed Church in Zambia took a hostile stand towards ‘Pentecostalism.’ The *Report* does not mention that the Committee made any efforts to call a reconciling meeting for the purpose of meeting the so-called self-styled “Pentecostals” in order to try and resolve doctrinal issues which brought disunity in the church. And all fourteen recommendations reveal that there was/is no room for compromise or negotiations; it is either “they” adhere and submit to the official Reformed Church in Zambia liturgical policy, or “they” join a church with a theological tradition congruent with their liturgical practices (see recommendation 10 above). I believe that these recommendations became a recipe for the breakaway that took place from the Reformed Church in Zambia in March, 2001. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2001 the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ), at Madzimoyo in the Eastern Province of Zambia, took the drastic decision that has changed the history of RCZ - the decision to excommunicate nine ministers, self-styled “Pentecostals” for the “disruptive effect of their practices on the unity of the Reformed Church in Zambia.” (see recommendation 10 above). These ministers, whose intentions were not to leave the church, were forced to leave.

At the launch of the Bible Church in Africa, the Reverend Peter Ndhlovu (former Moderator of the Reformed Church) now Bishop of the new church explained the reason for the excommunication by the RCZ saying that

“We are happy that we are excommunicated from the RCZ *not because we sinned, but because we stood for the truth*. We shall not hate members of the RCZ because they are our brothers and sisters. We shall continue to pray for them” (Kanyenda, 2008: 22-23) (Italics mine).

This indeed constitutes a sad chapter in the history of the church in Zambia. It remains an open question if the issue could not have been settled in another fashion, if the leaders from the two sides had reached out to one another in a spirit of understanding and reconciliation. More closely listening to God, both churches may have discovered new things that God, through his Spirit, wanted to teach his Church in Zambia. That the BIGOCA has lessons to learn from the situation, is evident. But the Reformed Church in Zambia is also challenged to respond to the “Pentecostalisation” of the church, with an understanding of the “flow of the Spirit.” The nature and causation of renewal movements require a balanced and relevant theological examination.

### **5.8. Entering into a dialogue with African Pentecostalism in Zambia.**

Entering into dialogue between African Pentecostalism and Protestantism will have ecumenical significance and obvious and far-reaching results. The kingdom of God as the ultimate criterion for spirituality and justice, the evidence of the in-breaking of God’s will over all of God’s creation, is the entry point for Protestants and Pentecostals in their search for common ecumenical foundation of mission and social concern. Entering into this dialogue with the African Pentecostal churches will demand equal commitment and openness from both sides.

In order to have a fruitful dialogue, Pentecostals need to come out of their isolationist cocoon and participate actively: but the Protestants as well. need to emerge from their

protectionist cocoon. As dialogue progresses, love recognizes unities of spiritual experience. In his book, *The Go-Between God*, Taylor (1972:186-7) says that “dialogue must probe beyond the glad discovery of similarities to the more painful recognition of differences that are mutually exclusive.” He adds that “the deeper the appreciation of the other faith the greater the knowledge of what these disagreements really are... let no one belittle those disagreements.” He argues that “...to stop at the disagreements is to lose faith in the Spirit’s gift of communion and communication. To move on from the stage of disagreement to that of a more profound mutual understanding is the most important step in a dialogue and the most important act in Evangelism.”

Ecumenically, it is highly significant that - with all of their differences in doctrine, ecclesiastical structure and spiritual traditions, often faced with mutual suspicion and conflict especially on the “mission field”, with charges of proselytism abounding - participants will find it mutually healthy to enter into dialogue in order to find a common theological ground for the sake of the kingdom of God.

The following are missiological issues which the Pentecostal churches bring to the table for dialogue with the mainline Protestant Churches in Zambia. I believe that if Protestants enter into dialogue with openness, willing to listen and understand, to seek also the wellbeing of others, talks will succeed.

### **5.8.1. Spirit possession: an African reality.**

Spirit possession is not a phenomenon just confined to the Chewa people of the Eastern Province of Zambia, but it encompasses the whole of Africa. Many researchers have written of spirit possession among the Africans, for example, Bourdillion (1987), Gelfand. M. (1965), John Mbiti (1969) and others. Mbiti presents some descriptions of rituals performed by a spirit medium in chapter fifteen of his book, *African Religion and Philosophy* (1969). Gelfand (1965) explains the role played by the spirits in general.

Bourdillon's (1987) anthropological observations of the positive social functions of spirit possession among the Shona people in Zimbabwe, is cited by Bucher (1980:94), who reports that "the possession provides the Shona with an opportunity to express, under the protection of the dissociated trance state, inclinations which they would not normally be allowed to manifest in public." This aspect of spirit possession is in sharp contrast to Ter Haar's (1992: 117) definition of spirit possession:

"Western possession beliefs generally consider spirit possession to be involuntary, a harmful experience which should be avoided if possible. In common speech, this negative attitude is reflected in a way people refer to someone as being "possessed" meaning in a hysterical state, acting as though mad, and in general having taken leave of one's senses."

This is a negative Western understanding of possession which does not portray any of the liberation elements of African spirit possession. However, there are notable theological perspectives on possession which have relevance to the African experience. Hastings, who is quoted by Pauw (1988:25), acknowledges the reality of the African metaphysical world of "unexplained illness and misfortune, of spirit possession and fears of bewitchment..."

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the phenomenon of spirit possession which is positively acknowledged as possessing power in African traditional religion, is widely regarded as victimisation by evil spirits in many Christian circles. I agree with Pauw (1988:29) who describes possession as "the complete taking over of the whole person by demonic forces." Pauw also quotes Oosthuizen as acknowledging the reality of demon possession and yet warning against demonising every misfortune (1988:36). Pauw (1988:38) furthermore acknowledges the reality of demonic powers which manifest in amphibious ways and appear as ancestors in some cultures, but he still contends that lessons can be drawn from spirit possession for Africans in search of God.

Possession by lion spirits, for example, signifies possession of power by the host, which is not just an abstract entity. The use of power bestowed on a medium is accepted by the Chewa community. This acceptance is demonstrated by rituals and ceremonies performed on the initial possession and subsequently. The spirit mediums act out aspects of the spirits while responsibility for their actions is laid on the spirits (Bourdillon, 1991:328). Thus, the medium, ng'anga, enjoys a prestigious position in society. As host of a powerful lion spirit, or even a lesser spirit for that matter, the ng'anga is connected with the metaphysical world. This factor lifts the ng'anga from most, if not all, social, cultural, or human limitations. Hence, the possessing spirit has some significant impact on the host's social life, especially considering Oosthuizen's (1968:136) observation that:

*“In the traditional African world everything is controlled by the spiritual world which determines and awards weal or woe, abundance or want, illness or health, continuing life or death.”* (Italics mine)

Thus, the Chewa cosmology of spirit possession (as discussed in chapter two) has brought to light the fact that ng'angas have been pivotal and central in African traditional religious beliefs and communities. It can therefore be argued and concluded that spirit possession provides a model of African empowerment.

The similarity between traditional prophecy and Christian prophecy as dealt with in this thesis, has led some scholars to conclude that the African Pentecostals are copying traditional devices under the guise of Christianity. However, a look at the nature of possession, the choice of hosts, the mood of possession, the gifts from the spirits and the limitations of possession may help to distinguish a traditional medium, ng'anga, from a Christian prophet or healer.

It is my contention that churches in Africa, like the African Pentecostal churches, can draw from the liberative model of African empowerment in traditional religion. The prominent



position of ng'angas in traditional religion can be used as a model for the inculturation of Christianity in Africa.

According to Oduyoye (1986:69) “Acculturation [is] used to refer to the efforts of Africans to use things African in their practice of Christianity, *inculturation as the manifestation of changes that have come into the African way of life as a result of the Christian faith.*” (Italics mine). Acculturation led to the realisation and recognition of the positive dynamic thrust inherent in African independent churches (Pauw, 1995:13). Young argues that “Without acculturation, Christian theology is not African; without inculturation, African theology is not Christian.” (Quoted in Cohn-Sherbok, 1992:98).

The emerging African Pentecostal Churches’ spirituality in this study may indeed be described, in the words of the IAMS Report (1985:76), “...as valid and genuine expressions of religious initiative and creativity with a missionary thrust in their own right.” (Quoted in Pauw, 1995:14). Their missionary initiatives are described by Pauw (1995:14-15) as follows:

“...a case of a positive response to, on the one hand, the total life situation within which people find themselves, as well as, on the other hand, a response to the Gospel and to Christianity as experienced and reinterpreted in their our context...as a people’s response to the Christian message as understood, interpreted and applied by people in their own particular context of change and as expressed in terms of felt needs, threats and challenges.”

It becomes, therefore, inevitable for serious African theologians to take the phenomenon of spirit possession as a resourceful departing point in the formulation of an African Pentecostal theology of spirituality. The Protestant church in Africa, too, in its search for that which is liberating, should wrestle with the question: “**How does the church address the traditional Africa spirit world?**” Working out the relationship between the ancestral spirits and the Holy Spirit has become a major theological problem in churches in Africa today as has been discussed in this thesis.

## **5.8.2. African Pentecostal Churches and the Holy Spirit.**

Spirituality may be understood as the power or energy by which one lives and which links one's worldview to one's style of life, according to Oduyoye (quoted in King, 1994: 363).

The missionary work of the African Pentecostal churches illustrates how, through the Holy Spirit, they have transcended the theological deficiency which Western Christianity presents to African Spirituality.

Although African Pentecostal churches emerged from mainline Protestant churches, they trace their Pentecostal influence to Pentecostalism in Europe and the United States of America. The whole Pentecostal movement has its roots in the Holiness Movement which separated from Methodism in the United States of America at the end of the nineteenth century, according to Dicharry (1983: 91-92). Central to African Pentecostal churches is the Holy Spirit and his accompanying gifts.

The gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit manifest in the power to perform miracles. Attention in this thesis focuses on the African Pentecostal churches' possession by the Holy Spirit. These African Pentecostals are taken beyond their limitations into the spiritual realm of power ready for what Pauw (1988: 28) calls "power encounter."

The African Pentecostal churches understand themselves as vehicles through which the Holy Spirit works. They are instruments of the Holy Spirit who enables them to do extraordinary work for God. These are the African Churches liberated from the constraints imposed upon Africans by andocentric Christian and African traditions. Their mission to the masses who look up to African Pentecostal churches for deliverance from sickness, barrenness, anxiety, chronic poverty, misfortune and harassment by evil spirit places them in a "limelight" category. They have ascended the social, religious and, to some extent economic ladders as instruments of the Holy Spirit. The African Pentecostal Churches depend totally on God for the empowering Spirit who requires "a life of vigorous fasting,





prayer and rejection of the world” (Elizabeth Amoah. 1986). Hence, possession by the Holy Spirit provides the African Pentecostal churches with a quick exit out of cultural, religious or socio-economic prisons of exclusion and marginalisation in which the other churches denying the ministry of the Holy Spirit are trapped.

The need to pay attention to pneumatology arises from an understanding by African Pentecostal churches, of the Holy Spirit as a comforter and source of power for the down-trodden African. This has significance to Africans in the African Pentecostal churches of this study because of the cosmological and anthropological boundaries they are helped to transcend through possession by the Holy Spirit. Hence, the need to outline the nature and work of the Holy Spirit in the Bible and, to evaluate how this has been appropriated within the African context.

### **5.8.3. Some Aspects of the biblical teaching of the work of the Holy Spirit.**

In his book, *The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament*, Wood (1976:14) reminds us that “The Holy Spirit is the Third Person in the Godhead: God the Father is the first; God the Son is the second; and God the Holy Spirit is third. Although these three Persons are equal in power and honour, they are different. Their difference has been illustrated by the events surrounding Christ’s baptism. While God the Father spoke in heaven when God the Son, Jesus Christ was baptised in the Jordan river by John the Baptist; God the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus ‘like a dove’ (Mathew 3:16). Luke, the author of Acts and the Gospel of Luke, quotes Peter who uses the name of God for the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3,4). And Paul in 1 Corinthians 3:16, says that a Christian is called “the temple of God” because the “Spirit of God” dwells in him/her. The Holy Spirit has divine attributes such as omnipotence (Romans 15:19), omniscience [1 Corinthians 2:10,11] and omnipresence (1 Corinthians 2:10, 11) and omnipresence (Psalms 139:7-10).

Wood further argues that, the Holy Spirit is not just a force or power, but a Person who is intelligent (John 14:26; 15:26); emotional (Isaiah 63:10; Ephesians 4:30) and has a will (Acts 16:7; 1 Corinthians 12:11). He is portrayed as the “comforter” (John 14:16, 26). He



teaches (Luke 12:12), convicts (John 16:8), speaks (Acts 2:4), commands [Acts 8:29], helps (Romans 8:11), intercedes (Romans 8:26), performs miracles [Romans 15: 19], searches (1 Corinthians 2:10, 11) and inspires (2 Peter 1: 21). The Holy Spirit also effects other divine works like creation (Genesis 1:2), regeneration of the sinner (John 3: 5, 6) and the resurrection of the saints (Romans 8:11) (Wood, 1976: 15-16).

### **5.8.3.1. The work of the Holy Spirit in the Bible.**

While the ministry of God the Father is that of serving as supreme planner, author and designer; and the Son's is that of serving as supreme creator and giving revelation of the Godhead; the ministry of the Holy Spirit is that of bringing to final form that which has been brought into being by the Son at the Father's command (Wood, 1976:16). In Genesis 1:2-31, we see the Holy Spirit present and active in the creation of the universe.

The Holy Spirit, according to Wood (1976:35) "also brought humanity into existence. Thus, the plural pronoun in Genesis 1:26, 27 "Let us make in our own image, after our likeness" is regarded as referring to the Trinity of God. "The Holy Spirit imparts new life in a person through regeneration. This begins with Christ's incarnation." And Wood (1976: 16, 35) argues that "it was the Spirit who prepared the body of Christ in the womb of Mary (Luke 1:35) and directed and empowered Him in his activities (Matthew 4:1; 12:48; Luke 2: 27; 4: 14, 18). "The Holy Spirit, Wood further argues, "also forms and empowers the church (1 Corinthians 3:16; 12:4-11; Ephesians 2:22). He teaches and guides Christians (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13, 14; Acts 5:32)."

In conclusion, the centrality of the God the Holy Spirit is well emphasised by Davies (1995:187), who argues that "Christology grew out of pneumatology." Davies adds that "the Christian movement arose from the Pentecost event." The African Pentecostal churches in this study understand their ministries to be pneumatologically founded and empowered. It is, therefore, the Holy Spirit who shapes their spirituality through healing, prophecy,

teaching preaching and praying. Hence, a general evaluation of pneumatology in Africa will shed more light on our understanding.

### **5.8.3.2. Pneumatology in an African Context.**

Pneumatology occupies a central place in many African Pentecostal churches primarily due to the rather holistic African worldview (Anderson, 1993: 109). According to Anderson (1991:38), "Pneumatology in Africa is enacted at least as much as it is articulated; the enacting of pneumatology is seen in the various and multiplied manifestations of the Holy Spirit." Anderson asserts that the African needs "divine involvement" because "as the spirit pervades all things according to the African worldview, the Holy Spirit is understood as a pervading Spirit." (1991:8). When received, the Holy Spirit is manifested by various extraordinary abilities such as to heal, prophesy, exorcise, speak in tongues, teach and preach. Hence, the centrality of pneumatology in African Pentecostal Churches is in continuance with African cosmology.

While Sundkler (1961:244) claims that "in African Independent Churches, the Spirit is recognised as a power which is independent of most of the Orthodox signs of Christian behaviour", Daneel (1988:19) argues contrarily. He asserts that "the Holy Spirit is not a manipulatable force as is the case in African traditional religion. God takes the initiative during inspiration or revelation by the Holy Spirit.' And according to James N. Amanze, "the Holy Spirit is understood in many African Independent churches as the power of God in the churches for the edification of the church." (1998:117).

Oosthuizen is, however, concerned that in the African Independent churches the Holy Spirit is misunderstood and is confused with the ancestral spirits. He notes that the 'Umoya' theology, or the theology of the Holy Spirit, is a fundamental concept in practically all indigenous and Pentecostal movements in Africa, and he is concerned that there is frequently in these movements a lack of relationship between the Word and the Spirit. When

this happens, free rein is given to all sorts of odd ideas and the unique biblical concept of the Holy Spirit is lost.

Oosthuizen insists that checks and balances must be employed when claims are made of the work of the Spirit. He suggests that anything which does not have biblical support is of dubious character and he furthermore insists that unless a clear distinction is made in the Independent churches between the Holy Spirit and the ancestors then syncretism has occurred to such a degree that these churches can no longer appropriately be called Christian (1968:119-138). Martin (1964:161) agrees with Oosthuizen by concluding that “there is little difference between the Holy Spirit and ancestral spirits in African Independent churches which, therefore, have a false pneumatology.”

Daneel, on the other hand, whose research has proved that there is no affiliation between the Holy Spirit and ancestral spirits, but a discontinuity, argues as follows:

“This orientation to the traditional worldview could create the impression that the prophet’s motive is to preserve the old mentality. That this is not the case is evident from the fact that the spirit is branded a demon and its claims on the patient - especially if these involve ancestor worship - are rejected and the spirit is exorcised. Here the Holy Spirit and the ancestral spirit are usually diametrically opposed and it is a matter of confrontation rather than identification...We are dealing with a Christian spirit-inspired confrontation that reaches into the traditional worldview at a far more existential level than was possible for the historic churches with their Western theological norms and doctrinal purity” (1987: 261-262).

These words remind us that missionaries often have tried to look into the African worldview through Western-hued spectacles. The images appear to be distorted; and so what is not understood is relegated to a mysterious African traditional spirit world that is considered “demonic”. Mbiti (1969:3) observes that “Christianity will fail to be meaningful in an African context unless it fully occupies the whole person at least as much as traditional religions do: The whole environment and the whole time must be occupied by religious

meaning, so that at any moment and at any place, a person feels secure enough to act in a meaningful and religious consciousness.” Anderson (1991:79) agrees with Mbiti by warning the church that “A Christianity which fails to speak into this existential spirit world of Africa, and which fails to provide solutions to the problems inherent there, does so at its peril.”

It can therefore be concluded that African experiences of the Holy Spirit should not be dismissed as resurgences of traditional religion. They should be interpreted in the light of biblical revelation, the African spirit world and charismatic spirit experiences all over the world (Anderson, 1991:99). Therefore, if there is a greater concern with the Holy Spirit in African Pentecostal churches than there is in mainline Protestant churches this does not necessarily mean a distortion of Christianity. The African cultural and religious background partly explains this interest and, again, it may be a question of assisting the African Pentecostal churches to put pneumatology into an overall theological perspective.

#### **5.8.4. Some aspects of the Christian ministry of healing, exorcism, and prophecy.**

Religion and culture remain a major source for a relevant understanding of Christian life and faith in an African context, as Verstraelen argues:

“While the Bible, the Scriptures, remains the sole source for Christians, African traditional remains the basic source for Christian faith and life, there are other sources such as African anthropology and African traditional culture and religiosity, which indeed cannot establish the Christian faith, but can open vistas for an appropriate understanding of the biblical message in an African setting” (1998:97).

According to Verstraelen (1998:83) the relevance of the Bible “is facilitated by the realisation of important elements of African religious heritage like dreams, the reality of witchcraft and spirits present in the Bible.” Mbiti (1977:35) concludes on the same note that: “The Bible is close to African people because of the many items in common between their cultural life and the cultural life of the Jewish people as contained in the Bible.” However, Mbiti (1977:39) asserts that “while culture and the Gospel may work as allies, it

is the responsibility of the Gospel to knock down the cultural idols and chains which may otherwise detain man from reaching the promised land of his faith in Christ.” He argues that “the Christian is a cultural pilgrim and not a settler, moving even with his cultural luggage towards the eschatological goal of the Gospel.” (1977:39).

Parratt, in his book, *Reinventing Christianity* (1995:27), argues (against those who would say that Black Africa’s theology is largely cultural) that ‘Theology throughout Africa finds its common ground in three basic elements - in the Bible and Christian tradition, in African culture and religion, and in the contemporary sociopolitical situation.’ He continues that “If we alter...and consider the three elements as five, we see that only one is of marked significance in much of African Christianity today, and that is the Bible, treated in a very non-critical way.” Therefore, it becomes necessary to reflect briefly on the biblical portrayal of the Christian ministries of healing, exorcism and prophecy which the African Pentecostal churches in this thesis have laboured to appropriate.

#### **5.8.4.1. A biblical basis for healing.**

In an analysis of the witness of the Hebrew Scriptures, Brown (1995:19) describes “God as the divine Healer of Israel.” And, according to Kee (1986:12) “Healing is portrayed as a central image for depicting God’s work in creation.” God, in Exodus 15:25-26, identified himself as “Yahweh your healer,” mainly because of his great love and compassion for his people.

There is a strong connection between sin and sickness running through the Old Testament with just a few exceptional cases. These unique cases include the raising of the widow’s son in Zarephath (1 Kings 17:17-24); the raising of the Shunammite’s son (2 Kings 4:8-36) the healing of Naaman (2 Kings 5) and the healing of King Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:1-11). All these cases involved the prophets Elijah, Elisha and Isaiah. And all these cases show God’s willingness and power to intervene in human affairs in answer to prophetic supplication and faith (Brown, 1995: 106).

While there may be points of discontinuity between Old Testament healing and New Testament healing, such as the rare association of Satan and demons with sickness in the

Old Testament as opposed to the New Testament, the whole Ministry of Jesus Christ is marked by healing and deliverance. This is evidenced by the many references in the synoptic gospels (example, Mark 1:32-34; 3:10-11; John 5:1-9; 9:1-7). And Acts 10:38 describes how Jesus Christ went about “doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil.”

Jesus’ Ministry of healing was extended to people oppressed by demons which caused physical disabilities like blindness and deafness (Matthew 12:22); curvature of the spine (Luke 13:10-12) and fever (Luke 4: 38-39). Hence, his ministry of healing and exorcism are inseparable. The link between human suffering and disabilities with Satan and his cohorts is apparent.

According to Brown (1995: 216), healing and deliverance in Jesus’ ministry, “were not an end in themselves, but a means to an end which was to announce the in breaking of the reign of God.” Brown (1995:219) further asserts that, “it was by the Spirit that Jesus preached, healed, and delivered.” And writing about the connection between, healing and the Holy Spirit in Jesus’ ministry, Davies (1995:77) argues that “He presented himself as possessed by the Spirit of God and in that persona forgave sins and otherwise encouraged his clientele to believe that God had acted to cure them.”

It can, therefore, be concluded that Jesus could heal people because he presented himself as the manifestation of God on earth. Arguing for an understanding of healing as proclamation of the Gospel, Brown (1995: 244) questions the inconsistency in Christians’ aggressive fight against malignant killers such as cancer, heart disease, and HIV-AIDS, using all medical means available while at the same time adopting a spiritual stance of acquiescence to these health destroying conditions. While it may be true that some modern proponents of divine healing have often sensationalised and commercialised the ministry of healing of the sick, the opponents of divine healing have generally thrown out the baby with the bath water. As Brown (1995: 244-5) argues:

*“In their zeal to correct the excesses and abuses of the faith healing movements, they too have misread the Scriptures, denying the reality and promise of an unbroken continuum of divine healing power.” (Italics mine)*

The truth, however, is that healing is demonstrating the Kingdom of God here on earth. We today as disciples of Christ are commissioned to heal the sick as part of proclaiming the kingdom of God. According to the Gospel of Luke, the healings of Christ are preceded by his proclamation. “When the crowds learned it, they followed him and he welcomed them, and spoke to them of the kingdom of God and cured those who had need of healing” (Luke 9:11). As a manifestation of the kingdom of God, Christ’s healing shows that in the kingdom we are freed from the oppressive reign of sin, Satan and suffering, and come under the liberating, healing reign of God. Therefore, if we are labourers seeking to extend God’s kingdom; if we are to be truly vehicles of the kingdom in deeds as well as words, then healing is to be part of the church.

#### **5.8.4.2. A biblical basis for exorcism.**

Twelftree (1993: 137), in his survey of the sayings and narrative material in the synoptic Gospels, concludes that exorcism was a part of Jesus’ ministry.

Jesus’ ministry of exorcism is extended to the Gaderene demoniac (Mark 5: 1-20), to the Syrophenician woman’s daughter (Mark 7:24-30) and, to the epileptic boy (Mark 9:14-29).

It is, therefore, not surprising that Jesus’ exorcism ministry led many people to conclude that he was possessed by an evil spirit and inspired by Satan (Mark 3:22), hence the Beelzebub controversy.

According to Smith (1978:221), “the opponents of Jesus capitalised on basic similarities between Jesus’ miracles, especially exorcism cures, predictions, and those of common magicians.” Differences between Christ and the magicians, however, were multiple.

Jesus as an exorcist employed various techniques. He could heal from a distance (Mark 7:24-30; Matthew 8:5-13). His approach to evil spirits was confrontational. Jesus evoked a disturbance in the demoniac, hence the man screamed out (Mark 1:23). The demon threw



the boy into convulsion and “he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth” (Mark 9:20).

The Gadarene demoniac ran, fell on his knees in front of Jesus and shouted out when he saw Jesus (Mark 5:6-7). One of Jesus’ techniques included his words of power. According to McCasland (1951:112), “Jesus cast out demons by his personal command, not by means of any kind of formulae, incantations, ritual or magical objects.” Some of his words of power are found in the Gospel according to Mark (Mark 1:25; 5:8; 9:25; 5:9; 9:25).

It can be concluded, therefore, that although exorcism was not the only aspect of Jesus’ ministry, it was of paramount importance. Twelftree (1993:228) argues that “...he believed the first stage in the defeat of Satan and his kingdom was taking place in order that the kingdom of God could come.”

Hence his commission to the disciples to exorcise and heal (Matthew 10:1; Mark 6:7; Luke 9:1; 10:17-20). This, however, has indeed generated considerable discussion on exorcism in the church.

#### **5.8.4.3. A biblical basis for prophecy.**

In his book, *Beyond the Curse*, Spencer (1985:103) reminds us that a prophet is

“...someone who receives and speaks forth a message from God. A prophet can both foretell as did Agabus (Acts 11:27-28; 21:10-11) and forth-tell in the manner of Silas and Judas (Acts 15:32). According to 1 Corinthians 14, a prophet speaks to people during worship for their upbuilding, encouragement and consolation (v.3). In contrast to people who speak in an angelic language, prophets use their minds. Prophets convict the outside and instruct the Christian (vv. 15-19). Everyone preaches (Kerusso) the good news, but only some are prophets. The prophet functioned in the service as does a contemporary preacher.”

The phenomenon of prophecy in Israel was enormously diverse in its manifestations. Thus, many non-prophetic figures are described in a way which attributes prophetic function to them. Abraham, for example, is called a prophet (Genesis 20:7). Childs (1993:109)

describes a prophet as “one raised up by God and given God’s word directly as it was with Moses at Mount-Horeb.” Hence, a prophet is described as mediator by Brueggemann (1997:622) who argues that “Prophecy as a mode of mediation begins in the inexplicable appearance of individual persons who claim to speak Yahweh’s revelatory word.”

Brueggemann further explains that, “there are hints that these several individuals are recipients of odd, psychic experiences, being visited by the ‘supernatural’ in odd ways such as dream, vision and trance.” For this reason, Barton (1986:261) describes them as “non-establishment figures who will not be silenced.” They speak about possible futures and new possibilities in desperate situations. In conclusion, Brueggemann argues that:

“It is not surprising, then, that the high claims of the prophet to be an authentic mediator of Yahweh are not always accepted, but are often dismissed or challenged by those who resist the utterance and who wish to remain undisturbed within certain beneficial construes of reality...”

The validity of both the prophet and the prophetic word is still questioned to date. However, it should be noted that the ability to distinguish or judge spirits is one of the gifts of the Spirit to the church (1 John 4:1-6; 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21). Therefore, the same Spirit who gives the gift of prophecy, also generously gives the much needed gift of discernment. Wagner (1979: 102) describes discernment of spirit as: “The special ability God gives to some members of the body of Christ which enables them to know with assurance whether certain behaviour purported to be of God is in the reality divine”.

### **5.9. Continuity and adaptation of some cultural religious expressions.**

The reason African Pentecostalism is appealing to Africans, and has succeeded in attracting people where and when traditional Protestantism has not, is its ability to continue and adapt some cultural religious forms of expression of the local popular culture. In his book, *Pauline Methods of Missionary work*, Taylor, W (1994:174) argues that “the goal of Pauline Mission is independent churches that are self-supporting. entrusted with their own

governance, and committed to an evangelistic style that enables them *to grow according to their own cultural patterns*” (Italics mine). And, according to Cox (1995:259) “The great strength of the Pentecostal impulse is its power to combine, its aptitude for adopting the language, the music, the cultural artefacts, the religious tropes...of the setting in which it lives.”

The style of “freedom in the Spirit” that characterizes African Pentecostal liturgy has undoubtedly contributed to its appeal and is one of its effective mission methods. This spontaneous liturgy, which Hollenweger (1999:36) has identified “as mainly oral and narrative with an emphasis on a direct experience of God through his Spirit, resulting in the possibility of lifting ordinary people out of their mundane daily experiences into a new realm of ecstasy, aided by the emphases on speaking in tongues, loud and emotional simultaneous prayer, and joyful singing, clapping, raising hands and even dancing in the presence of God.”

The worship of African Pentecostal churches is truly African in its character, with local lyrics, music and instruments. These African Pentecostal churches have been accused of being syncretistic. But, it must be noted that they are in fact even more zealous than Protestant Churches in defending the ‘purity’ of the gospel, and the uniqueness of Christ. They have refused to compromise with traditional religions, and have destroyed fetishes and symbols of sorcery.

Missiology in its attempt to apply scientific principles to human cultures and languages has sometimes assumed that there is a pure message free of cultural constraints, and that when the purity of the gospel is affected in some way by cultural adaptations, the result is syncretism. This word is often used in a negative way to suggest that the gospel has somehow been corrupted by culture. But, as Sepulveda (1997:167) points out, “the concern for preserving the ‘purity’ of the Gospel has always been stronger than the desire to incarnate (or ‘inculturate’) the Gospel in a particular situation.” He argues that “we cannot

grasp any meaning without the help of our precious cultural categories, and so ‘purity’ is not given to us. Some sort of Syncretism is inevitable.” Sepulveda (1999:133-4) sees the ability of Pentecostalism to indigenize Christianity as a process of its incarnation in local cultures:

“The rediscovery of pneumatology by modern Pentecostalism has to do mainly with the spiritual freedom to ‘incarnate’ the gospel anew into the diverse cultures: to believe in the power of the Holy Spirit is to believe that God can and wants to speak to peoples today through cultural mediations – other than those of Western Christianity. Being Pentecostal would mean to affirm such spiritual freedom.”

Therefore, a sympathetic approach to local life and culture and the retention of certain indigenous practices are undoubtedly major reasons for their attraction, especially for those overwhelmed by urbanization with its transition from a personal rural society to an impersonal urban one. At the same time, indigenous Pentecostals confront old views by declaring what they are convinced is a more powerful protection against sorcery and a more effective healing from sickness than either the existing Protestant churches or the traditional rituals have offered.

In Africa, it must be remembered that most Africans operate from a background which is little affected by the Western Enlightenment; for most Africans, witchcraft, spirits and ancestors and spells are natural categories of interpretation. For Africans, according to Horton (1971:85-108), religion “is concerned with the explanation, prediction and control of space-time events.” Yet most African Christians who have an “enchanted” worldview are members of mainline mission churches which officially embrace a non-supernaturalistic theology affected by the Enlightenment.

My experience has taught me that there is real danger that Christianity, if not disentangled from this type of Western theology, will become largely irrelevant to most of the people in Africa. In Africa, people came to regard Western missionaries with their logical presentations of ‘theology’ as out of touch with the real, holistic world which they experienced. Their deepest felt needs were not addressed; their questions remained

unanswered. However, the African Pentecostal churches have gone a long way towards meeting the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of Africa, offering a solution to life's problems and a way to cope in a threatening and hostile world. They proclaim that the same God who saves the soul also heals the body. This God is interested in providing answers to the fears and insecurities inherent in the traditional worldview.

And Gifford (1998: 330) speaks of 'the tension between the two Christianities, one expressed in terms of a primal vision, and the other which is affected by the Enlightenment is highlighted by the experience of Zambia's Archbishop Milingo, who was forced to operate in Europe.' He argues that "in 1996 Milingo was banned from holding services in the Archdiocese of Milan, precisely because of fears that he might have encouraged a 'credulity which explains all psycho-physical ills as due to the influence of the devil, and leads people to expect exorcisms, healings and miracles'." He further argues that "...Cardinal Martini of Milan, one of the Catholic Church's foremost biblical scholars, was simply not prepared to have Milingo's Christianity promoted in his diocese." Gifford is of the opinion that "for some, especially those influenced by cultural relativism, an 'African' theology such as Milingo's is to be encouraged" (Gifford, 1998:330). And Cox expresses the view that "the flowering of primal spirituality is a sign of hope, because Western liberal Christianity has run into the sand." (Cox, 1995: 82-83).

#### **5.10. A comprehensive analysis of Grace Outreach Missions International, and Bible Gospel Church in Africa.**

Grace Outreach Missions International and the Bible Gospel Church in Africa in this thesis illustrate how African Pentecostal churches have ascended heights in religious, social and economic orders as Christian ministries, breaking many man-made barriers. The founders and leaders of African Pentecostal churches and movements in a way reflect the leadership

of Africans in African Pentecostal Christianity. These African Pentecostal churches offer an alternative solution to the existential realities in which African people live.

Bishop Samuel Nathan Phiri, the founder of Grace Outreach Missions International (GOMI), may be described as one of the pioneers among charismatic pastors with the gift of healing and deliverance after he became born-again in 1991 and before resigning from the Reformed Church in Zambia. He received no admiration, sympathy or support from the Reformed Church when he confessed to “having an extra-marital affair with another woman” (Interview with Bishop Samuel Phiri, August, 1994). His marginalization by the Reformed Church should be understood from the perspective of the colonial church structures of post-independence. When Reverend Samuel Nathan Phiri emerged as an African pastor full of charismatic leadership potential, his expulsion from the Reformed Church was inevitable. The Reverend Samuel Nathan Phiri was “the tip of an iceberg”, a fore-runner in the break away from the Reformed Church which became a reality in March, 2001, known as BIGOCA. The Bible Gospel Church in Africa was established in 2001, under the leadership of Bishop Peter Ndlovu, a Reformed Church pastor, but “born-again” and filled with the Holy Spirit.

The leadership of both BIGOCA and GOMI trace their denominational background to the same Reformed Church in Zambia. GOMI, like BIGOCA, believes in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, the power of prayer and laying on of hands when administering healing. Both GOMI and BIGOCA, believe that the free gift of healing and deliverance and witnessing are the primary methods for the recruiting of new members into their churches. They claim that they are Bible-centered, Christ-centered, and salvation-healing centered. And both have discontinued the baptism of infants. Immersion is the mode of baptism which has been adopted in these African Pentecostal churches. In conclusion, BIGOCA and GOMI have more things in common than differences. Thus, GOMI and

BIGOCA, represent an African Pentecostal spirituality which ushers in not only a new religion different from the African traditional religion, but also a new wave of Christian spirituality which differs from the Protestant Christianity as well as from the average African Independent Christianity.

Both BIGOCA and GOMI are totally convinced of the importance of the ministry of healing and deliverance as being more dynamic in terms of contextualization of Christianity in Africa. They understand how healing brings relief to affected people as a result of Christ-like care and compassion. People find their spirituality attractive in as far as it offers deliverance, healing, prosperity and protection. They also regard themselves as God's ambassadors responding to crises in their respective communities in Zambia.

### **5.11. A missiological evaluation of the African Pentecostal churches.**

In this thesis, we have seen that African Pentecostal missiology is grounded in its spirituality: a conviction that the Holy Spirit is the motivating power behind all mission activity. And, according to Grant McClung (1986:72) "The very heartbeat of Pentecostal Missions is their experience with the power and person of the Holy Spirit." Steven Land (1993:29-52) says that "Pentecostalism cannot and should not be simply identified with a rationalist or scholastic type of evangelicalism. The 'starting point' for Pentecostal theology, is in its distinctive spirituality: the Holy Spirit who is 'God with us'." According to him, the central Pentecostal concern is "to emphasize the lived reality of the faith, the life and service of the people of God who are organically constituted as the body of Christ by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit." He adds that at the heart of this spirituality is prayer: "the prayerful response of persons to God."

Land identifies the Wesleyan and African-American streams as "perhaps the most important spiritualities which formed the originators of Pentecostalism...and gave rise to this movement of participation in the Spirit." Walter Hollenweger (1972:505-506), who agrees with Land, says that "early Pentecostals overcame dogmatic differences by forging an



ecumenical bond whose basis was the presence of the living God, the reality of the Holy Spirit, which people looked forward to receiving in conversion, sanctification, the baptism of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit.” He pointed out that these Pentecostals had only “a single legitimate aim before the second coming of Jesus on the clouds of heaven: to sanctify and unite the children of God and to evangelize the world within a single generation.”

Therefore, in evaluating these African Pentecostal churches, I shall briefly focus on **three factors** which have contributed to the growth of these churches, since missiology is concerned with the process of church growth and mission. The three factors are signs and wonders, evangelism, and worship.

#### **5.11.1. Signs and wonders.**

Pentecostals believe that the coming of the Spirit brings the ability to perform “signs and wonders” in the name of Jesus Christ to accompany and authenticate the gospel message. The role of “signs and wonders”, particularly that of healing and miracles, is prominent in Pentecostal mission praxis and reflection. Pentecostals all over the world, but especially those in Africa, see the role of healing as good news for the poor and afflicted. The church life and worship of many African Pentecostal churches portray Christ as the powerful conqueror of sickness and affliction. McClung Grant (1986:74) points out that “divine healing is an ‘evangelistic door-opener’ for Pentecostals, asserting that ‘signs and wonders’ are the evangelistic means whereby the message of the Kingdom is actualized in ‘person-centered’ deliverance.”

According to Penney (1997:66) “signs and wonders in Acts perform the dual function of authenticating the word and of leading to faith in the word”. The Pentecostal understanding of the “full Gospel” is that the preaching of the Word in evangelism should be accompanied by these “signs and wonders”, and divine healing in particular is an indispensable part of



Pentecostal evangelistic methodology (Saayman, 1993:46). Indeed, in many cultures of the world, particularly in Africa, healing has been a major attraction for Pentecostalism.

From the Biblical perspective, power manifestation is not a historical monument to be fossilized in Church history. In both the Old and the New Testament, God's power and his presence are demonstrated through his deeds (signs and wonders). In his book, *All the Miracles of the Bible*, Herbert Lockyer (1974:48) says that the "the deliverance of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt was only made possible through a series of power encounters between God and the gods of Egypt. The ten plagues were a demonstration of God's (YHWH's) supremacy over the gods of Egypt." God had told Moses that He would do signs and wonders, which would compel Pharaoh to release his people (Exodus 6:1-13; 7:1-12). YHWH said that He "made Moses as God to Pharaoh" (Exodus 7:1). This was significant because the Pharaohs were regarded as god-rulers. Therefore, Moses was God's representative to Pharaoh as his equal. The magicians from Pharaoh's court initially tried to rival the signs performed by Moses, but their gods were impotent before God (YHWH). The exodus became a benchmark in Israel's history. From the very beginning of their journey from the land of slavery, YHWH's presence ("God with us") was with them as their guide. Signs and wonders as manifestation of God's presence, protection and provision in the form of the "pillar of cloud that guided them by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people" (Exodus 13:21-22), as Herbert Lockyer, puts it, these were a "miraculous, visible manifestation of YHWH's presence." (1974:60).

In the New Testament, Jesus' ministry is filled with signs and wonders. John, the writer of the Gospel of John, stated that if all the details of what Jesus did were written "even the world itself would not contain the books which would be written" (John 21:25). And Merrill Tenney, in his book, *John: The Gospel of Belief*, (1972:30) posits that the miracles which John recorded revealed the characteristics of Jesus' power and ministry. He says that "John recorded these signs so that his readers may believe and have life in his [Jesus'] name." He continues that "this may be John's purpose in writing his gospel account, but he was also

very aware that there were those who responded to the signs in belief and others who responded in unbelief.”(1974:312). See Merrill Tenney’s table below from *The Signs in John*, p.312.

Reference	Sign	Jesus’ Power Over	Belief	Unbelief
2:1-11	Water changed to wine	Quality	Disciples believed (2:11)	
4:46-54	The healing of the nobleman’s son	Space	Man believed word (4:50) Man and household believed (4:53)	
5:1-18	The healing of the man at the pool	Time	Belief implied by actions (5:9)	Reaction from the Jews
6:1-14	The feeding of the 5000	Quantity	Acknowledgement of Jesus as prophet (5:14)	Departing of many (6:66)
6:16-21	Walking on water	Nature	Willing to receive Him into the boat (6:21)	
9:1-41	The healing of the blind man	Misfortune	Progressive belief (9:11,17,33,38)	Reaction of Pharisees (9:16,24,29,40,41)
11:1-44	The raising of Lazarus	Death	Martha (11:27) Jews (11:45;12:11)	Plot of Pharisees to kill Jesus (11:53)



Ridderbos, who quotes Christian De Wet in his article, *Biblical Basis of Signs and Wonders*, says that “these signs and wonders were proofs that Satan’s power had been broken and that the Kingdom of God had come.” So, Christians need to realize that they have been given the authority by Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to do signs and wonders in Jesus’ name for the purpose of establishing God’s kingdom.

Therefore, from the missiological perspective, signs and wonders are needed for effective ministry in non-western cultures, especially in Africa. Charles Kraft [1989:3-6] writes about his own frustration as a missionary in Nigeria because his Christianity was powerless against the spiritual practices of the natives. Kraft has not been alone in his experience; many more have found themselves in the same predicament, like Peter Wagner. Wagner [1982:77] had a similar experience during his sixteen-year term in Bolivia. He recognized that the Evangelicals did not prepare their missionaries “to deal adequately with a culture where spirit powers were seen to be at work in every area of life, and where the clash between divine and satanic power often was felt.”

The non-western world has a concrete mindset. To these people, especially Africans, God has to be immanent. Their spirit world is very real and concrete. Hence, signs and wonders point to a powerful God who answers prayers. Before an African changes his/her allegiance from ancestral religion to Christianity, he/she has to be convinced that God is more powerful and will protect him/her from the spirits of the ancestral religion. The Bible presents such a God, and so do the African Pentecostal churches. This emphasis on healing is so much part of African Pentecostal evangelism, that large public campaigns and tent crusades preceded by great publicity are frequently used in order to reach as many “unevangelized” people as possible. Peter Wagner (1973) says that “probably the greatest contribution that Pentecostalism has made to Christianity in general is restoring the miracle power of the New Testament.”

### 5.11.2. Evangelism.

According to Grant McClung (1986:71), “Pentecostal mission theology has tended to be ‘theology on the move’, its character often having been more experiential than cognitive.” In some parts of the world, especially in Africa, Pentecostals are notorious for their aggressive forms of evangelism. In her book, *People Movements in the Punjab*, Stock (1975: 219) contends that God is definitely interested in numerical church growth. She argues that we are called not just to be faithful, but to win people. She says quantity as well as quality should be our goal in mission work. And from its inception, Pentecostalism was characterized by an emphasis on evangelistic outreach, and all Pentecostal missionary strategy places evangelism as its highest priority.

In order to understand Pentecostal Evangelistic strategy, the value Pentecostals attach to the Word and to the Spirit must be put in focus. The issue of biblical authority determines the Pentecostals’ understanding and approach to missions. They are the people of “The Book.” And while some may question their use of the “Book”, the Bible, Pentecostals are always seeking to be guided by the Scriptures as well as by the Holy Spirit in their evangelistic efforts. The Pentecostals’ favourite textbook for evangelistic strategy is the Book of Acts. From this textbook the Holy Spirit emerges as the Supreme Strategist in missions.

The role of evangelism, therefore, is crucial for Pentecostal mission theology. However, while the goal of evangelism should be pursued, Pentecostals should not lose sight of the biblical, holistic view of mission. Witness and service should both be involved in mission practice. According to Grant McClung (1986:75), “Pentecostals see aggressive evangelism in the pages of the New Testament and feel that they must respond accordingly.” Pomerville (1982:353) says that they “examine Paul’s strategy and observe him planting churches, training leaders, and trusting the Holy Spirit to equip and develop the church in its native setting. Therefore, it is this “biblical pragmatism” which characterizes Pentecostal missions strategy and leads Pentecostals to emphasize that which they find in Scripture in

their missions approach.” Grant McClung (1986:51) however points out that early Pentecostals had a “last days mission theology” as follows: “Premillennialism, dispensationalism, and the belief in the immanency of Christ’s return forged the evangelistic fervor of the movement in its infancy.” We can only guess at what incredible mistakes early Pentecostal missionaries must have made. As Saayman (1993:42) rightly observes, most Pentecostal movements “came into being as missionary institutions” and their mission work was “not the result of some clearly thought out theological decision, and so policy and methods were formed mostly in the crucible of missionary praxis.” But, it must be acknowledged that despite the seeming naiveté of many early missionaries, their evangelistic methods were flexible, pragmatic and astonishingly successful. Saayman (1993:51) says that “Pentecostal Churches were missionary by nature and the dichotomy between ‘church’ and ‘mission’ that for so long plagued other Christian churches did not exist.” This “central missiological thrust”, says Saayman, was clearly “a strong point in Pentecostalism and central to its existence.”

Pentecostals have tended to be very practical and literal in their missions strategy. Hollenweger (1999:190-1) says that Pentecostals are “efficient evangelists” because of “the power of their experience”. A classical example of evangelism as a dialogical process is the conversion of Cornelius, an example of one invited to evangelize with the evangelist, something that needed to be translated “into present-day evangelistic practice” (1999:190-1). Although we may regard some manifestations of Pentecostalism with amusement, disdain or even alarm, we dare not ignore this enormous factor in missiology.

### **5.11.3. Worship.**

Worship, according to Orlando E Costas, is the church’s reason for existing. In his book, *The Integrity of Mission*, Orlando argues that “there is no dichotomy between worship and mission.” Worship and mission, he further argues, “are not two dimensions of a single reality.” He disagrees with some who have gone as far as saying that “a centrifugal, going,

missionary church cannot be also a centripetal, coming, liturgical community.” He argues that “this is both a theological non-sense and a practical fallacy.” He asserts that “Liturgy without mission is like a river without a spring. Mission without worship is like a river without a sea. Both are necessary, without the other one, the other loses its vitality and meaning.” (Orlando, 1979:91). African Pentecostal worship has undoubtedly contributed to the appeal of the church and the attraction of many people into its fold. This is due to its spontaneous liturgy, which is mainly oral and narrative with an emphasis on a direct experience of God through his Spirit; and which has become one of its most effective mission methods.

The Swiss Reformed theologian Emil Brunner, in his book, *The Misunderstanding of the Church* (1952), maintains that “the original Christian community of the New Testament was a totally free, unorganized spiritual fellowship, where the Holy Spirit was calling forth spontaneous expressions of life and witness.” He points out that “something went wrong as they started to develop fixed offices and structures in the congregations. Out of the living congregation of Christ there emerged a church with ecclesiastical law as its foremost mark. The juridical framework of the church became the substitute for the original fullness of the Spirit.”

African Pentecostal styles of worship and spirituality have come to pervade mainstream Christianity. Harvey Cox (1995) in his book, *Fire from heaven: the rise of Pentecostal spirituality and the reshaping of religion in the twenty-first century* tells the Pentecostal story critically but respectfully. The movement succeeds in the post modern era, he asserts, “because it has spoken to the spiritual emptiness of our time by reaching beyond the levels of creed and ceremony to the core of human religiousness, into what might be called ‘primal spirituality’.” African Pentecostal styles of worship and liturgy are meeting the needs of the people more substantially than the often sterile mainstream Christianity from the West. African Pentecostal Worship provides what Turner (1979:19) calls “a salvaging or rescue function” in relation to the older churches, by “preventing dissatisfied members from

reverting to paganism by providing a recognizably Christian and easily available alternative spiritual home”.

Furthermore, this is available to everyone, and the involvement of the laity becomes the most important feature of Pentecostal worship, again contrasting with the dominant role played by the priest or minister in the mainline churches. Grant McClung (1986:73) says that “Pentecostal worship allows the participant to be involved in a personal and direct way with the manifestation of God among his people in the congregation.” Therefore, as Albrecht (1999) puts it, the “fundamental goal of the Pentecostal service” is “experiencing or encountering God.” (:149). For him, “this is the essence of Pentecostal/ charismatic spirituality” (:238). And Cox 1996:81-83) says that Pentecostalism is expanding because “it has spoken to the spiritual emptiness of our time by reaching beyond the levels of creed and ceremony into the core of human religiousness.” He adds that which “began as a despised and ridiculed sect is quickly becoming both the preferred religion of the urban poor and the powerful bearer of a radically alternative vision of what the human world might one day become.”

### **5.12. What is mission?**

There are many answers to this question. But, fundamentally, mission is not man’s action, but God’s. David Bosch writes that “mission is, primarily and ultimately the work of the Triune God...for the sake of the world...the church is privileged to participate. Mission has its origin in the heart of God. This is the deepest source of mission.” He adds, “There is mission because God loves people.” (1991:389-393). So, mission is bound up with the sole purpose of the Triune God towards the universe. And this purpose will only be realised when the universe, all in heaven and on earth, is brought into a unity in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:10). This mission is, according to John V Taylor (1966:11-26) “the announcement that something entirely new has come to pass. And for this reason, only the action of the Holy Spirit brings home to the individuals the new thing which Jesus Christ has accomplished for



the whole universe.” Therefore, the mission of the church is to carry out God’s purposes to every creature. As Gerald Anderson puts it, “the supreme aim of mission is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all peoples in all lands as their divine saviour, to persuade them to become his disciples and to gather these disciples into Christian churches; to enlist them in the building of the kingdom of God.” (1967:242).

In his book, *What is Mission?* Andrew Kirk gives the missionary definition of the church.

He says that:

“Mission is so much at the heart of the church’s life that rather than thinking of it as one aspect of its existence, it is better to think of it as defining its essence. 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, it has ceased being church. Thus, the church’s self-understanding and sense of identity (its ecclesiology) is inherently bound up with its call to share and live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth and the end of time” (1999:30).

Mission, therefore, consists of more elements than signs and wonders, evangelism and worship. It has to do with kerugyma, the preaching of the Word, koinonia, the planting of new churches and nurturing of the believers and diakonia, the caring for the needs of the people. An example is the Bible Church in Africa. Through its department called “Fathers Heart Africa” it strives to ensure that quality education and sustenance of good health are provided in the communities. It has given, despite challenges, special attention to meeting and addressing some of the basic needs of the underprivileged in our various communities across the country (Zambia, see appendix A, p.204) as part of its community social responsibility’ (Kanyenda, 2008:39-42; see appendix B, p. 205). Evidently these aspects, kerugyma, koinonia, and diakonia, are being implemented in African Pentecostal churches (see chapter 4 above).



### **5.13. Conclusion.**

“The church” according to Emil Brunner, “exists by mission as fire exists by burning.” (1931:108). And Snyder Howard (1989:291) says that “a church needing renewal is focused inward. A renewed church focuses outward to mission and service in the world.” He adds that “Genuine renewal will include missiological renewal.”

Great renewals have taken place in the past. But the age of renewal and revival by the Spirit of the living God is not over. According to 1Peter 2:5-9, the principle of priesthood of all believers provides a vital key to church renewal. All believers, according to Apostle Paul (in Ephesians 4:11, 12) are called, and should be equipped and empowered for ministry. Spiritual renewal movements, like Pentecostal/Charismatic renewals, will remain for a long time a serious threat to the mainline established churches, like the Reformed Church in Zambia, if the renewals are viewed from a negative point of view. Therefore, the essence of Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal is best understood not as bringing the church, as Mc Grath (1975:34) puts it “something she does not have, but to release what she already possesses, to deepen commitment to Christ, to widen expectation of how the Spirit comes to visibility in the Charisma within the life of the church.”

Therefore, in order to understand and fairly evaluate Pentecostalism, it must be done from the renewal point of view. Pentecostalism must be evaluated as a movement reacting to a neglected dimension of the Spirit’s ministry in mainline Christianity. This view will help mainline churches to assume a positive attitude towards Pentecostal/Charismatic movements and also to dispose of their Holy Spirit-phobic attitudes.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

### **6.1. Introduction.**

The dimension of the spirit in the West appears esoteric in nature when compared with the comprehension of that dimension in Africa. The African Pentecostal churches among the Chewa people in Zambia, as an example, illustrate that comprehension. These African Pentecostal churches also point out another element in evaluating the Christian validity of African movements in which they emerge.

The discovery of a Pentecostal expression of faith was not a resurrection of traditional religion; and not a bridge to syncretism. It was the discovery of an expression of Christianity which spoke to the needs of the African in his/her cultural context, and provided Christian means to deal with the spirit-world. The discovery of the supernatural or miracles has become an impetus for the African Pentecostal churches.

### **6.2. The research goals of this thesis have been reached.**

The main goal of this thesis - to explore the liberating elements in African Pentecostal spirituality and in the African traditional context - has been reached.. The similarities in both forms of spirituality prove the hypothesis concerning the liberative elements of African Pentecostal spirituality, to be correct.

This work has established how African Pentecostal spirituality is contributing to the contemporary mission theology. As renewal churches emphasizing “experience” and “power encounter” the African Pentecostal churches are addressing a basic theological issue which has been, for a long time, neglected by Protestant mission theology. This basic theological issue concerns the demise of the “experiential dimension” of the Christian faith,

due, to a great extent, to the influence of the “Enlightenment”. The hypothesis has been proved true: that the “pneumatological hiatus” (Pomerville,1982:v) which exists in Protestant mainline churches and which significantly affects missions, does not exist in African Pentecostal churches, which have shown phenomenal growth in Africa, and in Zambia in particular. This study has proved that African Pentecostal churches are providing a relevant theological orientation and perspective to contemporary mission issues that Protestant Mainline churches must not ignore.

### **6.3. Summary of chapters.**

This study investigates the spirituality of the emerging African Pentecostal churches in Zambia’s Christian and traditional religious contexts. In this study, spirituality is defined as “the abiding presence of God the Holy Spirit” (in Chewa, Mulungu Alinafe). The study seeks to explore the role and the work of God the Holy Spirit as He manifests in the life of the Christian person, and in the inner life and mission of the African Pentecostal Churches. The study examines the impact of African Pentecostalism in Zambia on the mainline churches, in particular the Reformed Church in Zambia, causing tensions, conflicts, and schisms; resulting in the formation of Grace Outreach Missions International (GOMI) and Bible Gospel Church in Africa (BIGOCA) (*Chapter 1*).

In order to understand the idea of “spirituality” as used in this study, the concepts of Christian and of Pentecostal spirituality are explored, focusing on a sanctified Christian life; and the Pentecostal understanding of Christian spirituality is distinctively highlighted. With reference to John Wesley, the Afro-American Pentecostalism which arose from Joseph William Seymour’s Asuza Street experience in 1906 and which was influenced by the Evangelical and Puritan traditions, is examined. The emphasis of their spirituality on the

Word, the Spirit, prayer and the practice of godliness is typical of the African Pentecostal churches' way of life and theology (*Chapter 2*).

Of equal importance to this study is an understanding of the traditional African religious beliefs, the Chewa cosmology in the Zambian society. This study explores the Chewa understanding of spirit possession, witchcraft, magic and sickness. The study also examines the methods and practices of the ng'angas [healers] and healing from the African traditional view-point. The Christian attitude and response to this African world-view is also examined; and the need to develop an African theology is mentioned (*Chapter 3*).

The depth of the spirituality of the African Pentecostal churches is examined in this study with the intention of exploring the role of God the Holy Spirit in the formation of the churches, and the manifestation of God the Holy Spirit in the life and mission of the church. The study explores patterns and reasons for the growth of these churches which include liturgical practices. And for the purpose of understanding the question of healing and its place in the mission of the church today, three case-studies of healing and deliverance, those of Mwatitha Mbewe(40), Grace Banda (35) and Mary Ndlovu (38), are cited and examined (*Chapter 4*).

A study of the African Pentecostal churches highlighted in this study reveals how African Pentecostalism has impacted on the mainline churches, in particular the Reformed Church in Zambia. Pentecostalism entered the mainline churches through renewal groups such as Bible studies, youth groups, prayer and other groups which resulted in the "Pentecostalisation" of the Reformed Church in Zambia. But, this renewal process brought with it tensions and conflicts which led to the formation of GOMI and BIGOCA. As a result of the impact of African Pentecostalism, this study encourages mainline churches, especially the Reformed Church in Zambia, to enter into dialogue with African Pentecostalism in Zambia in order to find a common theological ground for the sake of the mission of God. The question, "What is mission?" concludes this chapter (*Chapter 5*).

This study concludes after establishing that the African Pentecostal churches' missiology is grounded in its spirituality. Recommendations to the churches and, to the universities and colleges for the purposes of dialogue and for further research are included in the conclusion (*Chapter 6*).

#### **6.4. Recommendations:**

At the end of my research I would like to make the following recommendations for the attention of the churches as well as institutions of theological training:

- The mainline churches in Africa should renew their efforts to maintain a dialogue with the Pentecostal churches recognizing that they bring with them a diversity of spirituality, which may enrich the body of Christ worldwide.
- It is of the utmost importance that universities and seminaries, in developing their curricula, should take the African context seriously, and allow for the contribution that all traditions, also the Pentecostal churches, can offer
- . The Reformed Church in Zambia should be open to a dialogue that will bring about a healthy relationship between Pentecostal churches and themselves. Forums must be put in place for discussions for the sake of all the churches in Zambia.

#### **6.5. Conclusion.**

African Pentecostalism is at a cross-roads in Zambia. There is no doubt about the fact that it has “broken” many grounds. However, there is still much to be done, if it is to continue to be successful and fully take foothold. What has happened in Zambia among some of the mainline churches, in particular the Reformed Church in Zambia, is phenomenal, not just

because of the remarkable church growth, but because of the impact of Pentecostalisation which has brought the transformation of many mainline churches to the Pentecostal way of understanding spirituality.

The experiences of spiritual encounter, of visions, revelations, signs and wonders, and other manifestations of the Spirit's presence and power were the source and the impetus for the Pentecostal missiology in which the early Pentecostals were engaged; and African Pentecostal churches are engaged today. And throughout the history of the church, the experience of the renewing, reviving work of the Spirit is the very dynamism that breathes vitality and re-formation into what is prone to degenerate into empty ritual and institutionalism. Therefore, the reviving work of the Spirit is not confined to "The Second Great Awakening" of the eighteenth century.

Anderson Allan (1999:223) concludes: "One thing is for certain: the face of global Christianity...throughout the world will never be the same since the Pentecostals came on the scene a century ago. Whatever protests we might have about the lack of 'sophistication' in Pentecostal praxis or the cultural or political insensitivity of some of the movement's emissaries, we must reckon with this rich diversity of Christian expression with a dynamic message that will surely continue to attract multitudes of people globally well into the next century."

The Pentecostals, therefore, have a responsibility to see to it that this "move of God continues to gain momentum" if they are to continue attracting the masses globally. Their responsibility is not to slumber or "quench the Spirit", but to continue being revived; for this renewing, reviving work of God the Spirit has been, for thousand years, an *awakening work of the Holy Spirit*.