

**AN INVESTIGATION OF SENIOR  
LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL  
STRUCTURE IN A MALAGASY  
CONGREGATIONAL SETTING**

**BY**

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During my first year of Bible School, I became aware of a calling to serve as a missionary in Madagascar and visited the Island on a few occasions. After four years of preparation my home church sent me to Madagascar to work with an independent Pentecostal church in the capital, Antananarivo.

Since I came to Madagascar the greatest truth I have learned, in the words of John Donne (1572-1631), is that "no man is an island; every one is a piece of the continent, a part of the main". We are all part of the body of Christ. I could not have completed my research entirely on my own and want to take this opportunity to thank those who have helped me in the process.

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## *Introduction*

### **1 Introduction**

#### **1.1 Background**

##### 1.1.1 Madagascar

Madagascar is the fourth-largest island in the world after Greenland, Papua New Guinea, and Borneo. It lies east of the African continent from which it is separated by the Mozambique Channel. Madagascar is an ecological paradise with four out of five plants and animals that exist nowhere else. It has six provinces (picture below) and has about 18 ethnic groups as well as many other foreigners from the Comoro's, India, China, and France. Malagasy cultures are diverse. The Malagasy people speak different closely related language varieties.



Madagascar has religious freedom but traditional beliefs still have a great influence in the rural areas of Madagascar. 47% of Malagasy are Christian while 44.77% continue in traditional religion and 7% are Muslim. The four main Christian denominations divide into 27.58% Protestant, 20.70% Catholic, 1.76% Anglican and 2.45% Independent. (P. Jonstone and J. Mandryk, 2001: 458)

##### 1.1.2 Life in Christ Church

The research took place at Life in Christ church (abbreviated LIC which is how I will refer to the church in the remainder of this paper). The church is amongst some of the first large Charismatic Denominations in the capital of Madagascar. The founder and senior pastor, (abbreviated S.P. which is how I shall refer to him in the remainder of this paper) started the LIC church in 1977 through a youth group. In 1985 the congregation experienced great revival but was persecuted by traditional churches and was not allowed by the government to assemble. In order

to continue as a church, the name had to be changed three times during their 28 years of existence.

The S.P. has significant influence in Pentecostal and Charismatic circles because of their history in Madagascar. He is known for his fervent evangelistic campaigns and efforts to bring different pastors together for more effective collaboration in ministry. He is considered as a spiritual father and mentor to many pastors in Madagascar.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

One day the S.P. made this very significant comment "I don't understand why so many people flock to my church, respond to the invitation to commit their hearts and lives to Christ, but that many don't continue to worship with us. With so many "converts" my congregation should increase in size, but church membership does not grow numerically." It seems that church attendees consider the church alive and dynamic but for some reason do not continue to worship with them.

This whole study centers on the forgoing question, which in turn triggers a number of sub-questions: Might this trend be part of a global phenomenon? Or is it perhaps a cultural trend specific to the people who attend this church? Might it be a lack of intimacy and pastoral care or due to inadequate ministry practice?

### 1.2.1 Church attendance

This phenomenon is also evident world wide. There has been fluctuation in church growth in various countries. In some countries churches are rising up and growing stronger. Although in the western world, church attendance has been decreasing to the extent that churches close down and buildings are sold to everyday market enterprises for pubs, restaurants or office space.

The decline in church attendance is an indication of the influence of evil in society that separates and dissatisfies people with God. People seem disinterested in congregational life, Christianity, or structured religion.

### 1.2.2 Worldviews

Present-day generations have literally hundreds of different products and name brands to choose from. People also face a developing mosaic of worldviews from which they can select. These worldviews are too numerous to list here and are multiplying rapidly. Nick Pollard that works under European students stressed his concern when he said: "...these worldviews range from secular humanism to eastern mysticism, from scientific materialism to Wicca paganism views which have profound effect upon people today". (Pollard 1997: 37-38) Because of these worldviews increasing numbers of people nowadays adopt their worldviews pragmatically. Whatever view works for them or fits their moral practices seems

good enough. Nick said people rarely live a certain way because of what they really believe.

These contemporary doctrines or worldviews have great influence on the fluctuation in church growth in various countries. However it does not have significant effect in Madagascar especially among the lower educated, but they are present at the university level. More and more people drift away after these new paradigms that are unfavorable to religious practices.

Madagascar is seen as a religious country with 44.77% Christians showing slow growth. It would seem that the problem with church growth in Madagascar might have more to do with the everyday practices of specific leaders in specific situations. This research aims to investigate the role of situational leadership.

### 1.2.3 Senior leadership

In Madagascar leaders are often referred to as *ray aman-dreny*, referring to more than one person, especially parental figures like fathers and mothers. Leadership is often understood as parental leadership. It is natural leadership in society and it sometimes allows two-way conversation in dialog between the parent and their child. The second is written: *Raiamandreny* and refers to senior leaders in society such as a mayor, a school principal, or a pastor. This kind of leadership in Madagascar is like "*kabary tsy valina*" (a speech one cannot reply to). Which makes it a one-way dialog, were followers need to listen, hear and obey.

Traditional Malagasy society has a high regard for *Raiamandreny*. A primary concern of this study is leadership that seeks the power, privileges and superiority through the position of *Raiamandreny*. Some do lead honorably, nevertheless many of these leaders enjoy the privileges accompanied by the title but seem to neglect the associated responsibilities. Some *Raiamandreny* leaders create an immense amount of stress on their surrounding community as they clash with honest, ethical and organizational expectations.

There are other terms for describing leadership in Madagascar, such as *Olombaventy* that refers to leaders in the community, that come together as a committee of leaders. All these show the respect Malagasy people have for those in leadership.

As Madagascar is infiltrated with western views, conflict arises between the new informal western-organizational culture and the old formal social hierarchy cultures. The old formal social hierarchy culture has a great respect for their ancestors and their traditional practices which causes difficulty for development. It also opens doors for corruption but it does favor collectivism and *fiavianana* (good relationship) that typifies Malagasy culture. Mark Ravalomanana, the current president of Madagascar, has worked hard at putting an end to corruption. The abuse of power and privileges that the *Raiamandreny* enjoy are in many ways related to corruption.

### **1.3 Research process**

#### 1.3.1 Difficulties encountered

I experienced difficulty in starting the research process. First of all my knowledge of research was inadequate for being so far away from the university. Secondly there were the problems of distance and lack of mentorship during the development of the research paper. Thirdly the congregation at the LIC church was apprehensive of the research and hesitant to expose themselves or their congregational problems to me. My being young and a foreigner didn't help them trust me. I did not immediately know how to communicate in Madagascar, or what the main customs were. Over time we became more familiar with each other and eventually a measure of trust was built that allowed us to partner on this journey to seek understanding and insight. Lastly, the research procedure has been immensely slowed down due to the language barriers. I only started studying Malagasy on my arrival and had to do most of my studies through an interpreter or the little Malagasy I knew.

In the process I also discovered my own directness and lack of empathy (which has been pointed out to me by congregation members in Madagascar and even in my own culture) and my conservative need and desire for justice, integrity, structure and organization. This is in contrast to the Malagasy avoidance of direct confrontation, and their not valuing truth as I view it (Malagasies would rather say what they think you want to hear than the truth), they value kindness and harmony, respect relationship and hierarchy seemingly at the expense of success, effectiveness and righteousness. (Dahl, 1993: 82)

#### 1.3.2 Literature study

My supervisor, Prof Muller suggested a research guide for the ABDCE method, a narrative research approach that follows a method of story development (See methodology P55-56). Being in Madagascar I was limited to only a few research textbooks. I set out to find understanding in existing research methodologies. Eventually it became clear that a combination between different qualitative methods and particularly the ABDCE method would be appropriate for my research. I applied a qualitative approach and the ABDCE method in narrative research. This included observation and formal and informal interviews that were combined with a case study methodology. (See methodology)

While still in South Africa I collected data on different theological perspectives, leadership practices, and their various forms, plus some articles about church growth. Since then I have only had one or two opportunities to continue research at the library in South Africa.

Malagasy and French predominate in Madagascar, which made it hard to find books locally that I could read for more insight. Despite the obstacles, various helpful books were found in English and some Malagasy books were translated as needed.

## 2 Literature Study

### 2.1 Christian Theology

Today theology is a term widely used by all religions. When referring to theology in this research we are primarily concerned with basic Christian Theology that holds fast to Scripture.

For instance if one follows a specific leader it is important that one adheres to the teachings of that leader. A Platonist holds to the conceptions of a Platonist and a Marxist to the teachings of Karl Marx. Likewise those that profess to be Christians ought to adhere to the doctrine and praxis taught by Jesus Christ, such as "Love your neighbor as yourself". Christian theology therefore means accepting Jesus as Lord and allowing him to be the authority by which we conduct our lives and practices. (Erickson, 1985: 20) In the words of James Orr

"He who with his whole heart believes that Jesus is the Son of God is thereby committed to much else besides. He is committed to a view of God, to a view of man, to a view of sin, to view of Redemption, to a view of the purpose of God's creation and history, to view of human destiny found only in Christ." (Orr, 1954:4)

Many false doctrines and practices have crept into the church in the name of Christ without substantiating the fundamentals taught and practiced by Christ. It is reasonable to say that the beliefs that Jesus practiced and taught provide the central meaning of what it means to be a Christian or a follower of Christ. Therefore a Christian theology is more than just knowledge, it is experiential knowledge.

#### 2.1.1 Defining theology

A simple definition of theology is "the study or science of God". Theology studies the nature of God and religious belief and it studies people's faith and their religious statements about God. The word theology is a combination of two Greek words *theos* (God) and *logos* (the entire word), so theology means "words about God".

Karl Barth saw theology as "the **systematic interpretation** of God's self-disclosure to the Christian church" (Barth, 1938: 47-70). Jesus said "I still have many things to share with you but you can not bare them now" (John 16:12) Theology calls us to systematically interpret God's word and actions of present day realities. .

Pattison extends this view when he said "Thus creative theological reflection is a three-way conversation or dialogue between their own ideas, beliefs, feelings, and perceptions; the beliefs, assumptions, and perceptions provided by the Christian tradition; and the contemporary, which is being considered" (Pattison) Thus it involves others to take part in our expedition in finding truth, knowledge, and relation with God.

The above-mentioned quote clearly shows that theology does not allow the theologian any passivity. Theology becomes alive through the present day realities of Christ, which definitely makes it an active research that could be interpreted systematically. It therefore has the ability to draw the theologian into a transformational conversation.

George Lindbeck proposes that theology develops along three patterns:

**Propositionalist:** "informative propositions or truth claims about objective realities. Religions are thought of as similar to philosophy or science as these were classically conceived." (Lindbeck, 1984: 16) Theology as science seeks to assert facts about reality.

**Experiential-excursive:** "non-informative and non-discursive symbols of inner feelings, attitudes and orientations." (Lindbeck, 1984:16) (Human religious experience) Theology as art or poetry that seeks to express what human beings universally experience.

**Cultural-linguistic:** "religions are seen as comprehensive interpretive schemes, usually embodied in myths or narrative and heavily ritualised, which structure human experience and understanding of self and world" (Lindbeck, 1984: 32)

The cultural-linguistic pattern will be further discussed in practical theology, which describes these comprehensive schemes. (See Section 2.6 Practical Theology).

### 2.1.2 A Living Theology

The God of Christianity is an active Being. According to T.F. Torrance "the contemporary reality and the presence of Christ is what makes theology a **living theology**" (Torrance, 1982: 138). We therefore are not observing or studying a historic and passive Entity but One that is presently alive and active.

St. Augustine thought theology to be characterized by a willingness to really try and listen to and understand **present realities** rather than to repeat the answer of the past. Present day realities means existing realities or occurrences that are real now. That makes theology an **active research**, not just historical research or intellectual gymnastics. To grasp and understand theology we need to listen to and observe the present day realities that are revealed to us by Christ in this time.

For example in studying about the *oikos* (household of God) a theory in Scripture, we could gain knowledge of God's existing household. We could remain passive or we could become part of the household of God through faith. We could also learn about the need for the unbeliever's adoption into God's household and be passive or active.

In my third year of Bible school I had the privilege of experiencing the adoption of an unbeliever into God's household while studying the subject of God's household and how individuals are adopted or born into His household. A man that worked at

a store where I regularly bought paint for an NGO company experienced the convicting of the Holy Spirit. He came to repentance and received Christ as Savior resulting in regeneration. Studying about these theories in scripture, like salvation, healing and miracles and being present in its manifestation merged theology with reality for me. The narrative above became a present day reality of a person being adopted or born into God's household, not just a passive theory in scripture or history.

Christian theology is a living theology, as Christ is alive, which makes it not just an educational study, rather a study that needs to be experienced and lived, both in the past and in the present. Theology is alive in present realities of God as He works through the Holy Spirit, Who could be listened to, observed, and interpreted. Theology is not an intellectual game or theory to be worked out in the mind, rather it is a philosophy which consists of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ in truth in order to effectively equip others to live in love and to edify each other. The challenge theology faces is to interact with the recorded Word of God (1Timothy 3:16). To take into account present day realities and analyze the religious statements of churches and individuals. It should also deal with the witness of churches and trace its history and evaluate the religious praxis of those congregations. (Pieterse, 1990, p10) This indicates to me that theology is therefore practical in essence, compelling participants to specific a action.

## 2.2 *Practical Theology*

Practical theology is part of the field of theological study. Although it is not agreed on in every detail there is common ground in this new theological paradigm. It first appeared through the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher who defined practical theology as the theory of the church practice of Christianity.

Systematic theology is dogmatic and could be seen as 'the talk', as we study the text, whereas practical theology is praxis, 'the walk'. This occurs when we apply the revelation we received from the word of God to our contemporary lives. Systematic theology forms the insight and practical theology dictates the actions of the religious person. Theologians understand practical theology as "**applied theology**". James brings a similar argument when he writes in James 2:18 "You have faith and I have works, show me your faith without works and I will show you my faith by my works". Pattison explains that only in action could the true meaning of love and compassion be revealed. Consequently theology only becomes practical when we apply the revelation we receive of God as directly and purely as possible to our lives and those we serve

Other modern theologians describe practical theology as:

- "God's activity through the ministry of human beings" a theory of action that is "the empirical oriented theological theory of the mediation of the Christian faith

in the praxis of modern society" (Heitink) Jesus first describe this phenomenon in John 14 when his disciples asked him "show us the Father?" And Jesus said "do you fail to see Him in me" Then Paul gave us a clear picture of this phenomenon when he wrote to the Galatians in Galatians 2:20 "It is no longer I that live but Christ that lives in and through me..."

Practical theology is "Communicative religious actions that serves the gospel" (Firet, 1976: 260) and "Actions that propagate the gospel and promote God's coming in this world." (Heyns/Pieterse, 1990: 6) These communicative actions are closely connected to witnessing, oratory, homiletics and conversations.

### **2.3 Practical wisdom**

The Old Testament reveals that some people had more wisdom than others and that some people have devoted themselves to gaining wisdom so that they themselves could be called "wise" (Hebrew *hakam*) (Gorden & Douglas, 1981, 208) Gorden & Douglas said that these people were highly practical, not merely theoretical. Practical theology is not just concerned with homiletics as communicative actions but also with practical wisdom exercised through one's actions. Practical wisdom could be illustrated by the following two accounts:

A missionary was sent to a foreign country. He was commissioned with the words "go and preach the Gospel and if necessary use words".

For years a missionary worked in a place where people never heard about the gospel of Jesus Christ and he never preached to them. After his death some other missionaries came to the same place to plant churches. While they were telling the people about Jesus, they responded. "We know this man Jesus, he lived here amongst us." This missionary had brought the gospel to these people through his actions and not just words.

These stories powerfully relate to the fact that Jesus' strongest proclamation was not in His words but in His action on the cross of Calvary. (Luke 23:26-49) What Jesus did was as authoritative and as much revelation of God as what He said and thought (Anderson, 2001: 13). When Jesus healed on the Sabbath, the act of healing became a criterion (text) by which a true theology of the Sabbath was revealed. Jesus said "if I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him."

Practical theology when understood as experiential or living knowledge of God is practical wisdom based on Scripture. The need of practical wisdom is evident when one encounters deep-seated taboos in Madagascar. One such example is where it is taboo to give children water when they have diarrhea. This leaves the child at the mercy of increasing dehydration. Practical wisdom is needed for conveying a solution to such a problem.

A Catholic sister tells how in a village where there is such good water that there is a project for bottling it, the above-mentioned taboo rules and so children often die of simple diseases. She used to offer the children cold sweetened water on their way back from school and so succeeded in making them used to drinking water. It would have been useless to tell the people to give their children water because taboos are kept in place through fear. In a practical way this woman has helped the children recognize that water quenches thirst. This woman used simple practical wisdom in caring for those that suffered under human traditions or taboos in this case.

#### **2.4 Practical theology as praxis**

Practical theological praxis in simple terms consists of "communicative actions that is in the service of the Gospel." (Firet, 1987) These actions aim at extending the Kingdom of God. However, theological praxis is not responsible for practice, Christ is. Practical theology only examines His practices through people.

Some claim that theory without good practice is invalid. In any field of study, knowledge gained remains dead if there is no application. With knowledge and wisdom gained, action should follow. The challenge is to practice our knowledge in modern society. For instance, the concept of Christians needs to be a witness in the world, can be understood as theory only, but has its origin and goal in praxis, and is a continuous progression from theory to practice.

R. S Anderson (2001:14) says, "If theory precedes and determines practice then practice tends to be primarily concerned with methods, techniques, and strategies for ministry, lacking theological substance. If practice takes priority over theory, ministry tends to be based on pragmatic results rather than prophetic revelation." There is a need for a clear balance between these two, the one is not better than the other. According to Karl Barth, "The task of theology is to clarify the presuppositions of the church praxis." (Barth, 1936: 187-247). Barth consistently holds that theory and praxis are not in opposition to one another but complement each other. With distorted theory false or irrelevant practices arise, or without practice theory remains passive.

"Theology is practiced in a polarised tension between trust and critique, prayer and argumentation, confession and present enquiry" (Fire,t 1975: 381). Without these presuppositions, theology would never be appreciated or experienced to its fullest.

Theology is practical only by applying God's revelation as directly and purely as possible to the concrete situations of life. "The believing community should conform itself totally to the Word of God" (Barth 1936: 187-247). Therefore there is a remaining necessity for theory not only to be formed by historic and contemporary practices, but theory should also be formed through the study of doctrine as systematic theology and other biblical studies offer, applying exegetical and hermeneutical methods in forming new theories. Without the word

of God practices become natural powerless theories, that are not rooted in the power and authenticity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Someone once compared the word of God to a spirit level. One day a man hired an experienced builder to extend his house by building a porch at his front door. The porch had two pillars supporting the roof. As the owner came from work one day he saw that the pillars were slanted, so he made a comment about it, but the builder kept on insisting on the correctness of his work. The owner silently went into his house and brought out a spirit level showing the experienced builder his error.

Jesus continually reminded his listeners "whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, he will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall." (Matthew 7:24-27)

Ministers come to the theological task with questions that are shaped by their practices, and ultimately they start reflecting, asking questions about their theory. Reflecting on the truth revealed in scripture helps them to see error that developed through time as seen in the spirit level narrative above. New practices will arise from the truth but new questions will also develop in time. "These new reconstructed religious meanings and practices continue until the religious meets a new crisis, thus it goes from practice to theory and back to practice. It goes from present theory-laden practice to a retrieval of normative theory-laden practice to the creation of more critical held theory-laden practices" (Browning, 1991: 7) It is my conviction that in theology one should move from practice to theory and back to practice constantly referring to the scripture as truth and guide.

## **2.5 Pastoral theology**

Don Browning argues that pastoral theology is "practical theology of care" "practical theology should create norms of human well-being and actions that are publicly understandable." (Browning, 1979: 8) Practical theology wants to help the church members, including pastors and church leaders, so that their religious actions, both in congregational life and in any other situation, may communicate the Gospel. Practical theology is concerned with the encounter between God and people. "As other theological students use the Bible as their text, practical theology has the religious person and praxis. Practical theology interprets the interaction between the Gospel and people" (Bastian 1968: 26-31). Practical theology studies people's faith and their religious statements about God, and that makes it part of theological study field. Nevertheless, the base of practical theology is the relationship between theory and praxis.

## 2.5.1 Pastoral Care

Pastoral care is an accurate term as it directly describes the pastoral practice, of caring and being concerned about those who entrust their lives to the pastor. Campbell said Pastoral theology is a "critical, exploratory (investigative), and dialogical process, which explores and creates meanings and is also in some ways artistic and visual." (Campbell, 1987 Pattison et al 1994) The pastor is not to be standing on the sideline like a coach, shouting and giving orders of where to go and what to do. Instead he/she should show creative concern by enquiring and getting to know those under his/her care through dialogue that could bring new meaning to their lives.

Pastoral theology should rather be seen as a discipline that will explore peoples life story, bringing transformation rather than prescribing rules of conduct. Of special interest here is the definition by Gerkin who describes pastoral care as a narrative hermeneutical model:

Fostering and facilitating the dialogical connection which is central to pastoral care. The dialogue between life stories and Christian stories, involves tension. Pastoral care then places the caring pastor between the two to facilitate an open dialog. The work of pastoral care involves the responsibility for facilitating the maintenance and future development of the Christian community's story and its dialog with its tradition, on the one hand, and for the facilitating the growth and creative development of particular life stories, on the other. Pastoral care involves both the care of the Christian community and the care of persons: individuals, in families and in the larger group relationships. Pastoral leadership becomes interpretive guidance. (Gerkin 1997: 112)

Pastoral care is not about solving all the problems people are experiencing but rather about caring and guiding them through the process. People are on a journey through life, sometimes they are oppressed, hurt, and broken and other times things are going well and there is growth, life, and prosperity. God has made us His representatives and as long as we are on earth we need to witness Christ's presence in a broken world. I have found that care in itself becomes the cure over a period of time, in combination with love, acceptance, and support.

Pastoral care is the task of the pastor who has the responsibility of individuals and different communities. This care should be administrated in the attitude of sharing and not primarily to solve the problem at hand. In caring for individuals and different communities there is an importance (responsibility) of the presence of the minister and listening on his behalf. In caring, the aim should not only be to relieve people in their agony, but rather to restore their dignity, to restore them to the image of God that they were created in, and to develop them as individuals to be of benefit to their community. Lester said that "pastoral care and counseling has, as one of its goals, the nature of hope, so one of its responsibilities is attending to the hoping process" (Lester, 1995: 71). Just attending to the immediate need in order to relieve the pain for a moment would only be going half the mile, but getting down to the root of the problem will bring new hope and

meaning to the community and individual. In pastoral care the pastor is in a not-knowing position. To be present in the community and care by using attentive listening that will help us as caregiver's to understand people's real needs is tremendously important for the pastoral care giver..

## **2.6 Practical Theology: a Narrative approach**

The comprehensive practice of the pastoral care giver is mainly communicative in nature. Pieterse said that "theology has formed into a paradigm of communicative action theory" (Pieterse, 1993: 3). For God acts within and through people and these acts are mainly communicative. They seek to communicate direction, truth, and life from scriptural theories that will bring transformation and new hope to the community and individuals.

Muller said that the best way to understand these communicative actions is in a narrative description, that a narrative description allows practical theologians to understand these 'communication actions' (Muller, 1996: 4). Muller was not the only person to observe these communicative actions in a narrative description but it has been implemented by many other practical theologians such as Habermas (1982), Pieterse, (1993: 96-98) and Vos (1995).

When studied from a narrative perspective, communicative actions in practical theology become more understandable and "they tend to lead to the "ecosystem", where the communicative process operates in" (Muller, 1996: 4). Culture and individual experiences could also be easier understood when approached from a narrative perspective.

Narrative practical theology is therefore, an ongoing hermeneutical process within the immediate storied context of ministry. The intention of that process is the transformation of the human story, both individual and corporate, in ways that open the future of that story to new creative possibilities (Gerkin 1986: 54).

Narrative practical theology is a hermeneutical practice where the pastoral care giver listens and interprets people's stories as they tell them hoping that some transformation will take place in their lives, creating space for an open ending and new possibilities that were absent before.

## **2.7 Leadership**

Anthropologist Oyvind Dahl contributes to the understanding of some of the characteristics that form Malagasy leadership in Madagascar. The primary purpose of his book "Malagasy Meanings" was to help Western and Malagasy people see how they understand or misunderstand each other. This impressed on me the great importance of coming to grips with the underlying culture and not to misunderstand Malagasy people and their practices. Through the glasses of their worldview one will be able to see how leadership functions in their culture.

### 2.7.1 Scriptural Leadership

According to Fiedler (1967), leadership is "situation dependent". Success depends on the situation the leader is found in and how he reacts to it. Whatever leadership style and church structure or practice is working in South Africa, Europe and America is not necessarily going to work in Madagascar. Still there are similarities and general scriptural leadership and organizational principals that we could identify that have to be implemented in any culture that wants to be apart of the Body of Christ worldwide. It is important that indigenous cultures should not overthrow or deny scriptural principals. Indigenous cultures should rather deny evil and unscriptural practices in their culture that do not cohere to scripture. By this I do not mean conforming to western values but being conformed to the image and practices of Christ. Many times new indigenous believers think they need to become western like the western missionaries that brought the gospel to them, which is untrue.

We will see later that the cultural context also plays a very important part in church growth and has great influence on effective leadership and church structure in the specific culture.

For this reason I would like to take a look at leadership and organizational principles in scripture and in secular leadership practices. There are immense amounts of secular leadership practices that explain general leadership practices that relate to the typical leader. For instance human development is similar for Christians and non-Christians. My goal is not to suggest or formulate a particular correct model for leadership or church structure for this would only result in reinventing the wheel. There are many other experts who have offered phenomenal work in shaping models for Christian leadership and organizations. My goal is to find understanding in the general leadership and organizational principals with those we are trying to help. To me it is important to have a look at what is identified in scripture and what is written by other Christian professional leaders about leadership and organization concerning church structure. These same general principals also imply to the LIC church and it could give us more understanding of the problem the LIC church is facing right now. Hopefully they will be encouraged to do some self-study on these two topics to discover the best alternatives for themselves and their current situation and for the future of the church.

## 2.7.2 Authentic Scriptural leadership<sup>1</sup>:

Jesus wants to use leaders just as they are in their own country and culture, the only requirement is that we need to die to our sinful nature and to live and lead through a life in Christ that consist of righteousness, holiness, humility and love. The message the new covenant brought through Christ and his disciples was to shift our trust from idols and man made traditional rituals, to having faith in Jesus Christ. As scripture continually say's that "the just shall live by faith."

The principles Jesus taught His disciples were Kingdom principles. In the millennial age, Christ will establish His universal Kingdom on earth that will consist of a parliament of man, the federation of the world, and they will preside over these same principals. Jesus taught these principles in the Commandments He gave in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt.5-7) All these principles will be the new constitution and Law of the Kingdom that has already begun ( Lindsay, 1951: 11).

Bill Hybels of the Willow Creek Community Church in America made an excellent comprehensive statement about contemporary Christian leadership. He said;

"The church is the most leadership-intensive organization in the world, more demanding than the market place, the military or political leadership. The church is utterly voluntary and altruistic...and as a result, will never rise above the level, commitment or quality of its leaders".

Christian leadership is not something to be taken lightly but should be approached with utmost prudence. Three main ingredients that are vital in Christian leadership are:

1. Distinctiveness
2. Taking responsibility
3. Raising successors

This adds to the urgency to grow and understand real scriptural leadership and organizational principals in order to be salt and light in the communities within which we work in the world by taking on the responsibility of spreading the good news and in raising successors.

**Distinctiveness.** Jesus said "you are the salt of the earth and the light of the world." (Matthew 5:13-14) Jesus set the pace. He became a model for us of these distinctive characteristics. In scripture it says that He became the first born and that we need to be conformed to His image (Romans 8:29), He humbled himself

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<sup>1</sup> Most of the leadership material given below comes from notes I have taken while still in Bible school and many of the original thoughts have been lost but I would like to accredit Martin Geddes that mainly taught me pastoral leadership.

taking the form of a bond-servant, He sanctified himself that we might be sanctified, He was blameless, sinless, full of love, humility, authority and power. Before he ascended to heaven he said to his disciples "all authority and power in heaven and on earth has been given unto me".

John Maxwell also said "the strength of the organization is a direct result of the strength of its leaders. Weak leaders equal weak organizations. Strong leaders equal strong organizations. Everything rises and falls on leadership." (Maxwell 1995: p6) Jesus is not some weak image for us to follow. This calls leaders to not lose their distinct saltiness by becoming mediocre and ineffective to the church or organization they serve.

**Responsibility.** Leaders need not only to carry the responsibility to lead through a distinctive model but also to set the standard for other people and leaders. Bill Hybels said Christian leadership is an immense responsibility and is not to be taken lightly. Jeremiah prophesied against ministers that take their responsibility lightly when he said:

"For the **shepherds** have become dull-hearted, and have not sought the LORD; therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered. (Jeremiah 10:21) Woe to the **shepherds** who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!" says the LORD. Therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel against the **shepherds** who feed My people: "You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings," says the LORD. "But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. "I will set up **shepherds** over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking," says the LORD. (Jeremiah 23:1-4)"

When Jesus saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few." Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." And when He had called His twelve disciples to *Him*, He gave them power *over* unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. (Mathew 9:35-10:1) Later Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." He said to him again a second time, "Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. (John 21:15-17)

The Lord has ordained priests and prophets and nowadays pastors and leaders, as they are contemporarily known, to continually nurture and lead his people. In the book of Ephesians we see that the Lord has given some to be apostles, prophets, evangelist, pastors and teachers to equip believers for the building up the Body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-12)

**Raising successors.** Being salt means being exceptional leaders, not following the norm, not being mediocre or conforming to worldly leadership. Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth. (James Macgregor Burns)

The central task of leadership is influencing God's people towards God's purpose. (Robert Clinton) Exceptional leadership means influencing other leaders and God's people towards God's will, His principles, and purposes.

"Then one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people, and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while. And he said to them: "Men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do regarding these men." For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody. A number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was slain, and all who obeyed him were scattered and came to nothing. "After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed." And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing "but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it -- lest you even be found to fight against God." And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go." (Acts 5:34-40)

God ultimately brings success to leaders and their successors. In the book "Developing leaders around you" John Maxwell quoted a saying Peter Drucker emphasized "there is no success without successors". (Maxwell 1995, p10)

For any leader to truly be successful he needs to influence other leaders and people around him that will ultimately succeed him. "The true mark of success in God's Kingdom is the raising up of successors" just as Jesus did. (Jess Gibson) By the time Jesus fulfilled His ministry He said to his disciples go and make disciples...and they fully understood what he meant, raise successors.

Followers of Jesus model of leadership will experience a sense of belonging and acceptance, understanding and being cared for, achievement and responsibility, participation and direction, fulfillment and freedom. It will not be easy because Jesus is the perfect leader. However, leaders should formulate their own understanding of the way Jesus led, and adapt to it rather than leading through their assessorial, cultural background.

### 2.7.3 Contemporary Christian Leadership Principles

Leadership is **vision** and people want to be lead by a person with vision. Jesus often talked about the Kingdom of God, his vision and passion. Jesus was a visionary (John 4:35; Matthew 24:14, 34) He sought his fathers will above all else. His vision for himself and his disciples came from His Father. A visionary keeps his attention focused on what lies ahead, his inner eye is on the future and he lives with a sense of anticipation in his spirit. (Heb.12:2) Jesus often talked about the Kingdom of God, which was His vision and passion. The shepherd guides his flock, seeing where he must take them. If the sheep stay in the same place too long, they soil the ground and develop foot-rot, which soon leads to mouth-rot. A group that has no plans to go anywhere does not need a leader - only a guard and an undertaker. "Without vision people perish." (Proverbs 29:18)

Leadership is setting **goals**. Jesus had a goal and that was to be pleasing to the Father by doing His will, fulfilling the Law and fulfilling what scriptures prophesied about Him. Paul said, "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:14) We all need long range goals to keep us from being frustrated by short range failures. Jesus endured those times, looking unto the purpose of the cross. In the same manner, leaders need to work towards their given goal.

Maxwell became pastor of a church in San Diego, California in 1981. The congregation had an attendance of 1000 members for 13 years. He knew they were able to lead a 1000 members but was not sure if they could lead 2000. His thesis was "Leaders determine the level of an organization". So he called a meeting of his staff, drawing a line for 1000 members and above it another for 2000 members and told the staff to change.

"It would be my responsibility to train them and help them make the necessary changes to reach our new goal. When the leaders changed positively, I knew the growth would come automatic. Now I had to help them change themselves, or I knew I would literally have to change them by hiring others to take their place." (Maxwell, 1995: 5)

Leadership is raising **successors**. Jesus was a capable leader, like none in His time or after Him. Still He built a team around Himself. He called a few men that He would latter send all over the world to preach the good news to all creation. Leadership is about empowering and releasing people. (2 Timothy 2:2) Leadership is a learning process. Only 2% of leaders are born leaders, the rest have to learn how to be leaders. After He trained them He told them: "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." (John 20:21) but wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will receive power to be my witness" (Acts 1). Thus brings the great need for mobilizing others Christians. The pastor needs to do things TO and FOR people, but his main focus must be on getting the job done THROUGH people.

Leadership is **motivating and maturing** people. Jesus said "follow me" and Paul said "imitate me". Wise leaders do not drive people but they lead them. Their continual focus is to mature those believers in Christ under their care.

In building a **team** around Him, Jesus first of all believed in and loved those He chose to follow Him. He was a loving leader, an apostolic father, and a friend to them. They saw His Divine nature and authoritative practices and wanted to be great like Him. He taught them to be servants, just as He served them. He was a selfless leader occupied by the needs of the people. He walked in the light being accountable and transparent to all people and those in His team. He set definite goals and communicated it clearly to His disciples as they walked with Him during the three years of His earthly ministry. One of His most constant teachings was to have faith in Him and to have faith in God. They worked hard in meeting the people's needs, healing the sick, opening the eyes of the blind, raising the dead and preaching about the Kingdom of God. His disciples continually grew in knowing Him and in faith. He openly acknowledged and confronted conflict in the group but at the same time He recognized and rewarded teamwork.

**Leadership is influence:** A leader's effectiveness is dependent on his influence.

There is a great need for leaders to have endurance, for God's anointing, for influence, for humility, for devotion to prayer, for being accountable in all their daily practices, for walking in the light and last but not least for continually growing in Christ likeness. Leadership is motivating and maturing people: Jesus said "follow me" Paul said "imitate me". Wise leaders do not drive people but they lead them. Their continual focus is to mature those believers in Christ under their care.

Mobilizing others: the pastor needs to do things **TO** and **FOR** people, but his main focus will be on getting the job done **THROUGH** people. The followers of Jesus model of leadership will experience a sense of belonging and acceptance, understanding and being cared for, achievement and responsibility, participation and direction, fulfillment and freedom. It will not be easy because Jesus is the perfect leader. But I would definitely suggest that leaders should formulate their own understanding of the way Jesus led and not just lead naturally through their own understanding of leadership that is many times from their culture background. Following His leadership methodology will take us to highs were no natural leader can go.

## **2.8 Merging Leadership ideologies**

Secular leadership theories are based on presuppositions that may look like they cohere with scripture but they are far from it. Secular leadership might bring great immediate success to church leaders but it will never be able raise up to the level of a true spiritual leader. Thus is why it is so important for us be careful

when we merge the two with one another. Yes, there are many practices that overlap between secular and Christian leadership but the one is natural and has worldly wisdom where the other is spiritual with authority and power in Christ.

Jesus said ""For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish". With any new kingdom or government come new rules and obligations. Being part of the Body of Christ all members within this Body need to follow the same rules and obligations because they are all from the same body, same kingdom. Jesus clearly said that any kingdom that is divided against it self could not stand.

There are general leadership and organizational principals that imply to the whole body of Christ that all need to obey, regardless of their culture or world view. Like for instance Jesus said who ever wants to be the greatest must be the least among you, must become the servant of all. This counts for all nationalities not just for the Jews.

Now in Africa leaders are seen as superior to those under them and they will not naturally serve others that are lower than they are in the hierarchy social structure. Once any man enters the body of Christ he cannot say, "O' I am a leader and because of our hierarchy social structure I can not serve others in the congregation or even in his own family. No if he is in a leadership or in a senior position this general principle of humility applies to him because he is in the Body of Christ. He is in the world and in his own culture but he is not of this world and should not be following the norm of the day.

For instance, laws at the American Embassy in Madagascar, differ from the laws in Madagascar even though the embassy is in Madagascar. The American Embassy is in Madagascar but not apart of the Malagasy government. In the same way Christian leaders or pastors are not of this world, they do not follow the norm of worldly cultures and principles any more. They are ambassadors for Christ; they have to follow the blueprint received from God through the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, know as the Bible. General principles like holiness, justice, integrity, righteousness, honesty, blamelessness and love should be followed by all regardless of who they are and where they come from. The list of principles can just go on and on but the basic idea is that we do find general principles to live by. Likewise there are also general scriptural leadership and organizational principles any Christian leader and Christian organization should follow. We can identify the principles that were inspired by the Holy Spirit in the word of God and in present day realities in Christian communities and congregations worldwide.

Regardless, there are an immense amount of secular leadership practices that explain general leadership practices that relate to the typical leader. Like for instance, human development is similar for Christians and non-Christians.

## 2.9 Secular Leadership ideologies

Blackaby said "The greatness of an organization will be directly proportional to the greatness of its leader" (Maxwell 1995: 4)

### 5.2.1 Leadership Style and Staff

"Organizations must have leaders, followers, and some task that needs to be done." (Tagliere, 19973: 5) These three factors could also be true in the church. The church has leaders, teachers, pastors, and their staff, disciples, and congregation, which together form the Body of Christ that has a commandment and a commission that has been given by Jesus Christ, the head of the body, that needs to be fulfilled.

Each church has there own significant staff members. They all differ in some ways, some receive salaries as it is in bigger congregations and others work voluntarily. In either case the ability of Christians to join together in service is crucial to congregational stewardship of gifts. Paul gives us about 30 diverse gifts that are present in the body of Christ in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12. These gifts are given for the edification of the body of Christ, the church. We need all these spiritual gifts in the church staff setting to bring harmony and growth. When all these gifts are used together in harmony, every member grows and contributes, feeling productive in the church. "When diverse people and their gifts are ignored, the minister would experience difficulty and discomfort in his congregation that result in stagnation." (Dale, 1981: 15-27 ) In the body of Christ we can not ignore other peoples gifts or over rule them with our authority. We need to practice our gifts when needed and we need to step aside when it is another persons turn to manifest there gifts. Otherwise, we are only seeking our own glory that will result in stagnation.

Tagliere said, "How leaders work with followers, and how both work with the job situation, determines the success of the individuals and by extension, the success of the organization". (Tagliere,, 19973: 5) If one member in the body suffers the whole body suffers with it. Each individual member needs to work together for one purpose and one goal, each member can not have there own agenda.

**This places the need for harmony between the leaders, followers, and structure for growth.** In most cases the leaders have the ability to establish that harmony. John Maxwell said "Great organizations may have great leaders and poor structures, but he has never seen a great organization that had a great structure but a poor leader". (Maxwell,, 1995: 12) Max places the greatest emphasize upon the leader and his practices and not solely on structure. Leaders all have their own styles of leading. As leaders look at these styles they will also be able to see there own style reflected.

Tagliere notices that all these different styles of leadership have two major characteristics" keeping it all or giving it all" (Tagliere, 1973:11). They have

positional power and personal power, which they can use for their own selfish desires, or share their powers for the edification of others. Even though there should still be a sense of fear and love for the leader. In effective leadership there should be a sense of fear and love for the leader. Followers fear being hurt by their leaders, but also love being led by them.

The leadership styles which are given by Dale are based on one factor: The extent to which a leader tends to impose structure on his or her followers. It has nothing to do with competence, virtue, morality, skill, kindness, or effectiveness as many would think. We all have our own style and we are able to consciously or unconsciously modify it to fit different situations or moods we are leading in because leaders are not born but learned by exercise as we saw previously. Regardless of the leadership style practiced by the leader, he or she will still be popular or unpopular. The S.P leadership style is probably adapted from the examples of leaders he was exposed to early in his life. We tend to lead like our fathers led but that leadership could be modified through other experiences and thought. Regardless, no leadership style in itself is wrong, but in an organization it would be wise to find or modify our leadership style so that it is appropriate for the work situation and promote the harmony needed for growth.

The five most popular leadership styles with the same characteristics that were proposed by Tagliere and Dale are:

Administrator-Teamwork

Autocratic - Dictators

Joker

Enablers -Hermit

Democratic - Workaholic

### 2.9.1 Leadership styles:

Maxwell said "to grow a leader is to grow an organization for the strength of a organization is a direct result of the strength of its leaders. Weak leaders equal weak organizations. Strong leader's equal strong organizations, everything rises and falls on leadership."

As we have seen there are many different styles of leadership, each leader has his own style of leading. Daniel A. Tagliere suggested that in organizational life three important streams of behavior flow together: "leadership style, follower style and structure style." (Tagliere, 1973: 3). Tagliere's work in this field is extensive and thorough. Robert D. Dale wrote an article for the Review-and-Exposition 78 Wint1981 on Church admiration and leadership. He based his work on Tagliere contemporary theory and applied it into the churches context. In his article he suggests five leadership styles that I summarized and quoted as being necessary to give us a glimpse of how leaders function:

**Team Leader.** Team leaders are the best most effective leadership style. They are active in taking initiative, flexible fitting any situation and have long-range goals in mind. Their greatest strength is that they believe in people. For this reason they involve people in their mission and together they achieve results. They grow people spiritually, together they reach others and as the body of Christ they mature in godliness together. (Eph. 4:11-13) Team leaders also have good relations with the congregational members and the surrounding communities. They value others feelings and ideas allowing them to dream together. Because of these characteristics, the church continually increases numerically and will be well established by the time they move on.

**Dictator.** The dictator leadership style is the only efficient style. It works well in short-term achievements, but on the long run it has little results.

"Communication is the dictator's strength. Pressure becomes his power. The dictators can get quick results but their commanding leadership creates either dependency or rebellion. This leadership style is many times referred to as "negative activist" role. As a short-term style dictatorial leadership can do well when the situation calls for control, but the dictatorial style does not necessarily work well for long-range healthy churches or individual maturity amongst members". (Dale,1981)

The dictator is focused and calls all the shots having little trust in other people's capability. They tend to run over people and take control of them. Regardless of these assumptions they are successful leaders. They clearly tell people what to do and how to do it leaving little room for questions. The misfortune is people either work with them or they need to leave.

**Jokers.** The joker leadership style is entertaining and builds a great atmosphere for fellowship in the congregation. They definitely bring healing to any congregation and are sensitive to people's interests and reactions. The joker helps people feel better about themselves and about each other. They preach well and enjoy the spotlight at functions. They tend to only get a little done because they play too much to set goals and organize things in the congregation.

**Hermit.** The hermit leaders do not easily approach people because they are shy and self-conscious around people. They easily withdraw from their obligations and responsibilities creating a leadership vacuum. Introvert leaders are doomed to failure because they don't take initiative or action. They would rather wait for someone else to lead.

**Workaholic.** Workaholic leaders are not a fruitful style for ministry, because they tend to work by the book and are addicted to their work. They easily feel guilty when there is little to do. In effect they create their own heavy work load and then slave drive themselves.

"The workaholics drive themselves and sometimes their work place offers a handy device for stirring pity and guilt in others. Characteristically the workaholic needs a lot of appreciation. He or she also enforces rules and policies and creates the illusion of personal indispensability". (Dale.1981)

### **5.2.3 Followers Style**

All leaders have followers otherwise they would not be leaders. These followers differ from each other just as the leadership styles differ from each other. Certain leaders draw certain people to themselves. The S.P. unconsciously has drawn a specific group of followers that would have a distinct characteristic.

1. Team player and Team leader. Team players are confident, compatible and responsible people who respond to the coach. They work well with team leaders because they are teachable and ready to grow, and the coach assists them in doing so. They are all actively involved in the congregational matters working together as a team in ministry. (Ministry of all believers) They do not hesitate to take initiative and responsibility. "The coach and players work together in dreaming, setting goals, making ministry decisions, and implementing them in the congregation's vision." (Dale,,1981)

2. Dependent and Dictator. Dictators are mainly working through hierarch structure as we have seen previously. The people that follow a dictator show characteristics of dependency like introverts. They fear taking the initiative when it comes to making decisions and taking direct responsibilities for matters. (See p51) They would rather be passive, submissive and surrender to the leaders command. "More commonly, dependents prefer to leave leadership to others and remain the "powers behind the throne," near the powerful but not risking involvement in ministry."(Dale, 1981)

3. Responder's and Joker. Responders are not passive but actively involved with their leader "The joker appreciates responsive buddies." (Dale,1981) They inspire and affirm the joker by listening to him. In return to their response he also inspires them and relieves them of their stressful lives for a brief moment. He normally uses his acting skills to get goals achieved but if he does not engage with his people he might experience some difficulty.

4. Self-Starter's and Introverts. In many cases the introvert leader only has a position in church, maybe because he has an educational qualification. What they need are strong people around them that can take the initiative when needed and in many cases stronger personalities that will act in their place. Most of the time he finds himself following his followers.

5. Sympathizers' and Workaholics. Conscious people who observe the workaholic's hard working pattern feel pity for him. Without knowing it, they are not helping him get out of this self-destructive position but rather allowing him to wallow in a reservoir of guilt. These sympathizers become ready-made loyal lieutenants for the workaholic admiring the workaholic's zeal for activity and structure.

### **Structure in Ministry**

"Great organizations may have great leaders and poor structures, but I have never seen a great organization that had a great structure but a poor leader". (Maxwell, 1995: 12)

Each leader style has a preferred ministry situation. Some churches are highly organized, every step is planned and rehearsed, and every one knows exactly what

to expect. Other churches are less organized and people just go with the flow of things and when a crisis occurs, they deal with it. These ministry situations differ in degrees of structure and order. The harmony in their structural situation is the key to success.

1. Resourceful Group - Team leader. Team leadership prefers to have an abundance of resources. They are also not interested with hasty results but lasting results. Team leadership is a long-range style, thus effective if possible to practice. Team leaders develop people and that takes time. He knows how to take ownership of a program and succeed. Dale said, the best ministry situation for the team leadership style needs several congregational ingredients like:

The team leader needs the core group to be trained. He or she must have at least some skilled workers and basic resources. .

Adequate time is required, as the maturing and training of people takes time. The team leader style is, by definition, a fairly patient approach.

Mass involvement events call for a team leader. Some ministry projects and congregational policies are well suited to a church-wide leadership mode. The team leader fits situations that call for the involvement of many people.

2. Unstable Settings - Dictators. Dictators prefer instability in their church because they do well in situations that demand control and structure. During chaotic times, a commander is welcomed like when Jesus took control and quieted the winds after the disciples had panicked and feared the storm (Mk. 4:39). When disorder and fear reign, the dictator style can be effective. They also work well when a congregation is passive and stagnant, for a little push is needed sometimes to encourage people not to be sluggish. The LIC church regally falls in critical situations that threaten the stability of the church. Jules is an evangelist and is able to produce quick results in his evangelistic captains but this dictatorial leadership is unhealthy for the congregations' health.

3. Stable Organization - Joker. The joker prefers stable and familiar organization that does not take too much of his time and effort because he wants to joke around. "With this "track to run on," he or she can concentrate on a relaxed, permissive, friendly atmosphere. Where tradition and structure direct organizational life almost automatically, there is room for persons to pursue goals-or to do nothing." (Dale, 1981)

4. Automatic Pilot Organizational Life - Introvert. The introvert would choose the most self-sustaining situations and programs he could find. They want to do the bare minimum of relational and institutional maintenance. When congregational members take initiative and know what to do he is covetable and relaxed.

5. Management by Pity - Workaholic. The workaholic prefers to be in the specialist position. It is the most seductive style of all for they work through pity. The workaholic takes advantage of peoples feelings toward the over-burdened and under-encouraged.

All of us have some of these traits to a certain extent but now that we have explored these leadership style's that combine with their followers and preferred structures we can enter discussions with a bit of a clearer view. Dale also gave

this useful table (See Table 1) were he clearly reflects the differences in styles and preferences of structure that can be used to recognize the style one uses the most and to see where one can make some adjustment in their leadership approach to grow as a team leader.

### MINISTRY STYLES MESH PATTERNS

Leader Styles	Introvert	Joker	Team Leader	Workaholic	Dictator
Ministry situation structure	Structure Abdicator INITIATIVE & STRUCTURE from FOLLOWER  (Both what and how decided by followers.)  Structure Demander	Structure Observer  (Either what or how determined by followers.)  Structure User	Structure Shaper  (What and how options jointly developed.)  Structure Sharer	Structure Keeper  (Either what or how prescribed by leaders.)  Structure Avoider	Structure Monopolizer  (Both what and how directions form leader.)  INITIATIVE & STRUCTURE from LEADER  Structure Rejecter
Follower Style	SELF-STARTER	RESPONDER	TEAM PLAYER	SYMPATHIZER	DEPENDENT

Table 1 (Robert D Dale, 1981)

The above leadership and follower styles can also be influenced by the cultures that they are in. We need to keep in mind that Tagliere's studies have been done in a western culture but I think there still remains a universal principle that is of value to us.

#### 2.9.2 Cultural influence of Leadership

Fiedler said that leadership effectiveness is "situational dependent". (Fiedler, 1967) For this reason I only addressed the central principles that would be applicable here in Madagascar and later I would like to have a look at the characteristic of leadership in a Malagasy context.

It is kind of difficult to judge leaders for we are all differing from one another in the way we approach our ministry. I would think not even the Lord would command such a thing for he made us diverse in personality and cultures but he does require

harmony and growth in the body of Christ in our own unique way. Charles Kraft said:

"The form of church government is far more a cultural issue than it is a theological one. What God desires is not a single form of church government, absolutely right and valid for every society in every age, but, in each culture, the selection of that form which best facilitates the smooth, effective and well-ordered operation of the church. Thus the biblical function will be expressed in culturally effective forms." (Kraft 19979:116-118)

Thus in each culture church leaders need to define and form their own leadership style that is in harmony with the specific culture they are in but it should also not compromise and contradict the basic morals and values found in the word of God regardless of their culture. If we are able to find the secret in our own cultures concerning leadership and combine them with practical principles in the word of God we will find mind boggling results.

Sergio Matviuk brings great perspective through the case study he has done on the Pentecostal Leadership Development and Church Growth in Latin America. He recognized that the twentieth century was a witness to an important social-religious phenomenon, the growth of Pentecostalism in Latin America. Matviuk acknowledged the work of the Holy Spirit and firmly believed that through God's sovereign presence in the world He operates and uses the social and cultural conditions of society to expand His kingdom. What made it such a great case study was that Latin American Pentecostal leadership development and rapid church growth were shaped by the integration of Latin American's collective cultural dimensions and Pentecostal theology.

Matviuk gave a global definition of the Pentecostal core belief done by Clark and Lederle. According to these writers the core beliefs are:

1. That Jesus Christ can/should be personally encountered as savior of the sincerely repentant sinner, resulting in regeneration to a transformed life.
2. To every believer there is an experience of God's Spirit available according to the pattern of Spirit baptism found in the history of the first-century church in Acts.
3. The power of God is revealed today in the lives of individuals and communities as it was in the early Christian communities.
4. A sincere attitude of praise and worship should mark the life of the individual believer and the liturgy of the whole group.
5. The regenerate is obligated to reveal a distinctively Christian lifestyle based on the discipleship of Jesus.
6. The goal of the individual believer, of the local church, and the larger Pentecostal community, is to further the mission of Jesus.

7. Jesus is coming again, to judge the world, and to apocalyptically renew creation.

From these points it is evident that the power of the Holy Spirit is available to all believers, and encourages their involvement and commitment to the mission of the church. This was one of the primary strengths of the leadership development in Latin America.

Matviuk then referred to Hofstede who did pioneer work in 1980. Hofstede proposed some dimensions of cultural value differences:

Power distance or power distance index (PDI) relates to peoples expectations of their relationships to authority in a given culture. In low PDI cultures, the relationships between people in positions of authority and their subordinates are theoretically close and less formal in nature. On the other hand high PDI cultures relationships are expected to be more distant, hierarchically ordered.

Uncertainty avoidance (UAI) relates to people of a given culture that prefer certainty and predictability. They find ambiguity confusing and uncomfortable. High UAI cultures prefer rules and stable jobs with long-term employers. Low UAI cultures may be more willing to take risks and tolerate organizational uncertainty and change.

Individualism-collectivism (IDV) differentiates between cultures in which an individuals identity and personal choice are respected and cultures in which a strong collective identity exists, linking individuals to cohesive in-group over a lifetime. Individualistic cultures emphasize values that promote individual goals, where collectivist cultures emphasis the welfare in the group. In high individualistic cultures, individuals tend to accomplish things individually based on a greater individual initiative. Where in higher collectivist cultures, individuals tend to accomplish things through groups with a greater emphasis on team building.

Through these he identified Latin America as a collective and high PDI that integrated well with the apostolic ministry of all believers of Pentecostal theology. Through this integration of culture and the theology Pentecostal churches grew faster despite the fact that they had fewer missionaries than the Protestant churches. The Pentecostal leadership followed more indigenous group values than foreign group values, like the foreign practices promoted by foreign missionaries in Protestant churches. They used a unique style of leadership training. Their leadership training developed through the "apprentices system" as Blank named it. (AJPS 5:1 2002: 164) This system was based on the Pentecostal doctrine of God's Spirit to all believers. Blank also said,

"Unlike other religions that preach about God's Spirit to all believers, Latin Americans put this doctrine to practice through the participation of all members in the work of God's Kingdom. Thus Pentecostal system of apprentice "produces pastoral "leadership" from laity". (Blank, 211)

In Latin America leadership development systems allowed new members to testify in public about their faith immediately after their baptism. In this way the potential leaders developed confidence in speaking in public and gained congregational recognition. Then they would be assigned to growing responsibilities normally teaching in Sunday school classes, and then preaching in weekday services. When the church leaders recognized loyalty in these young leaders they would be assigned to home bible studies while pastors would help in forming their leadership. Leadership training consists of a sound practical basis and some minor theological background. "This makes their leadership fully contextual and deeply native". (AJPS 5:1 2002: 164)

This strategy for leadership development is fully rooted in the Pentecostal in-group's characteristics and needs, and it also gives long lasting results. Blank says that "an apprentice system of leadership development is only possible where the church is divided in cells." (AJPS 5:1 2002: 164) This same apprentice model is used in Madagascar by many independent congregations. The LIC church has stopped training new pastors since 1985.

In these Latin American small groups they focus on commitment to evangelism as a Pentecostal doctrine and collectivism as a cultural dimension. These small groups are important not only for their strategic value for church growth, but also for the social and cultural role they play in the Pentecostal community. The challenge Matviuk then gave these Latin American churches that could be of value to the LIC church is:

"Mega churches phenomenon, mega churches have more than 1000 members where a normal church in Latin America only has about 100. The problem comes when these churches lose their communal character, which is present in the classic Latin American church. These mega churches lose their "personal militancy, community and participation, and discipline." (AJPS 5:1 2002: 170)

These churches need to develop their ministry through small groups in discipleship, leadership training and evangelism otherwise they will face a major crisis. Because of their collectivist culture, their members will become uninvolved observers of the mission of the church. The lack of mechanisms for spiritual and moral accountability in these mega churches may also foster nominal Pentecostalism.

Matviuk said

"The commitment of large Latin American Pentecostal churches should keep the communal character of the local church, allowing for the members' involvement in the life and mission of the church. This requires creative organizational structure to integrate the social dynamics of the mega-church with the collectivist character of the local culture." (AJPS5:1, 2002, P171)

The growing formalization of institutions of leadership training and development, for Latin American Pentecostal churches only has a few Bible schools. Many of

their pastors go to non-Pentecostal Bible schools and the danger is that these Bible schools have adopted foreign models of training that came from individualistic societies. The danger as well is that those being trained will return to their congregations to function as experts in church mission, which is dangerous in the Latin American culture that creates autocratic styles of leadership based on authoritarianism.

This clearly indicates that church leaders need to be trained locally and church growth has to be indigenous. It needs to be, closely related to the local church needs. The doctrine that is followed will also have a definite result on congregational growth. Maurice Bloch an expert on Merina history and anthropology noted this same phenomenon in Madagascar when he said: " It is both ironic and revealing that Christianity became truly established during the very period when missionaries were excluded from Madagascar" (Bloch, 1986,:20)

### 2.9.3 The Importance of Understanding Meanings

"Meanings are the way individuals make sense of their world, which opens the door to misunderstanding." (Dahl) In finding true understanding in any specific culture, one needs to understand what the indigenous people mean by their words and actions. If not there would be an occasion for misunderstanding their practices. Dahl illustrates some differences between the Western and Malagasy views. He describes a case where a Malagasy employee approaches a foreign priest, saying that they prefer the foreign priest above the Malagasy priest. Afterward the same Malagasy met with a Malagasy priest emphasizing how much they prefer the Malagasy priest. Dahl then analyzed the case with the help of the meaning "matrix" a structure that he continually uses thought his study. The following is an extract cited from Dahl.

#### 1. FOCUS OF COMMUNICATION

Malagasy to Westerner: "We prefer you to the Malagasy priest. You are efficient, better organized, more persevering. With you we know where we are going, whereas the Malagasy priest does not have persistence, they do not have a sense of organization."

Malagasy to Malagasy: "you know, they are not like you Malagasy priest to conduct us in Madagascar, first we understand when you talk, and it is not necessary for us to choose our words when we speak to you, you understand what we mean.... between Malagasy we understand each other, even with half-words, you have a sense of man, whiles the *vazaha* (foreigner) missionary rushes blindly."

#### 2. RESPECTED CULTHER "FRAMES OF REFERENCE"

Western Values:	Malagasy Values:
- Be independent	- Be dependent and submit to authority/elder.
- Take initiative, be assertive, argue	- Adapt to common zone before you open your heart logically .

- Be audacious	- Avoid pride and audacity
- Be autonomous	- Avoid arrogance
- Follow a straight line thought	- Watch the receiver, use empathy, be smooth
- Avoid vague and shifting position	- Take vague, tentative and shifting position
- Reveal yourself and your intentions	- Don't show you're inner feelings, meanings
- Be logical and direct	- Be flexible and indirect
- Make explicit statements	- Let the meanings transcend implicitly

### 3. MEANINGS DEDUCED FROM THE "FRAMES OF REFERENCE"

Western (western characteristic of the Malagasy):	Malagasy (Malagasy characteristics of the Western):
Negative: Treacherous, perfidious, unstable, Inconsistent, undependable, lacking self-respect, lacking initiative.	Negative: Abrupt, shocking, tough, harsh arrogant, lacking flexibility, lacking, respect for seniors.
Positive: Smiling, friendly, flexible, spontaneous, not stressed. Tolerant.	Positive: Independent, influential, organizational.

Matrix 1.1

Matrix 1.1 might seem neatly ordered and insignificant at present, but as one walks amongst the natives one would quickly recognize that this manner of thinking is deeply rooted inside the heart of indigenous people including their leaders. Therefore it would not be irrelevant to say that the cultural concepts discussed above definitely inaugurate and form a main part of the daily practices of the indigenous leader. There are many other mysterious parts of the culture that we will never understand, but we will be able to identify foreign behavior seen amongst Malagasy leadership. Thus to understand indigenous leadership we need to take into account the way they think and what they mean when they act in different ways. "The more the communicating parties know about the world of meanings (frame of reference) of the other and the more they empathise with the other, the better are the chances for true and effective communication" (Dahl, 1993. 190)

#### 2.9.4 Time perception

Another phenomenon, which has a significant influence on the way the indigenous leaders lead their people, is the Malagasy concept of time. Their time concept varies from the Western time concept, which is a "linear" time concept that was adapted to the industrialized worldview. Western civilization has learned from an early age that there is a time to start work and a time to finish it with certain deadlines. There are different times for listening, writing and recreation. We adapt to the program that works towards a goal. "Western cultures that share a

linear orientation are directed towards the end product, the result that makes us future orientated" (Dahl 1999. 46-47).

A second time concept is a cyclical time concept. People watch the sun coming up and going down and see it as on big cycle. For them time is not a scarce resource for time keeps on coming back to where it started. There will be more time tomorrow to do all the things that need to be done, there is no need to rush or be anxious about anything.

Then the third concept of time is an event related time concept. "For them time is an event, when something happens. People would only take action when something happened."(Dahl 1999,48, 48) In an event related culture there is no such thing as a maintenance plan. People would only take action and fix something once it is broken or out of order. If something is not broken and there is no crisis no one would take action in doing any maintenance. At times when people are aware of some imperfection they would not take immediate action. They will wait until it becomes a real problem and there is no alternative way out except to take action. It is as if the people would need some kind of crises to trigger off any action on their behalf. Only after the crisis takes place would they take action. Dahl said, "It is not a result of conscientious planning but rather the result of a happening." (Dahl 1999. 48) Workers in this particular culture also have a strong reaction to performing ferrous tasks given during an extended time period. They are only concerned with the work that needs to be done today, now. They argue "Who knows what tomorrow brings? Tomorrow is another day!" In this particular mindset task orientated people would only find frustration because the event related person gives his top priority to personal relations and not the task at hand.

The linear concept of time is future - orientated, the cycle time concept is past orientated and the event related time concept is evidently present-orientated. Some of these characteristics can be found in various cultures but here in Madagascar the linear concept of time is hardly ever seen nowadays in Antananarivo and some bigger cities amongst the educated because of foreign influence and industrial companies that came to Madagascar. Whereas the event-related and cyclical times concepts seem to dominate the common and more rural people in the countryside of Madagascar. Unfortunately this theory produces empty tanks, bare shelves and damaged motors. The lack of action taken until a "triggering" event occurred was observed on many occasions in Madagascar. Dahl describes his own experience of their fuel station in Antsirabe. Every now and then the fuel station would have no fuel. After confronting the service station dealer, the dealer explained to him that the people in Antananarivo are slow in delivering the fuel. So he asked the dealer "why don't you order fuel way in advance, because you could calculate when your tank would be empty? But the dealer reasoned he could only order fuel once the fuel is finished in his tank because he does not know what would happen in the future. (Dahl, 1999: 50)

In a case like this, a Westerner thinks the Malagasy hardly ever plans for the future; they are losing time and money. Through lack of planning they cause lots of problems for effective development, whereas the Malagasy thinks the Westerner is always in a hurry. They don't give priority to the art of living. They can only think about making money. They do not give priority to people for people are more important than schedules.

The event-related and cyclical times concepts create great difficulties for development because they were not designed for the industrial arena. Nowadays many educated Malagasies see the wisdom in adapting a linear time concept like planning ahead as they seek to develop various industries in Madagascar. Many are enforcing the time change but it will take time and consideration for the dominant time concept in Madagascar to see desired results.

Dahl further says that,

"When the cyclical concept is internalised, the most important attitude is one of adaptation, to submit to the internal order of natural events. If a person were raised with these concepts tries to act in a linear setting, however, problems are likely to appear. The linear perspective presupposes the consideration of different alternatives for future exploration. Planning towards an abstract future is made especially possible through writing and calculations. The elaborate of distant goals or objectives, concretised in subordinated objectives and operation plans, is a very abstract and alien way of thinking indeed when the repetition of cycles and events determines procedures. Concrete planning starts only when the events occur and on a short-term basis." (Dahl, 1999, 57)

Dahl said in conclusion that it would be hard to implement the technology of modern society that is based on the linear concept of time. "It would take strong routines of discipline and exertion of power to introduce this concept to them" (Dahl, 1999). The Malagasy believe they always have time: for them it would never run out. They are not really concerned with their future and are not really interested in interventions to change their future. This theory does not only introduce some difficulties for the industrial arena but also for our western theories of leadership.

#### 2.9.5 *Tsiny* and *Tody*: *Guilt and Fear*

"*Tsiny* means blame... blame that one risks every time you act or speak, deliberately or not". (Dahl 1999:70) Malagasy people continually feel guilt and fear when they speak or do something because there is so many do's and don'ts called *fady*. In Madagascar they are called or known as "taboos", it is taboo to do this or that. When one is familiar with the language one will quickly discover that taboos are omnipresent. (Ruud 1960: p2) *Tody* means appropriate consequences to human actions according to an order which is part of our world, or as we know it justice, like sooner or later retribution of wrongful action. "Tody brings the idea that one always has to face the consequences of one's actions." (Dahl, 1999. 70)

Because *tsiny* and *tody* rule the Malagasies world they have great respect for the natural way things happen in life which is dependent on the ancestors or *Zanahary*, a god or superior being. Dahl said "the Malagasy would rather not prepare for the birth of a child because it might cause the death of the child or one could not prepare for the frequent cyclones that hit the island for it would only bring disaster. Malagasy people would rarely blame themselves for success or failure. They would rather see the problem as some outside factor like one's destiny. They would rather look for the cause of the failure in the realm of *tsiny*". (Dahl 1999, 70) This phenomenon creates unwillingness inside the people to take responsibility, which is another sensitive nerve in effective leadership in any organization. Dahl said because they fear to be blamed they are reluctant to take initiative or be pioneers. For them the less they do means there are less things they could receive blame for. This might lead to peaceful living amongst the people but would not do much for further development in Madagascar.

There are some incidents where prominent leaders in the past have broken through some fears and brought liberation to the people. Like for instance King Ralambo, was the first Merina to eat beef that was seen as a taboo (*fady*). (Brown, 1995: 101) He said to the people "if I eat beef and live, all people are allowed to eat it." He lived and changed its name from *jamoka* to *omby* and ever since Malagasy have been eating beef.

#### 2.9.6 Indigenous Social Structure

The social hierarchical structure has supreme influence on leadership itself because of the strong hierarchical practices in Madagascar. Dahl suggests that there are two main hierarchical structures in Madagascar: a vertical and a horizontal structure. "The vertical hierarchical principle structure is emphasized in the parent - child relationship and in the senior-junior relationship, which permeates social structures outside the family. The horizontal democratic principle that is demonstrated in the *havana* (relationship)." (Dahl, 1993, 96)

In the vertical social hierarchy structure, there is almost no individualism, the community work closely together in a network where all contribute to the family. Every member of the family has his special place and roll in the hierarchy. The oldest have the greatest authority and influence. He needs to stand up, speak for and defend the younger, but the younger in return needs to serve the older. This simple principle nurtures the constant abuse of power that is ever present in Madagascar. They are called the *Ray aman-dreny* that means father-and-mother or *Raiamandreny* that means leader in society. This same title can also be given to some one that is younger that has good leadership position or that shows through their intelligence or initiative that they are capable leaders. (Dahl, 1993, 97) The title *Raiamandreny* is given to the headmasters of the school, pastors, the head of a village or strong leaders in society. Even foreigners like missionaries will receive this title and its responsibilities. (Many times without knowing it!) The *Raiaman-dreny* has the highest authority and if this relationship is not respected one could

be corrected harshly. This honorable title *Raiamandreny* is given to men or women. "Becoming a *Raiamandreny* is a matter of being acknowledged as such.", "(Bloch 1971:46) Most of the time people in the community would simultaneously agree if someone is *Raiamandreny* or not. Others, every one would agree or not.

"*Ny Ray aman-dreny toy ny tendrombohitra, na saron-javona aza tsy mba tototra antsanga raha fahavaratra*" (The ray aman-dreny is like a mountain, even when covered with fog and rain it can still be seen.)

One of the *Raiamandreny's* greatest skills is oratory. Oratory is a skill that requires personality, knowledge and influence. To be known as a *Raiamandreny* is to be honored with a title rather than holding an office. "If every thing goes well a leader is honored but if something goes wrong he would lose his honor." (Dahl, 199: 97) This brings tension into most Malagasy communities, because indigenous leaders are some of the finest orators but protracted in practice.

"In the horizontal solidarity there reigns a corporate equality. All *havana* are equal by definition, they all share the same substance" (Dahl, 1999: 100) The Malagasy rural society established horizontal solidarity in their quest to be equal by pooling their finances and relatives. If family members come to know that some family member has become successful and has financial prosperity they will send their children to them, to take care of or to pay for their schooling. Relatives can come and stay with any family member whenever they want and have the right to take part in their prosperity. They also have to share what they have with their relatives. (Dahl, 1993: 101)

#### 2.9.7 Conflict with their System of Government Bureaucracy

This is where great tension in our case study comes from. The rules of bureaucracy and the rules of the good relationship *fihavanana* are not always compatible with integrity, justice and righteousness. Officials, leaders and even pastors are prone to abuse the respect people have for them in Madagascar. Christian leaders have the mentality that once they reach some level of superiority or spirituality that they do not have to live according to common rules and regulations in society.

Dahl gave a case that clearly illustrates the conflict between modern economy and the traditional social relationship. The incident took place between a church leader and an instructor of a church's program for agricultural instruction to farmers.

"One of the church leaders came to me and asked me for a bag of fertilizer. He said he would bring the money the following Monday. Since he was a church leader, I considered him *ray-aman-dreny*, and consequently I gave him a bag. The first Monday the church leader did not show up. When I approached him and asked, he said that he had some unexpected difficulties, but he affirmed that he would bring the money the next Wednesday. When the Wednesday arrived, there was still no money. It was then postponed to the following week, and so on. Consequently the stock inventory did not correspond with the receipts when the control agent came from the agricultural center, and I was charged with deceit." (Dahl, 1999: 118)

This problem deeply penetrates almost every organization in Madagascar including the church as we can see above. There is a great crossing of loyalties between modern economics and the traditional social field. **"People adapt to the modern formal view with its written rules, but continue to revisit the traditional informal culture and its unwritten rules."** (Dahl, 1999: 118) Strict bookkeeping and management rules were formed by western practices, but the moment there is an encounter with the social rules in Malagasy culture it becomes very difficult to apply these western rules. This continually places staff under tremendous amount of stress and confusion. The Malagasy staff wants to follow organizational policy, but once they are manipulated and confronted with hierarchal structures and cultural norms by *Raiamandreny* they lose confidence and humbly submit to the demands of the *Raiamandreny*.

Collectively these five points described above have great influence on parts of the way Malagasy leaderships operate. Their worldview dominates their practices, consciously or unconsciously. Leaders know their differences well and they know when to use and manipulate situations in organizations or culture to their own advantage. They seek greatness in a title, being acknowledged by those around them as *ray-aman-dreny* that gives them power and influence in their social structure, (that most of the time is being abused). They have a harmonious way of reasoning, seeking good relation with all, but in some cases they craftily conceal their real feelings or agenda. Brown gave a good description of their oratory skills when he said "Andrianampoinimerina must have been a spell-binding orator". (Brown, 1995: 105) Future planning and goal setting is normally foreign to them because they live in the past like their forefathers did. If they do prepare for the future they fear that it might only bring disaster. As a result, they would rather not take the initiative and wait for destiny to be filled. On the one hand the Malagasy want development and growth to gain desired success and states but on the other hand they still love their traditional way of doing things. There is a slow response in taking the right steps that could bring results.

## **2.10 Malagasy History and culture**

Many of these cultural traits and meanings can be identified as we go back and study the rich history of Malagasy leaders. Indigenous leadership is deeply rooted in the Malagasy history according to their traditional worldviews and culture, regardless of the foreign influences they had in the past. Indigenous leadership can be traced back to the time Madagascar was predominantly led through

kingdoms in different parts of the island, even before there was any foreign influence. In 1792 George Bechan gave a good summary of the scale of society that is still evident to some extent in today's society in Madagascar.

"The scale of society seemed pretty much arranged in three classes, the highest class, next to the king, and what I may call the officers of state, being those whose occupations was profession of arms, who rank probably according to the extent of their possessions in slaves and cattle, the next, fisherman, who remain on the sea coast, and they are engaged in the management of their canoes and fishing, and the last, the slaves." (Brown, 1995: 95)

These casts are known as *Andriana* the high class, *Hova* middle class, *Andevo* the lower class. In Madagascar the leaders in history came from the higher class and middle class society. Although there were different kings in different tribes, the kings in the highlands showed dynamic leadership abilities. Nicolas Mayeur who traveled and traded in many parts of Madagascar in 1777, recognized that the *Hova* tribe or *Imerina* as they are known today had a flourishing and industrious population under and organized government. He said that the *Hova* was more enlightened, more industrious and more active in administration than the coastal inhabitants. (Brown, 1995: 98)

Many indigenous leaders had the ability to break taboos and traditional practices. One of the Imerinas greatest kings that stood out far amongst other leaders in Madagascar's history was Andrianampoinimerina ("the prince in the heart of Imerina") Andrianampoinimerina was 100% an indigenous leader. He had absolutely no foreign influence in His leadership methodology. Andrianampoinimerina dealt wisely in his own kingdom to strengthen his people through extending there rice fields and he brought many other tribes under the Imerina kingdom rule that reigned in Antananarivo. He showed brilliant leadership characteristics combined with authentic wisdom in morality, equality, management and administration.

"He displayed most of the qualities of a great leader throughout history. He had the gift of inspiring and retaining the affection of his people, and was generous in rewarding those who served him. He was a skillful organizer and administrative structure without benefit of written records and therefore of bureaucracy. He must have been spell-binding orator; details of many of his speeches full of imagery which Malagasy love, were preserved in folk memory long after his death. As a military leader he was not perhaps in the front rank, owing his victories less to strategic or tactical skill than to his ability to organize, train and arm his troops. Whenever possible he preferred to gain his objectives by diplomacy rather than by armed forces; and although he could be ruthless in destroying those who oppose him he knew when magnanimity would serve his purposes better." (Brown, 1995: 105)

His spectacular leadership abilities show that Malagasy leaders can break away from the cultural norm. He had well formulated structure with a vision, and a goal. As we saw previously that Malagasies have difficulty thinking of the future through there concept of time, but Andrianampoinimerina envisioned the cost. He said "the sea shall be the limit of my rice-fields" and his goal was to extend his rice fields and to bring all people and tribes under his rule. After bringing many

kingdoms under him, on his deathbed he said to his son Radama 1 that succeeded him "remember the sea is the border of my rice field".

Andrianampoinimerina believed in dignity and sovereignty, and was a well structured man. He said "Ny olombelona toy ny amalona ka be siasia, hany ka tsy maintsy asiana didy hanerena azy mba handehanany aminy lalana tian-kombany". (Man is like a wondering eel; therefore there must be law to guide him into the right way.) He continued to say that, "There were princes before, but couldn't make the prince ship respectful, and had no worth, so was not to be obeyed and like nothing."

This led him to establish a structure with seven basic principals to bring peace and unity in society:

### Structure

1. In the kingdom, the *fokonolona* had a big place of responsibility. The *Fokonolona* is an organization formed by the assembly of the citizens in a society to take charge of social responsibilities. Andrianampoinimerina set the *fokonolona* as the lower judge of any event in the society.
2. Andrianampoinimerina raised up an office called the *vadintany* to avoid the civil conflicts (or, explosive gun and raised spears, as he said.) *Vadintany*: (leaders of Imerina) he said "I'll make hierarchically the court. I'm not a king with a public palace (shallow palace)". The *Vadintany* consisted of two groups the *Vadintanimbohitra*: low leader (for the city) and the *Vadintany Ambony*: high leader (for the royal palace).

In court if two people had a fight and do not want to forgive each other, they must be taken to the *Fokonolona* to be judged. If it is too difficult for the *Fokonolona*, these two people must be taken to the *Vadintany*. If it is too difficult for the *Vadintany*, they must be taken to the king himself. He said to these leaders, "Ny fanjakako tsy mba andalako olon-tiana ary tsy mba anaranan' olombodo" (There is no partiality in my kingdom, and no foolish person can indulge it.)

### Seven basic principles

According to Simeon Rajaona, (Rajaona, 1972: 516) Andrianampoinimerina's first goal in his leadership was that his people (*Vahoaka*) may live in peace. He has seven basic principles to bring about peace and unity:

The **first** principle of peace and unity was the hearty, mutual, and spiritual relationships among people. Andrianampoinimerina set a hierarchical ancestry, but "everyone is equal" (*Olona tsy misy hafa*). Andrianampoinimerina said "it is so that the high class cannot despise the low class". His **second** principle of peace and unity, according to Simeon Rajaona, is the "*Valin-Tamand'* (recompense of what you did collectively). The **third** is the fact of honoring each other and the **fourth** basic

principle of peace and unity is the selflessness among people. He said, "*Aleo halan'andriana, toy izay halam-bahoaka.*" (Rather be hated by prince than by people.) The **fifth** basic principle of peace and unity, said Simeon Rajaona, is keeping what you have promised. The **sixth** is the fact of not being ashamed, but speaking discreetly in case of difficult times. The **seventh** is cooperative trust.

His Slogan "*Hataoko ny kely manana ny azy, ny be manana ny azy.*" ("I will make the least have their own goods, and the biggest their own.")

His thought about it was that he protects the poor from the abuse of the great leaders, "lest the poor and least snatch away". (Rajaona, 1972: 173)

King Andrianampoinimerina repeated this again when he spoke to the people of Ambohimanga. "*Izaho no raiamandreny; ataoko ny kely manana ny azy, ny be manana ny azy, ataoko ny mahia hatavy, ny kely ho lehibe*" "I am the "raiamandreny". (I make the least have their own goods and the largest their own, I will make the skinny fat and the thinnest big.) (Rajaona, 1972: 707)

"Aza manao zara miangetra ka fianakaviana fidina no omena manontolo ny anjaran'ny maro." (Do not do partiality that you give wholly the portion of some people to the chosen family.)

The first indigenous Christian leaders came into power right after the missionaries were banned from the island in 1836. Persecution broke out upon all Christians as Queen Ranavalona killed and captured them. From 1836 to 1861 Christians were severely killed and persecuted for their faith but during this time a few key leader's survived through God's grace. During those times of persecution two main leaders survived, Rafaravavay Mary and Paul the diviner as he was known. Probably the most prominent leader from the second part of the persecution, and many years after his death, Andriambelo was one of the greatest names in the Malagasy church. (Smith, 1987 98) William Ellis described him briefly:

"I was deeply impressed with the gentleness of the demeanor of the first-named preacher, his varied intelligence, great activity, and unmerited endeavors to strengthen the faith of his brethren, as well as to urge upon all to whom he could safely speak the claims of the gospel, and the blessing attending its reception. Sincerely and earnest devotion to Christ appeared to be distinguishing features of his character." (Smith, 1987 97)

He had first hand experience of the persecutions but also entered into a time of new light for the church in Madagascar. In 1861 the new King Radama 2 announced religious freedom and all prisoners were set free. Andriambelo had one of the biggest churches during this time, up to 1000 members. He baptized queen Ranavalona the 2nd and queen Ranavalona the 3rd. He was not known for "his intellectual power but for his high moral and spiritual character and his zeal for the cause of Christ". (Smith, 1987: 98) He refused to receive a salary, he was kind

to the poor and orphans, gentleman and highly respected by all, even by the drunkards and quarrelers.

Historically we can see that the first indigenous leader's showed excellent leadership capabilities in the different fields they were involved in. Ralambo showing initiative to try new things broke a taboo that was passed down for generations. Andrianampoinimerina dealt wisely as he extended his kingdom by uniting kingdoms with the Imerina. Christianity prevailed despite the severe persecution; they were fully devoted to Jesus even when faced with death. Humility, integrity and blamelessness were the characteristics of the early indigenous Christian leaders.

Despite the magnificent testimony of the church and its leaders during this time, idolatry was still the order of the day. "Unhappily these customs often continued alongside a profession of Christianity." (Smith, 1987: 115) This is still the case here in Antananarivo today. Just a month ago a cow was slaughtered at a building site in the city because of the death of a man while building. The other builders refused to continue building until a cow's blood was offered to chase away the evil spirits. During the same ceremony a priest prayed for God's blessing on the continuation of the building project.

### **Transformation in Malagasy leadership**

Since the twentieth century, leadership transformation has been taken place across the world. It is evident in the explosion of leadership development courses worldwide and books that have been written on different kinds of leadership theories and practices. Leadership in Madagascar has also taken a twist, since 2002 presidential elections introduced a new atmosphere to Malagasy leadership when Mark Ravalomanana was elected. He studied in the United States, came back to Madagascar, started his own industry. After a few years he became the mayor of Antananarivo and served in that office for four years. He was elected as the president of the FJKM Protestant church and eventually elected as the President of Madagascar. He had to stand down as the president of the FJKM church, however, he still serves as the vice president of the denomination. He introduced a new team leadership model from the authoritative, informal, oppressive leadership that was characteristic of the former president. Mr. Ravalomanana is a dynamic leader that was able to win many supporters by his intriguing speech and he succeeded despite of all his strong opposition. No leader is perfect and he also has his flaws. Still he mainly seeks the welfare of the people and new ways to empower them by developing the country. He has set his face to "break with the past" and has instilled a sense of teamwork within the new government, cabinet ministers and senior officials. His goal is to put an end to corruption that was nurtured by a hierarchal social structure.

Malagasies have realized the need for leadership change as they seek to rise to a new level of development. Various foreign institutes have recently been hosting

leadership workshops in Madagascar. In June 2003, a leadership workshop or learning retreat was held for cabinet members that focused on strengthening collegial decision making and team work. In January 2004 they held a second retreat that focused on cross-ministerial team-work at various hierarchical levels, rather than testing a specific methodology for achieving group consensus.

In December 2006 we are awaiting a new presidential election. Most of the leaders running for the election have brilliant leadership capabilities, extensive knowledge of society and all of them have studied abroad at some point in time.

### **2.11 Church structure**

When looking at some other authors work I found some interesting viewpoints about church structural problems that may give us more understanding in the LIC church situation.

Loren Mead gives two views: In the first view he says that we have structural problems in our congregations, but those problems are a part of something bigger than what we are. The issue of church structure is related to something God is doing throughout this world. Secondly Mead does not think structure is our real problem. He said, "Structure in the church has always flowed from what we understand the mission of the church to be" (Freeman, 1994: 3)

Structure is the way we try prepare ourselves for doing mission work. Mead motivates church leaders to focus on strengthening their mission rather than to focus on structure. Rather let the structure come out of your mission. First we need each other in community. We must work towards a deeper and stronger community in our congregation. Congregations need pastoral care, affirmation, and they need a sense of a larger mission. Maxwell also emphasized the need for strong leaders in order to have strong organizations.

Robert W. Jenson used as text an address of John Paul II to a delegation from the Bossey Ecumenical Institute.

"For Christians the supreme model of communion is the Holy Trinity, the mystery of three divine persons in a perfect communion of love. Every work and deed of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, was a revelation of the inner life, which he shares with the Father and the Holy Spirit.... In the plan of salvation God willed to reconcile mankind to himself by making it possible for us to participate in this mystery of divine communion through his Son.... The People of God, made one by sharing in the divine unity, is, as the Second Vatican Council says, "a sacrament or sign and instrument of intimate union with God and of the unity of all humanity." (Freeman, 1994)

From this text he drew seven propositions for the doctrine of Trinity for the structure of the church. I chose not to go deeper into detail, but one key thing he said was that our church relations and structure should reflect the harmony and integrity we find in the Trinity. When people look at the characteristics of the church and its leaders they need to see Jesus.

Many times when people look at the church and its structure all they observe is that the church reflects quarrels, dishonesty, corruption, and abuse of power. Instead, the church should reflect accountability, honesty, love, and peace towards each other. Then when people look at the church, they will see our Lord as the head of the church.

### **Hierarchical Structure in the church**

Hierarchy based leadership operates in organizations or groups whose members are arranged in ranks of age, power or seniority. For example: President (or Co-Presidents), Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, etc. This format can be useful for getting things done because it has well-defined roles and designates a clear chain of responsibility.

Synodal, diocesan or hierarchical systems of government mostly show slow growth according to Wagner. Church growth experts mention four principles for church growth in a hierarchical structure:

1. Peter Wagner believes synodal church structure needs strong, directive leadership. (Wagner, 1979, 60-61)
2. Synodal systems rob congregations of responsibility and initiative. Leaders only do what is required of them but do not think it is their responsibility to do some pioneer work and start new churches. This weakens the church in Madagascar and it is also the main reason why there are still so many un-reached people in Madagascar.
3. Synodal offices tend to be conservative and financially orientated.
4. Synodal executives lack the flexibility to adapt and make quick and new changes.

Lyle Schaller has found that ecumenicalism and politics at the executive level of denominations are generally associated with churches, which are suffering loss of self-esteem and credibility. They are usually introverted activities rather than evangelical and they sap the church of its integrity. "Growing churches are marked more by intensity of belief, independence of spirit and a strong missionary vision". (Schaller, 1978: 60-61)

We have seen previously that Malagasy culture has predominantly a hierarchy social structure. For this reason Raiamandreny, (Malagasy leaders) tend to function through hierarchy leadership practices. Hierarchical leadership models have advantages but are not superior to team leadership or management leadership models. Neither does team leadership nor management leadership exceed hierarchical leadership. Contemporary leadership gurus want to push hierarchy leadership overboard and incorporate consensus and shared leadership.

Nowadays power, authority, chains of command, and authoritarian hierarchies are unavoidable realities in churches and organizations. Globally leadership is being forced to change into a more liberal, comprehensive mold. Team leadership or shared leadership are generally promoted, but as much as members want to see hierarchy leadership done away with it will always return no matter what contemporary leadership training is given. James Hillman said in his book, *Kinds of Power* that:

"The leader cannot help but come forward and cannot help being pushed forward by others who intuitively recognize leadership and submit to a hierarchical structure" (Hillman, 1995: 150)

Hierarchical leadership seems to get the job done, but leaves little room for inferior people or the lower cast's opinions.

"In the Malagasy context, a more hierarchical culture, the leadership at the local church level and above tends towards the structured, managerial, and possibly, autocratic. Therefore the need for the more functional, organic aspect of leadership is all the more necessary" (Neumann, 1996: 39)

Neither of the above two quotes is wrong, but leaders need to examine and define as clear as possible the line where hierarchical control ends and participatory management begins. Opposing worldviews like hierarchy vs. participation based equality can and will create serious problems.

## 2.12 A search for research methods

Humans are not all knowing and they face various problems that need to be solved. Their knowledge is incomplete in virtually every subject and area. They can address their lack of knowledge and those unsolved problems by asking relevant questions and seeking answers through various research methods.

Nevertheless research is not as simple as collecting information or the transportation of facts from one location to another. Research is a systematic process of collecting and analyzing information in order to increase ones understanding of the phenomena under question.

Leedy and Ormrod (Leedy, 2001: 4) said research has eight distinct characteristics:

1. Research originates with a question.
2. Research requires a clear articulation of a goal.
3. Research follows a specific plan of procedure.
4. Research usually divides the principles problems into more manageable sub problems.

5. Research is guided by the research problem, question, or hypothesis.
6. Research accepts certain critical assumptions.
7. Research requires the collection and interpretation of data in an attempt to restore the problem that initiated the research.
8. Research is, by its nature, cyclical, or, more exactly, helical.

Adding to these one can categorize research into two types of research methods. They mostly differ on two dimensions: the nature of the question asked and the method used to answer it. One way they don't necessarily differ is in the content or focus of the research. For instance, one could be non-experimental, being attentive to people's habits, or experimental by exposing people to a certain scenario to see their reaction. Here is a brief overview of each method.

Type of research	Purpose	Time Frame	Degree of Control over factor	Code words to look for in research article	Example
<b>Nonexperimental research</b> <b>Descriptive</b>	Describing the characteristics of an existing phenomenon	Current	Non or low	"discribe" "interview" "review literature"	A survey of dating practices of adolescent females
<b>Nonexperimental research</b> <b>Historic</b>	Relate events that have occurred in the past to current events	Past	None or low	"past" "describe"	An analysis of Freud's use of hypnosis as it relates to current psychotherapy practices
<b>Nonexperimental research</b> <b>Correlational</b>	Exsamine the relationships between variables	Current or past	Low to medium	"relationship" "related to" "associated with" "predict"	An investigation that focuses on the relation between the number of hours of television watching and grade point

					average.
<b>Exsperimental</b>	To test for true cause and effect relationships	Current	High	"Function of" "cause of" "comparison between" affects of"	The effect of a preschool language programe on the language skills of inner city children.
<b>Quasi-Experimental</b>	To test for causal relationships without having full control	Current or past	Moderate to high	"Function of" "cause of" "comparison between" "effects of"	Gender differences in spatial and verbal abilities.

Table 1.1 Different types of research. (Neil, 2000: 11)

Other researchers tend to categorize research studies into two broader categories: quantitative research and qualitative research. Quantitative research is mainly used to answer questions about relationships in measurable variables. Its predominant purpose is to explain, predict, and control phenomena. It relates to other traditional, experiential and positivist approaches. Where as qualitative research is used to answer questions about the complex nature of phenomena. Its predominant purpose is to describe and understand the phenomena from the participants point of view. It relates to other interpretive, constructivist or post positivist approaches. (Leedy, 2001: 147-150)

Question	Quantitative	Qualitative
<b>What is the purpose of the research?</b>	To explain and predict To confirm and validate To test theory	To describe and explain To explore and interpret To build theory
<b>What is the nature of the research?</b>	Focused Known variables Established guidelines Static design Context-free Detached view	Holistic Unknown variables Flexible guidelines Emergent design Context-bound Personal view
<b>What are the methods of data collection?</b>	Reprehensive, large sample Standardized instruments	Informative, small sample Observations, interviews

<b>What is the form of reasoning used in analysis?</b>	Deductive analysis	Inductive analysis
<b>How are the findings communicated?</b>	Numbers Statistics, aggregated data Formal voice, scientific style	Words Narratives, individual quotes Personal voice, literary style

Table 1.2 Qualitative and Quantitative research approaches. (Leedy, 2001: 112)

### Qualitative research

The above qualitative research would be compatible with a narrative approach because of its objectives, especially in reporting its findings that are communicated in narratives, individual quotes and personal voice.

To find understanding the researcher needs to dig deep to get the complete understanding of the phenomena he is studying. Qualitative research allows for numerous forms of data to be collected and examined from various angles to construct a meaningful picture of the situation under study. There are five common qualitative research designs suggested by Leedy and Ormrod (Leedy, 2001 148)

<b>Design</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Methods of Data Collection</b>	<b>Methods of data Analysis</b>
<b>Case study</b>	To understand one person or situation in great depth	One case or a few cases within its/their natural setting	Observation Interviews Appropriate written documents and/ or audiovisual material	Categorization and interpretation of data in terms of common themes Synthesis into an overall portrait of the case(s)
<b>Ethnography</b>	To understand how behavior reflect the culture of a	A special field site in which a group of people share a	Participant observation  Structured interviews with	Focus on significant events

	group	common culture	informant collection	
<b>Phenomenological study</b>	To understand an experience from the participant's point of view	A particular phenomena as it is typically lived and perceived by human beings	In depth, unstructured interviews Purposeful sampling of 5-25 individuals	Search for meaning units that reflect various aspects of the experience Interrogation of the meaning units into a typical experience
<b>Grounding theory study</b>	To derive a theory from data collected in a natural setting	Human actions and interactions, and how they result from and influence one another	Interviews Any other relevant data sources	Prescribed and systematic methods of coding the data into categories and identifying interrelationships
<b>Content analysis</b>	To identify the specific characteristics of a body of material	Any verbal, visual, or behavioral form of communication	Identification and possible sampling of the specific material to be analyzed Coding of the material in terms of predetermined and precisely defined characteristics	Tabulation of the frequency of each characteristic descriptive or inferential statistics analysis as needed to answer the research question

Table 1.3 Characteristics of different qualitative designs. (Leedy 2001: 157)

Apart from these different descriptions of research methods and approaches the most basic distinction between research methods are between basic research and applied research. "Basic research is research that has no immediate application at

the time it is completed, whereas applied research is research that does." (Neil, 2000: 15)

## **2.13 Summary**

In a practical theological view, theology is alive in the present realities of God. God works in and through people. This is seen as communicative actions. These actions need to be interpreted and analyzed. Theology is also practical as applied theology. Practical theology should create norms of human well being and actions that are publicly understandable. (Browning, 1979) It is mainly concerned with the encounter between God and people.

I would come to the theological task with questions about practices that would lead to reflection on theories and to possibly form new meanings and practices. Practice to theory and back to practice again. Practical theology is "a critical, investigative, and dialogical process", which explores and creates new meanings (Campbell, 1987; Pattison et al 1994).

The complex processes of leadership and its methodologies are rarely discussed by the LIC church community. The problem is not unique to LIC church, as researchers have always found it hard to understand leadership practices. They found that no single trait or combination of traits explain leadership capabilities. Researchers then turned their focus on what influence the situation has on the leader's skills and his behavior. From this they found that leadership effectiveness depends on the situation. The next step was to find out what characteristics or attitudes were possessed by successful leaders in order to understand what helps leaders to be successful. From there researchers focused their attention on understanding the individual characteristics that leaders had that made organizations effective and successful. This triggered my curiosity to find out what hinders the LIC church leaders from being effective in keeping their church members. The interrogation led to the examination of Malagasy history and culture in order to understand how Malagasy leadership practices developed, and if that influenced the S.P. leadership practices in the LIC church.

To understand indigenous leadership we need to know what forms and influences its practices. Generally cultural leadership practices flow mainly from three universal sources:

1. Beliefs, values and the assumptions of the founders
2. Learning experiences of group members
3. New beliefs, values and assumptions brought by new members.

As we bear these tree universal sources in mind, cultural diversity creates many challenges for leadership theories, practices and research. Culture shapes peoples understanding of their leadership's values, effectiveness and development for both individuals and organizations. In Madagascar culture would tend to shape restrictions and strict sanctions of those that oppose cultural expectations.

Malagasy culture has predominantly a hierarchy social structure. For this reason Raiamandreny, (Malagasy leaders) tend to function through hierarchy leadership practices. Hierarchical leadership models have their advantages but are not superior to team leadership or management leadership models. Neither does team leadership nor management leadership exceed hieratical leadership. Contemporary leadership gurus want to push hierarchy leadership overboard and incorporate consensus and shared leadership.

Nowadays power, authority, chains of command, and authoritarian hierarchies are unavoidable realities in churches and organizations. Globally leadership is being forced to change into a more liberal, comprehensive mold. Team leadership or shared leadership are generally promoted but as much as members want to see hierarchy leadership done away with it will always return no mater what contemporary leadership training is given. James Hillman said in his book, *kinds of Power* that: "The leader cannot help but come forward and cannot help being pushed forward by others who intuitively recognize leadership and submit to a hierarchical structure, the pecks order". (Hillman, 1995: 150) Hierarchical leadership seems to get the job done but leaves little room for inferior Malagasy peoples or the lower cast's opinions.

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Neither of the two above quotes is wrong but leaders need to examine and define as clear as possible the line where hierarchical control ends and participatory management begins. Opposing worldviews like hierarchy vs. participation based equality can and will create serious problems.

## *Methodology*

### **3 Research methods**

The research will be focused on the question the S.P. asked:

“Why do so many people flock to my church, respond to the invitation to commit their hearts and lives to Christ, but don't continue to worship with us?”

From this problem statement (question) sub-problems were identified that would have some bearing on the situation under research. I then identified three main role players: the Leadership team, the congregation and the culture & society. Having identified these role-players we invited them to participate in formal and informal interviews. At the same time we gave out a questionnaire in order to get more feedback from the congregation. I took care to carefully record the whole process observing continuously, recording everything that might assist in the research. As patterns appeared I searched for a deeper understanding of these concepts through existing literature on these matters.

There has been great discussion about which methodology to follow in researching the above phenomena. While going through literature about research methodologies, I decided for this research to use a narrative approach combined with the qualitative method of a case study design.

Following a narrative approach I will use the **ABDCE** model that Muller, Van Deventer and Human suggest as metaphor for research. (Muller, 2001: 76-96) Other qualitative methods I have used are questionnaires, formal and informal interviews and observation.

#### **3.1 Narrative method**

##### **3.1.1 Description of method**

God acts in and through people and these actions can be interpreted as communicative. As Muller explained previously these actions could be better understood in a narrative description. This leads the researcher to following a narrative approach for research that would make the process more understandable and systematic in its report.

The purpose of this narrative research is not to study the churches' stories from a scientific perspective but rather to listen, observe, and interpret their actions theologically and to work therapeutically with them in order to form new theories for their praxis that could open new possibilities with a new ending for them. (Lynne and Mcleod, 2004: 168). Through this research at the LIC Church, practical theology anticipates the real purpose to come to fulfillment in the edification of the Body of Christ.

Anne Lamott's model for fiction writing was used as a method for doing narrative therapy and Muller, Van Deventer, and Human adapted this method into research. The narrative approach provides a useful process for the development of a narrative based research method (Practical Theology in SA 2001: Nr 16(2)).

### 3.1.1.1 *The ABDCE MODEL*

Anne Lamott explains Alice Adams' formula for fiction writing, which she said is an exciting way of story development. Lamott's method for fiction writing was then adapted for doing narrative therapy. The same approach was also adopted for doing research. As a research model this method allows for a very natural research situation - approaching real-life situations.

The objective of this research model is not merely to be an observer and then attempt to bring about desired change. Rather, the objective is to listen to the stories told and to be drawn into them. The narrative approach strives for participatory interaction rather than being an outsider.

The formula ABDCE represents Action, Background, Development, Climax and the Ending thus providing for the full account. "A" stands for the action or the problem under research, meaning the phenomenon or problem we investigate that individuals, communities, or congregations have brought to light. This does not mean that we are doing an "action research" but rather looking for the stories told about these actions. Lamott believes people live in short stories because that is what friends tell each other. These stories contain their pain, joy, passion, rage, yearnings and their cry against injustice. In this approach, the action is concerned with the contemporary story, the "now" of the story rather than the past or future. For instance, "what are the people's routines or beliefs?" It will help us shift the emphasis from the problem to the story of the action. The story has the ability to bring new possibilities in creating a new tomorrow rather than focusing on the problem itself. The research should not only focus on the problem, but on every action that contains possible alternative stories.

During this process the researcher remains in the "not-knowing" position - he allows people/communities to tell their own story in their own way like friends do. With the narrative approach, one can invite people to tell their stories, but one still has to set some boundaries to stay focused on a specific action to guard against various discourses. After taking an empirical look at the contemporary story of people and communities, we can move to a further investigation in search for deeper understanding of the action.

To find the exact problem one needs to go to the background "B." The background refers to the holistic picture, the history of the action. The background questions; How did it start, where did it come from, and who is involved? Lamott (1995: p74) uses the image of the designer of a play, a movie, or a story. When people/communities tell their stories of the past they are actually designing the set or stage for the action. "Every room is about memory" People

design the set as we invite them to revisit previous situations. With curiosity and patience the researcher may be able to identify and develop the research plot in detail.

This development “D” then becomes like a Polaroid that slowly develops around our conversations until we are able to see the clear picture. Not just them telling their story but actually developing their story. This means getting to know the people and communities that we are dealing with. Knowing what makes them tick, what they care most about, and what are their secrets?

This approach is not merely about story telling but developing these stories and awaiting new and better stories. To be an effective researcher one needs to have a good, long look at the Polaroid awaiting for the plot to develop. This requires the narrative researcher to be patient, intriguing, and curious while awaiting new and better stories to develop. This is not a passive waiting or a withdrawal from interpretation but involves both the researcher and the characters in an active process of story development. It is not a withdrawal from interpretation but a withdrawal from one-sided interpretation. For the characters in the research are not objects but participants, and they should be allowed to take part in the development process. The researchers objective is to reflect on the background and to facilitate deeper conversations, while waiting for a plot to emerge. Through listening to these characters one will develop compassion and understanding for their situation. This will result in a clear perspective.

The development will eventually reach the climax “C” where all the rivers of conversations come together. This is not an easy road to travel. The climax should reverently be waited for and not forced by the researcher, or else it will only be propaganda material. Understanding that comes too quickly may not be understanding at all. Quick analysis could bring misinterpretation of the given situation. Many times one judges by outward appearance, jumping to conclusions. Lamott uses a wonderful metaphor “if you are lost in the forest, let the horse find his way home.” The researcher should allow the people and communities to reach the climax of understanding in their own story. The climax will be able to speak for itself. It will bring us to a point of reverence and we will really care with compassion.

In any story or research there is an ending “E”. In the end questions arise like: what is our sense of who these people are now, what are they left with, what happened, and what did it mean? Some are happy endings and some are not so happy. Nevertheless, endings bring us into a new arena and new meaning. The ending is different from the start and it leaves room for new stories and new possibilities.

### 3.1.2 Problems

Problems I encountered with this approach were due to a lack of understanding of the objectives with the different steps. This could be accredited to the shortage

of literature describing the method. Coming to grips with the case study design was a little easier seeing that there was extensive material explaining the process and objectives. This was one of the reasons I turned to a second qualitative research approach, the case study to provide a context for the ABDCE model. All these methods categorize and interpret the data in terms of common themes. Their purpose is to explore and interpret the observed phenomena. They have flexible guidelines allowing an emergent design. Both encourage personal views through observation and formal and informal interviews that are reported through narratives, individual voice and quotes in a literary style.

### **3.2 Case study**

A narrative research method creates logical steps for research development and the reporting of data that are a part of qualitative research methods. It also helps one not to go on various trails but to stay focused on the present situation. In the five common qualitative research designs described by Leedy and Omrod the case study design would fit the best with this particular research because of common objectives.

#### **3.2.1 Description**

The case study has many advantages because it is used to study an individual or an institution in a unique setting or situation as intensely and detailed as possible. Second, the case study is a unique way to capture information about human behaviour. Third, the case study method also encourages the researcher to follow different methods of collecting his data. Finally, case studies do not necessarily result in hypotheses being tested, but give direction for further study. (Neil 2000: 194)

Case studies are common to various other fields of studies like medicine, education and psychology. In a case study design, one is concerned with an in-depth study of the phenomenon for a defined period of time. Case studies are also suitable when little is known or understood about phenomenon. (Leedy, 2001: 149)

According to Leedy and Ormrod (Leedy, 2001: 149) in the case study design extensive data is collected on the individual, program, and events or when combined with a narrative approach, the "action" on which the investigation is focused. The data that is collected includes observations, interviews, documents (like for instance newspaper articles), past records and audiovisual material. In many cases the researcher will spend an extensive amount of time with participants, interacting and spending regular time observing them in their setting.

The context, historical, economic and social factors that have a connotation with the situation plays an important part in the research development. Leedy said to analyze the data in a case study one needs to follow these typical steps.

Organizing details about the case

Categorizing of data

Interpretation of single instances

Identification of patterns

Synthesis and generalizations

(Leedy, 2001 : 150)

Eventually many separate pieces of information will then point to the same conclusion that will bring us to the climax. In the report I would include a base for studying the case, a detailed description of the facts related to the case, a description of data collected, patterns found, and finally the connection to the larger scheme of trying to answer the question that guided the "action" researched. (Leedy, 2001 : 150)

### 3.2.2 Problems

On the contrary there are several disadvantages in following a case study design. "What you see is not always what you get" it seems really easy to follow a case study design, just studying one person or one situation or one school. However, one needs to spend an immense amount of time collecting extensive data on a wide variety of situations and conditions. Second, recordings might be accurate and reflect "reality" but it is only one "reality". Finally, the major weakness is that in a single case study one cannot be sure that it is comparable to other situations.

## 3.3 Questionnaires

### 3.3.1 Description

"The objectives of a questionnaire are to set structured and focused questions." (Neil 2000: p136) One can save time through using questionnaires because they allow individuals to complete them without any direct assistance or intervention from the researcher. The objectivity of the data can also be easily shared with other researchers for additional analysis.

### 3.3.2 Problems

One of the biggest disadvantages Neil found with questionnaires is the completion and return rate.

This disadvantage was reinforced by Malagasy culture that makes questionnaires some of the most difficult research tools to use. In the Malagasy culture the following factors created extensive difficulty for me in using this approach to collect data:

In asking questions about Malagasy leadership, I have been looked on as being indiscreet, since society or minor citizens are not allowed to question leadership in

Madagascar. Raiamandreny practices and speeches are *kabari tsy valina* (a speech one cannot reply to). Which makes it a one-way dialog, followers need to listen, hear and obey their leaders. In any normal situation questions are not asked in this culture about people that should be highly respected and honored, like for instance, pastors or other religious leaders. Malagasies don't normally confront others or bring moral or ethical violations to light, fearing to hurt someone else, therefore questioning a respectable leader would be pushing their boundaries.

The non dismissal of the incapable. Here I would like to refer to an observation Dahl made in his theses.

An NGO company has established schools for general education all over the island. There were about 120 schools under administration with more than 12,000 students. Approximately 400 teachers worked in these schools. Thus at national level they have established a central school office that needed to be run by a secretary elected by the national board. He had several administrative duties like collecting annual reports to visiting schools. The secretary is also the official representative of the NGO to the national authorities. All these activities are quit complex and call for a dynamic person of initiative and energy.

During the last 18 years the secretary only occasionally convened the central school committee and for the last 5 years none has been convened at all. The secretary had no records of schools, he did not know which schools were still functioning or not, he had no statistics: As a result of his negligence, schools became independent in all aspects. To the westerner what needs to be done is clear, the secretary needs to be dismissed but when speaking to the Malagasy officers a very different interpretation was given. To the westerner's shock, the secretary was re-elected every three years.

In this case the westerner expected dismissal, but the Malagasy insisted that he has been legally elected and that there are no other candidates and finally that he has the diploma for the job. The Malagasy wants to avoid *tsiny* (blame), and give priority to *fihavanana* (personal relationship), and wait for *tody* (world order or justice) to eliminate the incapable. (Dahl, 1993: 80-84)

So why did I continue with a questionnaires? The questionnaire did help in giving me some ideas of what some people were thinking and experiencing in the congregational life at the LIC church. These personal opinions of the congregational members also helped me to be more specific and to narrow down the development of two specifically identified phenomenons.

### **3.4 Interviews**

#### **3.4.1 Description**

Interviews relate to questionnaires in the sense that one can take informal question-and-answer onto the street, or one can use highly structured and detailed questionnaires in a formal situation. Interviews work particularly well when one struggles to come by information in any other way and especially when one would like a first hand knowledge of people's feelings and perceptions. Interviews also offer great flexibility in allowing the conversation to go in other

directions (within the phenomenon). Information gained through interviews can be well used when one examines the outcome in the light of other information collected through out the study (Neil, 2000: 196)

There are two types of general questions the researcher can have, structured or closed-ended questions, or unstructured or open-ended questions. Structured questions are direct and short whereas in unstructured question the interviewee could elaborate upon his response.

In developing an interview it is of importance to first state the purpose of the interview, what is the goal? Then select and develop appropriate questions for the interview. The interviewer also needs to be polite, neatly dressed, have an uncontroversial appearance and be on time for appointments.

### 3.4.2 Problems

Interviewing takes a lot of time; to interview 10 people could take up to 20-30 hours. In the beginning, being unfamiliar with Antananarivo, it was time consuming tracking interviewees down. Apart from the time track, being a foreigner "vazaha" in Madagascar means people treat you different. If they are not trying to make a fortune off you they will try to please you in any way they can. Many times they would say things they think you want to hear and not necessarily the truth.

Some interviewees were able to speak English and others not. I worked with translators for most of the interviews because many of the participants could only speak Malagasy and were not able to speak English in interviews done. Working through a translator brings more difficulties. Time needs to be spent with the translator in order to build trust and to become familiar with each other. Many times I wound myself in conversation with students where they gang up to make a point, even when they don't all agree with each other, they would see themselves as a group and my statement or point of view as opposing theirs, even when right or wrong. It seems like they would stand together even when something is not true or right. This makes it very important for the translator to be familiar with the interviewee and his subject and he needs to learn to be neutral in his own opinion.

Another difficulty is that translators do not always interpret the detail and may result in losing key information, or they would twist information to what they believe the person is communicating rather than giving a direct translation. This created a loss of some important information but we could still attempt to use that information we did receive as effectively as possible. It was also hard in the sense that I was not able to use all the interview skills I wanted to use to affirm and put people at ease in the interviews allowing them to go deeper into the background and development of the action. Although it did motivated me to give my full attention to their point of view and listen sincerely to their stories, reflecting and trying to ask intelligent questions.

## 3.5 Observation

### 3.5.1 Description

The main advantage of conducting observation is that it is flexible. One can easily shift the focus as new data comes in. "Observation is where the researcher stands outside of the behavior being observed and creates a log, notes, or an audio or video recording of the behavior." (Neil, 2000: 134)

#### Behavior recording techniques

According to Neil there are four general categories of recording observation:

1. Duration recording, here the researcher records the length of time the behavior occurs.
2. Frequency recording, the researcher records the number of times the behavior occurs.
3. Interval recording, here the researcher observes a subject for a fixed amount of time.
4. Continuous recording, the researcher records everything that happens.

The research mainly followed a continuation recording design in observation. Thus recorded behavior followed a more natural stream of events. This was a rich and fruitful way of collecting information with little planning but left me with an intensive job of sifting through the recorded information at the time of analysis.

Practical theology as praxis simply consists of communicative actions that serve the gospel. These actions could be identified through observation. The most knowledge gained has been by observing the leadership and how they managed the church. The difficulty of communication and lack of honest communication encouraged me to observe the people rather than literally talking to people about their actions. In the two and half years of my association with the leaders of the LIC church close attention was paid to their communicative actions.

### 3.5.2 Problems

Some problems with observation techniques are that a person's presence may affect the behavior being observed. "By ones very presence, the researcher might alter what people say and do and how significant events unfold" (Leedy, 2001: 158) Our own viewpoint may also affect the way we record the behavior observed. Neil continues to emphasize the importance of not interfering with the behavior observed.

Caution needs to be taken not to make impetuous observation that will only lead to misunderstanding the people and the given phenomena. One will be tempted to

jump to a quick conclusion during observation in seeking answers and understanding. However, through continual observation, truth will be discovered.

### Researcher's Role

Reflection will be done through a case study of the LIC church, which faces some difficulties in understanding why people come to faith in their congregation but do not continue to worship with them. Whenever people encounter a crisis it leads them to reflect on their theory and their praxis, trusting that from these studies new practices will flow. These new practices will probably cause new crises that will lead back to reviewing their theory again. Browning calls this the practice to theory and back to practice model of theology. (Browning, 1991)

As the researcher, I will place myself between the two communities involved- the Christian community and the surrounding non-Christian communities of Antananarivo- in order to obtain a more holistic viewpoint. Hopefully my research will be characterized by a willingness to really listen and seek understanding of the present realities by pursuing an active enquiry, as opposed to a purely historical study.

It is of the utmost importance to remain silent while focusing on listening to the people's success, pain and need. Most of the time as pastors we have preconceived motives and ideas when people come to us for help and assistance. We have the urgency to lead someone to the Lord, to bring a powerful message, or to feel the great thrills of the Lord's presence. It would be of greater value to implement Lynne and Mcleod principles of telling, listening, retelling, and construction, deconstructing, and reconstructing. (Lynne and Mcleod, 2004: 168) This is sometimes easier said than done. There is always a tendency to react to the situation at hand without taking time in applying these principals. Through a continual pursuit of applying this approach it can be mastered over time.

(Campbell 1987) and (Pattison with Woodward 1994) view pastoral theology as a "critical, exploratory, investigative, and dialogical process, which explores and creates new meaning that could empower the teller to dismantle the dominant story and enrich the marginalized discourse". This prompts me to practice pastoral care as an exploratory and transformational act, through dialogical communication rather than setting out prescriptions and rules. I will follow the Cultural-linguistic model Gerkin proposed in developing theology (Gerkin, 1997: 110), pastoral care as a narrative hermeneutical model, placing myself between these two communities.

As researcher, I will follow the narrative approach. This is to separate myself from my agenda, desires, and ideas and to identify with the problem, identifying unique outcomes, formulating and building an alternative theory. During this process I will be asking appropriate questions and practice deconstructive listening to understand the LIC churches pain and needs. Practical theology is concerned with the religious person's actions. As a researcher my role is to closely study people's religious actions; not to be the expert arriving to fix broken

pictures, but to be present, walking alongside people for a time to find understanding and from that position and perspective to try and encourage new praxis. (Muller, 1999)

### 3.5.3 Researcher's Role in procedure

My main role in this research procedure is to learn and find understanding from the phenomenon under study. throughout this procedure I will be in a "not knowing position", (Freedman & Combs, 2002: 205), if the researcher places himself in the "not-knowing" position he automatically allows people/communities to tell their own story in their own way like friends do. This will also assist me in truthfully listening to their story as it is told to me, while facilitating our conversations.

Campbell says, "pastoral care is a relationship that is founded upon integrity of the individual and it does not primarily depend on knowledge and development of skill". (Campbell, 1981: 37) We need to be more than merely proficient or professionals, rather a friend, companion and comrade in time of need. People go through personal, interpersonal and relational problems, some more severe than others. During these times, our non-professional approach will bring us closer to people as they relate to us. The greatest hazard we face in trying to help others is our verbosity. When playing verbal games with people instead of seeking that which brings them peace, we enlarge the gap between them and us that eventually hinders prime care.

### 3.5.4 Confidential integrity and credibility

In the beginning it was really hard to get the ball rolling. At first there was no level of trust from the people's side. People were extremely suspicious about my research, some did avoided conversations with me and others did not come to formal interview appointments. The Malagasy people saw me as a foreigner trying to find something wrong with the leaders of the church. As earlier explained, in Madagascar people do not confront others directly. They will conceal other people's failures, rather than confront the guilty party in fear of losing good relations *fiihavanana* and would rather wait for *tody* (justice) to eliminate the guilty.

For example a volunteer came from the USA to help out in an orphanage. After serving there for a few months she discovered that the pastor, who was also in charge of the orphanage, was sexually abusing the girls in the orphanage. Since the orphanage was supported from abroad she immediately reported it and he was dismissed. Soon after that the volunteer had to leave the area. The people in the community persecuted her for the loss of their pastor, not thinking of the damage done by him to the girls.

There are many other examples like this that cause me to take a considerable amount of time to communicate my intentions in the least threatening manner to protect myself and any person involved in the research process.

In doing research gender does help to an extent. Men are well known for their historical memory and ability to recall stories, but they would close up and avoid any discussion about the real problems in their society or situation, whereas women are much more open and confrontational. This has great importance in selecting participants.

Eventually trust was built between us through patience and determination and consistent interest. What helped me was that a key person initiated the research action/problem. I stayed with him and his family in their house during some of my data collection. We daily worked alongside each other and before long I moved from "outside" to "inside". That helped us to be more relaxed in our conversations with each other. In the research I tried to have a big net approach (Fetterman, 1989) to mingle with anyone I could get into conversation with that could give me key information on the information being researched. It was important that the research should not in the first instance serve only my objectives as researcher, but must be of value for those being researched (Muller 2001: p77). These close relations held me back from reaching higher achievements in my research but at the end of the day it's about the people and how their story has developed into new meanings.

These relationships also brought privileges, but came with the responsibilities of confidentiality, integrity, and credibility: not breaking trust and being sensitive to the friendships we made in order to secure my future working relationship with the church.

In reporting my data I will not be able to communicate all things as clearly as I would like due to the sensitivity of the data. I continually showed my work to the church leaders for them to censor and avoid any offence. Over time I came to see my research as a real opportunity to serve the church, the congregational community, indigenous independent Pentecostal churches, and those foreign missions that come to Madagascar to serve the Kingdom of God.

### **3.6 Summary**

As literature was studied in order to find the most suitable research approach and bearing all the complex difficulties in mind this research will follow a narrative approach combined with a qualitative method further described as a case study design.

Among the qualitative methods, I have used questionnaires, formal and informal interviews and observation continuously recorded. Through out this procedure I will be in a "not knowing position", (Freedman & Combs, 2002: 205)

## FINDINGS

### 4 Stories of a ministry

#### 4.1 Introduction

Now I would like to introduce you to all the different role players in the congregation and to revisit their past to enter some deeper understanding of who these people are and how they interact with our research problem. " Background is where you let us see and know who these people are, how they've come together, what was going on before the opening of the story" (Lamott, 1995:62)

I have looked at the action, the "now" immediate story told by of the leaders and their congregational story. It is important to set the "now" of the story previously done against the background, in order to revisit the different aspects to work toward a better understanding of who these people are and how things have developed up to the present situation.

#### 4.2 The history of LIC

This is the history that was given to me by the S.P. of the LIC church during our conversations. There is no other known written record of the LIC church history. There are no archives of local newspapers with useful information concerning their history; most newspapers that existed in those day's do not exist anymore.

##### 4.2.1 Jesosy Mamonjy

The history of the LIC church originates from 1959 when Daoud and his wife, both evangelist from the Assemblies of God in America came to Madagascar to do short term evangelism. They ministered in several different countries and were very successful in their attempts. Upon their arrival in Madagascar they mainly worked with the Protestant churches, like the FJKM. At that time there were no established charismatic churches in Madagascar.

In 1962, they came back to Madagascar and started their own organization called Miracle Voice. They had some problems with the protestant churches and then decided to work on their own. They visited all the provinces like Toliara where many people were healed, the blind could see, the deaf could hear and many other miracles. God used them in a mighty way. Then in 1962 they started a church through cell groups in Ille Sainte Marie. Their first church was in Ille Sainte Marie. In the same year Daoud started preaching about the Holy Spirit, which was the first Pentecostal preaching in Madagascar, he also started many cell groups in Tana. With about 1000 church members they started to build the church in Ankorondrano with the name Jesosy Mamonjy (Jesus Saves). Today Jesosy

Mamonjy is still one of the biggest congregations in Madagascar. In 1964 He opened a Bible school with his wife as the main teacher with 45 students namely Rebecca, Emilien, Celestin, Jean, Prosper, Nestor, Raseta, Fidelis, and many others.

They planted many churches for Jesosy Mamonjy all over the island. Jesosy Mamonjy churches could almost be found everywhere in Madagascar. From Toliara, Mahajanga, Tamatave even up to Diego. In 1965 Daoud went back to America and then returned to Madagascar. When he returned there were great ethical problems (that can not be noted here). He stopped many pastors and full time workers. He said to them, "no, no you are not men of God, you have to stop working with us, there is a great problem". He only kept 11 men. This was only the start of their denominational problems.

#### 4.2.2 Senior pastor

In 1950 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June, the S.P was born in the Bezanozano tribe. His parents were both Bezanozano and his father was a railway agent. He grew up and went to a small school in the city of Moramanga. In this city a new church was erected called Jesosy Mamonjy. The S.P. mother's friend attended their meetings and told him many things that were happening in the church that caught his attention. Full of enthusiasm he went to hear the preacher and see for himself the miracles the Lord was doing there. Not long after attending the services he gave his heart to the Lord Jesus in November 1969. In 1970 he received a Diploma as a French teacher and started to teach French at a primary school and giving some classes in high school. That same year he was baptized in the Spirit and was baptized by immersion in September. Pastor Raseta, who loved to pray for many hours had a great effect on the S.P., who saw pastor Rasetahim as a "praying pastor". In 1971 the S.P. spent many nights in prayer. Almost every night he prayed until 2-3,4,5, in the morning. Some nights he prayed right through the night, just to get up and go to work the following morning. He had a French teacher's diploma and was a teacher in a school at that time. For about one year this passion for prayer burned as a fire in his heart. During the same year he started to preach in his home village Bembarry, where he planted his first church for Jesosy Mamonjy.

The planting of this new church created a great desire in the S.P. to be a full time pastor. Unfortunately in 1972 he was called for service in the army where he served for the next 18 months. From the start of the S.P.'s arrival he was persecuted in the army for not following the immorality that breeds within these young military men. Life was very bad for the S.P.. It felt to him as if he was in hell in comparison with his new experience of redemption and sanctification through the blood of Jesus. They were asked to do many immoral things on many occasions by their commander. The S.P. just refused, standing in his new found faith in Jesus Christ. He told them that he was a new man and that he was following Jesus, he could not and would not follow their immorality. That alone brought great persecution on him.

Regardless of this, it did not take long for the army to respect and recognize his leadership abilities. After the first 6 months they made him an instructor. Outside of the camp he also became a teacher and the director of the local school. All his work could not quench the fire that still burned in his heart to preach the Word of God. He then started to preach in the camp and from there to all the surrounding denominations. They invited him to preach in their churches. They did not know he was from Jesosy Mamonjy, they just knew he was on fire for the Lord Jesus and that they wanted to hear him preach. He later became known as the 'Pastor from the army'.

In June 1973 he completed his service and the time came for him to leave the army. The S.P. then decided to work full time for the Lord, he quit his studies in education, working as a teacher and the work he did in the army. From the army he went directly to the Bible school at Jesosy Mamonjy. For one year they studied all Bible books, themes like the theology on sin and the punishment that follows sinful actions (which is a strong doctrine they follow even today) plus many other comparative studies in the word. These classes were taught in the mornings, and in the afternoons they would each go their own way to practice what they learned.

The S.P. felt compelled by the Lord to preach in every market and each village in Antananarivo. He literally ran to every market he could find in the city and preached there. People would come in great numbers to listen to his preaching, the whole market would come to a stand still to listen and see the miracles the Lord did through him. Only when he finished ministering would the market continue with their business.

Jesosy Mamonjy was and still is today a very isolated denomination. They only believe in their own denomination and extending the Kingdom of God through their denomination. They don't allow their people to work outside their denomination, and pastors should only be from their own church. They also do not allow any books or teachings that come from the outside. The Church wanted the S.P. to only pastor in their churches but he had no desire to be a pastor in a church, rather to do open air evangelism.

The S.P. desired to work with all people and all denominations. His only thought was "what could he do so that each person could hear the gospel." In 1974 he then decided to leave the Bible school, compelled by the Lord with a fire in his heart to go to many places to preach and evangelize in the open air to all creation. Mark 16:15 "*Go and preach the gospel to all creation*" and Matthew 24:14 "*and this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached to every nation and then the end will come*" turned in his head like a magnetic band. The S.P. felt as if God was waiting for him at the different market places where he ran to preach. It was like God charged him to preach the Gospel to every creature, during this time he ran from market to market, region to region till he went all over Madagascar preaching the Gospel.

At this time he did not care about following people up. Many pastors asked him, "What are you going to do with all the people that give their hearts to Jesus?" In his heart he had no burden to follow them up. He only felt peace and satisfaction in his heart after he preached, when many people came to hear the Gospel. At that time when he preached many people gave their hearts to Jesus and many people were healed miraculously. Sometimes he did not even preach but healing was flowing out of him like spring water, many people were healed by his touch, some were healed by just touching his clothes.

He took many New Testaments, Bibles and books with him and people would buy all his books. They were so touched by his preaching they would just grab the books and buy all of them. Even though people did not know the content of these books, they just bought them.

At the same time he belonged to a group, *Youth and the Bible*. Some people of the group accompanied the S.P. when he went preaching in market places. Madam Rebeka who studied with the S.P. at Jesosy Mamonjy and a vazaha (=foreigner/ European), a French man Michel went with them taking photos and supporting them financially for two years.

In 1975, the S.P. was only 25 years old and had great results in ministry. Young people from the age of 12 to 17 followed him wherever he went. A little youth group formed spontaneously and they spent most of their time together every day. They only left him when they went to school. The group prayed with the S.P. and Madame Rebeka (who was the oldest amongst them) taught the youth once or twice a week about the things they learned in the Bible school. They even trained them how to preach the Good News. On many occasions he would take them to do open air evangelism in markets, where they would preach the Good News about Jesus Christ. Some at the age of 12-13 were already preaching with power and authority. There was a great atmosphere of respect and love for each other and the youth looked up to the S.P. as a father. His wife, Jules also came out of this little group and they got married in 1978. The group grew bigger and bigger, at first there were 5 youth, then 12, then 20, then 50 and then 100. They met in Vondrobavaka Ankadifotsy and they were known as 'Ankadifotsy cells'.

In 1975 the national president of the Assemblies of God met the S.P. at one of his evangelism outreaches in the market place. He made an appointment with the S.P. and after he invited him to come and preach in their church at Isotry, this was where their headquarters were. When he preached there, they gave him lots of money. One month later, they invited him to come and preach again, and then they asked him if he would be the pastor of their church. He was ordained there and he became their pastor with an assistant pastor. The S.P. was still meeting with his youth group on a regular basis. Within a few months the S.P. started his work in the church, they experienced a great revival. The church was so full, people were standing outside looking through the doors and windows.

The S.P. was still passionate about prayer, but at the Assemblies of God the people did not pray much. He continued to pray regularly with his youth group and in July of 1976 the S.P. fasted for 21 days. The youth did not fast for all the days, only the last 5 days because they were still in school.

Problems then started with the Assemblies of God as the S.P. went from market to market with the missionaries of the Assemblies of God. In Toliara they had a big evangelism campaign. At first the Chief of the police of Toliara gave the S.P. a permit for ten days to preach in the capital city. Then his directors and leaders complained, because their workers left their offices to attend the S.P.'s open air meeting. So on the third or fourth day they tried to stop the S.P. The police came with cars, lights and guns surrounding the crowd and handing Jules a letter that stated he had to stop his meetings immediately. The S.P. did not stop, he asked all the people that came to kneel down before the Lord and they went on with these campaigns ignoring the police until the last day. The Lord did great things among the people. Many were healed and delivered and many gave their hearts to Jesus Christ. However, the same night he finished his campaign he got on a bus to flee to Fort Dauphin.

When the S.P. got to Fort Dauphin he asked for a permit to preach and have open-air meetings for ten days. At first the commissioner gave it to him. The commissioner of the police stayed right next to where the S.P. was staying. So on the fourth morning as the S.P. was leaving the house to go and preach he said to the S.P. "give me back the permit, we don't want you to continue your preaching here any more for the people in our city are easily influenced " Then they asked the S.P. to go back to Antananarivo. The S.P. told the people that their meetings were cancelled and then went on his way.

In the meantime the national police interviewed the committee of the Assemblies of God. The police thought the S.P. was a troublemaker and that he was influenced and manipulated by the CIA of America. The committee was totally spooked and afraid of the police. The S.P., however, was an uneducated, innocent boy that came from the bush. He did not know much about politics or any other matter. The Government still persecuted him. The police went into his room by force and took all his things, for instance all his books and all his tapes of Billy Graham, Tomalley Osborn and Oral Roberts. They forbade the S.P. to preach anywhere and they forbade him to leave Antananarivo for a year. He could not even go to his parents. When he wanted to visit them, he needed to get a special permit from the national police. The S.P. thought he was going to go to jail. They interviewed him and placed him on the red list. The police followed him everywhere he went. The S.P. was still young and on fire for the Lord, he could not stop preaching. The police did not stop the S.P. from preaching. They continually followed him to the market but only found him preaching the Good News.

The committee of the Assemblies of God tried to stop the S.P. from going out and preaching in the open air. This caused continual problems because they felt the

S.P. was placing the Assemblies of God in trouble with the Government. In 1977, the S.P. went to the national president of the Assemblies of God and asked his blessing to leave the church to go and preach in the open-air full time. At that time S.P. felt the peace of God to go and focus on open air preaching and the home cell groups they had.

Easter 1977 they started to call the youth group of about 100, *Life in Christ* for the first time. The youth in the group came from all denominations. The S.P. baptized all of them and prayed for them to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They met once a week and then on Sunday each one would go to their own church. The group needed some money so the S.P. sold books for the Bible Society while ministering to generate funds. They also started a Christian newspaper in Antananarivo. In March 1977 the first publication was done by the Lutheran publications.

In 1977, they numbered about 150 to 300 and met in Besarety. In 1978 they became a much bigger group so they had to move to the building where the church currently meets. In 1979, some of the youth asked the S.P. to come together on Sundays to pray. Starting then some of them met on Sundays. In the beginning of 1980 only the church at the Cercle des Cheminots was full, about 400 people. Things became so big that they moved to the Stadium behind the church. They numbered about 3,000 on Saturdays and Thursdays at the stadium consisting of students from high school to university. The S.P. had a dream of a large congregation so during this time they bought and sold various pieces of land but the leaders could never agree about the right location. They then moved to Amboditsiry planning to buy land, where they built a large temporary roof construction with bamboo and palm trees, not with concrete. The land was too expensive to buy, even after all their money raising efforts they could not buy it. All the money they raised for their building was used for other ministries. They moved back to the stadium in 67 Hectar, where they gathered together until 1985.

At the same time the youth saw that they were becoming a church so disagreements and arguments started because some people did not want to leave the churches they came from. There was also a pastor on the outside of the group that went to France and when he came back he spread some doubt among the youth about the doctrine the S.P. was teaching at that time. He was asking the youth why they only pay attention to the Pentecostal teachings and not Calvinism or Lutheran and other doctrines. When this doctrinal problem appeared many people that were close to the S.P. abandoned him.

Then the S.P. went back on his knees and prayed and fasted for 12 days and restarted his services in the stadium again. At the end of 1980 the LIC church became a church. More people came; first 4,000 then 5,000 and then 8,000 came. Once, more than 25,000 people came, perhaps even up to 30,000. The stadium was packed and could not contain all the people. Great miracles took place, blind men

could see, the deaf could hear, the lame and crippled could walk and many small sicknesses were healed. It was not the whole multitude that got healed at once but daily there would be miracles that happened, giving the Lord all the glory.

The S.P. and Madame Rebecca were also training fulltime workers. They all stayed in a house in Analamahitsy, where they received training every morning from 7-12 in Abodiraotra, and then they went out to preach. There were four groups that went through their training. Victorien and Honore in the first group. Nalson, Dera, Adolph and Ramanbora in the second and in the last group, 36 people. They also planted churches all over Madagascar, The first were by pastor Honore that went to Fianarantsoa. Then in 81 in Antsirabe, 82 in Tamatave, 83 in Toliara, Mahajanga and Diego all in one year because airplane tickets were not expensive. In every city and region of Madagascar they had big churches from 300 up to a 1,000 members. By 1985 this great revival that hit the country by storm was at its peak. Full time workers and Bible Scholars were numerous and preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ everywhere, in the market place, from house to house and to every small village. In Antananarivo itself, you could not walk more than a hundred meters without finding someone preaching on the street and most of them were students. Many people were touched and many people gave their hearts to the Lord. The evangelical newspapers wrote down testimonies of what the Lord did for the people. The Church was living in a time of awakening, the people were not forced to come but all had a desire inside of them to pray and seek the Lord's goodness. Many students came to pray before they went to study. They had a hunger just to pass by for a short time where the S.P. and the full time workers stayed and prayed before they went out to preach.

Then persecution broke out, first in other provinces, Tamatave, then in Toliara. They stopped the meetings because the officials said the students are not concerned with their studies any more (as newspapers reported). This caused trouble in families and other people gave false testimonies. In pastor Honore's church in Fianarantsoa they were accused of being naked and doing abominable things at their night prayer meetings. Some said the real problem was not this persecution; the real persecution came from the traditional churches, the Catholic, FJKM, and the Lutheran church. They were afraid of losing their members and jealous of the move that God was orchestrating amongst the youth. Hundreds and some thousands of youth would get together where these churches struggled just to have a few youth members. Many FJKM members left their churches and came to these Life in Christ churches because they were not yet converted in their traditional church. They spread rumors that they would close these youth meetings and eventually they succeeded in influencing the Government to close them.

At that time these persecutions had no effect on the S.P.'s work in Antananarivo. However, the minister of the Interior decided that Life in Christ should be terminated and their ministry on the street should stop immediately. Because of this persecution pastor S.P. group had to stop meeting together. During the

persecution the pastors from Antananarivo, Toliara, Diego and other places were put in prison. In the Government the Minister of Interior and the C.S.R (Supreme Counsel of the Revolution) investigated pastors to see if they were true ministers. The pastors responded bravely and gave their testimonies, some even ministering to the Government officials.

During this time believers could not meet in the Church anymore. The church in Diego was locked with chains and was never opened again. This caused the believers to gather for prayer in different believers' houses. The police started to control the people. They did not allow anyone to preach loudly and they were not permitted to go to church in a group. The police only gave permission for 4-5 people to gather together in one house. Slowly the Lord opened doors and the Church in Antananarivo was able to meet together for prayer but not many people came together in one place. Due to the situation everyone stayed in his or her own region of the city. The people in the center of the city stayed with the S.P.

The S.P. had to cease entirely with his ministry in the open air and in churches. He only moved in the home groups they had and through these groups the church still continued to exist but anonymously. The S.P. still continued to work hand in hand with the Assemblies of God. In 1986 the S.P. went to Mauritius, Reunion and then to France with the Assemblies of God. Many churches received him because they knew about his persecution in Madagascar.

In 1987 the full time workers who stayed in their own regions became churches and most of them went over to the Assemblies of God. The S.P. decided to go back and work with the Assemblies of God. The S.P. and Jules quickly progressed in the Assemblies of God. Problems started when people from South Africa came and taught about the "Anointing" of God. Many people did not like their teaching, especially the missionaries from the United States of America. Others were moved by it, and great discussions started about this new phenomenon that entered the church. Some pastors that came from the S.P. also went to France and received the same teaching. Eventually it ended up that many people left (especially The S.P.'s spiritual sons) and decided to change the name of their churches to Rhema Church. A name they got from abroad but they do not associate with the Rhema church in S.A. Others became FAKRI, Jesosy Fitiavana or whatever other name suited them. The S.P. was not fully convinced about the teaching at that time; he was not for it but also not against it. However, when the Assemblies of God persecuted his spiritual sons the S.P. also decided to leave because he was in a position of continually defending his "sons".

At the same time a new national president for the Assemblies of God needed to be elected and the S.P. stood a good chance to be elected. The Assemblies of God were Traditional-Pentecostal, whereas the S.P. was more Charismatic-Pentecostal (following the new trend or the 'moving of the Spirit' as they called it). The whole dilemma with the 'anointing teaching' placed the S.P. in a difficult situation and there was some unhappiness about the S.P.'s relationships with foreign

missionaries to his own benefit. The S.P. was also not willing to submit to a team and their values, but rather wanted to do his own thing and set his own standards. In 1991, he resigned from the Assemblies of God and someone else was elected as national president of the Assemblies of God. In 1992, the S.P. went to Israel for the first time as well as Korea and Singapore.

In 1995, the Church did Holy War Evangelism in Paris and France. During that time the LIC church planted a new church there. After the evangelization in France The A.P. stayed behind to continue the work they started. The S.P. came back to Madagascar to attend to a difficult situation with his wife.

After her last baby the S.P. wife had an operation where the doctors did something wrong in her womb during the operation. For many years she never became ill, but after the S.P.'s evangelism in France she became very ill. The S.P. took her to a hospital and after two months she passed away. He was left with 6 children, four sons and two daughters.

In 1997, the S.P. was in Israel and during that time he felt the need to marry again. Life was difficult with 6 children. He prayed asking the Lord for a new wife. The name Ramarojaona Fanjanirina came to his mind. She was a beautiful woman and a dynamic leader in his congregation at that time. At his return, he spoke to some leaders that also suggested the same person to him. After spending time getting to know each other they got married in 1998 and one year later his seventh child was born.

In that same year World Mission Center came to Madagascar with the intent to reach the un-reached groups in Madagascar. They brought many other people that had a great influence in the church. Short-term ministries were also done by people like Ronny Naaido from South Africa. He gave some short teachings on how to formulate a cell structure and how to train their leaders.

In 2000, the S.P. wanted to immigrate to France with his whole family because he already had a congregation there that was doing well, but could use his presence. He prepared the A.P. and gave him the congregation in Antananarivo to manage. The S.P. left the congregation for four weeks in order to prepare all his paperwork for the French Embassy. During that time, the A.P. ran the church as his own. However, the S.P.'s visa was denied, so he returned to running the congregation.

The A.P. began training the cell leaders in 2001, and formed the 6 regions in Antananarivo that we have now. He also changed the host team in the church to training them as deacons. Many other Missionaries like Karel Sanders and New Covenant Ministries from South Africa started to work with the S.P. giving leadership training. Beginning in 2002, they formed a pastoral committee with all the Charismatic- Pentecostal churches in Madagascar.

This was not very difficult for the S.P. because many people say the LIC church is one of the leading indigenous Pentecostal Charismatic churches in Madagascar. The LIC church is neither a big affiliation nor the biggest church in Madagascar. But most Pentecostal Charismatic pastors in Madagascar would say that the S.P. is their Raiamandreny (spiritual father). They were either converted through his ministry or trained by him in the past. Even today these pastors are devoted to him and show him great respect wherever he goes to minister. The S.P. is the head of a Pastoral Committee, where pastors from different denominations and churches come together in order to work together as a national team, such as the Assemblies of God, Rhema, FAKRI, Jesosy Fitiavana, Baptist, Sahim..., but most of them are from Pentecostal churches. Only a few traditional churches are present that have some relationship with him. The S.P.'s. Logo is "Madagascar for Christ". His leadership and influence runs deeper and wider than meets the eye. I continually meet leaders on the mission field, and as I tell them that I work with the S.P they respond with " he was my spiritual father when I just came to Christ"

The church in France has recently declined numerically due to the vacuum of leadership since there is no ordained pastor. He went there with the hope of re-establishing the church, but back home his own congregation is also suffering because he is always on the road. He has been in France since November 2005 working hard in his congregation there. He only returns home every three months for 10 day's at a time.

Recently some pastors and members of congress have encouraged the S.P to take some responsibility for Madagascar by running for the upcoming presidential elections. On August 22, 2006 the S.P. publicly announced that he is running for president. This brought division in the LIC church because many people are working in the government and support Mark Ravolomanana, yet others are against him. Some think that the S.P should be a minister and not a president, and others are burning with excitement to see the new changes the S.P. might bring if he becomes president.

#### 4.2.3 Assistant pastors

The S.P. trained many pastors through the years until 1985. As people were converted and felt that God called them for ministry the S.P. trained them. Many stayed with him in his house and others met together every morning early, before they went out to minister that day with him. After apprenticeship training he sent them to different regions and provinces to plant churches and do pioneer work. A handful stayed, working within the LIC church until today. These pastors were all saved and trained in the church, but their own background and way of ministry is worth studying closely, so that we might get an understanding of "who" they are. I spent time with each one of them, in formal and informal interviews, that are combined with some of my observations of their ministry in the church. As earlier mentioned, more was learned by observing the leaders than by talking to them about their problems (difficulty of communication, or just honest communication,

without people covering up others past failures). In the 2 years that I spent with the leaders of the LIC church, I paid close attention to their communicative actions. I made continuous notes during my observations, asking my self "What do they do in church?" "How do they do it?" and "Where do they do what they do?"

These ministers are:

Pastor "N":A.P. : assistant pastor (administration and financial)

D.P. Pastor "G" : deliverance pastor

1.W.P. Pastor "C" : woman's pastor

2.W.P. Pastor "V" : woman's pastor

Pastor "H.I.P." : intercessor pastor

#### *4.2.3.1 Pastor A.P. Assistant pastor (administration and financial)*

While still in the army the Lord started working in the A.P's. heart and he hungered to follow the Lord. He was in a traditional church, but did not know where to go or how to start. One Saturday his brother's fiancée took him to a big crusade in a stadium. This crusade was organized by the LIC church. During this crusade he gave his heart to the Lord Jesus in 1983. The A.P. then started going to the LIC church for about a year. At that time, he was studying Economics at the University of Madagascar.

Many thoughts crept back into his mind about returning to the traditional church. For some reason Pastor "A" met him and spoke kindly to him and (pastor) "E" that was a medical student in the same University at that time encouraged him to go to church with him. So the A.P. decided to stay with the church and has continued ever since.

In 1986, the A.P. felt the Lord calling him to fulltime ministry. But he refused, wanting to finish his studies, get a good job and support the church and others in ministry. Finally, in 1990 he gave up his studies in Economics and began working full time with the church. He then went to Bible School in the Assembly of God until 1992. He did his pastoral internship in 1993, but the Assemblies of God did not accept the idea of working with the S.P. (should this be "A.P." instead of "S.P."? in the LIC church. So he left the bible school and started working with the S.P.

The S.P. gave him many small responsibilities like preparing for the crusades, doing the invitations, banners etc. He was also responsible for arranging all things in the church building and preaching on Thursday afternoons and some Sundays. In 1995 the S.P. went to France where he did Holy War Evangelism in Paris. The LIC church planted a church there and in May of 1995 until April of 1996 the Church sent the A.P. to lead the Church in France. He was forced to come back to Madagascar due to visa problems. From the time he came back, he worked with high school students with the S.P. At that time there were many students because

they held many crusades and the A.P.'s. main responsibility was to do the administration and preparation of these crusades.

From 1998, the A.P. became second in charge of the church. In 1999 and 2000 they held a national meeting in Palais des Sports where the A.P. took care of the administration and organization of all things.

The S.P. then decided to immigrate to France with his family. So he prepared the A.P. to take his place as senior pastor of the church. The S.P. stood back while he was preparing all his documentation and let the A.P. fully run the church. The A.P. preached continually for 4 weeks in all four services on Sundays, and he took care of the finances and all decisions concerning the church. Eventually the S.P.'s. visa was denied and he again took control of the church. The A.P. was responsible for administration and teaching the cell leaders on Saturday mornings. He also started to teach more regularly on Sundays with the S.P.

In the beginning, the church only had hostesses that took up collection and greeted people at the door showing them to their places, Soon A.P. started to train these people as deacons for four weeks every year. Today he is still the second in charge, assistant pastor, in control of the administration and is the head of the finances of the church. Whenever the S.P. is visiting his churches in the country and at the coast or in France, the A.P. is responsible for arranging all the programs in the church.

From the beginning the A.P. has been open to discussion. It is easy to get into a conversation with him, because he is very friendly and likes to joke around. He relates well with the people in the church and is humble, but knows how to take a stand when needed. He is friendly and warm hearted, which helps people easily approach him with their problems. He has been very supportive in collecting information for my studies. It has been quite difficult to get information from others.

The A.P. works very hard in the church. On Sundays he is at the church welcoming the people and taking care of the offering and announcements at most of the services. During the week he makes sure every one and everything gets paid, and he does all the necessary arrangements for whatever needs to be done. He is not like the D.P. who likes to work with his hands. The A.P. would rather give the orders to do something or to go and see people.

A.P. carries most of the responsibility in the church and is obedient to the tasks the S.P. gives him, trying to work hard and honestly. Whenever the congregation gets in trouble, he is always the one that needs to run and put out fires wherever he can. This places a lot of stress on him. Many times he needs to cross the ethical border to bring desired results.

The A.P. main responsibility is being the administrator of the church, financially paying all salaries, rent of all buildings and any other payments. He is at most of the services to welcome people and to make sure the deacons know what to do, and to make sure everything is in order even when he does not preach. Overall, he is a good pastor that teaches and counsels some people in the congregation.

#### *4.2.3.2 Pastor D.P. Deliverance pastor*

The D.P. met the S.P. in 1980 when he was converted. The S.P. then baptized him and he began to follow the S.P. like Elisha followed Elijah. The D.P. stayed with the S.P. in his house from the time of his conversion in 1983 until he got married in 1984. The D.P. has great admiration for the S.P.. probably more than the other pastors at the LIC church. The D.P. and his wife have been working in the church ever since. We are good friends but of all the leaders in the church, we had the least conversations together, because he does not speak English, which made it hard to get to know him personally. Whenever we were driving or eating at a restaurant together we could only sing songs we knew and have some kind of small talk with the little Malagasy that I have learned during my time here in Madagascar. He has given me a wealth of information through a translator that I used in compiling the history of the church.

The D.P. is adventuresome at heart, positive, humble, focused and energetic. He is able to relate to all people in the church, the poor and the rich, the middle and the lower class. Although, he does cling to the old way of doing things. He is devoted to his work at the church, he really enjoys what he does, and he likes to do it well.

The D.P. preaches very well as an evangelist but not as a pastor. He is a man of prayer that practices exorcism. He does deliverance and is active in spiritual warfare. He leads the deliverance team of the church. He is also responsible for all the sound equipment. He is very practical and eagerly does any maintenance in all the facets of Malagasy church life.

#### *4.2.3.3 Pastor 1.W.P. "women's pastor"*

Both of the 1.W.P.'s. parents are from the Merina tribe. Both of them were farmers in Vohabazaha where the 1.W.P. was born and grew up. She had a sickness in her hips and it made her weak. When she was 13 years old her parents sent her to live in Tana with her aunt for her to grow stronger and get a better education. In Tana her aunt's family already belonged to the LIC church, so she automatically went there with them even though she was Catholic at her home in Vohabazaha. When she came to the church, the S.P. was preaching and when he made an invitation, she and her brother received Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and savior. For them it was really a big thing that changed their lives. But the people back home in Vohabazaha heard and criticized them for leaving the Catholic faith for some unknown cult.

She was not always eager to go to church but the people in church received her well and some believers were always asking her to take her with them to go and preach or just to spend time together. She was assigned a group and grew and ministered with them in the school in Tsimbazaza, where they converted some believers.

Her aunt had to move to Mahajanga, so she was left behind alone. During this time, there was a holiday and she went to speak to pastor "H" and the A.P. They then sent her to preach in Arivonimamo with "M" and do a crusade there. When they returned in 1982 the S.P called her and sent her to the base in Analamahitsy where the fulltime workers lived. There, she began her 3 year training as a fulltime worker for the Lord. There were 36 people and after they finished the S.P prayed for them and sent the group out into three different places. Tsiroanomandidy, Ambatondrazaka and the last group worked in Tana. The 1.W.P was a part of this group.

This was at the same time the persecution broke out. The police arrested her twice, the first time she preached in open air and they took her to prison, but she was there for only 30 minutes. The second time was in her own house, so when the police wanted to take her the owner of the house spoke to them about leaving her. (I think he bribed them, police weakness here). Many stories went around that were not really true. People said that the youth were naked at the night prayer meetings.

In her view, the older people and the younger received the revelation of Christ in different ways at that time. When the youth received the Lord Jesus they were enthusiastic and they followed the S.P's. leading, where the older people did not receive the gospel the same way. The S.P. divided Tana into 12 areas where people met in their homes, and once a week they had a secret meeting, because there were three pastors already in prison. They were pastor "E", the A.P and pastor "X".

She continued her work under the S.P., and after 5 years of fulltime work he ordained her as pastor. The S.P. ordained many that are in the Assemblies of God, Rhema and many other smaller independent Churches. There were four groups the S.P. trained before the persecution. First, were pastor "H" and pastor "V". The second group consisted of pastor "N", "D", "A" and "R". Then finally, a third group, that she was a part of, which had 36 members.

She married in 1989. As she ministered in Ankadifotsy, she had a good believing friend there whose son did not stay with her. When her best friend died the 1.W.P. took care of her funeral, and in so doing met the unknown son and shortly thereafter married him.

She is quiet and has wisdom and understanding. She understands people and their situations very well. Thus, they find empathy and are comfortable in approaching her for counsel and prayer. She holds little back. She is like an open book and

relates to many people at the church that really love her. She is one of the regional leaders and leads the woman's group.

#### 4.2.3.4 Pastor 2.W.P “women’s pastor”

The **2.W.P** heard the Gospel of Jesus in 1979. She had a chronic stomach ailment and vomited blood for a few years. On top of that, she also failed her B.E.P.C exam. Her life was just a mess. Then, she found newspapers from the LIC church and from that time she started to read them. She received healing from her sickness and new strength to take her B.E.P.C exam. She did not really receive the Lord but was following her sister to church. In the LIC church every April the church as a whole fasts, and during that prayer and fasting time she recognized that Jesus Christ visited her life. The date was October 5<sup>th</sup> 1981. After that she became a new person. She worked and learned at University. She continued in her faith and attended all of the meetings of the church. Later there was a cell meeting for the University students in the house where she stayed. One day the people asked her to preach, and from that moment on she felt that the Lord called her. Even though she felt the call, she strongly desired to work, earn a good living and support the servants of God. Little did she know the Lord had a different plan for her.

She got married in 1988 and went back to the traditional church because her in-laws thought that the LIC church was a sect. The **2.W.P** and her husband were both believers at that time and had been baptized in water. She went with him to the traditional church to help with the Sunday school and became very successful. The other people that worked with her always focused on what she did and that brought jealousy and gossip among them. Her husband realized that the spiritual strength in the LIC church was not the same as in their own church. He decided to return to the LIC church in 1991. One year after that, the cell group grew larger and many people came. She decided to go to Bible school even though people discouraged her because she had no money or support.

They were not very rich but they knew that the Lord wanted her in ministry. They were blessed in many ways and that just encouraged her all the more to volunteer for the work of God. The cell increased in number and the spiritual gifts that the Lord gave her also grew. Apart from the cell group, they made her responsible for the prayer meeting in the Church, and later added the additional responsibility of taking charge of the Sunday service.

She oversaw the church finances. In the past a lot of money disappeared, but she did not tell me anything about it. I heard it from another leader in the LIC Church. On my arrival in the congregation she approached me in order to borrow a large amount of money to pay her telephone bill.

Today she is responsible for the women's group. She is also the regional leader of region five, including the countryside outside of the region. Many times people in

the church go to her for counsel and help in relationships and "soul educating". She also represents the church at all inter-denominational meetings. Just recently the church started a Christian radio station and she is taking care of that ministry as well.

She is an opportunist, and enjoys the presence of the elite. She does not have many close links to the congregational members, rather she has influence with some young teenage girls and regional leaders, and she concentrates on women's groups. At times she is involved in other ministries as well.

#### 4.2.3.5 *Pastor I.P." intercessor pastor*

When the I.P. was still a student she looked for happiness in worldly lust. She found it, but it did not last long. Sadness and unhappiness quickly returned to her.

One day in 1982 she decided to kill herself because she didn't find any happiness in this life. So, she asked her friend about suicide and how to do it. They had a very deep discussion but her friend did not know she actually wanted to kill herself.

While she was considering suicide she received a letter from her sister. She was preparing for her exams and wanted the I.P. to come to Antananarivo to help her with her cooking. So she went to Tana and arrived there on Saturday, the next day they took her to a worship service in Malacamp Stadium. When the S.P finished preaching she felt everything he said applied to her whole life, he spoke directly to her. She remembered that she had decided to kill herself, but in the preaching the Bible said that there is a beautiful hope for her. All of the word of God had been confirmed in her heart. Before the preacher preached, she was ready to offer her life to Jesus. When the S.P. asked people to come to the front if they want to accept Jesus, she was the first person to go. From that moment on, she lived her earthly life in a heavenly way. Some people received them and gave them advice that really helped her and she respects those people until today. On that Sunday she offered her life to God, and the next day she received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. From that day forward she desired to offer her life to Jesus more and more. She was surprised because she was free from the cursing words that she use in the past, because in school she was well known for cursing like a sailor and for bad behavior.

When her sister's exam was finished she returned to the countryside to finish her studies. She stayed in the countryside for one year before returning to Tana. In that time she was on fire for the Lord and preached to all the students. Her life changed and she became a good girl that witnessed to others about what the Lord had done in her life. When she moved back to Tana, her soul wanted to serve the Lord more and more. Whenever she read the Bible she was so fascinated by people like Moses, Elijah, Daniel, Esther.... who liked to pray.

The I.P had a great desire to become like these men, so she asked the Lord to help her become like them and He did. She heard a voice when she was in school that called her to do God's work. It said, "leave your studies". She was amazed, what's that? She didn't think about it but still continued to learn, and many times that voice came to whisper to her. She reasoned a lot with the Lord but His decision and word didn't change...

She then started to work full time for the Lord in 1992. Intercession was her desire. Before that the S.P called her to pray with him during one month. After that he said: "I know that God's call is upon you". She was the first woman's pastor to work in the church. Later the 1.W.P and the 2.W.P came. She has many testimonies of the things the Lord has done in their ministry of intercession, and of how the Lord healed and saved many people. She also oversees the prayer night. Every first Friday of the month the whole church comes together to pray through the night until morning. Today she faithfully continues to visit the sick and needy people to pray with them. She also works with the 1.W.P in her region and helps with whatever responsibilities are given to her.

She is humble and easy going, dedicated to her ministry and loves to be around people. She is well connected on ground level and knows what is going on between people in the congregation. She endeavors to be recognized as spiritual Raiamandreny in church. She mixes with the people and relates well with all people. She runs the intercessor team and always visits people in their homes to pray for them.

## **5 Discussion of results**

### **5.1 Questionnaires**

In the process of data collection we compiled a survey on the congregation's experience of the ministry at the LIC church (see Appendix). The questionnaires were written in Malagasy and translated to English in order to analyze the feedback. The objective of the questionnaire reflected on the S.P. question: to understand what draws people to the church and what disappoints the people in the congregation. In the congregation at the LIC church there are about 2,500 members. The leadership has no exact number of members, due to not keeping membership records. The deacons assisted with the questionnaires and gave out 1,000 questionnaires from which only 280 were returned, not all fully completed.

### **5.2 Positive feed back**

From the responses, half was positive. That was predictable, but many only wrote two word sentences such as "it's good" or "nothing wrong". Others were more thorough and expressed their appreciations and joy in worshiping in a congregation that they described as, alive and existing. Their main reasons for coming to the congregation were because they found salvation through the ministry of the church and for the good preaching they received in the LIC church.

### **5.3 Grievances**

Based on my experience of the culture. I would guess that most of the questionnaires that were returned revealing disappointment in the congregation had been written by women. In Madagascar, women tend to be more vocal than the men. Consequently, we made a list of all the different disappointing factors and then counted how many people mentioned similar disappointments. (See Appendix p110)

The congregation's main disappointments were with leadership practices and the way they manage the church affairs. One of the major factors was that even after having been successful in ministry for 25 years plus, the church still has no building of their own. Due to this, the congregation questioned the leadership's ability because they have collected building funds on several occasions.

After much discussion with my supervisor, Professor Muller, and some co-researchers about the results, we chose the least offensive, yet correct wording for the feelings that were evident in the congregation. Not intending to make any interpretations we can note that there was definitely two phenomena standing out through the questionnaires. First the leadership style and secondly the way the church was managed (church structure).

This led me to focus on the following factors:

- Leadership practices
- Church structure

In this case study we were attempting to focus the research on the relationship between these two actions and the effect it has on church growth. This was done through thorough interviews and observation, using a narrative approach.

## 5.4 Interviews

### 5.4.1 Formal interviews:

We started by interviewing the pastoral leaders in and out of the LIC church in a formal setting to get some understanding of their present knowledge of the problems they face in their congregation. I was fascinated while listening to their stories, yet challenged to find opportunities to talk to other role players from different parts of the island.

The reoccurring story told was that the church does not have the same passion, devotion or eagerness for prayer and ministry as in the past. Although the church still sees themselves as pioneers, spiritually strong, devoted to prayer and evangelism, they feel they lost some of their original zeal over the last twenty-five years.

Many discussions and discourses evolved from the question the senior pastor asked while speaking to different role players. Over time, the **relation between leadership style and church structure** reappeared as leaders shared their disappointments about the same phenomenon. All the leaders highly respect and honor the S.P., although some did complain about not being able to express their opinions to the S.P. leadership. Other times he caused them to be in uncomfortable situations or even unconsciously breaking ethical boundaries. Others bravely pointed directly to the unstructured manner in which the church was managed. In attempting to narrow the research down to a specific point we made observations about the leadership and the structure in the church.

### 5.4.2 Informal interviews:

We could not get all the pastoral leaders to speak to us openly in formal interviews, but we were able to get a glimpse of their contemporary story and history on record. Other than that, most of the research undertaken was done by walking and working alongside these leaders, ministering with them in different areas of the island. While traveling and in times of recreation, we would get into some deep discussions about the different factors of ministry in Madagascar and things that appear in their congregational life.

To my surprise, during times of recreation a tremendous amount of information leaked out from other key players. Although it would be nice to write down as much as possible, a good portion of the information needs to remain confidential in regards to ethical codes in research.

## 5.5 Observation

While listening to the history of the LIC church, I was amazed at what they have accomplished through the years and how they complemented so many other churches and ministries. It almost brought me to place where I thought that our study is totally irrelevant since the church accomplished so much. However just the mere fact that the S.P. thinks there is something wrong by his question "why is the church not keeping new believers that would result in the growth of the church?" continued to intrigue me.

Continuous observation was made during this time about leadership practices and the church structure. I asked myself "What do they do in church?" "How do they do it?" and "Where do they do what they do?"

At the same time, fellow researchers helped by also making observations, which then later were combined forming a general observation of the LIC church. The main objectives we focused on were:

- Church Leadership
- Church Structure
- Administration
- Financial Management
- Staff Setting
- Ministry Plan

After we made our own general observations regarding the above matters, we shared them with the church leadership seeking their input. This formed a basic starting point or a common agreement among us on how we understood these problematic matters in the LIC church.

Observation did not cease once a general ideology was formed, since a immense amount of information was concealed by participants for some time. Through ministering and traveling alongside participants, we understood the particular phenomenon.

### 5.5.1 Church Leadership

The senior pastor of the LIC church has the title of Raiamandreny. He has a charismatic personality with excellent oratory skills (see appendix 8.5). He is a strong spiritual leader in the city of Antananarivo and other parts of Madagascar. He has an abundance of influence in different ministries and has the ability to gather crowds of people together. People are fond of his ministry and say that he has a great personality, spiritual knowledge and influence. Throughout the time I have been working with him, I have observed that many independent church leaders see him as a mentor and a spiritual father. Due to the present culture in Madagascar they respect and follow his authoritative leadership without hesitance

or questions. Whenever he calls on them for training or meetings they willingly respond and attend the suggested seminars.

The LIC church has five other pastors working in the congregation. They are all his spiritual sons and daughters that did an apprenticeship as fulltime workers receiving their training and ordination from him. Their leadership is mainly practiced through hierarchy with all the authority at the top, namely himself, then working its way down to the minor pastoral team and leaders. Whenever the S.P. is absent from the church the other leaders struggle with unity among themselves.

The main social structure in Madagascar is a social hierarch that is mainly concerned with perceived relationships. Malagasy people know how to have social, ritualistic meetings. They preach well for the present time but they lack a vision towards future ministry and results because they live in the past and not the future. (See Time paradigm P36) The church's central focus is mostly on meetings and social activities with little planning for the future. The LIC church is totally independent, meaning they have no overseeing organization, but they do oversee other independent churches that were either planted by them in the past or by believers that originated from the LIC church. Unfortunately they are heavily influenced by various doctrines from foreign ministers. The ministers mean well, but bring instability into the congregation. There are no new apprenticeship possibilities for church members that want to go into full time ministry and all attempts to plant new churches have ceased.

### 5.5.2 Church Structure

The church for the most part maintains what already exists. The ministry has changed from being one of outreach to focusing internally. The ministry is run by the pastor's family, as a family, and for the family. It is not managed as an organization with the deferential dynamics that are needed

The LIC church is predominantly cell structured. The city has been divided into six regions, each with its own regional leaders and cell leaders. They have regular open-air evangelism and weekly cell meetings. Leaders gather together on Saturday mornings for training and have their regional administrative meeting each Sunday after the two o'clock evangelism meeting.

### 5.5.3 Administration:

The administration follows the pattern a dictator's leadership. There is some planning for the future, for example, if they have been invited by some church to do evangelism or regular programs in the church such as baptism or fasting. As seen above most of the fundamental ministries and offices do exist, but are not fully developed and clearly defined in the church infrastructure. Various positions in the church are seen more as a title than a position with a daily responsibility.

There is a strong hierarchy structure in the congregation. The S.P. sent his first born to South Africa to be educated in leading worship. Since his return the church has never looked at him as a worship leader because he was never given the authority to use the skills he has learned in the worship team. Even today, he only works alongside the team even though he is highly skilled and qualified in worship.

If the S.P. is not present, standards are lowered and productivity slows down. I have noticed that people need to be highly motivated by someone with influence like the Raia mandreny. For instance, the leaders normally all pray together on Thursday afternoons. If they know the S.P. is not going to be there, they become increasingly absent. Even if the A.P. leads the prayer time there will be little commitment. The A.P. is a great asset to the congregation and he makes sure that all is well and that everyone knows what they should do. However, he only focuses on the most important thing that needs to be done right away. Even when he attempts to manage he does not really have the authority and so is not followed. If I can describe the way I see administration in the church in two words it would be "crisis control". I say this because I see little planning and strategizing for future development in the church, instead we are continually fighting fires.

Recently the government held meetings with all independent churches, questioning their administration and management. They required a list of the different offices in the congregation from the senior pastor, vice president, financial administrator, secretary etc., They then had a formal interview with each individual. This quickly motivated the church to organize their structure before the government meeting. The LIC church leaders spent hours placing everyone in their positions and preparing them for the interview and what each would say.

Since then, the A.D. was announced as the senior pastor of the church since the S.P. was in France most of the time. The S.P.'s son became the vice president and different leaders occupied the other offices for the interviews.

#### *5.5.3.1 Financial Management:*

I heard many financial stories from the past that are addressed in Chapter 3. Let me give you a current example. In May 2004 the church was struck by great financial difficulty. Three factors played a role. First, money was not saved or used well in the previous months. Second, the church wanted to bless the S.P. with a 4X4. They bought it the year before but were struggling to pay it off and the previous owner came looking for more money every month. Third, Madarail the railway company who rented the building to the church for 27 years received a new director from South Africa. He was unhappy with the state of the railway buildings the church rented and demanded that they renovate the buildings and repair all facilities damaged through the years, which placed enormous financial pressure on the church.

The S.P. has devised some financial structure but is not very clear and there is little room for transparency. This unfortunately is normal in Madagascar. Some church leaders shared their concerns with me, and for the first time I had a look at their financial procedures. I could not find any permanent structure. Money is collected on Sundays by deacons and then counted by a few responsible church members. The first offering and tithes are counted together and used to pay the pastors, other staff and building renovations. The second offering is then used for evangelism. After counting the money, the money is given to the pastor to do as he sees fit. (This is a custom in Madagascar, the pastor is sent to start a church with no financial support, the moment his church is running the finances belong to him. Most independent churches would use the offerings for ministry and tithing for the pastor). The S.P. has integrity concerning the spending of the church money but his financial management structure is dependent on his personality and not formal accounting and accountability. Some church members that worked for the bank tried to assist him. They were rather frustrated because of his lack of prioritizing. Many times the senior pastor would take money from the rent money to do other things like evangelism. When the church needed to pay the rent, they ran to church members looking for the balance. This is a continual problem and places stress on those responsible under him.

There are no permanent financial structures or guidelines that leaders can follow. There is no bank account because the church didn't register themselves with the government. Many times money was placed in the senior pastors personal bank account and in the accounts of other pastors. They might even use it straight out of the box. The S.P. usually does the finances for his church but at times has given the task to others. Different people have done the finances. Some used church money for personal gain (see Appendix) and others built the financial credibility of the church making sure all bills are paid and even saving up some money for future use. The church has been very ignorant in believing people would be honest with money without making them accountable. Quite a bit of money has disappeared in the past because of their ignorance, trusting people with too much that eventually brings temptation to the church leaders. (see appendix) This mismanagement of finances is one of the main reasons why the church has kept on collecting money but still has no building of their own. Now they are in a place where they cannot ask for more money to build a church building because people want to know where the money went that was collected previously.

Just recently the government forced all churches to report on their finances. This brought new motivation to organize their accounting. The church is also working hard to get all their legal papers in order that will allow them to open a bank account. But there is a constant flow of people knocking on the church's door asking for payment for outstanding bills, such as, sound equipment, keyboards, even money borrowed from other mission organizations to buy plane tickets for the S.P.'s family to go to France.

At one stage another Christian brother phoned me and told me to tell the church leaders to, "Keep the money they owe him, he is righting it off, but they are plain thieves".

### 5.5.3.2 *Staff Setting:*

The people of Madagascar appear to be people oriented versus task orientated. Another characteristic of their society is that they are collectively oriented and have a pool of resources. This is not necessarily a weakness, as we can learn a lot from them concerning solidarity. But I do struggle to identify personal motivation because the Malagasy social structure leaves little place for personal growth or rewards for personal performance. I think this could cause the community to become stagnant, but I might be wrong. What is important is to identify problem patterns and see how we can approach them in a new manner that will change the result. I see many things Christian Malagasy people do out of their culture that are in some ways contrary to Christian values. The secret would be to help them identify these areas and direct their present unity to fulfill a God given goal of extending the kingdom of God.

I came to the conclusion that the staff are working through a title and loyalty to the "family" and not as much through an office and order like we do. Their work ethic and punctuality depends on how loyal they are to the family (organization) and their level of authority in society. This originally brought me great frustration in working with some of the church leaders until I understood their culture better.

The church pays some staff and some are volunteers. Those that are paid receive their salaries weekly. The staff does not have job descriptions but are given different tasks to do. If there is no immediate task, no further action or planning is done to improve various other aspects of their work. They do not think of new ways to do things, study, plan or do anything extra in their line of work. Many times staff would follow their own agenda, and only sometimes notify others that they would be absent from work for a while. Regardless of this, they do all work in unity once a big seminar or evangelism convention takes place. I see Malagasy people want success and perfection but are sometimes slow in pursuing it. They would rather find the shortest and easiest way to complete a task despite the fact that quality is often lacking. They are easily influenced and will fire away on a project but need constant encouragement to follow through. Their underlining Malagasy culture of pooling resources causes some people to have a low level of productivity in their work environment.

The church has many staff members that are not Christians but have the ability to do the work the church needs done. Some are not doing their work. Others are continually stealing from the church or leaders and they are still not dismissed.

### 5.5.3.3 Ministry Plan:

Their ministry is unconsciously built on the idea of pillars. The first pillar is prayer. The senior pastor and many other leaders in the congregation are devoted to prayer. During my time with them I have heard numerous teachings on prayer that were encouraging to me. The second pillar is evangelism, probably because the senior pastor's main gift is evangelism. He is extremely talented when it comes to crusades and arranging big campaigns using all forms of media and artists to draw great crowds of people together. The third pillar is the church's cell groups. The church has divided the city into six regions and has church leaders in these cell groups all over the city. They are able to do outreach and visit new believers close to their regions.

Unfortunately, since the persecution in 1985 the S.P. ceased planting new churches and training new pastors for the ministry. There is little opportunity for new pastors to rise up out of the congregation. The only pastor in training is the S.P.'s second son who will succeed him. Recently the S.P. and others refer to him as pastor but he has no theological training. Other than that, the S.P. only ordains new pastors in other congregations by invitation of other church leaders. He continues to support the pastors and the churches they previously planted.

### 5.5.4 Malagasy leadership

Contemporary indigenous Christian leaderships in Madagascar have remarkable rhetoric skills in their worship meetings. As the charismatic church would say "they are able to preach up a storm". Apart from their excellent skill in rhetoric there still remains some strange phenomenon that I still don't clearly understand. Some say they are known as social secrets.

### 5.5.5 Ownership

One phenomenon in independent and some other denominations is that the pastor takes ownership of their churches as if it physically belongs to them. Pastors are sent to towns and villages to plant churches with no financial support. They live in extreme poverty until they have enough people in their congregation to support them. As time goes by and the church grows they feel that the money and church belongs to them. They lead the church through this "ownership" mentality. If there is a need for new and fresh leadership, younger leaders will rise up out of the congregation that are not of the pastor's immediate family. They then clash with the "owner" and are frequently forced to leave the church and start their own church in the same manner as the "owner" started the present church.

### 5.5.6 Family

Adding to this "ownership" mentality, in the every day government of many churches a "family" practice occurs. Like in the horizontal solidarity where family

reigns, the church is governed by a family as a "family organization" rather than an organization with its various obligations and offices. They take full possession of the church and finances and run it as if it is a family. (Dahl 1999, 118) The family shares in the resources of the church and many times the church needs to supply any needs the pastors family has, many times to the inconvenience of the church. The church is also passed down to the pastors descendants. They take his place, many times to keep the church or "family business" in the family.

Similar phenomenon in other religious organizations in South Africa has occurred. Sad to say that most of them changed from top rated institutions to watered down institutions. In America Joel Osteen has proven just the opposite and has changed his father's congregation from about 6 thousand members into a 45,000 member congregation. Thus leadership explicitly depends on the given situation and response of the leader.

### 5.5.7 Receivers

Down in Toliara I went fishing with some local fishermen. During our conversation about religion I asked them how they perceive the church in Toliara. To my disappointment they said "it is just a money making scheme, people start churches just for the money, to escape poverty and so that they can have a nice house and a car, but they don't really care about the people."

Culture is also guilty to an extent in the high esteem and respect that they show towards religious leaders. These leaders abuse the people's generosity and over time they become "receivers" instead of givers. Through the years this phenomenon has deeply infiltrated Christian leadership in Madagascar and has become a hindrance to the gospel.

Traveling with some leaders, I noted an incident where the leaders gracefully forced a bus company to give them a discount on their bus tickets because they were ray-aman-dreny. Sadly these leaders fail to see the message they project through their actions.

It would be unfair and insensible to generalize and say that all pastors reflect this kind of attitude. The tragedy is that "some preach the gospel from envy and strife and some from goodwill" (Phillipians 1: 15)

### 5.5.8 Customs

-Some Malagasy traditions and customs are still very prevalent in the church today, such as circumcision which is an age old ritual that dispenses blessing or *tsodrano* in Madagascar. This is practiced by Christians and non-Christians. Many reasons were given for performing this ritual, like "circumcision makes the boys 'sweet or beautiful, *soa* or clean *madeo*...other said "the ceremony made the children evolve into men", some have even said "it makes the boys potent sexually". (Bloch 1986 p48) Bloch has found in his study on circumcision that circumcision is

to be used in invoking a blessing for the children" from a creator God and predominantly from the ancestors. If studied in depth all relatives and participants benefit from such a ritual. The point I want to make is that Christian leaders and members of congregations alike are all still taking part in these pagan practices, even though it is done with subtlety among Christians. If we look deeper, we would find that there is a deep rooted fear that still drives Malagasies to take part in traditional customs. They are still hanging on to the high hills (places) as the Israelites did in the Old Testament.

These few remarks I have made are much deeper than what I have space or time to go into. Still they are a fundamental part of the day to day practices of indigenous leaders in Madagascar. Despite the magnificent testimony of the church and its leaders, idolatry is still the order of the day. "Unhappily these customs often continued alongside the profession of Christianity." (Smith 1987 p115)

Foreign missions and international organizations have played a great part in shaping contemporary leadership practices in Madagascar. Thus, we can see the world has great influence in indigenous leadership practices. In the church the main importance is to learn from the world, but not to be conformed to the world and its leadership practices, for the Lord Jesus has already taught and modeled our predominant leadership methodology. This methodology needs to be followed worldwide and in any given culture.

### Summary

The LIC church is one of the senior role players in the charismatic movement in Madagascar. Through the establishment of one of the first independent charismatic churches the S.P has received the title of *Raiamandreny* among other charismatic-Pentecostal churches. His church has existed for 25 years and has gone through times of awakening and times of stress and difficulty, a pattern seen in many other congregations' worldwide.

By returning to the history of the church and placing it against a background, I tried to sketch a background by drawing from the experience and wisdom of various other writers. After reading through the work of these writers, it is clear that the S.P. was highly influenced by foreign leadership models. He clearly missed the basic ABC's of starting an organization. He functions through a dictatorial leadership style that unconsciously makes his followers dependent on his presence in the church. This clearly shows the need for a senior pastor to be present in the church and indigenous leadership that would cohere with Malagasy culture and true Biblical values.

We could come to many conclusions when analyzing these stories. However, what is more important is how the LIC church viewed themselves when looking in the mirror. During the brief look pastor the S.P. took, he has received a deeper

understanding of the situation the LIC church found themselves in. He has recognized the need to strengthen their current leadership teams, goals and vision. They also worked hard at arranging all their legal documentations with the government and established some accounting and financial accountability; there by forming some Biblical order in the infrastructure of the church, that could reflect the characteristics of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## *Conclusion*

The stories from the past reveal two distinct patterns. First, they indicate the particular leadership style of the senior pastor, how he leads other leaders and congregation members. Second, they reveal unconscious mismanagement by possibly not following basic structural procedures that discourage growth and development. The question that is still unanswered is "how did this phenomenon develop". In seeking a deeper understanding, I compared Malagasy history, culture and indigenous leadership practices with general western and scriptural leadership practices found in literature in order to see how these two distinct patterns could have developed.

Throughout the research, existing leadership and structure patterns in the LIC church were evaluated. In the research, consideration was given to who wears the titles, exercising their authority and who makes most of the decisions. We have come to understand the church constitution, doctrinal statements and church policies. Analyzing the data collected resulted in some conclusions.

First of all the LIC church needs to bear in mind that some problems in their congregation are a part of something bigger than what they are. Some issues of the church are related to something God is doing throughout this world and it also affects them. On the other hand all could not be counted as world events.

Secondly some interpretations were made as the LIC church's actions were placed against the background. At first the problem seemed single fold but through time a plot surfaced between leadership practices and church structure. Each one of these factors has its own peculiar demands. The main plot that developed through the years of ministry mainly relates to:

1. Title and position
2. Distorted Church Structure and Management

### **5.6 Title and position**

While interviewing the S.P. he referred to his calling by saying:

I was compelled by the Lord with a fire in my heart to go to many places to preach and evangelize in the open air to all creation. Mark16:15 *"Go and preach the gospel to all creation"* and Matthew 24:14 *"and this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached to every nation and then the end will come"* turned in my head like a magnetic band. God charged me to preach the Gospel to every creature.

Following this specific calling the S.P. became a phenomenal leader that rose despite all opposition and persecution. From the start he followed every step in building a solid foundation for ministry. He practiced strong oratory skills with an

eminent charismatic personality, attractive spiritual knowledge and influence. This brought him the recognition of Raiamandreny at a young age. He also trained a leadership team around him and gave them responsibilities in the city. By doing this, he integrated the collective cultural dimension within the Pentecostal Theology of the availability of the Holy Spirit to all believers.

At that time the Pentecostal movement was a new teaching in Madagascar, and the people's response brought great recognition. Unconsciously the fame initiated a pursuit for superiority that has made it more and more difficult for the S.P to work under another organization or denomination leadership that would set the standard and rules down for him. The S.P. initiated his own ministry where he was seen as Raiamandreny. At that time, the S.P had a great leadership style, equipping and raising leaders, and using the unity in Malagasy culture to bring forth rapid church growth among the youth that the Lord turned into a great awakening. This response to his ministry has brought a threat to other traditional denominations and the government. In return they persecuted the church. The persecution almost destroyed his ministry but the LIC church continued to exist despite the persecution because of its small groups in the community. What the persecution did succeed in, was to derail the church from their mission and former focus of raising successors to preach the gospel and in planting churches.

Dictating leadership style and management made the life of the church dependent on the S.P's. presence. Regardless, the S.P started to move and minister abroad. This caused his leadership style to lose its distinctiveness. He gradually became culturally irrelevant through leading the church individually, while the church had a collective atmosphere. Through his relations abroad, more and more foreigners ministered in the LIC church. That damped the S.P. sense of taking personal responsibility in raising successors. Foreign influence also oppressed the existing indigenous leadership qualities within the congregation. Their influence brought great financial demand in the S.P's. lifestyle, and as a result time and money became scarce for the training of new leaders in the LIC church.

Over the years the S.P's. ministry has grow, and he has become more popular due to his evangelistic abilities. He travels to different capitals of the provinces in Madagascar for mass evangelism. After some quite years, the S.P. tried moving his family to France in 2001. However, this failed due to a visa denial. In November of 2005, the S.P. returned to France, concentrating his ministry on trying to resurrect the church they had planted there in the past. The church had recently undergone similar leadership problems, stagnation, financial and administrative difficulties. The S.P. had been absent from his church for three months at a time, only being present in the LIC church for a week or two at most. This caused the S.P. to be more and more absent from his own congregation, which created a further leadership vacuum. As we have seen before, Malagasy people need a strong leader to be present to develop that specific organization effectively. This leader needs a strong vision, goal and upcoming successor in order to motivate and strengthen beliefs by team leadership using different gifts in the body of Christ.

If not people would wonder off, and run hot and cold. In Madagascar other leaders would fear taking initiative while the senior pastor is not present.

The major hindrance in the S.P.'s. ministry is the continual search for recognition as Raiamandreny. This is not just in the religious communities but also nationally. The final observation is affirmed by the S.P.'s. pursuit in running for president. All these items have caused mediocrity to creep into his ministry and cause further division in the church. The S.P.'s. congregation feels that they have lost their pastor, and when he is present his ministry is foreign to them.

### **5.7 Distorted church structure and Management**

The church is the most leadership-intensive organization in the world, more demanding than the market place, the military or political leadership. The church is utterly voluntary and altruistic. As a result, the congregation will never rise above the level of commitment or quality of its leaders

The S.P. had an exceptional approach to ministry as he did evangelism in the market place and used small groups in different parts of the city. It not only worked well in nurturing their culture, but was also of benefit to the raising and training of new leaders. Through the years, other leaders have also developed different ministry offices that are needed in a mega church. These offices had a great need for strong leadership that would keep members accountable and on track with their **vision** and **goals**. Even though the right **offices** exist in a congregation they still need a leader to empower and equip them for their work to achieve desired goals.

The LIC church's disadvantage relates to the way leaders **govern** the church. The vertical solidarity gives the eldest family member authority over surplus that is considered corporate property. (Dahl1993,p109) These leaders take full possession of the church and **finances**, and run it as if it is a family business. (Dahl 1999, 118). It might be culturally acceptable, but it leaves little room for real internal **leadership development** and growth. The only way new leaders will rise up is if there is a specific program to disciple and grow new leaders, which is not the case. This also effects the organizational growth because there is little fresh indigenous input in the congregation.

In desiring to move on to a different level, an even bigger congregation, they will definitely need to strengthen their foundations that have been left. The current foundations and government in the church are workable but unstable. The LIC needs to re-affirm their communal character, allowing the members' involvement in the life and mission of the church. This requires creative organizational structure to integrate the social dynamics of the church with the collectivist character of the local culture. The LIC church lost their personal militancy, community, participation and discipline.

The LIC church needs to develop their ministry through small groups in discipleship, leadership training and evangelism. Otherwise, they will face major crises. The LIC church started out well, but lost enthusiasm along the way. They gave the necessary training, but did not follow through. Because of their collectivist culture their members became uninvolved observers of the mission of the church. The lack of mechanisms for spiritual and moral accountability in the church fostered nominal Pentecostalism.

In Malagasy history, we saw extraordinary leadership characteristics in the administrations of Andrianampoinimerina. It is evident that management is not an indigenous problem but mere personal ignorance towards setting up an authoritative constitution and accountability. The distorted church structures in the LIC church led to mismanagement due to the lack of guidelines and barriers in their constitution. Andrianampoinimerina clearly said in an well known proverb, "*Ny olobelona toy ny amalona ka be siasia, hany ka tsy maintsy asiana didy hanerena azy mba handehanany aminy lalana tian-kombany*". (Man is like a wondering eel; therefore there must be law to guide him into the right way.)

Apart from ignorance in setting up a constitution for the church, others openly avoid structure. A great tension exists between leadership and organizational regulation in Madagascar because leaders (*Raiamandreny*) avoid ethical and governing structures since they hinder using their hierarchical position for sorted gain. This problem deeply penetrates organizations and churches in Madagascar. The rules of bureaucracy and the rules of the good relationship *fiavanana* are not always compatible with each other. Officials, leaders and pastors are prone to abuse the respect people have for them in Madagascar. Christian leaders have the mentality that once they reach some level of superiority or spirituality that they do not have to live according to common rules and regulations in society.

This abuse is subtle in its approach in Madagascar. However, it is evident to all spectators that leaders abuse their power or positions. These leaders usually manipulate people offering services, money etc. to them without expecting reimbursement. Many keep their books in order, abiding by the rules set by the organization or Church, but the moment there is an encounter with senior leaders or pastor, it becomes very difficult to stick to these rules. This continually places staff under tremendous amounts of stress and confusion, as leaders help themselves with the surplus. Malagasy staff want to follow organizational policy but once they are confronted and manipulated by *Raiamandreny* they humbly submit to their demands.

Structure in the church has always flowed from what we understand the mission of the church to be. A great need for indigenous leadership training still remains. Fulltime workers need to be raised and trained for new pastors to emerge from the congregation. It is always a temptation for missionaries to take initiative concerning training in the church but the right and lasting results will only come internally as leadership identifies the Lord's will for them to make disciples. It is

both ironic and revealing that Christianity became truly established during the very period when missionaries were excluded from Madagascar. Native leaders should train these new leaders.

The growth lack of growth in the church is also due to the fact that S.P. mane spiritual gift is in doing evangelism, that focuses the church practices more on evangelism than discipleship. Therefore people tend to move on to other churches in order to find proper discipleship teaching. This is one of the remaining problems. The S.P. worked with all other pastors and only wanted to do evangelism in various places all over the world but had little vision for training new leaders in his own congregation. His vision of duplicating his church or developing it totally faded away. His leadership ran here and there arranging and attending foreign conferences and evangelistic campaigns, but had little discipleship and planning in systematic teaching for future practices and results in their own congregation. Since the S.P. is running for presidency all ministry has slowed down tremendously.

### **5.8 Recommendations**

The LIC church is in need of a permanent leader with a strong indigenous leadership style who is acknowledged as *Raiamandreny*. The S.P told me that he is in the process of developing his second son's leadership abilities and would like to hand the church over to him in a few years time. The church is fond of him even though he is a bit young. He has shown remarkable characteristics by not following his father in his propaganda towards pursuing the presidency but remained faithful to his responsibly in the church unlike other pastors. The congregation gladly accepts his leading. He is popular with the congregation and shows great oratory skills like other Malagasy pastors. The only concern some people in the congregation have is the fact that he has no theological training and that he will need management support to give him the needed wisdom in running the church affairs.

There always will remain the need for hierarchical leaders. However, team leaders need to be encouraged, to be equipped and exhorted by a strong hierarchical leader that is willing and able to raise successful successors. Leaders need affirmation and security from their senior pastor. They need to feel and experience that he believes in them, which is important in Malagasy culture. They want to be involved in his mission and together achieve rewarding results. Leaders desire to brainstorm, formulate and establish the church's doctrine and church policy together. Planning ahead is crucial, especially in this time of crises and stress that is apparent in the congregation, in order to focus on establishing a doctrinal statement and organizational policy in the infrastructure of the church

The senior pastor has started moving towards forming some constitution and financial policy for the church. The church's leadership team desires to write down their doctrinal statement that will give the church a clear understanding of their beliefs, but no actions were taken in this direction.

Most of the matters in the church will definitely not change by themselves or overnight. It will be a tough road with rewarding results. Steps towards change that have been suggested by other ministers with experience in transforming leadership structure say that this process should not be started until there is a willingness to walk on this long road of transformation.

### 5.8.1 Personal Reflection

Personally the research has been rewarding and interesting while listening to everyone's story and building lasting relationships with the leaders. In pursuing understanding of each other it has become less difficult to open up to each other and share frustrations and disappointments encountered in ministry. This allows us to edify and strengthen each other on the road that is still ahead. There still remains a lot of gray areas in Malagasy leadership and church structure to me.

Many times I felt insecure, not knowing where the research was leading and how to approach the different barriers that I encountered on the road to understanding. Most leaders were much older than I was, and I had almost no experience compared to them. Many hierarchical issues surfaced and because of uncertainty most of the time I found myself taking control of our conversation instead of waiting in silence for a natural development. This was one of my biggest struggles.

Even now that I understand their situation a little better, it still leaves uncertainty about what would be the best manner to embrace the future. How should I encourage the church in forming and planning their future practices? Should I help or just continue to walk alongside them in silence? Walking is difficult for me, I just want to do and run. One question I ask myself is, "am I still trying to solve problems, or did I reach the place where I only care and walk alongside people as proposed in Pastoral Care"? I hope that I can reach the place where I will be content with just caring for those who come along my way and not repeat the mistakes of the past.

Excitement fills me when I think of their story, and what the Lord has done through them. I will be honored to see what He will do in the near future. I am also glad to walk on this road with the church, and see a new generation of leaders rise up to extend God's kingdom. I believe the best will come from this research paper and that other churches here in Madagascar will pursue Godly leadership in their churches and a firm foundation of faith with a well-formed church policy to pass on to their children.

## APPENDIX

### 6 Conversations

In the following sections I recorded the conversations I had with numerous church leaders. I will always be "R", as the researcher and the other letter used would be the different church leaders I had conversations with. I wrote this report as close as possible to the participants account to preserve the original data. But in some instances we had to make adjustments to keep a basic flow of English grammar.

#### 6.1 S.P. (*Senior Pastor*)

**R:** From the time that you finished Bible school, the time you converted, step by step till how you started the church, we can start from there. But detail is very important.

**S.P.:** Thank you very much. I was converted in November 1969 and I was baptized in the Spirit in the beginning of 1970 and was baptized by immersion in September that same year. As a youth I went to a small school in the village Moramanga. There was a new church called Jesosy Mamonjy (Jesus Saves). My aunt attended their meetings and told me all that was happening there, so when I went to hear the preacher and seeing the miracles the Lord did, I gave my heart to the Lord Jesus in November 1969. The pastor that supported me was "R" who was a pastor who loved to pray for extensive hours. I saw him as "the praying pastor". This had a great influence on me, and ever since the time of this I am passionate about spending time in prayer, especially during my first year of conversion. In 1971 I spent many nights in prayer. Almost every night I prayed until 2,3,4,5, in the morning almost for a year I think. Some nights I prayed right through the night, just to get up and go to work the following morning. I prayed all the time even during the day for about one year. This passion for prayer continued. During the same year I started to preach in my home village Pembary, where I planted my first church for Jesosy Mamonjy. In 1971 I became very hungry to be a full time pastor but was called up for service in the military in 1972.

**R:** You were called to the army?

**S.P.:** Yes, the army where I served for the next 18 months.

**R:** For 18 Months?

**S.P.:** Yes.

**R:** So what did you do there?

**S.P.:** I was a foot soldier but soon the army recognized my leadership abilities and after the first 6 months they made me an instructor. Outside of the camp I also became a teacher and the director of one school. All my work could not quench the fire that still burned in my heart to preach the word of God.

**R:** Did you preach in the army?

**S.P.:** Yes, I then started to preach in the army camp and from there all the surrounding denominations invited me to preach in their churches from Jesosy Mamonjy to the FJKM even the Roman Catholic's invited me to preach in their church. They did not know I was from Jesosy Mamonjy but just that I was on fire for the Lord Jesus. I later became known as the pastor from the army. It might sound a bit romantic but from the beginning I was persecuted in the army for not following the immorality that breeds amongst these young military men. Life was very bad; it felt as if I was in hell.

**R:** So it was very hard?

**S.P.:** Yes. We were asked to do many bad things on many occasions by the person in command but I refused, standing in my newfound faith in Christ. I said to them, "no I can not do it, I am a new man now and I belong to Jesus now, I can not do it", so it brought great persecution to me. In June 1973 the time came to leave the army, and I decided to go full time for the Lord. I stopped my studies for being a teacher and I left my work.

**R:** What studies did you do and what job did you have?

**S.P.:** I studied to be a teacher and I was also working as a teacher. Then I went directly to the Bible school at Jesosy Mamonjy starting in July 1973, in Antananarivo.

**R:** At Jesosy Mamonjy?

**S.P.:** Yes. I did only one year of Bible school. Then after one year...

**R:** What were the teachings in the Bible school like?

**S.P.:** For one year we studied all Bible books. Themes like the theology on sin and the punishment that followed their previous actions (which is a strong doctrine they follow even today) plus many other comparative studies in the Word. We studied the doctrines of Jesosy Mamonjy. We studied the Word and made examples of people who committed sin and how God forgave them. There is not one person in the Bible that committed sin who repented that was not forgiven by God. So God forgives all sins. We did comparative studies from the Bible like when Moses hung the snake in the tree and all who looked at it would be healed just like in the New Testament when Jesus came and was hung on the cross and all that looked to Him would be healed, things like that.

R: So how did it work, when did you have classes?

S.P.: These classes were taught in the mornings and in the afternoons. We would each go on our own to practice.

R: Did everyone choose where they wanted to preach or do they send you to a specific place?

S.P.: No, each one goes where they want to go to preach.

R: So where did you go?

S.P.: I felt compelled by the Lord to preach in every market and each village in Antananarivo.

R: So did you go to the market places?

S.P.: Yes, but I also went to every Village to preach.

R: So then you called all the people together?

S.P.: Yes. And at that time in Malagasy people would come in great numbers to listen to me preach. The whole market stopped and all people looked at me and listened and saw the miracles the Lord did. It is like they gave time and only when I was finished the market would start again with their business.

R: Somebody told me that there was a special group and that you were a part of this group "the youth and the Bible".

S.P.: No, not yet. That was one year after my Bible school, after we went out of the Bible school we started this group.

R: Why did you leave the Bible school?

S.P.: For me personally I felt the Call of God very strongly in my life. I wanted to go to many places and the Call that I have in my heart I could not do at Jesosy Mamonjy. I had this burden in my heart to preach to every creature the Word of God, there is a burden in my heart and the Word of God, *Mark 16:15 'and He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."*, and in *Matthew 24:14 "and this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come."* It was turning in my head like a magnetic band, I could not forget about it. So I felt that God was only speaking to me. It's like God charged me to preach the Gospel to every creature. And at that time I would run to any market or hall to preach the Gospel.

R: So the Bible school did not agree with that?

**S.P.:** No.

**R:** What does the church believe?

**S.P.:** Jesosy Mamonjy was and still is today a very isolated denomination. They only believe in their own denomination and to extend the Kingdom of God through their denomination. They don't allow their people to work outside their denomination, but they should only be pastors in their own church, preach in their own church, and they also do not allow any books or teachings that comes from the outside. The Church only wanted me to pastor in their churches but I had no desire to be a pastor in a church, but rather to do open air evangelism. I wanted to work with all people, my only purpose was "How should I teach so that each person can hear the gospel?" At that time I didn't think of the follow up I just went to every market place and preached what was in my heart, many pastors said to me "what are you going to do with all the people that gave their hearts to God?" But I did not think of that, I just wanted to go out and preach the Gospel. And I preached and many people heard the Gospel and I felt satisfied in my heart. But in my heart I had no burden to follow up these people. At that time when I preached many people gave their hearts to Jesus and many people got healed miraculously. Some times I did not even preach but healing was flowing out of me like Spring Water. Many people would touch my clothes and be healed and by just touching them. And I brought many Bibles and books to the market every day, people would buy all the books quickly. They where so touched by the preaching they would just grab the books and buy all the books in a few minutes. They did not know what it was about, but they just bought it to see what was in it. They were so touched by what we did, they just took all our books. At that time I belonged to that group 'the youth and the Bible', but I did my own work.

**R:** So did you always go on your own to preach?

**S.P.:** No, sometimes some people of the group accompanied me. One Vazaha, a French man, and Madam "R", that studied with me at Jesosy Mamonjy started to go with me to preach everywhere I went. At one stage even a photographer started to follow us to take pictures of what we did.

**R:** Is that the time you had the newspaper?

**S.P.:** No, this was between 1974-75.

**R:** What you told me now?

**S.P.:** Yes. In 1975 I was 25 years and had great results in the ministry. Young people from the age of 12 to 17 followed me everywhere I went, like little ghosts. A little youth group formed spontaneously and they spent most of their time together every day; they only left when they went to school.

**R:** What did you do then with these youth?

**S.P.:** We taught them the things of the Bible. The group prayed together and Madam "R" (who was the oldest amongst them) and I taught the youth once or twice a week, the things we had learned in the Bible school. We even trained them how to preach the Good News and on many occasions he would take them to do open air evangelism in markets, where they would preach the Good News about Jesus Christ.

**R:** Even the young ones?

**S.P.:** Even the young ones. Some were already preaching at the age of 12-13 with power and authority. There was a great atmosphere of respect and love for each other and the youth looked up to me as a father. They became like my children, they loved me very much and I loved them. We were almost always together. Their ages were 12 to 17 years of age and I taught them how to preach.

**R:** How many was in the group?

**S.P.:** The group grew bigger and bigger, the first 5 became 12, 20, 30, 50, 70, 100 and just grew.

**R:** Did you teach them everyday?

**S.P.:** No, maybe in the beginning it was once a week and then twice a week. But we came together if one of us were sick, then we would meet there, or on birthdays to celebrate.

**R:** Where would you get together?

**S.P.:** We would meet in Vondrobavaka Ankatavotsy and we where known as "Ankatavotsy cells". My first wife also came out of this little group, but we only got married in 1978. In 1975 the national president of The Assemblies of God met me at one of our evangelism outreaches in the market place. He then made an appointment with me where he invited me to come and preach in their church at Isotry where their head quarters were. When I preached there they gave me lots of money. About 1 month after that they asked me to come and preach again, it was then that they asked me if I would be the pastor of that church. They then ordained me and I became their pastor with an assisting pastor. At the same time I was still meeting with my youth group on a regular basis.

**R:** So you still had the youth group?

**S.P.:** Yes. Just after a few months since I started to work in the church they experienced great revival. The church was so full people where standing outside looking through the doors and windows.

**R:** Did you still pray a lot in that time?

**S.P.:** Yes, but not as much as I did in 1971. I was still passionate about prayer, but the people at Assemblies of God did not pray much. I continued to pray a lot especially with my youth group. My youth group and I always prayed. In July 1976 we fasted for 21 days with my youth, it was my first time. Full fast you know, nothing just water. The youth did not fast for all the days, only the last 5 days for they were still in school.

**R:** And from there, what happened to the church?

**S.P.:** In 1976 problems started with the Assemblies of God. As I went from market to market with the missionaries of the Assemblies of God in Toliara, they had a big evangelism campaign in the City of Toliara. It was a very big evangelism campaign, many people came. At first the minister of Toliara gave me a permit for ten days to preach in the capital city. But then the directors and leaders complained because their workers left their offices to attend my meetings in open air. So on the third or fourth day they tried to stop me.

**R:** Where did you preach?

**S.P.:** At the market, open air in Toliara. So on the fourth day the police came with cars, lights, and guns surrounding the crowd and handing me a letter that said I have to stop my meetings immediately. But I did not stop, that day I continued until the end. I asked all the people that came to kneel down before the Lord and we went on with these campaigns ignoring the police until the last day.

**R:** Was there many healings and stuff still happening?

**S.P.:** Yes, the Lord did great things amongst the people; many were healed and delivered and many gave their hearts to Jesus Christ. But the same night I finished my campaign I got on a bus to flee to Fort Dauphin, because I did not want to stay in Toliara. When I got to Fort Dauphin I asked for a permit to preach and have open-air meetings for ten days. At first the commissioner gave it to me. The commissioner of the police stayed right next to where I was staying. So on the fourth morning as I was leaving the house to go and preach he said to me, "give me back the permit, we don't want you to continue your preaching here any more for the people in our city are easily influenced". Then they asked me to rather go back to Antananarivo.

**R:** So did you give him the permit?

**S.P.:** Yes, I gave him the permit. I told the group that the meetings were cancelled and then went on my way.

**R:** And then?

**S.P.:** And then I went back to Antananarivo.

**R:** What year was that?

**S.P.:** 1976, and then after that the national police interviewed the comity of the Assemblies of God.

**R:** Why?

**S.P.:** The police thought I was a troublemaker. They thought that I was influenced and manipulated by the CIA of America. The comity was spooked.

**R:** So did you at anytime preach things about the Government?

**S.P.:** No, no only the Good News. I was coming from the bush and I did not know much of what was going on in the political world. I only knew I had the power of His resurrection. Nothing other than the Gospel interested me. Still the government already persecuted me. The police went to my room and took all my things like all my books and all my tapes of Billy Gram, Tomalley Osborn, Oral Roberts, and it was burned.

**R:** Burned?

**S.P.:** Yes, it was burned. They forbid me to preach anywhere and they forbade me to leave Antananarivo for one year. I could not even go to my parents, every time I wanted to visit my parents I needed to get special permission from the national police. I thought I was going to go to jail, because they interviewed me and placed me on the red list. Police were following me everywhere I went.

**R:** But did you still preach or did you stop?

**S.P.:** I still preached. I was still young and on fire, I could not stop preaching. The police did not stop me from preaching but they went with me to the market and saw that I was only preaching the Good News. The comity of Assemblies of God asked me to stop preaching, but I did not stop, so this caused continual problems. At the end I went to the national president of the Assemblies of God and asked his blessing to leave the church and preach in the open air.

**R:** But the police had told you not to preach?

**S.P.:** Yes.

**R:** Didn't they follow you and try to stop you?

**S.P.:** No. they followed me but did not try to stop me. At that time I also felt the peace of God to go and focus on open air preaching and the home cell groups I had. Easter 1977 we started to call the group FAAK, of about 100 for the first time. Then we changed it to "Life in Christ." The youth in the group came from all denominations. I baptized all of them and prayed for them to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We met once a week and then on Sunday each one would go to their own church. The group needed some money and I sold books for the Bible Society. So we said we needed a newspaper in Antananarivo.

**R:** So then you started the newspaper?

**S.P.:** Yes, the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1977 was the first publication done by the Lutheran publications. Easter 1977 we started to call the youth group of about 100, LIC church for the first time. The youth in the group came from all denominations and I baptised all of them and prayed for them to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In 1979 some of the youth asked me to come together on Sundays to pray, from then some of them met on Sundays. From there we moved to the Stadium behind the church. The youth saw that we were becoming a church so disagreement started because some youth did not want to leave their church. There was also a pastor, not part of our group, that went to France and when he came back spread some doubt amongst the youth about the doctrines I was teaching. He was asking the youth, "Why do you only learn about Pentecostal teachings but not Calvinism or the Lutheran and other doctrines." Some did not want to leave their churches but continued to obey their parents. There was about 3,000 youth gathering at the Stadium.

**R:** On a Sunday?

**S.P.:** No, on Saturdays and Thursdays at the stadium in Amboditsiry. Youth from the high school and university. We were planning to buy this land. We built a big temporary roof construction with bamboo and palm trees, not with baton but the land was too expensive to buy at the end. From there we moved to the stadium in Sosethectar until 1985 where we were persecuted. Then the doctrinal problem came and many of the people that were close to me left me.

**R:** So what doctrines did you teach them?

**S.P.:** Speaking in Tongues, to be baptised, the gifts of the Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and things like that.

**R:** So the people started to question it?

**S.P.:** Yes, so many of them started to leave. In the beginning of 1980 only one of my churches 'Cercle des Cheminots' were full, about 400 people. Then I went back on my knees and prayed and fasted for 12 days and started my services in the stadium again. At the end of the 1980 LIC was a church. We started at the church and then went to the stadium because we grew very fast. More and more people came, more than before.

**R:** How many people came?

**S.P.:** It was 4,000; 5,000; 8,000, one big evangelism more than 25,000 people came, even up to 30,000.

**R:** Madame "R" told me that there was a time when about 300,000 people came there? But I'm not sure that I understand the Malagasy so well.

**S.P.:** No it was 30,000 people. The stadium was too small to contain all the people.

**R:** So did you have a microphone to speak to the people?

**S.P.:** I did, I bought a big sound system. Many miracles took place until 1983; blind men could see, the deaf could hear, lame and cripple could walk, and many small sicknesses were healed. It was not the whole multitude that got healed at once but daily there would be miracles that happened to praise God for. In the 1980 we started to plant churches all over Madagascar, first by "Ho" that went to Fianarantsoa. Then in 1981 in Antsirabe, 1982 in Tamatave, 1983 in Toliara, Mahajanga, and Diego all in one year because airplane tickets were very cheap. So persecution started in other provinces, the first was in Tamatave, then in Toliara.

**R:** What started the persecution?

**S.P.:** They stopped the meeting because the officials said the students are not concerned with their studies anymore. It caused trouble in families and other people gave false testimony, like at night prayer the youth would do abominable things.

**R:** Madame "R" said that they accused the youth of being naked at prayer meetings.

**S.P.:** Yes, in 1985 they accused the youth in Fianarantsoa at pastor "Ho" that the youth were naked at night prayers. But these persecutions did not stop my work in Antananarivo. But the real persecution came from the traditional churches.

**R:** What traditional churches.

**S.P.:** The Catholic, FJKM, and the Lutheran church.

**R:** Did they threaten you?

**S.P.:** Not directly?

**R:** Why were they persecuting you?

**S.P.:** They were afraid of losing their members and jealous of the move God was doing under the youth. Hundreds and thousands of youths would get together where they struggled to have even a few. Many FJKM members came to the church because they were not yet converted in their own church. They spread rumors that they would close these youth meetings and eventually they succeeded to influence the government. In 1985 there were big churches in every region and big city. We were stopped to continue preaching in the stadium, Jesosy Fitiavana. God protected me from going to prison. Many people that were close to me would warn me that the police are looking for me, but I never fled from them and they never arrested me. My one uncle worked for the government and they received

notes that the police should arrest me but they never arrested me. All went to Assemblies of God.

**R:** So all your small churches (the congregation) went to Assembly of God and became part of Assembly of God?

**S.P.:** Yes, they all became Assembly of God. Before the persecution I wanted to start a church in the Comoros, so I went there for a month but could not get a permit from the government. I came back but sent a couple there but they also returned after a year not receiving a permit or visas to continue their stay there. We went to Hawaii and we went out from Assembly of God because they did not want to see or accept people who followed the Power of God.

**R:** But what do they believe, are they also Charismatic? I don't know anything about the Assembly of God.

**S.P.:** They are Pentecostal. You see there were many people who fell under The Spirit.

**R:** In that time?

**S.P.:** Yes, many people.

**R:** In who's services?

**S.P.:** In many services, like the Rhema church.

**R:** And in your services?

**S.P.:** Even in my services, we would preach and lay our hands on them and pray.

**R:** And the Assembly of God did not agree with that?

**S.P.:** Yes.

**R:** Did they also have an election for a new President for the Assembly of God?

**S.P.:** Yes, they had an election.

**R:** Ok, so then you left, but how many years were you a part of Assembly of God?

**S.P.:** I think 2 years, I don't remember exactly.

**R:** I wonder if we have an Assembly of God in South Africa?

**S.P.:** Yes, in every country, even in South Africa they have an Assembly of God. When I was abroad, I stayed a long time in Comoros, Reunion, and France with the Assemblies of God. And the churches received me because they knew my problem here in Madagascar. Then when I went out from the Assembly of God, I started

my church. I did not just want to work with one denomination, so I started my own church and worked with many denominations.

**R:** So they (the different churches) did not want to work with other denominations but they wanted to work with you?

**S.P.:** Yes. But there are some who work together but there are some who don't, like the Assembly of God.

**R:** But you were ordained in the Assembly of God is that correct?

**S.P.:** Yes, in 1975. Have you been ordained at that time also?

**R:** No, I was only born in 1979, I am still very young. You have more experience than the length of my life.

**S.P.:** (Laugh) In 1979 is when I got married.

**R:** So then you did not want to be apart of their denomination?

**S.P.:** No.

**R:** So what did you do then?

**S.P.:** I just continued in the church here.

**R:** So what was the church like at that time?

**S.P.:** We had one meeting at 9 o'clock. We had a band and made music. We did evangelism. We have Gospel Feasts.

**R:** When do you have these Gospel Feasts?

**S.P.:** We do them every year, here in the stadium. But we did not do it last year.

**R:** What do you do at these Gospel Feasts?

**S.P.:** We invite artists to come here to sing, I preach to the people. Many come here to be healed. Like this man came here he could not walk, people brought him here and was healed and walked in 2002.

**R:** But why did you not do it last year?

**S.P.:** We did not have money, you know you need lots of money to do that.

**R:** How did you pay for it the last time?

**S.P.:** The previous time, one member of my church was very rich and gave money to do it. Also some South African people that have an association the Good News Ministry, they also gave us money.

**R:** With whom did Pastor "M" come to your church the first time?

**S.P.:** He came with "K.S" to my church.

**R:** When did you start having more services in the mornings?

**S.P.:** 10 Years ago. Now we have 4 meetings in the morning.

**R:** How do you see your church now?

**S.P.:** We have been struggling for the past few years, we are not growing.

**R:** That is strange because when I speak to the people on the street, they say that it is growing fast.

**S.P.:** Many people say that, but inside I don't think so. I am not satisfied. But I believe that from this year my church is going to grow. I trust and believe, after a few months something will happen.

**R:** The churches you are working with here in Madagascar are Assembly of God, Rhema, FAAKRI, Jesosy Fitiavana, and may others?

**S.P.:** Yes, many others. But mainly Assembly of God, and Rhema.

**R:** You are friends with many of the pastors from all the churches?

**S.P.:** Yes, but it is a bit political. When we had a problem in our country, the President made an arrangement, he invited all the churches, all denomination not only their churches, to come together and support him. Then just after that the same week another pastor who is very close to our President asked us to come together and to pray together. So we prayed together going from church-to-church.

**R:** All the pastors?

**S.P.:** Yes, all the pastors. All come together and we all pray together, so we all became friends. Now the one who is very close to me he became the National President "M". But now he talks to me, but it's like he became a little bit cold, not like before. Since he got elected he did not want us, he never visits one of our churches. He only goes to the FJKM, that's all.

**R:** So he doesn't get together with all of you anymore?

**S.P.:** No, he doesn't. We always talked to each other. He talked to me and my wife. But he is out of our friendship, but maybe when it is time for our next election then he will come to talk to me again (Laugh). But for now he does not.

**R:** So do the other Pastors still get together?

**S.P.:** Yes, we still get together, but not so much now. But like this coming Saturday we are coming together and we will have lunch together.

**R:** Are you going to approach the other Pastors to work with you?

**S.P.:** Yes, I'm always trying, slowly and slowly. To show them that I have something to share, that God is important and we should work together.

**R:** Tell me about your passion for Evangelism, what drives you to do Evangelism?

**S.P.:** I think what drives me to do Evangelism is that every creature should hear the Gospel. That is the route. In my heart I wonder when will the Gospel be preached to all the nations, all creatures. I want there to be many saved when Jesus comes.

**R:** So you want to see the end, when Jesus comes?

**S.P.:** Yes, even in my lifetime.

**R:** Do you want to see Jesus come?

**S.P.:** Yes, I would like to meet His eyes when He comes. That is my plan, my goal.

**R:** Last time we ended with your persecution, but you did not explain to me clearly what happened in the persecution. What happened?

**S.P.:** The Minister of Interior and the C.S.R (Supreme Counsel of the Revolution) declared that I must stop my ministry and they spread it in the Government newspaper.

**R:** What newspaper is that?

**S.P.:** It is a Government newspaper they have, they call it an official newspaper.

**R:** So then they tell everybody that they are going to stop 'this man'?

**S.P.:** Yes, they investigated the pastor's to see if they are true ministers. And during this time believers could not have reunion in the Church anymore. The church in Diego was locked with chains and was never opened again, no one could go in. But we get together for prayer in different houses. The police started to control the people, not allowing anyone to preach loudly and we were not permitted to go to church in a group. The police give permission only for 4-5 people to get together in one house.

**R:** And in Antananarivo, did they close the church?

**S.P.:** Yes, they closed it.

**R:** So the people split up again?

**S.P.:** Yes, that is why we became so many churches. And then slowly God opened doors, the Church in Antananarivo was able to meet together for prayer. In Antananarivo we were once one church and now we are 20 churches. Not small churches, but big churches, they all come from my church, like Rhema Church (a name they got from abroad but they do not relate to the Rhema church in S.A), FAKRI, Jesosy Fitiavana, or whatever other name suited them.

**R:** So where did all of you go?

**S.P.:** 1992 I went to Israel, Korea, and Singapore for the first time. In 1995 the Church did Holy War Evangelism in Paris and France. We planted a new church there. But this church also split because of a problem with pastor "P" and her husband. They did not want to submit to my leading but they wanted to control everything. In 2000 I wanted to immigrate to France with my family because I have a church there. I left the church just preparing all my paperwork for the French Embassy, and that took four weeks. I prepared pastor "A.P." to give him the congregation in Antananarivo. In that time he ran the church as his own. But my visa was denied, so I went back to running my church.

"S.P." was very open and excited to share his story with me. But I only had the opportunity to record three formal interviews. Most of the other times we had conversations while working together.

## **6.2 Church Leader "D.P."**

Leader "D.P." could not speak English so I made use of my translator. He is a pastor in "S.P." church, a faithful servant in the church and he does not really have enemies in the church. He can relate to anybody, honest in his work. But he can be very ignorant of things happening in the church. He mainly feels disappointed about their current state or dryness in the church but feels that they just hit a dry season because the Lord is testing "S.P." in this time. He was very suspicious and cautious in telling me their story. Our time together was very brief and to the point. Afterwards he spoke to many people questioning my research.

**R:** How did you meet "S.P." ?

**D.P.:** I met "S.P." in 1980. "S.P." baptised me and I started to follow "S.P." like Elisha followed Elijah.

**R:** What can you tell me about "S.P."?

**D.P.:** "S.P." is like the palace you see there on the mountain, he cannot be hidden. He is a great man that brought great revival to Madagascar. I believe God is testing "S.P." in this time he is going through. "S.P." used to preach in all six provinces and then started to go abroad.

**R:** But why did people leave "S.P."?

**D.P.:** Many workers left "S.P.", judging him (Accountability, Finances). How to take care of people? Nothing else than the Gospel mattered for him. His wife died. His life was prayer, night and day he prayed and there was no "vazaha" (foreigners) in his life. All the crusades we did in all the provinces were by faith, God supplied all the money, and no foreign money was used. You see in Madagascar there were three great people Dahloed, the founder of Jesosy Mamonjy (Jesus Saves church). He was a preacher, they had great revival. He is an evangelist in 1960 and was supported from America. S.P. was converted in his church. Nenilava, the Lutheran church, she started the fiofohasana (to be awakened) she was known for metrical healings and she worked with the Government. The Lutheran church abroad and "S.P.", the LIC church, supported her. He was a great evangelist that brought revival and miracles but he had no support. When "S.P." trained us he said "every 40 years God raises some one to do His work."

**R:** For how long have you been with "S.P."?

**D.P.:** I stayed with "S.P." from the time of his conversion in 1983 until I got married in 1984, but there were many other pastors working and learning from "S.P." from Rhema, Assembly of God, FAAKRI, and others.

**D.P.:** In 1980 we moved around, ministering in many places. In 1985-6 the Government persecuted us and all people stayed at their places. Only from that time did we really start to stay in the church building. Before we prayed a lot, then we would preach in different areas and on Sunday. All the people came to the stadium. From 1990 to 2000 we had no support, all the money came from the church only. "S.P." did not like that foreigners controlled him, so he did not care about foreign support.

### **6.3 1W.P.**

Leader "1W.P." could also not speak English that forced me to use a translator. She is a pastor in the church but we only had a brief interview in my office, she was not really open to talk and share personal stories (which is understandable), but she was eager to answer any questions I had. She strongly felt the church is on fire for the Lord but thinks that they desperately need to get a good administration platform in the congregation. She mainly complained about not being allowed to give input into different decisions they as a leadership team should make together. Rather than "S.P." dominating the meeting where he only shares his ideas with them but then making the decision by himself.

**R:** How did you come to know "S.P."?

**1W.P.:** In 1979 I was converted in "S.P." church, coming from a traditional church: I felt the traditional church had very good administration, but needs more

of the Spirit of God, that I found in the Charismatic church but I feel they need better administration.

**R:** What would you say is "S.P." ministry?

**1W.P.:** "S.P." is an evangelist and he works with power but he's not good with arrangements in the church.

**R:** Could you perhaps tell me what is his main message?

**1W.P.:** He mainly preaches that people need Jesus, and healing.

**R:** What kind of person would you say is "S.P."?

**1W.P.:** He is kind, direct but he cannot hold any secrets. If you tell him something, tomorrow he will either speak it from the pulpit or talk to other about it. My family and non-believers that is not from our church think the church is a sect, because "S.P." leads all things and he does not really listen to our advise or opinion in the meetings. I sometimes wonder what are we doing there.

**R:** What would you say is "S.P." function in the church?

**1W.P.:** He does all things, he is the senior pastor, he does the administration, and he does the finances, "S.P." is all in one.

**R:** As a pastor in the church what do you think is the problems here in the church?

**1W.P.:** Believers always criticise, and there is no church building. We are renting this building. We have no church; we need to build a church of our own. But at least the church is on fire for Jesus. We just need discipleship, many people are born again here but there is not much after that... I think the problem is discipleship.

#### **6.4 Pastoral Leader "A.P."**

Leader "A.P." spoke English and is a pastor in LIC church. When I started this interview he was avoiding me, not showing up for the appointments we made. The more I worked with him the more relaxed he became until one morning we were able to have a formal interview that I think went really well. I took him to a coffee shop close to the church that is peaceful in the mornings. It helped to have more privacy and to avoid interruption by church members and activities.

Afterwards I got to know "A.P." really well. We share the same teaching gift in the congregation that brought us closer in supporting each other. He was eager to go into a conversation with me sharing interesting stories with me. He desires to change many things in the church but feels that he cannot stand up to "S.P." dictatorial leadership. He knows that I have a close relation with "S.P." and that I'm not afraid to speak to "S.P." about congregational matters. Some time in the

past he asked me to talk to "S.P." about financial problems they experience in the church. I'm a foreigner that can jump the gender chain and address certain issues he is to afraid to address. Gender plays a big role in Madagascar.

**A.P.:** Brother I am afraid; (laugh nervously) I can see that you are very patient with us for you have one goal in mind.

**R:** No need to be afraid, I know you would like to stay anonymous and I will keep it confidential. So where should we start, why do you think so many people are leaving the church?

**A.P.:** There are many reasons why people leave the church, many, many reasons. Firstly one person told me there is not any good teaching to build them up. Most of the time we receive encouragement and exhortation but no real meat. That is the first thing. The people grow up and they need something fit and consistent. Some say milk, milk, milk we are not babies, so then they go to another church to seek meat, there is no meat, there is meat but not many times, many times milk, milk, many times exhortation, exhortation. That is the one thing and I have shared it with "S.P.", even this year, I explained to him, I want to share four things, four important things. My goal is to give teaching to the families once a month, teaching about sanctification, and teaching about the second coming of Christ.

**R:** You have given three teachings for the family, sanctification, the second coming and the third is?

**A.P.:** And the last is how to encourage people to be involved in ministry, involved in their lives, involved in their faith to do something for the Lord. That is also the one reason, they just attend the meeting on Sunday, and during the week they do nothing for the Lord. But I grew in doing, when I was involved in the work of the Lord, it helped me to grow. So the fourth, but it is not ok' excuse me. "S.P." said to me; excuse me so he wants to be involved in the teaching. And I agree, but I try to see a opportunity, I do according a possibility the opportunity who is presented to me for this, first I will do teaching of family with deacon this year, maybe I can't do it, maybe rarely in the church, but with the deacons I will do it and I will meet at least once a month with all deacons. I will teach them about family, relation between wife and husband, and relation between parents and their children, because right now I know there is a big problem between parents and their children, in some deacons lives. One deacons wife told me, can you please talk to my husband, he fought with our daughter in public and a heathen said to him don't fight with your daughter like that we will kill you.

**R:** Don't you think you should also teach it on Sundays?

**A.P.:** Rarely, because you know I first arrange my program. The first responsible is "S.P.", and I arrange everything, he preaches and if there is time he gives me and I preach, but I see this. One Sunday, maybe I have at least one meeting to preach, maybe at eleven it does not matter, I want to start to show to God but I

really want to serve and exercise my ministry. I am convinced that God called me to this church to serve in my ministry as a teacher, I am not sure if I am a teacher or not but the little I have I share, to serve the church. So but all time "S.P." want to teach and preach, him and his wife. It is right, its ok but at least I will arrange everything, this week if I have an opportunity I will teach this, I want to put in these four things. Even if I preach at seven I preach this thing, and I arrange the first Sunday, but this program I will do after the fasting days, so during the fasting I will arrange my program and I will do my best to do if a opportunity is open. That is what I see as the reason, the big reason for people leaving. In one side they have reasoned and on the other side I see they have other problems in church, and they use the occasion to leave. I go to the second thing. That is a problem of finances. Before we raised funds for the building in 1984, we where next to Abotatim. We want to buy a land to build. And at the time there is a financial problem, we don't know exactly where the funds went, we have raised some funds and the funds has disappeared. Not disappeared like that but it has been used for other things. At that time we bought many, many copies of books, a room full.

**R:** For the LIC church?

**A.P.:** Yes, for LIC church, at the same time the owner who is selling the land asked us where is your complement of this. This is one brother who played piano at the church, but now he is in Jesosy Mamonjy. His problem is of finances, there is no transparency and there is no right use of the money. Maybe we raised funds for one big problem, two years ago there is a problem in the south, problem of famine, we raised some money, but then we had a big problem and we took this money to resolve our own problem but we never sent the money to the south. Never, and one of the brothers said to me you need to tell "S.P." he needs to replace the money. But because the money is used for our big problem the problem is resolved.

**R:** When was that?

**A.P.:** Two years ago?

**R:** So you never replaced the money?

**A.P.:** Never! Like this Sunday, the church in Toliara is flooded and the pastor said to me he has water in his house up to his hips and nobody is coming to church so they have nothing, no money and we will take up an offering for them on Sunday...The problem, the big, big reason, the big, big, big reason is the finances. The church is using the money badly. Many, many times, let's say one thing we raise money, maybe from 1997-1999 maybe from 1985 to 1999 we collect funds for the building, I don't know for the sixth time, we have some money, it's the second offering. The entire second offering is for building. Praise the Lord we can buy land 38 million FMG we have in the bank I don't know, maybe 30 million or more.

**R:** 38 million plus 30 million?

**A.P.:** Yes, but 38 was used to buy the land. And ...

**R:** Where is the land?

**A.P.:** Do you remember where we had the evangelisation with the Les Adeline groups?, near that place. And we want to do something with the rest, maybe 30 million, with 30 million we organize a big crusade here, and we do not have enough funds, actually we had no funds, so "S.P." asked the brother if it is possible to take some money for the crusade. The problem is that nobody, nobody is able to say no it is for the building not for the evangelisation, including me. So they ask how many do you want? Ten million, so we give it. One thing, second thing one of the staff have a problem at the "turbine" in the court, he did not do something bad but someone beat him. So he is in the hospital and he brings the things at the court, so he needs an advocate, so he needs to pay the advocate, so he took some money, so he asked for some money for his advocate. The other problem also is at the bank, because at that time pastor "1W.P." and her husband are responsible for the money. And they take money and put it in their own account. You understand? There is no account apart, but in the account of pastor "1W.P." all money belongs to the church. So we don't know exactly how many money we have and how many she has.

**R:** So the church had no bank account?

**A.P.:** Yes.

**R:** So the church used her account to deposit the money?

**A.P.:** Yes, yes, especially the account.

**R:** But why did the church not open their own account?

**A.P.:** Yes, we can do it easily, but at that time I don't know.

**R:** Did they say lets put the money into our account?

**A.P.:** Yes, like the big people, we have a big problem and the temptation is big. You know the temptation is big. We have a big problem. I think. I don't say they took some money, but I think.... When we call them, what happen with the money of the church? They explained, no, you took a lot of money, so we gave our own money to the church, the money of the church finished long time ago, but you continue to take money from us. We don't know exactly what happened there, but there is no structure, or control. All things are, you can do what ever you want, you are a believer we believe you. So we give it to your responsibility that is a big problem. This 30 million or more disappeared.

**R:** So it disappeared?

**A.P.:** Disappeared, so many people know it, and many people left. Many people left.

**R:** Is this a thing that happens continually?

**A.P.:** Yes, one example or more, we raised funds but there is a bad use of this funds and when some one heard about it, ah' is it like that, then they leave. The big, big reason is the finances.

**R:** What about the Les Adeline crusade you did?

**A.P.:** Yes, I see but it was ok, even "S.P." is very strict, do not take any money, it is for the evangelisation. Right now we have learned the lesson, we understand. For any reason we can't take any money that is set apart for the evangelisation. And we give the second offering to the regional leaders to do evangelisation. Every week, sometimes it is big and sometimes it is not big, sometimes very little, maybe 400,000 FMG.

**R:** For one services or all the services?

**A.P.:** No, for all the services on one Sunday it is about 400,000 to 300,000 FMG. But in general it is ok. The first problem is teaching and the second problem is finances. Thirdly in 1985 there was a division in the church. The problem was at that time, many times there is someone who wants to divide the church but as this time. Jules had a wife before the wife he has now. At that time I was in France and somebody said "S.P." wife had an affair with another man so they prepare to divide. There are many divisions, but this is a big one. Before there was a pastor in my place, he was second to "S.P." and when this problem grows in the church he calls everybody together. And they ask "S.P." wife to repent in public, if not the whole church would go with him. But praise the Lord after the evangelisation in France, I stayed there and "S.P." came back to Madagascar to arrange everything.

**R:** So did she repent?

**A.P.:** Yes, but not in public. She repented to "S.P." I think I don't know, but after that she was very sick and then she died.

**R:** Of what did she die?

**A.P.:** In her womb, after her last baby, they did not have another baby. The doctor did something bad in the womb. But for many years there was nothing but exactly after this thing she became very sick. But I tell you she was like a mother to me, she was a good teacher, and she was a lovely person. As "1W.P." and pastor "B" she led them like her own daughters. She was very lovely but the devil cut her, I loved her, I really loved her. I never knew someone like her. She helped my wife when I was in France, she takes care of us sometimes when me and my wife had some disagreements and tears, she helped us like a mother Spiritually, and she

loved us. Me and my wife she loved us with her heart. We feel that but the devil cut her.

**R:** But what about November, you did not want to speak to me, thinking that I am with the people that want to divide the church, what happened there?

**A.P.:** The problem in November is, there is some believers, some brothers, attend some meetings in another churches, I don't know why maybe this problem, always milk always milk. Maybe they seek meat there, so in this church they do not practice tithing, it is not biblical. And the authority is not the pastors alone.

**R:** So there is no dominating?

**A.P.:** Yes, you know "S.P." dominates all things in this church; he takes all things and uses it for many things. There is one brother talk to many people there is wrong teaching in this church, the take a tithe but it is not as God wants us to do, and they talk many wrong things about "S.P." and they do it even in broadcast on the radio. Even to say "A.P.", "S.P." they need to repent, they need to receive our teaching.

**R:** What is the church these brothers went to?

**A.P.:** ERFM, but their radio is in 92.5 their frequency so they took many people to follow them, even one of them, "S.P." is preaching on the stage and he is saying many things around him, that's right, that's wrong, that's right. But I told them, I don't want to see you here any more, leave if you want to leave but don't call people to follow you if you are convinced our teaching is not good here. You are free to leave, but do not influence other people, so they left, but people did not follow him. They where only maybe ten people but one of them returned. I don't know how I can classify this division. There is another case like that in another form, they bring people also...

**R:** Who was that?

**A.P.:** One of our staff leaders, like us, but this brother is in prison now. He builds a church and he bought a loud sound system, many good things but right now he is in prison.

**R:** Is it the man that stole the money to built a church?

**A.P.:** Yes.

**R:** I have preached at his church, do you know that?

**A.P.:** You?

**R:** Yes, I have been there, I have preached there and just the next week "S.P." told me that he is in prison now. What is his name?

**A.P.:** L, he is one of our leaders, but I see his teaching is very good. But his problem is he wants to be someone, even he has not enough humility, not even accept "S.P." advice, because he has a big problem in marriage, with his family. His family is broken he leaves his family, and "S.P. say to him "I want you my brother to stop your ministry activity until your family life is ok, but he did not accept it, he said "I am a good teacher." And that is right, he is a good teacher and everybody exhorted his teaching. I agree, I have attended one of his meetings, he is a good teacher, but what to say if you want to catch a bird?

**R:** A snare.

**A.P.:** A snare?

**R:** The snare of the devil.

**A.P.:** Yes, that's right, and he also wants to be, and many people also. He can have many people, he has many people, but now I don't know where are they, because many of them after this problem don't like to return here, maybe they are outside attending another church.

**R:** So he was in this church first and then he started his own church?

**A.P.:** Yes, because of the problem, ok because a...

**R:** Why did he leave the church?

**A.P.:** Because they say, according to what I heard, all money of the church is used for his own needs, but that is not true. And in their congregation, nobody has any right to receive or to take money; all money is used for the church, exactly the opposite. They leave here, they say, they are not spiritual, they use money for their own need, so for us lets use our money just for the church, we have no right to take money, but they do not take money in the church, but they take money at their office, many, a big amount of money.

**R:** You said there are two problems. First the milk, and second the finances?

**A.P.:** Yes, the third is that many people have different views on sanctification. As you see in the church anybody's sister can bring a long top, short skirt, and some didn't agree and left, but not many, especially at this time of "S.P." wife. It is difficult to say it, "S.P." wife at that time put on ski pants and every body was shocked. Another thing that also makes them leave... not many, people feel mature spiritually but they are not called to be a deacon. So they leave to another church that gives them responsibility... I think we are wrong, our place is to seek the gift of every body.

**R:** But are they part of the cell groups then?

**A.P.:** Yes, but in another way, they don't want a cell group but a position in the church

**R:** Maybe they just want to be seen?

**A.P.:** To be?

**R:** Because in the cell people don't see what you are doing but God sees the work you are doing.

**A.P.:** Yes, and do you know, some of them see some pastor is starting a new church and they start working with him, but there is not many but they leave. Another problem, we exhort people and God hears our prayer and responds to us, exhort them if one seek the Lord diligently God reward him, some people fast and receive from God, others fast and receive nothing from God and are disappointed and they leave. So people leave because they think there is some testimony in another churches like the Universal church on the TV... "I pray and God answered me, and I receive money I can build a house", something like that. But these believers have nothing, and think God is not working powerful in this church. He is here but not powerful, but in another churches God is very powerful because the people receive results, so they leave, but there is no money, that is one of the reasons.

**R:** So the people leave because they don't receive.

### **6.5 Church leader "M"**

Leader "M" the missions director of the Assemblies of God and was my best contact to listen to their story. It was a formal interview; unfortunately I could only have the one meeting with him formally. He has a strong respect for the work "S.P." is doing in the country, his only concern is the fact that "S.P." does not submit or practice accountability to other leaders. His opinion is not that "S.P." is practising any sin or has bad habits in his life, but other younger pastors follow his trend of independence, and they are not as trustworthy as he is, and are caught in the snares of the devil.

**R:** Maybe you can just start by telling me when and where you met "S.P."

**M:** Ok, I met "S.P." in 1996. He was a pastor of LIC church, and he invited me to preach in his church and we worked with him.

**R:** Did you also minister with him abroad?

**M:** No, not abroad. I have never ministered with him abroad, but usually he works with us very well, with our leadership of Assembly of God Church. And when he goes abroad to France, he is able to go to Assembly of God Church as well and minister. He himself has claimed that his doctrines are closer to that of the

Assembly of God's than anybody else, so he is able to go into churches because of his past relationship and his present relationship, we worked well together.

**R:** He was ordained in the Assembly of God, wasn't he?

**M:** Yes, he came out of Jesosy Mamonjy (Jesus saves, church); everybody knows that, along with other pastors. So when they came out they came to the Assembly of God and in the formative stages lay people ran Assembly of God. In other words lay people were responsible for the congregation and the pastors were only responsible for the pulpit ministry. But "S.P." was an Evangelist. So as an Evangelist the lay people did not allow him to do what he was called to do and that is why he left Assembly of God in those days.

**R:** So the lay people hindered his ministry?

**M:** Some of the lay people. Because when we started the Assembly of God we started with three churches, so the lay people were professors, doctors, and attorneys from universities. And they had a document of church that said that lay people will run the church, because it was a model from churches in Brazil and France as far as the day to day things are concerned, I think. The pastors only had a pulpit ministry. So they kind of basically had control so he had to leave because he could not do what he was called to do. But the church has evolved since then from lay people leading to pastoral leadership. So he left the Assembly of God then another missionary came to Assembly of God. He encouraged "S.P." to come and work with us at Assembly of God, and he came to work with us during that time. One of the major hindrances in his life was, I don't think it still is, is that he wanted to maintain his personal relationship with as far as foreigners were concerned and even though he was in an organisation he maintained his independent attitude of working with others. So the Assembly of God said if you are going to work like that it is going to be hard because you are part of the organisation and not by yourself. So in some sense even though he likes organisations he has his own agenda, own goals, own missions to follow, so he did not feel that he needs to be controlled or come under authority of an association. And if it was an association it was him who would lead and him who would decide.

**R:** So he would never submit to another organisation?

**M:** No, I do not think so not during those years, but I do not know now. In those years when he was with us he felt that he had more to gain going on his own than being in an organisation. So then he left for the second time.

**R:** But there was a time that here was a position for a new president in the Assembly of God and they said that "S.P." had a very good chance of being elected as president of the Assembly of God in Madagascar.

**M:** He did, and in fact he could have. He was a pastor of the church in Isotry, at the Assembly of God, but his philosophy as working for an organisation, even

though he could be a leader, he had to be under authority of a group of leaders and that is how we did it. Like now we do have a president but he cannot do whatever he wants. He cannot decide by himself who the church will have a relation with, because they have to maintain a certain doctrine or standard. When you have relations where the doctrines are not concurrent with the Assembly of God, then the church will ask why are you bringing people like that to preach in our churches who do not believe in what we believe. But he wanted to bring them because there was a personal gain and which he could continue doing and not be a part of the Assembly of God. So it was not a fight, it was a matter of choice. At the Assembly of God there are standards, doctrines, there are foundational principles so you can have relations with foreigners as long as they espouse to what we believe. When they come and they say "no you can do this and do that" and that is not part of what we believe as an organisation, you get cut off, but he was not willing to go that far. So he was willing to step aside and step out of it rather than be in and be part of the guiding principles. So his guiding principles were there just for himself, whatever he thought could help his ministry that's good enough. But if it effects an organisation, that didn't matter, that's why he started his own organisation so he could be the author, whatever the doctrine it doesn't matter. Even though he did believe in certain doctrines that we believe, but people who came from abroad did not have to adhere to it, but they helped him accomplish his vision even though there were a lot of principles that were not biblical according to the Assembly of God.

**R:** One thing that he said to me was that the Assembly of God did not agree with, as he called it, "the flow of the Spirit" and he said that you were more traditional and did not accept Spiritual things that happened in his services, for instance: people falling under the anointing of the Holy Spirit as He calls us and you didn't accept that practices. And because you didn't accept the practices and you wanted to cling to the traditional practises, he moved away.

**M:** That is probably part of the reason; he is probably right that there was probably a difference between the traditional believers who didn't want that to happen, thinking that it will become an extravaganza in the spiritual concept and becomes an abusive spiritual gift rather than promoting the edification of the believers. There are other people who believe in those things but stayed with Assembly of God. But the main reason he left Assembly of God, instead of staying and changing those believes and trying to make sure we were open to the Spirit, he did not stay in and convince the people even though he had that power to do it, he left because he had a problem with submission to authority. So it was easier to go and do his own thing than to stay in an organisation where there is opposition, because in an organisation you will get all kinds of questioning, drilling, accountability, and have people disagreeing with you. I don't think he was able to face the disagreements, because he had the capability to go and run his own organisation without all these problems. He saw it all as problems rather than using the problems to help people grow, so I am not disagreeing, maybe sometimes Assembly of God rather stuck to more traditional ways, which we call the

foundational truths, and if you come into Assembly of God you will see all kinds of Spiritual gifts flowing. It's a principal of evolution of a congregation, time and culture. Malagasy culture is very calm, if you go to FJKM (church) they don't moan a lot, they are the biggest church and they have traditions. No matter what the Spiritual movement is they still have to act normal within their traditions, and not outside of it. So, the people thought falling under the Spirit and things like that were more not in the context of the Malagasy culture. I will give you an example, if you go to Sweden the Pentecostals are like that because they are very gentle and very calm. If you go to an African American church in Chicago, they are going to dance and fall under the Spirit, but it's not that the one is biblical and the other is not biblical, it is the way you respond to the Spirit that you are made up of. Even in a given church there may be some who would clap hands and some who wouldn't, but yet the response of the heart is what matters to the Spirit. So you cannot make it a doctrine that all have to fall under the Spirit or you all have to dance under the Spirit or that you have to do all these extra things in order for you to stay in an organisation. So that is what I'm trying to say, you can't expect everybody to believe everything you do, but at the same time as the leader you have to cast the vision and be part of leading the organisation to a greater level. But that is hard work, the easiest is to go and start your own organisation and do it however you want to, and even that exists in all the organisations. Some of them in his organisation work well with him, some of them don't, as long as he is the head of it and, he controls the direction of it, that's fine. I don't know if that is any reason for the people staying in the church or not, that is just organisational skills. He doesn't have specific organisational skills, he is open to suggestions, but if it affects him or his direction, then that idea will not go, rather than saying "ok I will work with you, I'll see what you're thinking". That is how I see it. It can be a positive characteristic as well as a negative one.

**R:** But we are one Body, even if we have different opinions, we are still the Body of Christ. We still have to work together to edify each other.

**M:** Absolutely. I think it is good for someone who has the personality of "S.P." to be in his organisation and be on his own and working with other organisations on his own terms rather than be in an organization, which includes various personalities. Some will say we can dance in the Spirit, like you will go to one church and they do and at another church they don't. So it is a mixture. I think the concept of collective leadership is hard, when your leadership is based on your personality.

**R:** How do you see his leadership in the church here?

**M:** I think his personality comes through in his church, very positive, very progressive. It is not to say that we do not have those things in Assembly of God, but when things don't go the way he thinks it should go, then there was a problem in the past, but now he does not have that problem. If somebody has that problem they will leave, they won't come back.

**R:** Do you feel that his ministry is not based on doctrines, but more on a spontaneous level?

**M:** No. I think there are fundamental doctrines that he believes, that Jesus is the Lord, He is the Christ, He died, He rose again, He is coming soon. I don't have any doubt about that. But his ministry is not based upon doctrines or principles; his ministry is based upon those fundamental doctrines. **His leadership is not based upon guiding values that would promote interactions even though we have differences.** But he likes interactions even though we have differences, under his own terms.

**R:** What about ethical values, administration and responsibilities?

**M:** That comes with his kind of personality; in accountability he takes a lot of servant leadership attitudes. When you're a servant leader you want to be accountable, but if you are in an organisation that forces you to be accountable, but your heart is not in it, then you are not going to accept that. Personally I believe it is one of his weaknesses, not because he is corrupt, for him it is a hindrance. When you are accountable it means you are accountable to somebody and he does not want to be accountable to somebody. I mean I can be accountable to my wife, but accountability to another leader is not part of his personality. I believe differences, reconciliation, and things like that are not part of organisational issues, and those are personal issues. Personally my attitude is as a servant leader I want to be accountable to somebody. I want to give financial accountability, Spiritual, moral, everything then it's personal. What we do is this, Assembly of God is like this; we blame it on an organisation when an organisation consists of a group of individual personalities. So those individual personalities have to first of all be like Christ accountable, submissive to authority when there are differences. When I say reconciliation, it is working out your differences, it doesn't mean you don't have any differences, it is just to work out your differences with an attitude of Christ and still love one another, so it is not an organisational issue. So if we talk about submission, accountability whether it is financial, moral, or whatever, I'm not saying he abused those things, but his personality does not allow that to be a major part of his leadership skills. That does not mean he does not have those skills, or he doesn't have a transparent life, or that he is sinning, no that has nothing to do with it, those are individual issues not organisational issues. So when you start your own organisation, it goes with your personality traits and anything you don't want to do, you don't have to do. I don't agree with everything in the leadership of Assembly of God, but I want to submit myself to the leadership here. Serve them and say, "You don't agree with me, ok". I feel that is more powerful in the long term. The cultural thing here does not allow you to be accountable, even in our church sometimes, if we didn't have to be accountable, we don't have to. We would rather not be accountable, but in our structure were put places were you have to be accountable, somehow it became a habit and also they grow in Christ.

**R:** So "S.P." doesn't have a real mentor? I know he is a mentor to many others, but he himself doesn't have a mentor?

**M:** I cannot answer you, I don't really know. I don't know if he had any mentor before at all, other than Dahoed who adhered to the Assembly of God in the beginning in 1960.

**R:** Dahoed, his wife taught in the Assembly of God?

**M:** Yes. His wife taught at the Bible school at the Assembly of God in the States. He is of Lebanese background, he comes from Texas, but he was kicked out in 1961.

**R:** Kicked out of Assembly of God?

**M:** No, out of the country, out of Madagascar in 1961 or 1962. But he came back in 1991, so in 30 years he built the church living in Texas. So a lot of people say Assembly of God came out of Dahoed (his church Jesosy Mamonjy), no, Dahoed came out of Assembly of God. In fact many churches came out of Assembly of God.

**R:** Who started the Assembly of God in Madagascar?

**M:** The people who came out with Dahoed and some missionaries, even before Dahoed there were some missionaries who came to Madagascar in 1958,1959 who installed certain things. But as an organisation it started only in 1970.

**R:** So Dahoed came as an Assembly of God missionary, but he did not start the Assembly of God church in Madagascar?

**M:** No, he left. He started his own organisation, he went by himself.

**R:** This is Jesosy Mamonjy?

**M:** Yes, holiness, it's a holiness movement and then he went to Texas and ran the whole thing from there.

**R:** Do you think "S.P." is following his example of independence?

**M:** I do not think so, but there is naturally influence. I would say "S.P." manner is a combination of many influences. Church government is Presbyterian, that means there are rules; it's not a congregational Presbyterian move. But Assembly of God is more of a congregational Presbyterian mix; congregation and the pastoral leadership together have certain responsibilities to one another. But he saw Assembly of God as a congregational rule and he did not want a part of that. He did not want to be under the congregation, he wanted to be above the congregation. For some reasons it might be good and for some reasons it might be bad. I'm not saying whether it's wrong or right. The style of leadership as you can

see, wherever he got it from, whether it is mentored by Dahoed or somebody else, I see that it fits his personality; his charm, he is an Evangelist, talented and he can attract people so that just moved him to that style. It took hard work and self-submissiveness to change the style of his leadership; to submit to others, to be accountable, and things like that.

**R:** I know that he also left the Jesosy Mamonjy, because they wanted him to be a pastor in the church. They don't accept literature that comes from other churches, they don't accept teachings from other churches, and they don't accept relation with other churches.

**M:** It is an extreme form of holiness and an extreme form of controlling the congregation.

**R:** So then "S.P." said, "If that is your way of ministry", in fact he didn't even finish his first year of Bible school because of that, he said, "I want to work with all churches and with all people".

**M:** Let me give you my opinion, Jesosy Mamonjy, their weakness was that they were extremely legalistic and the reason for extreme legalism is control. It is not out of conviction because if it was out of conviction there is other things you would hold on to and you will never come out of. At that time some of the people needed some kind of parameter in their lives and Jesosy Mamonjy came in and showed the legalism of the laws that showed you have to do this, and you don't have to do that. and there were certain people who wanted that after they gained independence and that's why they joined. I will give you an example too. One million people in Mauritius Assembly of God missionary team went there and preached. They went out every day and there were twenty thousand people and it's a Hindu country and we are the biggest organisation there right now. Reunion Island, it is the same Assembly of God's same people preached. People were ready to accept something different that Hinduism, Islam, and other things, and that is why Assembly of God continues to grow in those countries. Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya... I mean you can go on and on and name the African countries why it has become a strong organisation. We have 2,500 churches in Kenya, Assembly of God, Tanzania is the same. We have five Bible schools and five in Kenya. They worked with missionaries who were willing to be accountable and they worked with nationals who expected that even though they had their own personalities.

**R:** Just to come back to "S.P." What do you think of "S.P." ministry style; do you think it is foreign to the people here because he works with so many foreigners from outside?

**M:** I personally think these people are very adaptable, Malagasy people easily adapt. They are like a sponge, anything you give them they will take it. "S.P." to his credit, he has learned some of the good things from the foreigners to apply in his church, which is good. He has learned and he is willing to accept it but under the

context of him being the leader and the head of the association. So in that sense he is very well applied to foreign concepts of worship and for governing of the church and adapted to it, and the people like that.

**R:** They also like this new culture, people are moving away especially in Antananarivo from this old traditional culture of Madagascar itself.

**M:** There are various reasons they are moving away, economic reasons. When the world is globalised some of the things does not make sense that made sense in those days when they didn't have television or anything from outside. When they see how everybody lives or how everyone has to live and some of the activities they were doing in the name of tradition did not make sense, so that's why they are moving away. And when they are moving away they want to attach to something that's happening all over and that comes from foreign countries, so they are willing to grasp to it. And "S.P." is well adapted to take what is good so he can get the people following that.

**R:** So you met him in 1996 when you first came here?

**M:** Yes.

**R:** Was he working closely with the Assembly of God at that time?

**M:** He always worked closely with the Assembly of God, because all their pastors are good friends, they have been working for years with him.

**R:** There was one specific pastor that did his studies with the Assembly of God, and when he finished his studies, and he had to do his internship, he wanted to do it with "S.P." and the Assembly of God were apposed to that.

**M:** Yes, that is basically normal. We would not allow people, wanting to do their internship, especially when the churches that is in our organisation needing people to come and help them. Internship is a two way thing I see, one is the intern learns from the pastor in the environment of the practical aspects of the church on the other hand the pastor also has to use him as an associate where there is no fulltime associates in our churches. When you invest in certain Bible school students to come and work, and if he wants to leave the organisation to go and do his internship with somebody else that sets a model that would defeat our purpose. So everybody will go and follow different outlets of different churches, that is why you have a structure. It is the same with us. And if you want to go and learn something from "S.P.", you are welcome to go and learn, but do the internship here. So it is not a matter of you are not allowed to go to "S.P.", a lot of pastors attend conferences "S.P." has, a lot of pastors attend his church when he has some training seminars and vice versa. The structures are set so that it does not cause confusion in our organisation. When you go beyond the structure and you make an exception, usually that becomes the norm, and in order to avoid that leadership has to exercise their authority. Even though some leaders would say,

"yes that would be a good idea," they still have to respect the structures that have been put in place and stay within the structure as much as possible. We're not strictarians in the structure, we believe structures are there to help us.

**R:** I don't have much information about "S.P." ministries in the 90's, so maybe you can tell me a little bit about his ministry from of your own experience, or what you have heard or seen about his ministry, from the time when you came here up until now.

**M:** He used to have a Dispensary Clinic, I don't know if he still has it or not.

**R:** What kind of clinic is that?

**M:** It used to be in Andohamadinika and in 67 ha. I do not know, in those days they used to just say, "this is "S.P." Clinic".

**R:** And what did they do there?

**M:** I don't know, but I have heard them say that, the pastors from the Assembly of God, say that he has done a lot of Evangelistic services, and he has done a lot of training of Evangelists. And he has a big heart for Evangelism so I believe he is one of the primary Evangelists in the nation who influences a lot of people in that direction, be it in Evangelism or in ministry. He has worked hard in bringing Pentecostal Evangelical concerns before everybody else, because he has worked with other leaders to show that what we are doing also is important. And one time the government closed their organisation.

**R:** The church?

**M:** Yes. But after that he did not fall back. He started and came back and he was willing to make adjustments where he needs to. And make good contacts and good relationships with everyone. He is a fighter and he comes back. And God has used him in those things.

**R:** Why did they close FAAK?

**M:** The main reason I do not know. The reasons, there are several reasons probably but I am not aware of them. I could ask some of my pastors and they would know. But most of my pastors give him a positive reflection of "S.P.", even though the negatives might be not necessarily negatives for himself or his spiritual life, but negatives that were in fact of the organization. He was in an organization.

**R:** So, you said he was working with Pentecostals in Evangelism?

**M:** Evangelical Pentecostals and Evangelic concerns. He brought to the forefront the issues of our style and beliefs and he sensitised the traditional churches.

**R:** And he was mainly just doing Evangelism?

**M:** Yes, in fact I used to hear his wife used to sing in singing groups. His sister-in-law, his wife's sister, and his wife who has passed away, was a musician, and he used that to attract people to present the Gospel, and he used all methods to present the Gospel. And he is well respected all over the country, even our own pastors respect him, there is no question about that.

**R:** I've seen that while I was in Toliara with him. And I have said it as well before, but then other missionaries thought that was just saying it because I work with him. I have seen that there were very strong leaders, strong pastors, in Toliara who were on stage speaking to the people, but the moment "S.P." was there, there was a very strong sense of respect for him and even when he came up to speak people really honoured him. Even those leaders looked up to him, as if he was their father. Even though there were some of them that I would think is more "influential" than him, but people still look up to him as a father figure.

**M:** That is true. He has shown himself as a leader, as one of the Evangelical leaders. And that fits well with his personality one more time, and the people here really respect a spiritual leader. That is their context and the culture of this country. And if you're a spiritual leader they will give you all the benefit of the doubt and allow God to work in their heart. They are not going to oppose them, they are going to follow it. We have strong churches in Toliara. We have strong churches like Assembly of God, yet when "S.P." comes they will respect him, work with him, and collaborate with him.

## **6.6 Informal conversations**

### **6.6.1 Friend S**

S is a friend down in Toliara. During the time I stayed in his house we had some deep discussions about church life. I had my tape recorder with me and asked him if he would mind if I just record our conversation. During the 28 months of my research we became very good friends and S became a very reliable and constant source of information through his close connection with S.P. Although most of the information collected informally would not be recorded in respecting the ethical code.

**R:** Tell me about the research that you have done.

**S:** If you really want to start we have to start from Dahood, we must start with Dahood's wife. Dahood's wife was an evangelist before Dahood and Dahood helped him to bring all the instruments of Evangelism.

**R:** Where was this?

**S:** This was abroad, in America. They used to go country to country. What I know is that Dahood's wife was with Assembly of God.

**R:** Do you know her name?

**S:** I do not know her name, they used to say Madame Dahood. And then they see each other and got married, she gave the glory to Dahood and Dahood start to be Evangelist. His wife have more knowledge of the Bible than Dahood. They came here to Evangelise in Madagascar and they worked with the Protestant. It was 1959 or 1960.

**R:** Do you know why they did not start working with Assembly of God at that time?

**S:** Just a moment, when Dahood start to have a new organisation, Dahood and his wife left Assembly of God and they worked with Voice Miracle organisation. This is what I know, it is not Assembly of God anymore.

**R:** So they started with the Protestants and then they worked with Assembly of God?

**S:** No, they didn't work with Assembly of God, she was from Assembly of God. When they came here to Evangelise they had to work with a church, we only had Protestant and Catholic we had no Charismatic. No one spoke about the Holy Spirit, no one spoke in tongues here at that time. When Dahood came here they started to preach the Gospel, then the authorities said to Dahood, "you have broken the circulation" like it created a traffic jam and then they said, "you have to move from here". And then they went to the market. You must record this, this is very important.

**R:** Yes.

**S:** Then they still worked with the Protestant and the Protestant was careful, because Dahood, he was not allowed to build the church.

**R:** Why?

**S:** It's like that, he came only to Evangelise, and this is with the Protestant. Then in 1962 Dahood came again and he started to build the church. The reason why is that the Protestant and Dahood fight, has a problem, conflict between them. Cause Dahood start to have a church again, and they didn't work together anymore. Dahood started a church. But before that Dahood visited all the provinces like Toliara and many people got healed then, like the blind, the deaf can hear, it was miracles. God used him in mighty ways then. And then in 1962 Dahood started a church, like cell groups on Ile Sainte Marie. This was his first church Ile Sainte Marie. And then in the same year Dahood started to speak about the Holy Spirit, this was the first preaching here in Madagascar about the Holy Spirit. Dahood, this man was the first to start to preach about the Holy Spirit here. And then in 1963 he started Ankondrano where they have a big church then.

**R:** Then he started Jesosy Mamonjy (Jesus Saves church)?

**S:** No, Jesosy Mamonjy started in 1962, it's like only cell groups, but they only built the church in 1963. Dahood has a house close to this church, he bought a house there. Then in 1964 Dahood opened a Bible school, in August or October. And then both of them were teachers, lecturers.

**R:** Dahood and his wife?

**S:** Yes. But I want to say to you that his wife is a teacher, a teacher of the Word of God. The students at that time were 45. This is very important about that time, if you want to know more about this time. The students were 45 and the believers were about 1,000. The person closest to him, his name is Robert, he was a translator. He was very close to Dahood and his wife.

**R:** Was he converted by them?

**S:** Yes. There are many, but I cannot name all of them. I know Rebecca, Emil he preaches everyday, and Celestin, Jean, Ashan, Prosper, Nestor, Rasetta, Allersough, Fidelis, Rholo, Albert, Ezelle, many people.

**R:** Adolf?

**S:** Yes, Adolf and his wife is Voangy. It's many, and some of them have died by now. And the church grew a lot. They have Jesosy Mamonjy almost everywhere, in Toliara, Mahajanga, Diego, and so on.

**R:** So how long was Dahood here before he went back to America?

**S:** He went to America about 1965, he went back there. When he came back here there were problems, and it is difficult to say to you the problems.

**R:** Why?

**S:** Never mind. When Dahood came back from America, they stopped many of them, they said that, "no, no you are not men of God, you have to stop, there is a problem".

**R:** But what problem was that?

**S:** Leave it. It was about 11 men, the rest were kicked out.

**R:** Only 11 stayed?

**S:** Yes. The rest went. Dahood, as I said to you, his wife is a teacher Dahood is not a teacher. I don't even think Dahood passed Bible school. But his wife is really good. The reason why? His wife always trains people. You will see at Jesosy Mamonjy church the women work a lot and preach a lot more than the men. It is not by chance, but what they see from their leader, they follow. For example until now it stays with the pastor, it is a sin to preach without a tie, it's a sin if you

don't have long sleeves, it is a sin to clean yourself in the river. Maybe inside of him it is not sin, it is just wants us to know don't go there it is dangerous. Maybe he likes his students to be in a good condition, something like that, presentable. Maybe that is why they say it's sin. But for now it stays that way. For example there is LIC church, Assembly of God, and REMA, but they still stay in this teaching. For them it is not sin to go in the river but if you are preaching in the church you have to be dressed correctly, like have on a tie.

**R:** So do you think he let those people go because of their clothing.

**S:** Yes.

**R:** And he only kept the 11 there, but the rest he let go because they did not dress in the right manor?

**S:** Pardon?

**R:** You said to me when he came back he let everyone go and he only kept the 11.

**S:** Yes.

**R:** Did he let them go because of their clothing?

**S:** No, it is not only that. He sent them to different cities to preach and they came late, and that is enough to let them go, for him. That is one of the reasons. One of them died in the water, and they said, "See it's sin, he commit sin". Dahood said, "see your son commit sin and God just judged him there". Then the government decided that Dahood could not stay here anymore, in the year of 1966. This is because of tithe and Dahood wanted to be rich and have many things, the people don't want to go to their job anymore they just want to go to church. And the government said to Dahood, "it's finished for you, go home". So Dahood sent one man, Getor, here to Madagascar, instead of himself.

**R:** Is he an American?

**S:** Yes he is an American, of course. There is an idea, they needed missionaries, and so they had the idea that if you need missionaries you must stop with Jesosy Mamonjy it must be Assembly of God.

**R:** Who said that?

**S:** It is Fox who said that. Because he send Fox too, and it must be Assembly of God.

**R:** Because they were all from Assembly of God?

**S:** Who?

**R:** Fox.

**S:** Maybe Fox were from Assembly of God, I am not sure. But what I know is that they needed missionaries. They needed missionaries in the name of Jesosy Mamonjy, but the government did not want to give permission.

**R:** Ok.

**S:** So they said because Assembly of God does not have any problems with the government, they said, "let us change the name to be Assembly of God". Then Dahood get angry and the Assembly of God and Fox fight. Then Dahood again send other people. The name of the man who closed the church is Resampa. So then Robert came to Evangelise. Dahood and Robert had problems with Assembly of God. A very big problem. Even Fox, they used to stone his car, break the tires of the car.

**R:** Fox's car?

**S:** Yes, every morning. He kept repairing the car and then he just decided that he would walk, and he just walked at this time. Then I think "S.P." appeared at this time. All the big names here, like Celestin...

**R:** But Celestin, doesn't he come from "S.P."?

**S:** No.

**R:** Was he not trained by "S.P."?

**S:** No.

**R:** Celestin is the head of REMA now?

**S:** I don't know.

**R:** Is it the same Celestin we are talking about?

**S:** Celestin, I don't know him, I never met him. What I know is, that he was one of the first in the Bible school. "S.P." is second generation.

**R:** You mean he was the second generation of people in the Bible School? The second group in the Bible school?

**S:** Yes, because after that the leaders were the ones who came from the school. They lead the church and they divided. They say Robert, half of the church when Robert preach say, "Hallelujah" and the other half did not say Hallelujah. Because the rest stood with the other guys. Robert said, "I am the head", but they said, "we are the same". And there was division.

**R:** At Jesosy Mamonjy?

**S:** At Jesosy Mamonjy, the time when Dahood was not here. But later Dahood came...

**R:** Did the church split at that time or not?

**S:** Pardon?

**R:** The church did it split or was there only division?

**S:** Only division. They fight a lot, but when Dahood come here, everything became fine. And "S.P." start to preach. I asked "S.P." to speak to me, because all this I'm telling you is before him. All of this that I'm saying to you is before him.

**R:** Yes.

**S:** And they just stop like that and they went to speak with Roland. Roland, here with Assembly of God, and they go there when there is a problem. Many go from Assembly of God. This pastor here in Toliara, I forget his name, he is Assembly of God. Pastor Charl he is Assembly of God.

**R:** So everyone, if they have problems, they run to Assembly of God?

**S:** No, one thing I want to say to you is that they don't have a problem with Assembly of God. Just sometimes the Assembly of God is strict about the foundations of truth, even "S.P." said that. We believe in God's Trinity and we believe in the gifts. But I do not know why they left Assembly of God.

**R:** "S.P."?

**S:** No, no many people. But one thing that I want to say to you, only Assembly of God was closed by the government only 4 days. The people didn't understand that there is some law...

**R:** I didn't even know that they were closed.

**S:** At the time when they closed Jesosy Mamonjy because they said, "we have same attitude, why you do not stop Assembly of God?" but they said, "before Fox came here, before Dahood come here, Assembly of God existed so don't say that." Then the government give permission again.

**R:** But why does Jesosy Mamonjy still continue? Because they are still existing today.

**S:** When we changed , I forgot the date, they closed about 2 years, 5 years, 8 years more than that? I don't know how long exactly.

**R:** So they were closed for a time period and then they opened again.

**S:** Yes, they opened again when the government changed or the President changed, something like that.

**R:** Do you know who started the Assembly of God here? That is something that nobody can tell me.

**S:** Assembly of God?

**R:** Even "S.P." cannot tell me.

**S:** I know it is Fox and Silver too. Silver he was missionary from Brazil and Falga he was Swiss and there are some missionaries who started Assembly of God. But they were quiet, they were not loud, they believe in quiet Spirit.

**R:** But then the Assembly of God was three churches in the beginning?

**S:** Why do you say three churches?

**R:** I don't know, somebody said to me that there were three congregations in Antananarivo of the Assembly of God.

**S:** Yes, in Antananarivo, and in Toliara we have Assembly of God but they could not open. For example Charo start to open Assembly of God here and then they needed him to be in Antananarivo and he became President of the Assembly of God.

**R:** Who's that?

**S:** Charo.

**R:** Was he the President of the Assembly of God before "S.P." was with them?

**S:** No, "S.P." was not there at that time. There were many President's before him too. There were many before Charo, I don't remember all, but what I remember very well in Toliara it was Charo and then Roland in Antananarivo.

**R:** Who was the head of Jesosy Mamonjy, who died recently?

**S:** Dahood.

**R:** Was it Dahood?

**S:** Yes, Dahood died.

**R:** So he stayed in Madagascar until he died.

**S:** Yes.

**R:** He's American?

**S:** Yes, he's American.

**R:** And his wife?

**S:** She's American.

**R:** And is she still alive or not?

**S:** She's still alive.

**R:** But is she still in Madagascar?

**S:** I don't know. That is the Dahood story.

**R:** Do you know how long his miracles continues, Dahood's miracles?

**S:** This is a very good question, no one could answer me about this, the reason why. But the miracles stopped before they kicked him out of the country. A lot of people saw him do miracles.

**R:** Before they kicked him out?

**S:** Yes, before they kicked him out.

**R:** But why did they kick him out?

**S:** Why? Because they said that Dahood wanted to collect more money, but this is not true, this is from the government. This is the reason why Jesosy Mamonjy has a big division, this division still continue until today. This division does not come easily, this division comes from sin. If we want revival here in Madagascar we must not judge but we must pray for the sin and to stop it completely. One man can't do that. One thing here temptation here in Madagascar for the leaders is adultery. The next generation must change this, this is the biggest temptation. I will say to you it is not to judge them. God send the Fire, He wishes to spread the Fire. I can see that God wants the Fire to always be the Light. The two big things is adultery and lack of knowledge. Our first missionary had lack of knowledge and it is still the same now. This pastoral generation do not want to study anymore. They say, "We are pastors, it's ok for us. We have a church, it's a big church and we sing and praise God."

**R:** And most of the pastors are not ordained?

**S:** No.

**R:** Even "S.P." told me tonight that it is one of the problems. Many of the people work in the church 2 to 3 years and then the people start to call them pastors, but they are not ordained.

**S:** Yes.

**R:** But they all have churches?

**S:** Yes, they all have churches.

**R:** But what do you think of the Assembly of God? They have a Bible school, they get very good training there. Do you still think that they lack knowledge?

**S:** I know that some of the pastors there have knowledge, but not many of them are from Assembly of God. And don't think that all the pastors at Assembly of God are from Assembly of God, they are from LIC church. But the new pastor he is one who has nothing, he just said, "this is my life, to be a pastor" he doesn't even have any knowledge. What I want to say is that they don't want to say, "you can't be a pastor", and this is what they are doing. But Assembly of God have changed now, they have 3 different Bible schools. First is for knowledge, second is to become a pastor (ordained) on an international level. It is in English and in French, and you can continue with your studies to get your Degree and so on. And thirdly is for the lay people. But what is necessary is that those who have a Calling, really a Calling from God not just because I don't have a job, but really a Calling from God to be a pastor. This is the person who can change Madagascar. And this person must dedicate himself to the Lord, and not to judge, but to pray for the sins and the sins of the past. I can see these sins stay, it has "entered" the Kingdom of God and it needs to be removed. Do you remember what Daniel said that when he understood that the time has come for freedom? He prayed for Israel, "Lord we know there is many sin in Israel" and the Lord start to work in Israel. This is what many young people should do, is to pray for all our leaders for what they have done; and to be careful with their money, the girls, with glory; that is what we need.

#### 6.6.2 Researcher L

L is a fellow researcher in Madagascar that has been involved in several sociolinguistic projects in Madagascar. It was very helpful for me to listen to her view of things.

**R:** Tell me about the research you did.

**L:** It is good to have updated information on Madagascar, because new things are happening all the time, but that does not mean the old things (as far back as the first missionaries) are not important, such as the Antananarivo Annuals, which you can find in the archives. There are amazing accounts of what happened in the early days of contact between the Malagasy and European travelers and missionaries. What happened in those days set the scene for church as we know it today. Malagasy society does not change so fast that things that were written a hundred years ago, are no longer valid today.

**R:** What I was thinking is to start with this guy, there are many things that he has done that you can see in people today.

**L:** That is why I took out this book, it is written in English and I'm sure you will find it at the Tukkies library as well, 'Madagascar Society and History' this was written in 1986 but it's still valid today.

**R:** Maybe you can explain hierarchy to me.

**L:** What we have noticed in going around is, that it is a very strong principle in Malagasy society. The hierarchical structure that they have inherited from the past (where the elders decide) carries much more authority than any Governmental structure. For example the Government says that all forests belong to the Government, the state. But the people are the ones who administrate what happens in the forests. They don't ask the Government, to them 'it belongs to them' because they inherited it from their parents and their parents inherited it from their parents and so forth. So the people are the ones who make the decisions on what happens to the forests regardless of what the Government says. The Government says the forests are Government property, the people says the forests is their property.

**R:** I read that this guy said that when they get married, it also depends who you marry, because you don't just marry that person but also the property that is attached to them.

**L:** Yes. Some people come here with very modern ideas. They come here with preconceived methods and it works well in the west, it consists of going into the Village and making sure you hear everybody's opinion: the youth, male and female. It's supposed to be totally "democratic", say for instance you want to help them replant the forest that they have burned, then you have to go into the Village and speak to women, men, young people, and old people. And you get them all to decide what they will plant, who will plant it, how many they will plant, and you help them with knowledge you have, but you get them to make the decisions. So in the end it is their decision on how they will replant the forest, and this has worked in India. It has worked in some places in Africa like Malawi and so forth. They have brought those methods here and have tried to apply that method here in everything they do, whether it is research on Aids or teaching about Aids and so forth, they try to apply that method. In Madagascar it doesn't always work because of the hierarchy. It doesn't work to come into the Villages and say, "now you old men, you be quiet, we want to hear what the young women have to say and we want to hear what the young men have to say", so "now you young men what do you say, how do you feel about 'whatever'" and they try and get input from these people by creating something very strange in their society because the people are not use to being dealt with in that way. And it is disrespectful for a youth to speak when there is an elder present. So unless you have a very good relationship with the people it's very strange to come in as a foreigner and facilitate this kind of interaction that is "totally democratic", that works well in India, South Africa, Australia and America, etc. But in Madagascar the people have a strict hierarchy that they respect in their daily lives; and then we want to come and we want them

to change the way they milk cows, store rice, the way they plant potatoes, their diet and we want to tell them to change their customs.

**R:** So how do the people respond to the people who do research? For instance when it is a young person that's coming to the village and trying to speak to the older people.

**L:** I think it works when someone they respect introduces you to them. So if you come in with one of their friends, and if you come to e.g. a **Tandroy** Village with a friend of yours who is a student at the university, and he is also a Professor, and he is one of their people who has made it in life even though he is not one of the elders but he is well respected by them and he introduces you, then it is easy for them to receive you.

**R:** It is interesting if you look at my situation, how I ended up in the church because I do not know if it was by coincidence or what it was, but for some reason when I came to Madagascar in 2002 my Pastor also came over here, and he is a very important man. But it's got nothing to do with my coming here, he came here after me. I didn't know "S.P." or had anything to do with "S.P.". He was invited by someone who was working with Jules and who was giving training to all the Pastors and he came with him and worked with him. So by the time I came to work with Jules he sent a letter with me saying that he wanted me to work with them to see if I can help them. You know "S.P." has this thing that if somebody preaches or teaches and he's not interested he falls asleep right there and then. I have begun to see more and more how arrogant we were when we first came here; sending me to come here and teach them about cell groups, but "S.P." has been doing cell groups since the 1978. What can I really teach him about cell groups that he doesn't know by now? But still he spent 3 or 4 days in my house where I was teaching the leadership and he slept everyday, but I didn't know why, I thought he was just tired. But now that I know him better I know that he does that, especially to foreigners when they come here and teaches something that he thinks has no relevance, then he sleeps. It is very interesting to see this, and it is probably why they accepted me, because my pastor wrote a letter and has been here with me.

**L:** It is important to them who introduces you and where you come from, it's very important to them. So in the Malagasy context for example if you went with "S.P." to his village where he is from and he introduced you to those people, you would get further with them than if you just go there out of the blue.

**R:** Yes, when I went to the North and I wanted to leave he gave me a letter and told me to give it to the pastors, but he wrote it in Malagasy, he said "you must give this to the people where you are going" and they treated me like a king.

**L:** That is how it works in Madagascar and probably most African countries as well. But in a society where the people have grown lose from their roots, like we are in South Africa, it's a strange thing. We are a culture within a culture within a

culture within a culture and in a way we have lost our original culture. We have become this hybrid of cultures and we do not have those things anymore, but you sometimes still find it amongst Afrikaans speaking people. People can tell where you are from by the way you act, so if that is true in South Africa it is even truer in Madagascar. I would suspect that the hierarchy issue would cause acceptability or non-acceptability of messages in the church. If you as a young person try to train people older than you, there would have to be a relationship that gives you the open door for them to receive what you are saying. Otherwise you may end up in a situation where they put up with you because you are a pastor and because of what you may bring to them extra over and above your teaching, or through you they hope that they may have access to things that they cannot normally have. For instance maybe they can send a child to South Africa to study, or a brother or sister; or maybe they can have gifts; or maybe they can have a roof on their church. Someone had a lot, of I'm not sure how many, sheets of corrugated iron and these were lying at his house in T. So congregations who started to build a church for the Pentecostal denomination he was propagating and just lacked a roof would be given to, but they were not given those roofs unless they had built the walls. Some donors might think of this as church planting, but this is not how you plant a new church by saying, "Do you agree with me, let's start a new church, you build the walls and I will give you the roof", that's not how you plant a church here, if you don't have relationship with them and a real open door to their hearts you probably get nowhere. Except if you are in Antananarivo where a lot of people have lost their roots.

**R:** Why do you say they have lost their roots?

**L:** If I look at the society of Antananarivo, it is a little bit like Johannesburg and a little bit like Pretoria. When you have a City you have people who come there to make money and a lot of them don't go back to where they come from. Here in Madagascar some still go back. They will come here and work, like sell peanuts or something and then when they have made money they go back. But some people have come here like this lady working over there: her father is from the East coast, he came here for work and married a woman from here so he never went back. She says that when he dies he will be buried here, he won't be taken back and in Madagascar that is a big indication of whether or not they still have a link with the family where they come from, their roots. That is one way you can tell, where are they buried. The hierarchy issue is very important when you want to plant a church that will grow and perpetuate itself. Because we do not choose what is important: we are foreigners here with a message for them, but we should at least respect them enough to check and see "Do I really have something new? What should my role really be?" and you were mentioning that you have learned some of those things. I think a lot of foreigners think that they have it all together and Madagascar is a place where they can come and off load what they think is so important, whereas they do not have the time or the opportunity to check whether that already exists here and maybe the Malagasy have got something better. In this country they have seen real miracles that we have not

seen in South Africa, like a child that died of cholera in the North of M that has come back to life and her immediate family became Christians as a result. Her father was a "king", folk-Islamic. The parents had already lost one child to cholera and soon afterward their daughter died of the disease and through this child's death and resurrection in 2001 or 2002, her family became Christians. But miracles don't always give you favor with the people, sometimes that's the very thing that makes them chase you away. And in that case it made them outcasts, so they moved to another village and we met them there and we spoke to them. Miracles like this happen often in this country, not necessarily in the Pentecostal or Charismatic churches it happens where there is faith. It happens where people have faith in God and it happens to any sort of Christian. Things don't change here just because we have something valid to say, they change because the people receive what we have brought. I have a suspicion that some of the things are kept alive when they haven't even grown roots, they are just kept alive artificially - financially or with input or with expectations.

**R:** Just to go back to the hierarchy in Antananarivo, how do you see it working here in Antananarivo with the old cultures and the new cultures?

**L:** If you get the opportunity to go and see a funeral, it reveals a lot about how the hierarchy works here. When a person dies in a Christian family, I have not had the opportunity to go to many funerals and only some were non-Christians, but when they are Christians then usually for 2 days the dead person is in the house. Then the friends and family comes to visit and they do a very formal visit. The oldest person will do the speaking, the youngest person present will give the gift, that is one way you can see that it matters to them. There are many other such issues in society that show how the people respect hierarchies. Their hierarchy is age related; also if somebody is more honourable than another then they would let him have the honour. So in such a case a much younger person maybe give the word because they are more honourable than the oldest person present, so age does not always have preference. I suspect that here in Antananarivo it is a bit the same as in the south where hierarchy is based on age, social standing and while the government hierarchy is respected, if there is ever a conflict between the government hierarchy and the traditional hierarchy, the tradition will win.

**R:** But for instance now the government is changing and many people are complaining about it, that Ravalomana is bringing in younger people in the government. In the government they had loopholes of how you could do things, but those loopholes have changed now. In the old government you could still use those cultures and hierarchy to get things done, where there was more grace, where now he is bringing in more and more young people into the Government and they don't help the people like that. I've just been to the government a few times and M has also explained this to me that in the past they could get a lot more done, but now they have become more Westernised. I've been told about the cutting of the hair, where it started with the King and then the army and now today everybody is cutting their hair. So in that sense I'm just trying to make a link between the new

way that they are moving towards and how that is influencing their culture here in Antananarivo.

L: I think that in language you also find that in Antananarivo they don't speak the same way they would speak in Villages outside of Antananarivo. In Antananarivo they have incorporated a lot of French, English, and they have a slang, which is 'Antananarivo Slang', we have that in South Africa too like in Pretoria people speak a certain way and in the suburbs they also have slang (it's not quite Zulu, not quite Sotho and so on), they have made their own hybrid thing and it is the same in their customs. They are taking customs from elsewhere because they are exposed to so much here in Antananarivo, that's why you can get away with a lot more in Antananarivo than you would in other Villages. You would not get away with some of the styles of Evangelism that you get away with here in Antananarivo when you go to the villages, the people may listen to you, or chase you away, or they may let you do it, or stop you. When we first came here we went to do a survey in this one village, we had asked permission, we had a letter, we had been to the market place where the member of Parliament asked all the Chiefs of the villages to please help us with our survey and they all agreed. So we came to the village by appointment, with agreement and all that was done. We were told to sit down, we made our greetings as it is supposed to be done and then we said, "We have these questions to ask, is that ok with you? We are going to record it, is that ok with you? So we don't have to write so much" and she said, "Yes". Now we had a translator, she grew up in the south. She could even speak their language. Our documents were translated into Official Malagasy. The moment she started reading our first question most of the people except for 3 of them, there were about 25 of them in the hut, got up and left and the women were mocking us and she said, "If we have to answer these questions in that language you have to pay us. What are you going to pay us?" They were chanting outside the hut and they were mocking us, we could not go on. So they did not receive us happily. We were not asking questions that were personal; we were asking questions about their culture, stories, and we thought that these questions would not be threatening, but they did not receive us because of this language and we learned many lessons from that. So the permission was given, the hierarchy was respected, but we did not succeed because we used this language, so there are many elements when trying to bring something to the people or asking them something. You have to be very sensitive when doing something. I personally think that the most insensitive thing that there is in these villages, is government and church. I think in the big cities like Antananarivo you can get away with it. But you can't use those methods as they are in the villages. It's really important that when you want people to change in a important aspect like for instance "give your children water when they have diarrhoea" there are places in the south where it is taboo to give them water when they diarrhoea and that is ridiculous because that is the worst thing you can do. I mean they will dehydrate and die but the tradition is that it's taboo and the people believe it. You cannot just come and tell them this is wrong, you have to have a relationship with them, you have to figure out a way of bringing that message to

them so that they may receive it. This one Catholic sister sits at her doorstep every afternoon in a village "where the water gives life" (there is so much water resources there that they are thinking of bottling it. In that village the taboo is you don't give water to children when they have diarrhea so children often die of simple diseases) and she waits for the children to come from school and she offers them cold sweetened water. She is making them used to drinking water and she has done this for years. She wants the children to look for water when they are thirsty. They are recognising their thirst that can be quenched by drinking water and she is hoping the link will be made that when you have diarrhea you are very thirsty. She has made changes that are very subtle, it would not have helped to tell the people "you give your children water" because a taboo is very strong and they are too scared to change it. In this city they have taboos....

**R:** In Antananarivo?

**L:** Yes. They have many taboos and you don't just find those out by asking them, you have to have friends that will tell you about them. Some Christians will come here from all over, like from South Africa and they will say, "that's demonic and that's demonic" and they don't want to hear, or they don't want to listen, no they just want to do an exorcism on this people. Then they will go away and these people just carry on with the old ways, because it's not about 'magic' it is about fears. These people need to be helped. Jesus came in context as a Hebrew. He did not come as a world citizen, jet setting around the world and we have to bring the Gospel in a context. It does not mean we become pagans but we have to be sensitive to what these people believe otherwise we will get nowhere, even if we have 2,000 people every Sunday. I feel this is why your study is so important because you are working in one of the churches that I personally think, from what I've heard and seen, one of the most culturally foreign to Madagascar. It is foreign to them even though the leadership is Malagasy and to have Malagasy leadership (the person can have a Malagasy passport because he was born here) that does not mean their work is culturally sensitive. Many churches here think that what they are doing works fine because they have the numbers but that is not so. And what I think is important about your studies is that you are trying to think outside the 'box' as we say and there is a 'box' here and you are trying to figure out "What is it with this 'box' that makes people come but they don't stay?". It is an important question and it deserves the time that you have given it to learn the reason why this is happening. You know a lot of people have come here and tried to work with them and said, "It's chaos" and it is chaos. And it's a shame that a lot of the stuff is South African driven, a lot of the insensitive stuff that is going on in Madagascar is South African driven, because somehow we have a mindset that "we have the Truth and they must just receive it" "I will lay hands on them and I will pray for them and they will be ok" "I have the Holy Spirit and therefore what I do is valid". I question all those ways of thinking because I've seen what it looks like after awhile in Antananarivo. Many people are falling about from one group to the next because they have been cut lose from their roots, they are no longer part of something that holds them so they are just drifting

from one to the other. If foreigners are going to continue 'pumping' money into this country for this we should be culturally sensitive for it to grow. A certain worldwide evangelistic group is coming I've heard to Madagascar and the one missionary said to me, "I'm glad that they are coming but I'm also afraid." Apparently when they went to P and other countries, they caused some trouble there, they caused some of the church leaders to be thrown in jail because of the way they were doing things. Then afterwards you want to say, "I will pray for those who have been persecuted, I will pray for those Christians who have been thrown in jail" but the reason this has happened is the group who is usually only very briefly involved in any region (short-term missions) ministered in ways that exposed Christian leaders to an unsympathetic and antagonistic government. So if someone with a long-term commitment comes to Madagascar and works alongside national Christians and a church grows; and other Christians pass by and they have outreaches and cause trouble in these churches that have been a longtime work, then what is the point of sending such a short-term group here? We know that the particular short-term ministry and other organisations do a lot of good work, but many of these organisations think the way they do things is automatically ok and the statistics you read of the work they do makes you think that they do indispensable work, always good, never the wrong way.

**R:** Why do you think persecution is still here in Madagascar? Because the way we understand persecution and the way they understand persecution is two different things. Some will say, "I have been persecuted for this or that", how do you think they 'see' themselves as being persecuted?

**L:** Harassment and difficulty shouldn't always be called "persecution". I think somebody gave them the word during the time that Communism was their antichrist. About 20, 25 years ago, I'm not quite sure. Communism was prophetically seen by some as the antichrist and a lot of people had the explanation of this from the book of Daniel and the book of Revelations. So it was Communism that was the 'big scare' and you had Richard Wurmbrand, the church of the Martyrs, who had people suffering for their faith behind the Iron Curtain coming into the west and talking about that when they escaped. So all these things became mixed into experiences of adversity.

**R:** What I think is, is that a lot of the time the people are drawn into the Western culture and they think that they have grabbed onto their salvation and then with time they realise that there is no power in it and they abandon it. Or is just the pureness of the new things that draw them?

**L:** Yes, that happens.

**R:** Because he's not following through.

**L:** Because it's not solving anything. Jesus said, "I come to bring the Good News to the poor, the gift of Sight to the blind..." and we call this the Good News, the Gospel, but in many instances in Madagascar it does not seem that they really

understand what the Good News is. It just seems to be this church structure or that church structure. A part of the Christian faith is a culture anyway, they have to change some of their culture to become a Christian but what is the Good News that you hear that is preached every Sunday? And if you receive it as Good News, do you think that the people that listen that are there together with you are receiving the Good News for their lives? Is it truly Good News for them? For who is it Good News? What is the good news about it? And if they're not going there to receive Good News then why are they going? In the south there is a big church that builds little churches. They build these beautiful churches, they have this round shape and look like something from Russia or Greece, small and you find them in about every village. Initially the people come because it's new. It's like a spectacle. Like TV, they like to watch TV. They will watch anything that is on TV. Often they will leave the TV on all day. Many don't use their discretion, "I will watch this but I won't watch that", no the TV is on the whole day or the radio is blasting. When an Evangelist goes to a village everyone comes out to see, but what we are concerned with is what happens afterwards. One missionary asked us to check for him, he had previously been to a village we have been at to do research so he asked us to find out what had happened "to the 'new Christians' there after they brought the Gospel to them". What they had done was they went with a helicopter with sound equipment, they put out the sound equipment and showed the Jesus Film and so preached the Gospel in Official Malagasy (he could speak Official Malagasy) and they asked who wanted to receive Jesus and everybody did, everyone in the Village, and then the visitors wrote their statistics and got in the helicopter and left. Malagasy people will almost always oblige the visitor with a positive reply. So we went there about a year and a half later and we asked on behalf of this Pentecostal missionary, "Do you remember someone coming here with a helicopter etc..." and they said "yes we remember" and they were laughing about that event. It had been something of a spectacle and it was something foreign so that the conclusion of it seemed to be that the person had made no lasting impact. After that I found out that there still were no Christians except for one new Christian, an old man and his adopted son who had a very specific story of their own and it was not as a result of that event. They had become Christians and we were in this room because the old man could not go to church anymore, so they were celebrating communion in his room. The other missionary had spent a lot of money on his quick once-off evangelistic trip, but made no impact at all, perhaps he might as well have left it.

**R:** Like being a tourist.

**L:** To the villagers it was like seeing someone funny and then they go again, like being entertained.

**R:** Just like a tourist who comes to the village and leaves again?

L: Yes, it was exactly like that and we had to come back to T and tell him what they said. So I don't know how people feel about that, but that is what they apparently accomplished.

R: What else can you tell me about their culture?

L: The child sits and takes a stone and taps another stone, with the stones they are speaking. Then the other child picks up the stones and speaks. They use these stones to tell a story, and I have observed it being done and it is very fascinating to watch and it's any kind of story.

R: Yes, people have told me that they speak about anything. But what grabs me is that sometimes it becomes an unconscious thing like their problems, and that I think can be a good thing, even when there is abuse or a bad thing happening then they use these stones to communicate. They also use these stones in the house to communicate with their parents, so they can speak to the older people because of the hierarchy that they have. They cannot just speak to the father, because sometimes the parents will just avoid it and say, "Ah it's just a simple story" but many times the parents will walk by and say, "Listen what is this child saying?" and it becomes a medium to communicate with them. These stories become therapeutic for the children.

L: There are many such games that the children play.

### 8.6.3 Missionary

D is a missionary in the north of Madagascar, he has only had a little contact with S.P. through his evangelism campaigns in their region of the island. D is from SA and very traditional, conservative and direct. Some of his statements were direct and some times harsh.

R: How is the work going in...?

D: Things are going well we are having a team of ministers coming for the evangelism campaign in two weeks time.

R: Previously you told me that things went so well with having S.P. up there pulling all the church leaders together for the evangelism that you would like to do together. When is it taking place?

D: I don't even want to talk about S.P. He is a big dropper, just chasing after money. He is full of greed, no I want nothing to do with him. He just phoned us two tree weeks before the campaign and said his not coming any more, because of his safety in running for president.

R: No, how can you say that, what happened?

D: He was going to help us with the evangelism campaign, minister their, so we arranged a team from S.A. to come and do a seminar before the campaign, then they told us we need to move the seminar after the campaign because some Nigerian is coming with a lot of money to help in the campaign and they want the main spotlight on him. Then the Nigerian pulled out and then S.P. also pulled out. The moment there is no money S.P. does not want to be involved. He goes were the money is, he is just full of greed. I'm sorry I know you work with him before but I don't ever want to work with him again or if he is involved with any ministry in our aria I would pull out. I don't want anything to do with him.

R: Yes, but I think that is a harsh statement.

D: No, do you know what they did now, now they want the S.A team to do the seminars and the evangelism, so I said to them no, we would only do the evangelism, we can not do both.

## **6.7 Questionnaires and results**

The questionnaire was formulates as if S.P. were the one asking the question.

### 6.7.1 A survey on the congregations experience at LIC church

We as your spiritual leaders are looking at ways we can make the church friendlier to you and how we can meet your needs as your leaders. So we are doing a survey to know how you experience the church. You don't need to give your name but we would appreciate it if you could answer a view questions for us as honest as possible. It will only help us to serve you to the best of our ability. .

1. Why do you attend cervices at LIC church?

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2. Why do you come to LIC and not go to any other church in Antananarivo?

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3. What makes you uncomfortable about what we do at LIC church?

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4. What have we done in the past that offended or disappointed you?

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5. Have ever thought about leaving the church, and why?

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6. What is your expectation of the church?

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6.7.2 Table of grievances

1.	Partiality from the leaders and between believers	48
2.	Disappointment about still renting a building after 25 years of existence after money has been collected in the past but just disappeared.	33
3.	Woman wearing unsuitable clothing like trousers or short skirts (Pastors wife, children and leaders on stage)	29
4.	Leaders responsibilities and preparation	21
5.	Church have become spiritually cold, not on fire like before (Pastor Jules)	24
6.	Financial administration, transparency and accountability	15
7.	Gossip and fighting in the church	12
8.	Lack of love amongst believers	9
9.	To many programs can not attend all, time is limited	8
10	Neglecting to help the poor in the church	6
11.	Bad hospitality	4
12	Pastors children having bad conduct	6
13.	Youth rapping	4
14.	No confidentiality from the leaders	3
15.	Pastor dominates the church	3
16.	Problems with Pastor V (hurt people with words)	4
17.	Not giving new artist opportunity in the church	3
18.	No healing	3
19	Disappointment with sermons that are not well prepared	2
20.	Missionary support to Lakato	1

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