

ABSTRACT

THE IMPACT OF BIBLICAL PREACHING ON THE GROWTH OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN KENYA

by

Festus Kilonzo Kavale

This dissertation examines how biblical preaching relates to numerical and spiritual growth among evangelical churches in Kenya. The study was a descriptive, correlational study utilizing researcher-designed questionnaires and closing interviews.

Congregational members from ten evangelical churches located in the two largest cities in Kenya, Nairobi and Mombasa, responded to a twelve-question congregational survey. Fifty-four leaders responded to a sixteen-question pastoral and leadership survey. Closing interviews with ten pastors added greater insight into the perception of the significance of biblical preaching to church growth.

The findings of the study confirmed a direct relationship between biblical preaching and church growth.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled
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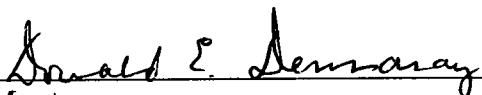
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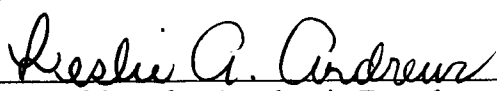
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Doctor of Ministry

By

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CHAPTER 1

UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM

An Introductory Overview of the Context of Study

A brief introductory overview of Kenya will help set the stage by providing information about the country upon which the study was based.

Kenya has a long and complex history that spans thousands of years.

Geographically, Kenya is split into almost two halves by the equator so that it is located approximately between latitudes 421 north and 428 south and longitudes 34 and 42 east. It is bounded on the north by Sudan and Ethiopia, on the east by Somalia and the Indian Ocean, on the west by Lake Victoria and Uganda, and on the south by Tanzania. It has an area of 224,960 square miles.

Due to its strategic geographic location astride the Indian Ocean and the East African littoral, Kenya attracted numerous foreign peoples. These included Americans, Arabs, British, Chinese, French, Germans, and Portuguese. They came to Kenya either seeking to escape conflict and political persecution or to find opportunity to begin a new life. Africans from throughout the subcontinent have also settled in Kenya (Maxon and Ofcansky 1).

Between 1 July 1895 and 12 December 1963 Britain colonized Kenya. However, not until 1920 was the name “Kenya” adopted. Before this period, the country was labeled by the British as the “East African Protectorate” with the name “Kenya” being adopted as part of the change of status from protectorate to colony. On 12 December 1964, Kenya became a republic on the first anniversary of its independence (Maxon and Ofcansky 1).

At a 1989 census, Kenya's population was 21,443,636; whereas, in 1998 the country had an estimated population of 29 million. The overwhelming proportion of the population is made up of Africans with other groups such as Arabs, Asians, Europeans, and others constituting less than 1 percent in the last census (Maxon and Ofcansky 3).

Although, as noted above, the population may be generally divided along racial lines, the most significant divisions are based on ethnicity. Maxon and Ofcansky clarify this when they observe that

Kenya's African people are divided into more than 40 ethnic groups belonging to three linguistic families: Bantu, Cushitic, and Nilotic. Prior to 20th century, the social formations known as ethnic groups were fluid rather than static. Language is the primary characteristic of ethnic identity in Kenya. Among the Bantu-speaking people, a main division may be made between the western group (Luyia and Gusii), the central highlands group (Kikuyu, Embu Meru and Kamba), and the coastal Bantu (the mijikenda). For the Nilotic-speakers, the divisions are the River-Lake or Western (Luo), the Highlands or Southern (Kalejin), and the Plains or Eastern (Masai, Teso, Samburu). The Cushitic-speaking groups comprise the Oromo and the Somali-speakers. The Kikuyu, who made up 21 percent of the population at the 1989 census, are Kenya's largest ethnic group. Next largest are the Luyia (14 percent), and the Gusii (six percent). (3)

The colonial rule solidified ethnic identity and associated it with certain areas of the country (provinces, districts, and smaller territorial entities known as locations) where only people with a specific ethnic identity were supposed to reside. For example, under this colonial, government created-system, the majority of the Kikuyu were required to live in Central province and the Luo to reside in Nyanza. However, modern economic and political development has brought many Kenyans to urban areas and other parts of the country far from what was presumed to be the traditional areas of residence for their ethnic groups.

This state of affairs is illustrated by the fact that at the 1989 census, Nairobi city, Kenya's capital as well as the country's largest city, had a population of about 1.8 million

people; whereas, by the year 2000, the city had a population of about two million people. Similarly, in 1989, Mombasa, the second largest city in Kenya, had a population of 800,000 people. By the year 2000, the population had grown to approximately 1.2 million (Barrett et al. 160).

In addition to the languages associated with the ethnic groups, Kenya's people are also divided along religious lines. As a result of missionary work, largely during the twentieth century, by 1985, about 70 to 80 percent of the population were considered Christian. Among these, 45 to 50 percent were Protestants while 30 percent were Catholics. Muslims made up only about 6 percent of the population with the remainder of the people being largely followers of African traditional religions together with a small number of Hindus, Jains, and Sikhs (Maxon and Ofcansky 4).

Introduction of Christianity in Kenya

As hinted by the above percentages of various religious groups, Protestants did a great deal of the Christian missionary work in Kenya. In particular, the Christian Protestant missionary work in East Africa began in May 1944 with the work of John Krapf and his wife. Prior to coming to East Africa, Krapf had worked in Ethiopia as a missionary. While in Ethiopia, he had not only learned the Ahmaric language but also learned about the Gallas who lived southeast of Ethiopia. He hoped to reach them from the East African coast as well as to use this base to reach the whole of the East African region with the gospel. Much pioneering of the Christian Protestant mission, therefore, owes much to the foundational work that he and his team did. The only other Christian Protestant missionary agency that did any work in East Africa around this time was the Methodist Church. These started work among freed slaves at Frere Town in Mombasa in

1878. Later, they also started work among the Meru of Eastern Kenya in 1909. Not until nearly four decades later (after 1888) did other Christian Protestant missions get seriously involved in the work (Falk 233-35).

In 1888, Imperial British East Africa Company, chartered by the British government, assumed responsibility of Kenya from the Arabs and began building a railroad starting from Mombasa into the interior (eventually leading to Uganda). Having assumed the responsibility for Kenya, the British wanted to develop the country economically. The company then invited the Church Missionary Society and any other willing missionary societies to establish mission posts along the railroad route. Several societies responded positively to this invitation and flocked into East Africa. Thus began the serious growth of the Christian Church in East Africa. Catholics started ministry in Western Kenya. The Society of Friends from England began industrial ministry on the Island of Pemba (north of Zanzibar) in 1896. The Africa Inland Mission started work among the Akamba of eastern Kenya in 1875. For seven years, the Scottish Industrial Mission also tried to begin work at Kibwezi in Eastern Kenya. Their goal was to plant a church and also to start an industrial school. However, after failing they moved to Kikuyu in 1898 where they joined and worked together with Lovedale Bible Institute of South Africa and later became part of the Church of Scotland. The American Friends also began an industrial mission in the Kavirondo area (on the Eastern Shore of lake Victoria) in 1901 (Falk 261-64).

As noted above, my own denomination—the Africa Inland Church—was born out of the missionary efforts of the Africa Inland Mission. Africa Inland Mission started its work in Kenya in 1895 under its founder, Peter Cameron Scott. Its initial base was among

the Kamba (my tribe) in the eastern part of Kenya. In an article published in *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology*, Dr. Omulokoli tells us that in the initial period of 1895 to 1901, the mission experienced a lot of hardships and difficulties including the loss, through death, sickness, and resignations, of almost the entire missionary force (Omulokoli 45).

Peter Cameron Scott, the founder of AIM, was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1867. In 1879, when twelve years old, his family moved to America and settled in Philadelphia. Peter had a good singing voice and wanted to become a professional singer so he trained with an Italian maestro. However, his parents objected to this because at the time such a career was unacceptable for Christians. He, therefore, began work as a printer, but he could not continue for long because of ill health. Upon a doctor's recommendation for change of climate, he went back to Scotland. When Peter was in Scotland, he visited his sister's grave in Glasgow. As he stood over his sister's grave and thought seriously about the possibility of his own death, he committed his life to Jesus Christ and vowed to serve God if he spared his life (Omulokoli 46).

God was faithful in restoring Peter's health. After returning to America and beginning to feel healthy once more, Peter forgot about his vow. However, after a short time of crisis, he continued to grow in Christian faith and found himself getting more and more interested in going to Africa to work as a missionary. His first ministry was in Banana, Central Africa, at the mouth of the Congo River in 1891. There he worked with his brother, John, but this lasted only a few months and ended with John's death and Peter's own poor health. Later upon recovery, much prayer, and concerted effort, Peter formed and launched the Africa Inland Mission (AIM) with eight missionaries in 1895.

(Fish and Fish 11, 13).

Generally speaking, AIM was developed from the Reformed tradition. David Sandgren, a professor of history at Concordia College in Minnesota, conducted extensive religious historical fieldwork in Kenya. Later, he wrote an article that is featured in the book entitled *East African Expressions of Christianity*, edited by Spear and Kimambo. In this article, Sandgren described AIM as “a non-denominational (though largely Baptist) American Society that ... worked among the Kamba since 1895” (Sandgren 172). In another article written by Richard Waller, a professor of history at Bucknell University in Pennsylvania, a similar description of AIM is given. Waller writes that

the AIM was a non-denominational Protestant evangelical mission. It differed from other Protestant missions in Kenya, notably the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM), not only in its governance, structure and theology, but also because it was directed and largely staffed from America. Born out of the evangelical fervor of middle-class urban revivalism in the late nineteenth-century America, the mission had its central tenets of belief a conviction of the sole efficacy of salvation through personal experience of Christ and an acceptance of Divine Revelation in matters great and small, the inerrancy and primacy of scripture, and an absolute abhorrence of “modernism.”... Like Moody himself, the commanding figure of American revivalism in the 1870s, and the Student Christian Volunteer Movement that he founded and from which it recruited, the AIM eschewed political and social activism. Its vision was in-ward looking and narrowly focused on “soul winning.” (84-85)

Nevertheless, amidst numerous difficulties and problems, God blessed the work of AIM, and it continued to grow. The Church started by the AIM became more and more established. By 1971 when Rev. N. C. Thomas, the then General Secretary of AIM, publicly signed the papers to hand over the leadership of the Church to the first African Bishop of Africa Inland Church Kenya, more than twenty thousand members of AIC from all over Kenya were assembled at AIC Mumbuni in Machakos (Somba 60-61). Writing in 1987, Dr. Titus Kivunzi, the third Bishop of AIC Kenya (1996-2001), noted

that “the church has grown to nearly three thousand congregations with a membership of approximately one million people.” (iii). By 1995, when AIM marked its centenary, the membership of AIC Kenya totaled more than three million.

Personal Background

Personally, my life has always been significantly influenced by the word of God. I grew up in a family of devout Christians. My father was among the very first elementary school teachers in my country trained by the AIM missionaries. Consequently, this also meant that he was an evangelist. Moreover, not a day passed without my mother quoting a Bible verse or a biblical principle. Two of my uncles were ministers in the Africa Inland Church. My older sisters took me to Sunday school at a very early age where I learned the virtues of being good children of God. At the age of twelve, I personally prayed to invite Jesus into my life. During my high school years, I became well grounded in my Christian faith. As I look back, I realize the privilege I enjoyed. My local pastor, who also served as a part-time lecturer in a Bible institute, always gave detailed exposition and teaching of God’s word from the pulpit. As a result, I developed a great passion for biblical preaching. During this time, I also began to participate on my own in church leadership—through involvement in the school Christian Union, Sunday school teaching for children, and the English worship service in my local church. I also regularly attended vacation youth camps organized by a Christian organization known as Word of Life. During this period, I became fully assured of my salvation, learned the need to feed spiritually by reading the Bible on my own, learned how to deal with sin in my life through confession, and learned how to yield my life to the leading of the Holy Spirit. I also began to minister to other youth through Christian drama.

The next development in my interest in preaching was two fold. After graduation from high school, I moved to the city of Nairobi where I got a job as a “trainee library assistant” at Nairobi University. I then became a member of my denomination’s largest church—Africa Inland Church Ziwani—where I once again became active in a Christian drama group. Under the sponsorship of the local church, this drama group became very much involved in weekend ministries in high schools and other local churches all over the country. During this period, the Lord began to call me to the preaching ministry. As a leader in the drama group, I would often be called upon to give a brief sermon at the end of each play. Results of the Lord’s work through drama and short sermons greatly encouraged me. Through this ministry, my gift as a preacher/teacher began to evolve. I also became more and more aware of my own inadequacies in the understanding of Scripture and ministry to others. I, therefore, began to sense the Lord was calling me to resign my job and train for Christian ministry; however, for three years I resisted due to various reasons. I did not want to become a pastor because of the poor support. Satan tried to convince me through the comfort I enjoyed in my good salary as a librarian. After all, I could keep on serving God partly. The fact that most people in my country tended to regard pastors as failures that joined ministry out of lack of something better to do also served as another hindrance. Nevertheless, I finally obeyed (1 Sam. 15:22) and shared my call with my local pastor and the board of elders for further guidance. After one year’s patient and prayerful waiting as the church leaders scrutinized me and confirmed my calling, I applied, and was admitted to Scott Theological College in April 1985. Originally, I intended to study God’s word for my own growth after which I could serve God partly in the church as I continued with my work as a trained librarian. Little did I

know that by the time I finished Bible college, the Lord would have clearly shown me that he wanted me in full-time ministry. By this time I had also grown enough in my faith to trust God to sustain me in ministry.

Following my graduation from Scott Theological College with a bachelor's degree in theology in March 1989, I was initially expected to take up an assignment as the third assistant pastor at AIC Ziwani. Pending my assumption of that appointment, a request came for me to preach for six weeks at Africa Inland Church Jericho, that had an average Sunday worship attendance of six hundred people. The reason for filling-in as a preacher for the said six weeks was that the church had not had a pastor for more than one year, owing to church politics.

According to the Myers-Briggs type indicator, I am an ISTJ. Consequently, I tend to be driven by a deep sense of responsibility (Kroeger and Thuesen 215). I also shun mediocrity. Also, as hinted above, my main gifts in ministry are preaching (especially preaching that takes the form of teaching from the pulpit), teaching (in a classroom or seminar setting), administration, and counseling. Consequently, I took my temporary assignment at AIC Jericho very seriously and preached God's word zealously. Little did I know that this would result in the board of this local church striving relentlessly to have the District Church Council retain me as their pastor.

When this eventually happened, I assumed my new responsibility with a lot of apprehension due to several reasons. First, I neither desired to get entangled in church politics, nor did I desire to be at the helm of leadership. Second, I felt too young and inexperienced. Third, I happened to know that the major part of the politics surrounding this church involved people who could be loosely termed as "power-hungry dissidents"

from AIC Ziwani. Nevertheless, after much prayer, my wife and I took the challenge. Utilizing my training as a librarian, I took one month to organize, file, and study all the correspondences as well as minutes of the church board meetings since the church's inception. During this period, I also further developed my training through studying part-time, obtaining a master of divinity degree in the process.

Africa Inland Church Jericho, where I ministered for ten years, lies approximately seven miles southeast of the city-center of Nairobi, Kenya's largest city. The church began in 1967 as a Sunday afternoon fellowship for four families who found themselves unable to travel with their little children to Africa Inland Church Ziwani for the Sunday morning worship service. Then, AIC Ziwani was the only church of their denomination in the large city of Nairobi, and it was located five miles away. By mid-1969, regular Sunday attendance had grown to eighteen people. Pastor Isaiah Maweu, a lay leader, was requested to take charge of the small congregation, and the Church held its first formal worship service on the afternoon of 25 August 1969 at the Jamaa Social Hall with twenty people in attendance.

As the years went by, the church continued to grow numerically, and by the time Pastor Maweu mysteriously died in July 1976, Sunday worship attendance had risen to two hundred. Pastor Paul Nzyuko, another lay leader, took over the leadership of the congregation temporarily until the first full-time trained pastor, Nathaniel Omega, assumed responsibility in December 1976. This marked the second phase of the church's growth both numerically and spiritually.

Bearing in mind that ministry does not take place in a vacuum, most of the people in AIC Jericho have attributed the steady growth of the church during this time to

Nathaniel Omega's personality. He was highly gifted in preaching, administration, and public relations. He was also very mature both in terms of age and integrity. By the time Pastor Nathaniel left the church for an administrative position at the denomination's headquarters in September 1981, the average Sunday worship attendance was six hundred. When he left, one of the elders, Joseph Matele, led the church for four months until January 1982, when Joseph Kiiru Ndebe, another well-trained, full-time pastor, took over the leadership of the church

Apart from being a man of integrity, Joseph was also a powerful preacher and a good organizer. He was reasonably mature. His wife Annah, also a trained minister, worked well with both the youth and the women. Pastor Joseph divided the church into small cell groups and helped start home Bible study and prayer groups. This helped with discipleship in the church as well as encouraging the members to care for and to minister to one another. During his time, the average Sunday worship attendance rose to 900. He left in June 1986 to serve as Field Education Director in the denomination's undergraduate Bible college. Charles Kababu took over the leadership of the church in the same month.

Pastor Charles was also a fairly good preacher. However, in June 1987, he turned hyper-charismatic and, as a result, apart from causing division in the local church, he differed with the denominational district leaders over certain doctrinal issues. Consequently, he transferred to another denomination, taking with him a group of three hundred members from the congregation. Thus, the attendance declined to six hundred people. The church then continued without a pastor for more than one year. This was the aftermath I found when I took over the leadership of the church in May 1989.

After serving as the pastor of AIC Jericho for three years and upon completion of my graduate studies, I had the privilege of participating in church leadership seminars involving several fast-growing churches in the two states of Indiana and North Carolina here in North America. Through these seminars held in July 1992, I discovered that four factors greatly contributed to the growth of these churches: powerful preaching, powerful worship, effective pastoral care, and effective discipleship. Upon my return to Kenya, I decided to embark on the experimental application of the above four factors in my own local church—AIC Jericho. After all, I personally enjoyed the task of preaching, especially preaching that takes the form of teaching from the pulpit. During the next seven-year period, I witnessed Africa Inland Church Jericho grow numerically from a Sunday service attendance of nine hundred people to three thousand people. I, therefore, strongly suspected that biblical preaching had a lot to do with the growth of Africa Inland Church Jericho during the ten years of my ministry there.

Moreover, during this ten-year period of pastoral ministry in Kenya, I continued to observe a very interesting phenomenon. While some churches seemed to grow very fast, both numerically and spiritually, others in the same neighborhood seemed either to decline or remain the same. Further observation revealed that this phenomenon appeared to affect all kinds of churches. Thus, many churches from different mainline denominations, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant; conservative, traditional, or Pentecostal, they all seemed affected by this phenomenon. Sporadic interviews and casual discussions with some clergy showed that most of them were greatly concerned with this state of affairs. Most of them also felt that the growth of the fast-growing churches was not the result of traditional “evangelism” as we know and practice it. On

the contrary, many agreed that such evangelism was not the major contributor to both the quantitative and qualitative church growth.

Most of the clergy interviewed seemed to attribute the fast church growth to the four factors noted above: powerful preaching, powerful worship, effective pastoral care, and effective discipleship. Among these, powerful preaching seemed to rank highest. This fueled my own strong suspicion over the years that a connection existed between preaching and the numerical growth of the church. Based on this intuition, I developed a desire to explore further the impact of preaching upon church growth.

However, while much has been written on how to prepare and deliver both quality and various kinds of sermons, very few works deal with whether biblical preaching has any impact on the growth of the church. The opportunity for me to examine the impact of biblical preaching on the growth of the church came when I enrolled in the Doctor of Ministry program at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky in July 1999. My courses provided me with the opportunity not only to sharpen my tools in biblical preaching, but also to evaluate the impact of biblical preaching on the growth of the church.

Background to the Problem

Initially, a casual study revealed that many arguments exist against preaching and its role in the growth of the Church. These arguments vary from the simple assertion that people are bored and disenchanted with the spoken word to the stronger argument that the television and technology age will gradually and eventually render preaching useless (Stott, "Creating" 1). Such arguments against the impact of preaching exist within the Church, especially within what is popularly known as the church growth movement. This

movement arose in response to the American Church's experience of declining membership, especially in the 1970s. During this decade, the so-called "mainline Protestant denominations" in America (including Presbyterian, Congregational, United Methodist, and Episcopal churches) experienced a serious problem evidenced in a membership decline of crisis proportions. This precipitated both serious investigations into the possible causes as well as suggestions for remedial measures. Therefore, the church growth movement came as a prominent resource for dealing with church decline.

Interestingly, in their early writings, the majority of modern "church growth experts" seemed either to disregard or minimize the role of preaching in today's church growth. In 1994, Michael A. Wilde did a detailed study of the impact of preaching upon biblical church growth. Concerning church growth experts, he observes that "their studies included many good ideas, but they excluded preaching as a contributing factor" (2). He goes on to add that "many of these church growth proponents focus on developing principles and models for church growth by examining the common characteristics of growing churches.... [But] no adequate analysis of preaching relating to the growth of the local church [is done]" (3). Instead, most of the renowned church growth movement experts seem to mention preaching in a deprecating manner. Win Arn, one of the most notable church growth movement proponents, says, "[S]ermon delivery represents a very small portion of the pastor's total work week" (12). To him, "the sermon is a relatively minor factor in the growth of the church" (12). Another supporter, Herb Miller, says, "[T]he style of pulpit work seems little related to church growth. Nor is the quality of oratory significant" (30).

However, contrary to the church growth movement's low view of preaching,

another strong voice seems to rise from renowned homileticians. According to George Sweazy, a former professor of homiletics at Princeton, “all experience indicates that everything else will become obsolete before preaching does. And when a dying church comes back to life, that usually starts not with programs or activities, but with new life in preaching” (4). Several decades prior to the church growth movement, theologian Emil Brunner had made a similar observation. He observed that “where there is true preaching, where in obedience of faith the word is proclaimed, there, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, the most important thing that ever happened upon earth takes place” (142). Thus, many different people have strong feelings as to whether or not preaching has any impact on church growth. In his study, Michael Wilde quotes John Schletewitz’s reference to an anonymous provocative letter that appeared in the *British Weekly* in the 1980s. This letter revealed further the volatile nature of this debate:

It seems ministers feel their sermons are very important and spend a great deal of time preparing them. I have been attending church quite regularly for 30 years and I have probably heard 3,000 of them. To my consternation, I discovered I couldn’t remember a single sermon. I wonder if a minister’s time might be more profitably spent on something else. (21)

This letter was followed by a storm of responses that filled the editorial pages for several days. However, the words of one sage finally silenced the tempest:

I have been married for 30 years. During that time I have eaten 32,850 meals from my wife’s cooking. Suddenly I have discovered I cannot remember the menu of a single meal. And yet ... I have the distinct impression that without them, I would have starved to death long ago. (Wilde 21)

In this study, I assume that the emphasis upon biblical preaching will bring about not only numerical but also spiritual growth in the church.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this proposed study was to evaluate the impact of biblical

preaching upon numerical and spiritual church growth among evangelical churches in Kenya.

In pursuit of the above, this study addressed four fundamental questions.

Research Question #1

What is the decadal growth rate in the churches of the study?

Research Question #2

What evidence of spiritual growth exists among the participants in this study?

Research Question #3

What is the strength of biblical preaching as perceived by participants of the study?

Research Question #4

What is the relationship between the numerical decadal growth rate, spiritual growth, and the observed strength of biblical preaching?

Definition of Terms

Obviously, in order to answer the above questions both adequately and conclusively, several terms call for definition. Also, in every study, there is need to provide generally accepted definitions of the terms used. Thus, a brief but clear understanding of the meaning of the terms *preaching* (especially biblical preaching), *church*, *church growth*, and *church growth movement* is necessary.

In his book, *The Sermon in Perspective*, Massey tells us that “the Bible is central for preaching: apart from its message and meanings we fail at the business of criticizing and correcting life, we miss the way of salvation, and remain in the rut of ineptitude” (52). Thus, although some legitimate forms of Christian preaching are not necessarily

direct expositions of the Bible, we must agree with Sangster when he observes that “no preaching that is out of harmony with the Bible, and no preaching that cannot be related to the Bible, can establish its claim to be Christian preaching at all” (34-35).

To answer the question, “What is biblical preaching?” one needs to note that the most outstanding characteristic of biblical preaching is that it grows out of the message given in the Bible. In biblical preaching, the chief element is not what one brings to the text, but what the text imparts. Once again, Sangster helps people see this clearly when he states that “An address is a man talking to men; a sermon is a man speaking from God.... [H]e is a herald. His word is not his own; it comes from above” (13). This preaching role will never diminish because “this was, is and will ever be God’s chief way of announcing his will to the world” (20). For the purpose of this study, therefore, I will formulate my own simple definition of biblical preaching as the accurate communication of God’s word to the people in such a manner that they will clearly understand it and be moved to obey it.

The term *church* is often used to mean different things. Sometimes, the term is used to refer to *a particular local congregation*, that is, “a group of persons in a specific geographic area, banded together in order to carry out the Christian task of reaching other people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ” (Eiler 17). Other times, it is used to refer to “the church Catholic ... [that is], the church [as] the body of Christ” (17). Obviously, the limitation of this study does not allow for a detailed biblical study of the word “church.” Consequently, for the purposes of this study, the term “church” will simply refer to the “local church.”

The term *growth* also needs defining especially as it relates to the *church*. In the

glossary of the book, *Church Growth: State of the Art*, edited by Wagner, Arn, and Towns, church growth is defined as

the science that investigates the nature, function and health of Christian Churches as they relate specifically to the effective implementation of God's commission to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). Church growth is simultaneously a theological conviction and an applied science, striving to combine the eternal principles of God's Word with the best insights of contemporary social and behavioral sciences, employing as its initial frame of reference the foundational work done by Donald McGavran and his colleagues. (284)

In his own book, *Your Church Can Grow*, C. Peter Wagner reduces the definition to "all that is involved in bringing men and women who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ into fellowship with Him and into responsible church membership" (12). However, J. Randall Peterson quickly reminds us that "churches grow in different ways.... [T]hey include more people; they build new buildings; they add programs; members become more active in community life; they give more to missions; they grow more Christ-like" (19). Thus, church growth is a complex of interrelated factors. Therefore, to restrict it to numerical or quantitative growth without including the other aspects of spiritual or qualitative growth would be severely defective. Elmer Towns, dean and professor at Lynchburg Baptist Seminary, warns of the danger in making false assumptions concerning the study of church growth.

Christians make two false assumptions regarding church growth. First, some believe that if the church is growing in spiritual character, an automatic expansion in numbers will result; that quality will lead to quantity. This is not necessarily so. The second false assumption, a reversal of the first, is that churches, which are growing in numbers automatically, are growing in Biblical maturity. It is possible for a stagnant congregation to have individuals growing in grace and truth. Both congregations are growing, but neither has the full blessing of God. (199)

Consequently, for the purposes of this study, church growth will be understood to mean both quantitative (or numerical) and qualitative (or spiritual).

The other term deserving a brief description is *Church Growth Movement*:

“Church growth is not just an idea: it is a full-blown movement” (Wagner, Arn, and Towns 33). In view of the fact that church growth leaders consider themselves a movement, a description and definition a movement is helpful.

Generally, a movement arises in response to a need for change in a given social institution. Implicitly, different people make diverse efforts in order to bring about the desired change. Gusfield defines a movement as “a wide variety of collective attempts to bring about change in certain social institutions” (439). As noted earlier, in the case of the church growth movement, it arose in response to the American churches’ experience of declining membership, especially in the 1970s. During this decade, the so-called “mainline Protestant denominations” in America (including Presbyterian, Congregational, and Episcopal churches) experienced a membership decline of crisis proportions. Martin Marty puts this very clearly. He observes that

from the birth of the American republic until around 1965, as is well known, the churches now called mainline Protestant tended to grow with every census and survey.... In the 1950’s [they] experienced a boom that to the prophets of that decade looked superficial.... Then [in 1965] came a cultural crisis.... The mainline started slipping. (10-11)

This crisis of membership decline precipitated both serious investigations into the possible causes as well as suggestions into remedial measures. To many, the church growth movement was viewed as a prominent resource for dealing with decline and growth.

Population

The population of this study covered ten evangelical churches located in Nairobi and Mombasa, the two largest cities in Kenya. The study is an evaluative study in the

description mode utilizing researcher-designed instruments.

The ten were local churches of several evangelical denominations in Kenya. They were chosen based on a general consensus among the majority of clergy in the two cities of Nairobi and Mombasa that most of these churches were among the fastest growing local churches in the whole country. Regardless of their denomination, most of them seemed to have experienced tremendous numerical growth over the last ten years. Also, such growth seems to have started with the coming of a powerful preacher. Some static churches were included because they fall within the same geographical locations as the growing ones, and, in some cases, they are either of the same denomination or of generally the same belief.

Instrumentation

As noted above, this study was an evaluation study in the descriptive mode utilizing researcher-designed instruments. Six researcher-designed surveys were used to gather data. The instruments included: an average Sunday morning attendance survey, a demographic survey, a congregational survey, a pastoral survey, a leadership survey, and an interview with the preaching pastor. A pretest of all the surveys, on three pastors and three congregational members of different denominations, all representative of the population, preceded the actual research.

Data Collection

The data collected concerned the relationship between annual or decadal growth rate and the observed strength of biblical preaching as perceived by the preaching pastor, the leaders, and the congregation. Prior to distributing the questionnaires, either my agent or I had talked to each of the pastors of the participating churches and explained the goals

and objectives of the study. Consequently, the covering introductory letter was only aimed at making the agreement formal. Owing to the limited period as well as the limited number of churches that participated and their locality, I took advantage by personally visiting all the participating churches twice. During these visits, I not only delivered and collected the questionnaires, but also interviewed the preaching pastor. Each interview was audiotaped.

All participating churches were asked to fill out a card listing the known average Sunday morning attendance over a period of ten years. This helped display annual or decadal growth rate or decline. After gathering all the data, I compiled it and completed the analysis using a computer.

Generalizability

Ideally, the population of this study should have been all the evangelical churches in Kenya. However, to observe all evangelical churches in Kenya was unrealistic. One could only make generalizations that similarities existed between most of the evangelical churches in Kenya. Owing to this, the findings and conclusions of this study were based on a representative sample of ten evangelical churches including some that were not growing. All of these local churches were located in Kenya's two largest cities. Consequently, the assumption was that such findings would generally apply for all evangelical churches in Kenya.

Theological Reflection

A casual examination of the New Testament brings out two aspects of preaching. First, preaching was highly regarded. Second, preaching appears to have greatly impacted the early Church causing both qualitative and quantitative growth.

The importance accorded to preaching seems apparent from the fact that it was what Jesus came to do (Mark 1:38 cf.; 1:14; Luke 4:18-19). It was also what he sent and commanded his disciples to do (Mark 3:13-14; 16:15; cf. Matt. 10:7; Luke 9:2; 9:60). Moreover, it was the only method that Christ ordained for the building of his Church (Matt. 28:18-20). The apostle Paul considered himself primarily a preacher (1 Cor. 1:17). He believed that he had been set apart and commissioned by God to preach (Gal. 1:15-16; cf. 1 Cor. 9:16-18). Consequently, he wrote to the Church, not only listing preaching as the supreme commission of the Church (1 Cor. 12:31) but also stressing its importance in offering the word of faith (Rom. 10:8-14). Paul prescribed “preaching” to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:2) as the primary means of equipping God’s people to do his ministry. This prescription to Timothy can be understood better through an exploration and exposition of the purpose, context, content, and character of the Greek word κηρυσσω as portrayed in Paul’s charge to “preach the word.”

Paul wrote to Timothy within weeks or even days of his martyrdom. This makes this last charge to “proclaim the gospel” a very solemn, relevant, and timely one because it probably contains some of the apostle’s last spoken or written words. This charge came at a critical time in Timothy’s life. At this time, the emperor Nero, bent on suppressing all secret societies and misunderstanding the nature of the Christian Church, was determined to destroy it. Heretics were on the increase (2 Tim. 1:15). The situation was such that Christianity was on the verge of annihilation. Any time now, Paul would be gone. Timothy, who is now left behind and in whom Paul has much trust and hope, must do several things. First, he must guard the “deposit” (gospel) that Paul entrusted to him. He must also pass it on, pure and uncorrupted, to the coming generation that in due course

would rise and do the same. This would be possible if he bore in mind that the same Christ who had entrusted the gospel to Paul was not only able to keep it safe but would also be with him always. Second, Timothy must prepare to labor and suffer for this gospel, depending on Christ for strength. Third, as the times became worse and more distressing, as pressure to conform increases, and as false teachers reject the truth, Timothy must “turn to,” “embrace,” and “stand firm” in the Scriptures. This is because he followed the teaching from Paul and, therefore, came to believe it. In addition, because the gospel originates from God (inspired by God), it has the profitable purpose of instructing for salvation and refuting error. If he remains loyal to the Scripture, he can rest assured that it will lead him to Christian maturity. Finally, he must also seize every opportunity to “proclaim the gospel” (Stott, *Guard* 17-21).

Looking back over this contextual flow of Paul’s second letter to Timothy, one cannot fail to observe and appreciate the relevance of its message to today’s pluralistic and permissive society. Just as in Timothy’s time, today’s society is full of falsehood, many strange views, and lax standards. Consequently, a final authority for faith and practice is critically needed, hence the necessity of God (the final authority) to reveal himself and his will in this regard. Just as Paul reminded Timothy that the solution to the floodtide of sin and error was to be found in embracing God’s revealed truth (Scripture) and the proclamation of the same, so too this truth not only applies today, but it is actually necessary.

The impact of preaching in the early Church was demonstrated in its growth. When Jesus preached, multitudes came to hear him (Mark 4:1). He also commanded his disciples to preach, and consequently, the Church began. In addition, the apostles avoided

the temptation of “serving tables” for fear of neglecting “preaching.” This brought about phenomenal results.

According to Acts 6:7, “so the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7, NIV). As the saying goes, “any text that is read out of context always becomes pretext.” This underscores the importance of understanding the context of the above text (Acts 6:7) as well as that of the whole of the sixth chapter of Acts. In this regard, John Stott, in his commentary on Acts, gives us a good summary of the context. He informs us that Acts chapter six comes in the context of

the three tactics which the devil employed in his overall strategy to destroy the church. First, he tried through the Jewish authorities to suppress it by force; secondly through the married couple Ananias and Sapphira to corrupt it by hypocrisy; and thirdly through some squabbling widows to distract its leadership from prayer and preaching, and so expose it to error and evil. If he had succeeded in any of these attempts, the new community of Jesus would have been annihilated in its infancy. But the apostles were sufficiently alert to detect “the devil’s schemes.” (Stott, *Message* 124)

Moreover, the apostles did not regard social work as inferior to pastoral work nor was it beneath their dignity. Rather, the question was calling. The apostles discerned a deeper problem, namely that social administration was threatening to occupy all their time and so inhibit them from the work that Christ had specifically entrusted to them, namely preaching and teaching (Acts 6:2). They had no liberty to be distracted from their own priority task (Acts 6:3-4). What we need to note is that the apostles considered the essence of their ministry to be the natural couple of prayer (both public and private intercession) and the ministry of the word (Stott, *Message* 121).

As a result of the action of the apostles in delegating the social work, in order to concentrate on their pastoral priority, “the word of God spread” (Acts 6:7a). The

implication here is that the word cannot spread when the ministry of the word is neglected. Conversely, when pastors devote themselves to the ministry of the word, it spreads. As a further result, “the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7b). Noteworthy, the verbs “spread” and “increased” are in the imperfect tense, indicating that both the spread of the word and the growth of the church were continuous (Stott *Message*, 123). Thus, the fact that the apostles’ preaching resulted in both numerical and spiritual growth in the early Church (Acts 2:41-47; 5:42; 6:7; 3:44-48; 14:1ff.) provides evidence of a direct correlation between preaching and church growth in the book of Acts.

Overview

Chapter 2 consists of a brief literature review. The first part of this chapter provides a scan of the biblical foundation for preaching. This is followed by an historical overview of how biblical preaching has impacted the growth of the Church over the centuries. The chapter ends with a critical examination of the church growth movement’s view of preaching as a church growth factor.

Chapter 3 contains the design of this project and a detailed explanation of how the research was conducted and analyzed. Chapter 4 consists of the presentation of the findings of the study including an analysis of the responses obtained in the research. Chapter 5 summarizes the major findings of the study and ends with conclusions and recommendations for application as well as for further study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this brief literature review, I explore any tangible evidence of church growth originating from preaching in two parts. Part one consists of scanning the biblical foundation for preaching and a brief historical overview of the impact of preaching upon church growth over the centuries. Part two is a critical examination of the view of preaching as a church growth factor as perceived in the church growth movement.

Biblical Preaching and Church Growth

in the New Testament and in Church History

Undeniably, Preaching has always been crucial to Christianity. However, an important question worth pondering is, “What makes preaching biblical?”

What Makes Preaching Biblical?

Homileticians often agree that the most effective kind of preaching is “biblical preaching.” Therefore, a need to clarify further, by way of definition, what makes preaching biblical. John Knox points out that this kind of preaching never grows old. Thus, “true biblical preaching is preaching which has ... effect in every age” (Knox 23). Haddon W. Robinson, an author and long-time professor of preaching at Gordon-Conwell Seminary, feels that when preachers neglect to preach biblical sermons, they give away their responsibility and privilege. According to him,

when a preacher fails to preach the scriptures, he abandons his authority.... God speaks through the Bible.... Through the preaching of the scriptures, God encounters men and women to bring them to salvation (II Timothy 3:15) and to richness and ripeness of Christian character (II Timothy 3:16-17). Something awesome happens when God confronts an individual through preaching and seizes him by the soul. (*Biblical Preaching* 18-19)

Consequently, today’s ministers have no liberty to invent their own word or to preach

their own “words.” As one theologian says, “Pastors are morally responsible to preach the [word of God].... For the pastor to speak issues of politics, psychology, sociology, and the like has no such biblical basis” (Kurtaneck 366).

However, different homileticsians seem to have different preferences concerning the appropriate structure that the “biblical” sermon should take. John A. Broadus says that sermons may be classified according to four basic structures: textual, topical, textual-topical, and expository (*On the Preparation* 54-60). However, W. E. Sangster is quick in completely rejecting “topical preaching” as a fit category for classifying sermons. He feels that topics should serve either as references or illustrations (58). In a textual sermon, the text provides both the subject matter and the major divisions. In contrast, the topical sermon derives its divisions from the subject.

James Earl Massey, dean emeritus of Anderson School of Theology, prefers the “topical” sermon. He says that “the most popular and traditional form is the topical (or subject) ... [because] it is usually backed or supported by a related scriptural text,... but in each instance, the subject or topic provides the source of the focus and control” (Massey, *Designing* 21). According to him, the only major distinction between textual and expository preaching is the length of the passage with which one deals. To him, whereas the textual sermon deals with “a single text or short passage,” the expositional sermon is concerned with an extended passage of scripture (21-22). According to John R. W. Stott,

All Christian preaching is expository preaching.... [This is because] “exposition” ... refers to the content of the sermon (biblical truth) rather than its style (a running commentary).... [T]he “text” in question could be a verse, or a sentence, or even a single word.... The size of the text is immaterial, so long as it is biblical.... Our responsibility as expositors is to open it up in such a way that it speaks its message more clearly, plainly, accurately, relevantly, without addition, subtraction, or falsification. (*I Believe* 126)

Haddon Robinson declares his preference for “expository preaching” when he says, “the type of preaching that best carries the force of divine authority is expository preaching” (*Biblical Preaching* 19). He then goes on to define expository preaching as

the communication of a biblical concept derived from and transmitted through an historical, grammatical and literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through him to his hearers. (20)

Biblical Preaching Finds Its Origin in the Bible

The foregoing evidence suggests that many scholars have different preferences for the structure or form that preaching should adopt. However, they all agree that biblically-based preaching is the only kind that causes lasting numerical and spiritual growth. In order for this to happen, at least three qualities are essential. Preaching must be *biblical*, *relevant*, and *clearly understandable*. In regard to being *biblical*, sermons must not merely make general references to the Bible; they must expound the Bible. This is because “the Bible is and remains the appointed means of God’s conversation with men” (Cox 18). Larson and Shelley state that

the text dominates the sermon; what is subordinate in the text is subordinate in the sermon. In other words, no cookie cutters. By preaching through the words, phrases, clauses, the die of the text casts the die of the sermon. (134-35)

As one great Baptist preacher, Harry Emerson Forsdick, once said, “[A] sermon is not an essay; nor is it a lecture; it is not even a mere speech; it is God addressing people with real needs and providing a solution to those needs” (22). In his book, *The Bible in the Pulpit*, Professor Leander E. Keck, former dean of Yale Divinity School, tells us that

preaching is truly biblical when (a) the Bible governs the content of the sermon and when (b) the function of the sermon is analogous to the text. In other words, preaching is biblical when it imparts a Bible-shaped word in a Bible-like way.... Preaching is biblical when the Bible is preached, not simply preached about. (106)

Nelson Price, pastor of Roswell Street Baptist Church in Marietta, Georgia, reminds us that any church growth not based on sound biblical preaching will always be shallow. He writes,

Pulpit ministry minus the Bible might be delivered by such a charismatic speaker that numerical church growth will occur. Personal magnetism might draw a crowd. However, unless they are tutored in the timeless truths made applicable to today, the pastor will soon be facing a congregation that knows no scripture. Since theology and ethics go together, the moral temperament of such churchgoers will evidence no spiritual growth. (488)

Biblical Preaching Is Relevant

Preaching scholars reinforce the position that biblical preaching ought to be relevant. In their introduction of volume one of *20 Centuries of Great Preaching*, Fant and Pinson declare that

great preaching is relevant preaching. That is not a presupposition ... but a conclusion ... After studying the lives of hundreds of preachers and reading countless sermons, we have concluded that preachers who made the greatest impact upon the world were men who spoke to the issues and needs of their day. (1: v)

In *Preaching for Today*, Fant argues further for relevance in preaching:

Preaching must recognize that it stands between the attraction of two powerful poles: to its right, “the faith once delivered,” the historical given of the eternal word; to its left, the present situation, the existential given of our own contemporary culture. Christian proclamation is intimately connected with both. (28)

After thirty four years of “open air” preaching at Hyde Park and Tower Hill in London, Donald Oliver Soper wrote *The Advocacy of the Gospel*. In it he explains both the importance of and the rationale for relevant preaching. He says that

no preaching is of effect if it speaks to a situation that does not exist, and proposes a cure for a disease from which the victim is not conscious that he is suffering. Until you can suggest that you have an answer to the problem which vexes the hearer, you have no point of contact with the hearer, you have no attack whereby you can drive home the claim that you seek to make and offer the answer which you believe Christ has. (20-21)

Paul's charge to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:2) also points to the fact that preaching should be relevant. Relevance is suggested in the words "convince," "rebuke," and "exhort." Some people will be tormented by doubts and hence will need to be convinced by arguments. Others will have fallen into sin and will require rebuke. Others will be haunted by fears and uncertainties and will need to be encouraged. Yet, in all of these, God's word will be sufficient. In line with this, I totally agree with Stott's summary of the preacher's role or expositor's responsibility as that of opening up Scripture "in such a way that it speaks its message clearly, plainly, accurately, relevantly, without addition subtraction or falsification" (*I Believe* 126). Craig Loscalzo, a long-time professor of preaching at Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, similarly underscores the importance of relevance as he defines preaching. He emphasizes the need to particularize one's message when he tells us that,

preaching is a *particular* message to a *particular* group of hearers at a *particular* time by a *particular* [original emphasis] preacher. I have students describe the particular congregation to which they will preach. One student wrote that his sermon could be preached to anyone, anywhere, at anytime. This student missed the point that the far-reaching truths of the Gospel need to be particularized for one's own preaching situation. ("Back" 30)

Kinlaw, another renowned preacher, also emphasizes the need for preachers to ensure that they are relevant when he says,

All too often we preach about history and abstract values when we should be able to say, "The Word of God has come alive for me. Here's what it says about me and to me!" That's the point of being biblical in our preaching: we must present the Bible not only as the Word of God, but as the Word of God about us. Biblical preaching involves more than reciting and explaining the text. Most evangelical preachers can quote significant portions of scripture, but that is not enough; scripture must be presented in such a way that it speaks to the needs of the person who hears it. (15)

Biblical Preaching Is Clearly Understandable

Equally important, the preacher ought to interpret and explain the ancient text to

modern people in a manner that is *clearly understandable*. An etymological examination of the Greek word κηρυσσω reinforces this need. Apparently the apostles, being the main writers of the New Testament, borrowed the word from the secular world. During the New Testament period, a “herald” was an official of the government. Evans informs us that among the ancient Greeks, the herald was an ambassador or messenger who enjoyed the special protection of the god Zeus. He was “a swift messenger ... who was first to tell the news.... [He would] make proclamation throughout the city.... As one privately employed: ‘the herald [was] the crier of the old king’” (315). John Stott gives a similar description of a herald when he says that he is a “town crier ... who has been given a message ... and been told to proclaim it. So in the market square or some other public place, without fear or favor he lifts his voice and makes it known” (*I Believe* 135).

Generally, the responsibility of a herald was to move (if not run) from one place to another (market to market) “proclaiming” or “declaring” the latest official (and, therefore, also authoritative) news from the rulers (especially kings or governors) to the people. He would “proclaim” the news as clearly and in the best way possible to ensure that the people clearly understood it. Consequently, this would leave the people with both a challenge and an opportunity. Having heard and understood the news, they could choose to act upon it as required. This would of course result in their benefit or blessing. It would also ensure that a healthy relationship was maintained between them and the government. On the other hand, they could choose to treat the news with contempt at their own peril. Thus, this metaphor of an “herald” or “heralding” shows not only how critically important the herald’s work was but also how important it was for the herald’s message to be clearly understandable.

Biblical Preaching Is Exemplary

However, one must also bear in mind that preaching does not take place in a vacuum. Biblical preaching always relates to the person of the preacher. A generation ago, Knox emphasized this truth when he said, “How good we are as preachers depends—not altogether, but (make no mistake!) primarily—on how good we are as men” (59). He defined “good” as meaning: honest, straightforward, sincere, and free from pride, sham, pretense, self-complacency, and self-absorption. Daane says very simply: “In a code word: the preacher is part of what is preached” (6). Consequently, in order for his or her message to be effective, the preacher must be a person of integrity.

In an article in *Leadership*, Haddon Robinson spells out the key role played by the preacher’s character when he says that “for church leaders, perhaps no factor contributes more to legitimate authority and credibility than authentic Christian character” (“What Authority” 29). John Maxwell says, “[I]ntegrity has high influence value. The first key to greatness is to be in reality what I appear to be. Image is what people think I am. Integrity is what I really am” (10). Kinlaw also affirms the importance of the preacher’s integrity when he says, “[T]he things that happen in a preacher’s life have a great deal to do with what happens when he preaches. He cannot preach effectively out of anyone else’s experience; he comes out of his own” (40). Addressing the same subject of the impact of personality in preaching, Loscalzo also clarifies the need for integrity. According to him, “who you are perceived to be has an effect on what you have to say when you preach. Who you are is not the issue, but who your hearers perceive you to be. We may not like the sound of it but it is radically true” (*Preaching* 59). Writing in the *Integrative Preaching* in 1981, Willimon also testified to this truth. He says,

Recently, I asked a number of rural North Carolina congregations to define good preaching. The first thing I noted in these lay persons' responses was that most of them defined it by naming good preachers. They seemed to be unable to separate the preacher from the preaching. (15)

We can, therefore, confidently conclude that regardless of its specific structure or form, sound biblical preaching finds its origin in the Bible; also, it requires relevance. In it, the preacher must also make every effort to ensure that his or her preaching is clearly understood, but even more importantly, in order for such preaching to have effect, the preacher ought to be a person of high integrity. Truly biblically based preaching insists upon exegesis of the sacred text in order to bring out what it exactly meant at the time of writing. Pursuit for relevance pays close attention to the current situation of the hearer in order to ensure and preserve accurate continuity between what the sacred text meant as well as the creative translation of what it means for today. Owing to the colloquialism that "actions speak louder than words" and the fact that the messenger is part and parcel of the message, the integrity of the speaker is necessary in order to give weight to the word.

Having dealt with what makes preaching biblical, I will now embark on finding out whether the Bible and history affirm any effect of preaching upon church growth.

Preaching and Church Growth in the Gospels

Although the New Testament uses several words for "preaching," the key word is the Greek κηρυσσω, which signifies "to be a herald" or "to proclaim" (Vine 201). The word has three major uses: "to be a herald or to proclaim" (Matt. 3:1); "to preach the gospel as a herald" (Matt. 24:14); and, "to preach the word with special reference to the gospel ministry of Scripture" (2 Tim. 4:2); (Macbride and Marlowe 68). The word occurs fifty-nine times in the New Testament. In the Gospels, it is found thirty-two times.

However, it does not occur in the fourth Gospel. *Μαρτυρεῖν* is used instead. However, the connotation is not different because the word *μαρτυρεῖν* also denotes proclamation—people should repent in light of the coming kingdom of God. Moreover, in the Gospels, *κηρυσσω* is never used in the context of preaching in a synagogue as part of worship and teaching. Similarly, the majority of the occurrences of the Greek word *κηρυσσω* in the epistles refer to the preaching or proclamation of Christ to the lost. The only exception to this is the singular occurrence in 2 Tim. 4:2 where the word is linked with ministry to the local church body (Evans 316).

In John 21, Jesus spoke to Peter in the context of restoring him to ministry and the role Peter would play in the beginning of the Church and its growth. The word that Jesus used to describe the role that Peter would play in caring for the people is *ποιμαίνω*. This means to herd, tend, and (lead to) pasture. The context of Peter’s ministry suggests that this word means to feed. The pastor feeds the flock through preaching.

Thus, preaching in the New Testament is mostly associated with the unsaved and always involved in the communication of the gospel. In the Gospels, it describes the work of John the Baptist, Jesus, and the disciples (Matt. 3:1; Mark 1:14, 38; 3:13-14). Holland rightly observes that John the Baptist bridged the gap between Old Testament and preaching and evangelistic preaching (16). Jesus called him “more than a prophet” (Matt. 11:9). Repentance of sin, salvation, and baptism are evidence of the qualitative growth that occurred through his preaching. The large crowds that gathered and the increase of disciples (Mark 4:14; 14:16) are evidence of the quantitative growth from his preaching. Although some people have rightly observed that the Church did not actually begin until after the resurrection, one cannot deny that the beginning and initial numbers associated

with the Church were a result of preaching.

Based on the foregoing, some people have strongly argued that the Greek word translated “preaching” should only include the gospel and no other subject. However, as is evident from above, one can also rightly conclude that even when preaching refers simply to gospel proclamation, a direct correlation seems to exist between preaching and church growth.

Preaching and Church Growth in the Book of Acts

Peter, Paul, and Philip are some of the outstanding examples of the impact of the preaching ministry in the early Church. According to Acts 2:1-41, on the day of Pentecost Jesus’ disciples were all gathered together in one place. A sound like the rush of a violent wind filled the house, and tongues like fire rested upon each of them, filling them with the Holy Spirit. Consequently, the Jews who gathered to listen heard them speak different native languages and were greatly astonished. One of them thought, “They were filled with new wine” (Acts 2:13). However, Peter stood in front of the other disciples and raised his voice to quiet the confused crowd. After he had preached for several minutes, Peter stopped speaking. Three thousand people repented of their sin, trusted Jesus as their savior, and were baptized. The Church grew numerically by three thousand that day. The most amazing thing is that this was not a result of a program. The disciples had not even carefully planned what took place. They did not employ any church growth principles. Peter’s preaching simply echoed God’s plan of salvation. Yet, Peter’s preaching caused both quantitative and qualitative church growth. The qualitative growth from Peter’s preaching included devotion to the teaching ministry of the apostles, fellowship of the brethren, practice of Church ordinances such as baptism and the Lord’s supper, and unity

of the body (Acts 2:42-47). As mentioned earlier, in Acts 6, the apostles avoided the temptation of fixing a church problem themselves for fear of neglecting preaching (Acts 6:2). When they were freed to preach the gospel, the church grew numerically as well as spiritually (Acts 6:7).

After Paul's conversion, he embarked on the ministry of preaching. As noted earlier, he considered himself primarily a preacher (1 Cor. 1:17). He believed that God had commissioned him to preach (Gal. 1:15-16). Holland confirms this when he observes that

Paul was first of all a preacher as was Jesus; he gave preaching the primary place in his ministry. Immediately following his conversion, he went to the synagogue and proclaimed Jesus the Son of God, and he continued preaching until the end of his life in Rome. (19)

Thus, preaching in the synagogues became the pattern of Paul's church planting activities. The apostle wrote to the church in Rome stating that preaching offers the word of faith (Rom. 10:8). He specified the importance of preaching in the role of the church's mission (Rom. 10:14). He later prescribed the same church growth strategy to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:2).

The book of Acts shows that Paul's preaching in Pisidian Antioch resulted in nearly the whole city coming to hear the word (Acts 13:44). He also preached in Iconium, and a great number of Jews and Greeks believed (Acts 14:1ff). After he had preached in Derbe, many new disciples joined the Church (Acts 14:21). Paul also preached in Thessalonica and both Jews and a large number of Gentiles believed (Acts 17:1-4). In all of these, apart from increasing the number of church members, Paul's preaching also strengthened the believers in their faith (Acts 16:4, 5). Philip's preaching also resulted in many men and women believing and being baptized. According to Acts 8:5-6,12,

Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said... But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. (NIV)

All the evidence above shows that preaching in the book of Acts caused both quantitative and qualitative church growth. Allison Trites affirms this by observing that

the early church's growth was not simply quantitative; it was also qualitative. There was not just an increase in numbers and in geographical outreach; there was also a definite deepening of spiritual life in developing Christian communities throughout the Mediterranean basin and Roman Empire. Wherever the gospel was preached, there was an increase in godly living. (165)

Preaching and Church Growth in the Hortatory Passages

Richard Mayhue notes five key verses that mandate preaching to fulfill God's will: Matthew 28:19, 20; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 2:2; 2 Timothy 4: 2; and, Titus 2:1 (113). In the first one of these passages, Jesus commanded his disciples to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20). McGavran, the founder of the church growth movement, is remembered for stressing the significance of the words of Jesus in this passage. The Greek phrase *μαθητευσατε παντα τα εθνη* is translated "make disciples of all the nations" (McGavran and Arn 110). Based on the fact that the main verb *μαθητευσατε* is in the imperative mood (Friberg and Friberg 105), McGavran and Arn emphasize that this must be taken as a command, not a suggestion or request, from the Lord (136). Noteworthy, this main verb is modified by three adverbial participles. An adverbial participle describes the circumstances under which the action of the main verb takes place (Brooks and Winbery 132). Based on this many have reasoned that the participle "go" should not be interpreted with an imperative force. Rather, it should be interpreted simply to mean that Jesus' followers are to make disciples "as they go," that

is, wherever they go. However, Carson has effectively argued that when a participle functions as an adverbial participle dependent on an imperative, it normally gains some imperative force (595-97). Nevertheless, whichever way one may want to interpret it, clearly the emphasis in this passage is on “making disciples,” that is, bringing people into the fold, or the body of Christ, into responsible Church membership. Obviously, this necessarily involves the proclamation of the word, and therefore, it is right to conclude that “making disciples” is largely dependent upon “preaching.” No wonder the apostle Paul prescribed “preaching” as a church growth strategy to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:2).

The Greek verb κηρυξον in 2 Tim. 4:2 is a first aorist, active imperative. Due to this, many commentators have strongly argued that the best way to understand this command would be to use it in parallel construction with the other aorist imperatives in the context (“reprove,” “rebuke,” “exhort,” and so on). In such use, these aorists would not mean “be constantly preaching” as a present imperative would. Rather, they would convey the idea of occasional recourse as Timothy would only rebuke someone when necessary (Macbride and Marlowe 70-71). The conclusion would be “had the author meant ‘be preaching all the time,’ one would have expected a present imperative instead” (Evans 318). However, while the above may be true, we must agree with Dana and Mantey’s assertion that

the fundamental significance of the aorist is to denote action simply as occurring, without reference to progress.... The aorist signifies nothing as to completeness but simply presents the action as sustained. It states the fact of action or event without regard to its duration.” (193)

Consequently, based on Dana and Mantey’s statement as well as the context (where Paul preached the word at every opportunity) and his immediate appeal to Timothy in the adverbial phrase “in season” and “out of season,” one can conclude with

some degree of accuracy what Paul is telling Timothy. “Preaching” or “proclamation” of the word should be performed “in season” and “out of season.” Thus, instead of a pastors asking, “is this a suitable occasion?” they should rather be asking, “Why is this not a suitable occasion?” A church service is indeed a suitable occasion for preaching (Kurtaneck 366). Thus this passage, rather than arguing against preaching in public worship, as some commentators say, seems to strengthen the argument for preaching in public worship.

Timothy is exhorted to seek and create every possible opportunity to preach, but he must ensure that his preaching is biblical. This comes out very clearly when Paul tells him to “preach the word.” Already, Timothy knows the word he is to proclaim. It is the word that God has spoken. Paul need not specify it further because Timothy knows at once that it is the body of doctrine that he heard from Paul and that Paul has now committed to him to pass on to others. It is what is referred to as “deposit” in chapter one: the “sound teaching” (4:3), “the truth” (4:4), and the “faith” (4:7). Timothy has already “followed,” “learned,” and “firmly believed” it (3:10, 14); (Stott, *Guard* 106). Thus, the phrase κηρυξον τον λογον is to be understood in the absolute sense as a reference to the apostolic gospel (Kittel 114-15). This becomes even more clear when one takes into account the immediately preceding context of the passage, which portrays preaching as the primary way of using God’s word to equip people to do the work of ministry (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Interestingly, Paul did not merely charge Timothy to “preach the word.” Timothy’s preaching was also to be accompanied by or done together “with all teaching.” The word used for teaching is διδαχη distinct from κηρυσσω (preaching or the proclamation of Christ to unbelievers). Teaching has more to do with “the ethical

instruction of converts.” Thus, the preacher’s word must contain much “teaching.” Hence, regardless of its relevant need and use, as implied in the preceding statements, Timothy’s preaching must be a doctrinal ministry (Stott *Guard* 17-21). This is probably the reason why Paul included “aptitude to teach” as one of the key qualifications of an elder or church leader in both 1 Tim. 3:2 and Tit.1:9. With the development and increase of knowledge in the church, this need for “proclamation of the word ... with all teaching” is called for even more.

From Paul’s emphasis of the teaching aspect of preaching in this passage, one can conclude that although the term “preaching” in the New Testament mostly occurs in the context of evangelism, it should also be accompanied by teaching. Contemporary usage and understanding of the term also suggests and includes the idea of teaching. Donald Sunukjian, a respected homiletics professor at Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, says, “[T]here should be no essential difference between preaching and teaching”(qtd. in Wilde 15).

Donald Demaray, a long-time professor of preaching at Asbury Theological Seminary, affirms this when he says,

[κηρυσσω] is the proclamation of the most fundamental truths of the Christian faith: The Cross and resurrection; the exultation of Jesus; the Christ event as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy; man’s responsibility to say yes or no to Jesus; Jesus as both Lord and Christ; the necessity of repentance; forgiveness of sins. These nine points we know as the [κηρυγμα]; they are non-negotiable. (*Proclaiming* 25)

Holland says that preaching and teaching are distinct, but the distinction is in content—not necessarily mode of delivery, place, or time of communication. Thus, both preaching and teaching are very important in the Church. Κηρυσσω basically brings about quantitative (numerical) growth, while διδαχη (teaching) brings about qualitative

(spiritual) growth. He puts this very clearly when he observes that

the New Testament and Church Fathers clearly indicated that the purpose of the preaching of the [κερυγμα] was to extend the church, and it was consequently proclaimed to the unchurched world. On the other hand, [διδαχη] involved sharing the teachings of Jesus and interpreting the [κερυγμα] to Christians—helping them to understand and apply what they heard. (13)

Hebrews 4:12 is another key passage in regard to preaching. It describes the power of God's word in the lives of its hearers. It not only has the power to enter people's lives and bring change, but also it contains purpose and meaning for life. We must therefore agree with F. F. Bruce that

God's word is not like the word of man; it is living, effective and self-fulfilling; it diagnoses the condition of the human heart, saying, "Thou ailest here and here"; it brings blessing to those who receive it in faith and pronounces judgment on those who disregard it. (80)

Just as the surgeon dissects flesh with a scalpel, the preacher penetrates the human soul with the living word of God. Its ability to penetrate enables it to judge the most intimate thoughts of the hearer. This passage suggests that the best method or means for bringing about change (qualitative growth) in the lives of human beings is the word of God.

According to 2 Peter 2:2, just as milk is essential for the growth of a baby, by way of analogy, the word of God is crucial to growth in the Christian life. Rom. 10:14 portrays preaching as the primary means of delivering this milk. This is done through what one may call the "ripple effect" of preaching, which brings about Christian growth. Noteworthy in this analogy, a mother gives milk to a baby either through breastfeeding or through a bottle, and, as a result, the baby grows. Similarly, the preacher brings people into encounter with the word of God, and because of hearing it and believing, they grow. Therefore, when the early Church leaders obeyed the imperatives contained in these

passages by preaching, the church grew both numerically and spiritually. One would be justified in concluding that any biblical strategy for church growth ought to take preaching with the seriousness it deserves.

Preaching and Church Growth from the Church Fathers

According to Holland, preaching during the era of the Church fathers consolidated the numerical growth made during the apostolic period. Preaching was part of their church service. As a result, rapid growth and expansion occurred in the church during this time. Several preachers serve as good examples of the effect that preaching had during the patristic period. These included Origen (185-254), John of Antioch (347-407), Cyprian (200-258), and Augustine (354-430) (21, 24).

Origen grew up in Alexandria, the large Mediterranean port city on the western reaches of the Nile delta in Egypt. Asceticism was part of the philosophy of his day. He died in 254 through Emperor Decius' massive persecution of Christians and Jews. However, through his Bible commentaries and homilies, he is known as the first systematic theologian of the Church. Evidence that Origen was a strong biblical preacher is the fact that Jerome lists for him 444 Old Testament sermons and 130 for the New (qtd. in Wilson 35-36). Commenting further on Origen, Wilson notes that much of the success of Origen's sermons was the unique characteristic of the communication of God's immediacy and presence to his congregation. He writes that

Origen's immediate legacy was to make Christian thought acceptable and even attractive to the Greek mind. Unfortunately, with his commentaries and other writings, he helped secure the church's move in the direction of allegory and typology for the next thousand years and beyond. But he also gave us a less frequently noted gift in being critical of the literal.... His extended simile of God as "the kind parent with the child" promoted the idea of a tender loving God.... Instead of someone who may seem intellectually remote and distant, he seems approachable and loving.... [In some of his sermons], Origen asked God ... questions. His questions represent our

questions, our doubts, and by asking them he encourages us to take our own concerns directly to God. Many people think that their questions, doubts, disappointments, anger do not belong with God. Of course this is not the case, as the psalmist teaches us. By briefly moving his focus in this manner from us to God, Origen communicates a sense of God's immediacy and presence. It is as though God might actually be listening and might be part of our gathering together. It is almost as though God cares, which is, in fact, the truth. (38-40)

According to Wilson,

Cyprian was a wealthy legal advocate and a professional teacher of rhetoric. He was forty-five when he was baptized, was ordained shortly thereafter, and, with a swiftness that makes modern heads turn as it did ancient, was elected and consecrated Bishop of Carthage, with significant opposition, in 249 while still a novice. (53)

He was a fiery preacher as well as a man of remarkable generosity and compassion. Early in his faith, he sold his estates and distributed his wealth to care for the poor. When the city of Carthage was ravaged by plague and people were casting even their own ill friends out into the streets, Cyprian spearheaded a mission to care for anyone in need. He is remembered as the first one to adapt rhetoric to the pulpit, saying that preachers, unlike lawyers in court, should aim at a chaste simplicity that uses truth, not eloquence, for conviction. He also insisted upon the authoritative interpretation of scripture. Whenever he quoted Scripture in his writings, he always indicated that he was quoting, letting Scripture speak directly to the precise situations that were happening in his current-day Carthage (53-55).

John of Antioch, also called Chrysostom or Golden Mouth, was one of the greatest Greek preachers. In 1997, Pauline Allen published an article about John Chrysostom's homilies and his audience in *Studia Patristica* v. 31. The article affirms the important role played by biblical preaching in the growth of the church during this time of the early Church fathers. From it, we learn that "the homily was the main teaching medium of the church and was largely responsible for the scriptural and moral education

of the congregation and for the transmission of social, cultural and religious norms” (4).

Chrysostom’s preaching drew crowds and led many to obedience at a time when the people of Antioch were rebelling against taxes. Dargan clearly portrays the effectiveness of Chrysostom’s preaching when he says,

Day after day, the crowds increased which came to listen to the stream of golden eloquence, which he poured forth. With all the versatility of a consummate artist, he moved from point to point. Sometimes a picture of the city’s agony melted his hearers to tears, and then again he struck the note of encouragement, and revived their spirits by bidding them take comfort from the well-known clemency of the emperor, the probable success of the mission of Flavian, and above all from trust in God. (88)

In his book *A Concise History of Preaching*, Paul Wilson describes Chrysostom’s homiletic as “pastoral and popular.... [It was] blended with social justice themes about wealth and ideals of charity that were inspired by his asceticism. His constant bias was for the poor” (43). He goes on to add that

when in February of 387 the people of Antioch rioted against new taxes and desecrated the statues of the emperor, punishment came in the form of tribunals, imprisonment, torture, and death of many of the city’s leaders. It was fully possible that the emperor would order the entire splendid city to be destroyed. Just prior to the trial Chrysostom preached [a message encouraging the people to] ... bear and sustain such human trial.... When his city was facing the possibility of destruction on an apocalyptic scale, Chrysostom continued to preach a message of hope. It was not the foolish hope that everything will go away, but a hope for courage, strength, and mutual support that still keeps open the possibility of God’s intervention. Our world seems to face a variety of apocalyptic scenarios, and our media seems to find new ones each day.... We must learn to ... acknowledge what [our people] are struggling with, as Chrysostom did with his people.... Much of the power of Chrysostom’s message comes from a willingness to bring politics and world events before God’s word. (45-46)

More than anything else, Chrysostom is remembered as a great biblical preacher.

Affirming that he was a biblical preacher, Larsen tells us that “Chrysostom stands tall among preachers as one whose sermons took the text of Scripture with utmost seriousness” (82).

Aurelius Augustine was born on 13 November 354 in Tagaste in Roman Numidia (modern Souk Ahras in Algeria), North Africa. His early years of study in Madaura and Carthage were years of sin and license. His unnamed concubine bore him a son, Adeodatus, who died at the age of seventeen. He studied and became a master professor of rhetoric. However, through the intercessory prayers and fasting of his mother (Monica) and the influence of the sermons and exhortations of Ambrose (another church father [340-397] in Milan), he was converted and baptized by Amrose in 387. He later went back to North Africa where he was ordained in Hippo in 391 and consecrated bishop in 395 (Larsen 87-88). He made preaching central to his ministry, preaching five days during the week, and sometimes twice a day. He is, therefore, remembered for his powerful preaching and prolific writing (Holland 24). His own writing shows how spiritually effective his preaching must have been. Speaking of his endeavor to dissuade Mauretians from the feud that was common among them, Augustine writes,

I strove with all the vehemence of speech I could command to root out and drive from their hearts and lives an evil so cruel and inveterate; it was not, however, when I heard their applause, but when I saw their tears, that I thought I had produced an effect. For the applause showed that they were instructed and pleased, but the tears that they were subdued. And when I saw their tears I was confident, even before the event proved it, that this horrible and barbarous custom was overthrown; and immediately that my sermon was finished I called upon them with heart and voice to give praise and thanks to God. And lo, with the blessing of Christ it is now eight years or more since anything of the sort was attempted there. (qtd. in Dargan 103)

Commenting further on the significance of Augustine's ministry and his enormous power as a zealous biblical preacher, Larsen points out that "Augustine's contextualizing synthesis of biblical truth and classical rhetoric is a defining hour for preaching" (87). Moreover, Augustine's own words not only summarize his ministry but also clearly indicate that his was a ministry of the Word. He says "I simply taught,

preached wrote God's Word.... Otherwise I did nothing; ... the Word did it all" (qtd. in Larsen 155). Larsen makes further observation that

Augustine's ministry took root amid widespread cultural decay. An inner rotteness had gutted the once proud empire, and even though the emperor Theodosius declared Christianity the state religion, the Church was unresponsive to the events swirling about her.... [He] battled the Manicheans, the Donatists, and the Pelegians in the interest of biblical integrity. He wrote 230 books. He was to be the fountainhead from which Luther, Calvin, and Jensenius drank. But he was most of all a consummate preacher. The focus of his life and ministry was the word of God.... Dressed in street clothes, he preached without manuscript or notes. We have 685 of his sermons, some of which consumed an hour and some of which were very brief.... Augustine was highly doctrinal in his preaching. He used spacious themes and spoke of the mysteries without being patronizing or condescending. He could weep in the pulpit.... Augustine seldom preached from "without" to his beleaguered congregants but rather from "within" the flock.... This is the secret of Augustine's enormous power as a preacher. He will make it his first concern to place himself in the midst of the congregation, to appeal to their feelings for him to react with immense sensitivity to their emotions, and so, as the sermon progressed, to sweep them up into his own way of feeling.... Little wonder that Spurgeon called Augustine "the quarry from which nearly every preacher of note has dug." (89-90)

Preaching and Church Growth in the Middle Ages

The Middle Ages followed the patristic period. This period is recorded as a time of chaos, decline and ruin with formal liturgies and the mass replacing preaching in the church. Holland writes,

Christianity ceased to be basically an enthusiastic lay movement and became more and more an ecclesiastical institution. No immediate successors to the great preachers of the patristic period emerged, and during the early dark years preaching reached the lowest point in its history. (32)

However, there were several notable exceptions to this declining trend. Augustine (566-607), a Roman monk, used preaching as a church planting strategy during this time. Boniface (675-754), an Englishman who ministered in Germany and Anschar (801-865), who came from France and ministered in Denmark, also emphasized preaching in their missionary efforts, and this resulted in tremendous Church growth (Holland 32-33). Later

in the thirteenth century, preaching brought renewal (qualitative growth) to the Church at a time when the Church needed to deal with corrupt conditions in both Church and society. St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226), who was a quiet, conversational preacher and a great teacher by example, preached the word, and the Franciscan order spread rapidly in the first half of the century. This order came about as a reform movement, opposed to wealth, luxury, and impurity of existing monasteries. It was also committed to establishing new parishes in urban areas. It attracted great multitudes and sent missionaries to Africa and Asia (37-38). According to Broadus, “the Franciscans addressed themselves especially to Foreign Mission work among Mohammedans of Spain, Africa and the East, but also comprised many zealous preachers at home” (*Lectures* 101). Dominic (1170-1221), another exceptional preacher of unusual force and fervor, preached the truth against heresy. He started the order of the Dominicans who, especially, were thoroughly trained in homiletic tradition based on classical rhetorical principles (Holland 37-38). Once again, Broadus’ observation regarding this order is worth noting. He says that the Dominican order, specifically,

was founded for the express purpose of preaching.... Within a few years this order embraced four hundred and seventy different monasteries, in every country of Europe, and spreading into Asia, making probably twenty thousand travelling preachers.... For two or three generations this mighty order of “Evangelists”... made the Christian world ring with their preaching. (*Lectures* 100-101)

The two orders arose simultaneously in different parts of Europe—the Dominicans in southern France in 1215 and the Franciscans in Italy in 1209. Moreover, the crowds associated with the preaching of these two orders overshadowed those who attended the liturgical mass (Holland 38). According to Holland,

Both groups were given freedom to preach in any parish, and through their influence, a great rebirth of popular preaching took place throughout the west. Large crowds

gathered to hear the friars and outdoor sermons became regular practice... The wandering friars, all of whom were designated as preaching specialists, often drew large crowds for sermons at special assemblies, in contrast to the usual liturgical mass. (38)

Hence, the popular preachers known as “friars” began to preach during this period. These were itinerant preachers and missionaries who traveled from country to town. One of the best known Franciscan friars was Anthony of Padua (1195-1231). Sometimes thirty thousand people would come to hear him preach, and on at least one occasion, as many as twenty thousand are reported to have waited all night before a platform where he was to preach the next day. Commenting on Anthony, who came from Portugal and went as a missionary to Africa and Italy, Broadus says that “He is reckoned by some as the most popular preacher that ever lived.... [T]he first preacher who made a careful division of his sermons into several heads—which his extant sermons show that he commonly did though not universally” (*Lectures* 103). Another renowned friar who came from the Dominican order was Thomas Aquinas. Broadus reports that

he is by common consent regarded as the greatest theologian of the Middle Ages, and one of the greatest minds in the history of philosophy.... He was at the same time very popular as a preacher to the common people, being thus faithful to his Dominican vow. Amid the immense and amazing mass of his works are many brief discourses and treatises which were originally discourses, marked by clearness, simplicity and practical point, and usually very short, many of them not requiring more than ten minutes, though these were doubtless expanded in preaching to the common people.... It is pleasant to think of the fact that this great philosopher and author loved to preach, and that plain people loved to hear him. And many of us ordinary men would do well to combine philosophical and other profound studies with simple and practical preaching. (106-107)

Thus, biblical preaching drew large numbers during a time characterized by ignorance and lack of progress in other areas of society and culture (Holland 39).

Preaching and Church Growth in the Reformation

The reformers used preaching as their chief instrument of reform. Both John

Wycliffe (1320?-1384) and Martin Luther (1483-1546), though separated by a century and a half, believed in the primacy of preaching as the ministry of the Church. As the Middle Ages drew nearer to the Age of the Renaissance, reform preaching came to the fore, especially in the work of Englishman John Wycliffe. Wycliffe, later to be called the Morning Star of the Reformation, organized bands of “poor priests” who preached the gospel to the poor peasants throughout England. He regarded the apostolic period as the golden age of the Church and preaching. Consequently, he diligently sought to prove that preaching was more important than the Eucharist. He was to become the mightiest champion of the new doctrine of the primacy of preaching (Holland 40-41). In his book *Great Evangelical Preachers of Yesterday*, James McGraw has this to say about Wycliffe and his preaching:

No preacher ever regarded the condition of the people more sincerely or set about to help them more persistently than did John Wycliffe. Mingling among them, he developed an understanding for the poor. In a day when the monks and the friars were neglecting the ministry of the poor, Wycliffe’s attitude was one of a shepherd rather than a hireling. Like Jesus of Galilee, John Wycliffe preached to the poor and lost the favor of those in high places. (McGraw 14-15)

McGraw goes on to add that in answer to the question as to how the word of God must be preached, Wycliffe is reported to have once answered, “Appropriately, simply, directly and from a devout, sincere heart” (15).

When Luther nailed a list of ninety-five theses on the Castle Church door at Wittenburg, he was simply seeking to purify the Catholic Church from within. However, his outspoken preaching started a movement. This is because he believed that the living word worked most actively when it was preached from the pulpit by a man standing on biblical truths. He insisted that the sermon must be central in worship (Holland 41-42). Many people regard him as the greatest expositor in the history of the Church since John

Chrysostom. He was intent on expounding the entire Bible in sermons, and so he preached through the books of Scripture in continuous order—Old Testament as well as New Testament. Owing to this, from his time the use of the Old Testament has taken on increased importance in Reformed preaching (43-44). Interestingly, Luther and Calvin, who are probably the two most celebrated contemporaries in the history of preaching, were marked with contrast in nearly every aspect of their lives. Broadus gives a detailed comparison and contrast of the two:

Luther ... was a broad-shouldered, broad-faced, burly German, overflowing with physical strength; Calvin ... a feeble-looking little Frenchman with shrunken cheeks and slender frame, and bowed with study and weakness. Luther had a powerful intellect, but was also rich in sensibility, imagination and swelling passion—a man juicy with humor, delighting in music, in children, in inferior animals, in poetic sympathy with nature.... With one of his marked faults, a prodigious and seemingly reckless extravagance, and even an occasional coarseness of language when excited ... which have been the stock in trade of Anti-Protestant controversialists, and some of which is impossible to defend. Calvin, on the other hand, was practically destitute of imagination and humor seeming in his public life and works to have been all intellect and will. (*Lectures* 118-19)

However, Broadus quickly points out that although the two were widely different, “both of these men were great preachers” (*Lectures* 119). He observes that the reputation of Calvin as a theologian and church builder has often overshadowed his great merits as commentator and preacher. Yet, “with the possible exception of Chrysostom,... there is ... no commentator before our own century whose exegesis is so generally satisfactory and so profitable as that of Calvin” (121). Broadus informs us that Calvin would often preach every day. To clarify this, he gives an example of Calvin’s two hundred sermons on Deuteronomy, which are dated. Calvin delivered these sermons on weekdays in the course of little more than a year, and sometimes on four or five days in succession (122). Similarly, to show how Luther emphasized preaching, Broadus quotes him accusing

another preacher of leading an “idle life; for he preaches but twice a week and has a salary of two hundred dollars a year” (122). He goes on to add that in spite of all his lecturing, immense correspondence, voluminous authorship, Luther “often preached every day for a week, and on fast days two or three times” (122). The potency and power of Luther’s preaching also comes out clearly in McGraw’s description. He writes that

at Wittenberg Luther preached to large crowds who were eager to hear him.... On one occasion, when he arrived for his preaching appointment, the whole population was in the fields harvesting, but they left their work and crowded into the church to hear Martin Luther.... At Zwickau, speaking from a window, in the city hall, 25,000 people crowded into the market to hear him. (26)

In a book entitled, *This is Luther*, Plass quotes Luther as having advised preachers that

a good preacher should ... teach systematically ... have a ready wit ... be eloquent ... have a good voice ... a good memory ... know when to stop preaching ... be sure of his doctrine ... engage body and blood, wealth, and honor in serving the word ... suffer himself to be mocked and jeered by everyone. (qtd. in McGraw 27)

Thus, the views of these reformers and their preaching greatly impacted their contemporary societies and led to three major ecclesiastical bodies: Lutheran, Anglican, and Reformed.

Preaching and Church Growth in the Great Awakening and Nineteenth Century

The Great Awakening of the mid-eighteenth century added thousands to the churches of America. Although revivals would certainly have occurred without him, many people consider Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) the principal apologist for and defender of appropriate revival methods that brought about the Great Awakening and resulted in unprecedented Church growth. He has well been called the father of evangelical Protestantism in America. His preaching received unusual responses (Holland 56). He preached regularly from the fall of 1734 into the spring of 1735. As a result,

“three hundred were converted in a town of only two hundred families” (Demaray, *Pulpit Giants* 56). Edwards noted four results of revival, one of them being that the preaching of the word was greatly prized (Holland 56). Most new converts as well as revived converts greatly valued preaching. They saw it as being essential to their spiritual well-being or qualitative growth.

George Whitefield (1714-1770), an itinerant Anglican preacher, was the only evangelist involved in revival on both sides of the Atlantic. Biblical preaching was his primary ministry. McGraw tells us that “in content, Whitefield’s sermons were biblical; some were expository, few were topical, many were textual” (64). Several examples illustrate the profound impact that Whitefield’s biblical preaching had. In a book edited by Richard Bushman entitled *The Great Awakening*, published in 1970, the impact of Whitefield’s ministry is described in detail:

Whenever he went, huge crowds came to hear him. Often he took to the fields, not because of clerical inhospitality, but for the lack of space inside the meetinghouses. His published journals tell of weeping and anguish in the audiences he addressed. After each meeting, concerned people crowded into his rooms for pastoral counsel. The printed versions of his simple and direct sermons convey only a small part of the majesty and deep passion of the man. Whitefield says that Jonathan Edwards, a far more sophisticated and learned person than himself, wept through entirety of one of these discourses. (19-20)

Benjamin Franklin, the Philadelphia printer who later became America’s first great statesman, in his autobiography recalls attending a meeting in which Whitefield was to preach and thereafter receive an offering of cash for some worthy project. He writes,

I silently resolved he should get nothing from me.... As he proceeded, I began to soften and concluded to give the coppers.... Another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that, and determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector’s dish, gold and all. (qtd. in McGraw 64)

He averaged forty hours per week during his evangelistic tours. At Whitefield’s funeral,

Wesley stated that tens of thousands of people had come to know Christ because of his preaching. John Newton affirms that Whitefield's preaching always produced results (Holland 57).

Undeniably, John Wesley (1703-1791) had a great influence upon the history of Britain. Interestingly, such influence came through the effect of his preaching. Consequently, McGraw writes about him that

perhaps no Englishman who ever lived had as great an influence upon the history of his nation, or indeed upon the lives of people in every nation, as John Wesley.... With the possible exception of a few statesmen and a general or two, John Wesley has received more attention from the pens of biographers and has had more written about him than any other Englishman of the eighteenth century. France had no Wesley, and France had her bloody revolution. Britain with her Wesley, had an eighteenth century Wesleyan revival, and there was no bloody revolution. *The preaching of John Wesley*—the Wesley with the warmed heart—*gives hope and faith to those who sometimes wonder whether or not much lasting good is accomplished by "the foolishness of preaching [emphasis mine]."* (McGraw 56)

As Methodists began in eighteenth-century Britain, another religious movement also began in 1747. This was the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing. This group also came to be popularly known as "Shakers" because of the ecstatic nature of their worship services. By 1774, many Shakers had immigrated to America. Initially, members of the movement looked to women for leadership. However, as the communities grew, women and men shared leadership. Jane Wardley and Ann Lee are remembered as the most important women leaders of this community. Although little attention has been given to Shaker preaching, these women were powerful, articulate preachers and charismatic personalities (Leonard 32).

Bill Leonard highlights the significant impact and response that the preaching of these women had. Quoting from Edward Andrew's book entitled *The People Called Shakers*, Leonard says that an early convert from the ministry of these women observed

that “The wisdom of their instructions, the purity of their doctrine, their Christ-like deportment, and the simplicity of their manners, all appeared truly apostolic” (qtd. in Leonard 33) Thus, preaching in this community knew no boundaries of gender, social class, or education, and it greatly impacted the people of the time.

Other preachers who had a long and fruitful ministry during this time were Francis Asbury (1745-1816), Charles Grandson Finney (1792-1875), Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887), and Philip Brooks (1835-1893). Francis Asbury was among the first great holiness preachers of America. Although he was not highly educated (not having attended school after his thirteenth year of life), he took Wesley’s advice that he be a “man of one book” very seriously and learned his Bible thoroughly. He then gave himself completely to the task of preaching. McGraw confirms this when he says of Francis Asbury,

It is no surprise that the words, which appeared most often in the Journal of Francis Asbury, were, “I preached.” The first twenty-five years of his ministry he did nothing else but preach, for not until he was forty years old did he administer any ordinances of the church. En route to America from his native England he preached many times on shipboard. He preached on landing in Philadelphia, and thereafter for forty-five years, scarcely a day passed that he did not preach. It has been estimated that he preached 17,000 sermons during his long and fruitful ministry. (74)

What made Francis Asbury such a great preacher was that

[he] always made his sermons the products of the texts from which he preached.... [H]e announced a text and preached to it. With him proposition, argument, illustration, incident and everything were either immediately drawn from or directly connected with his subject and his text. (McGraw 76)

Many people regard Charles Finney as the most effective biblical preacher and successful evangelist in the nineteenth century. Henry Ward Beecher ministered at Plymouth Congregational Church in Brooklyn while Philip Brooks was the pastor of Trinity Episcopal Church in Boston. None of these three biblical preachers possessed an

oratorical style that would find acceptance today. Yet, their integrity and extemporaneous exposition of Scripture had great impact upon the growth of the church (Holland 71-72).

Church history shows that following the American Revolution, preaching produced much growth in the Baptist denomination. According to statistics, prior to the Revolution, Baptists had ranked considerably behind both the Methodists and the Presbyterians. However, by 1800, the Baptists exceeded the other denominations with over seven hundred congregations. Extreme flexibility of their ecclesiastical structure and easy communication with the ordinary people contributed much to this accelerated growth. The third and main reason attributed to this rapid numerical growth was the ministry of the “preacher-farmer” (Holland 62). Typically, these lay preachers labored in the fields during the week and then proclaimed the word on Sunday.

After 1880, thousands of people were moving from smaller places in the United States and from abroad into the rapidly growing American cities. Many of them lost contact with their churches. Revivalist campaigns designed to reach such people began around this time and flourished in the 1920s. As hinted earlier, Dwight L. Moody was one of those greatly involved in these revival efforts. He joined forces with chorister Ira Sankey. They worked together as a revival team for twenty-two years. Between 1873 and 1875, they were heard by three million to four million people in Great Britain (Holland 72-73). About him, Donald Demaray writes,

Mr. Moody had little formal education. He never mastered grammar, spelling, or pronunciation... He stammered; but determination and the grace of God saw him overcome that hurdle... Moody preached in every major city of the United States, and it is estimated that he addressed over fifty million people. They came to hear a man paint word pictures in warm and homely language... Fun and humor were not wanting in the meetings, but preaching of the word was supreme, for Moody discovered early in his evangelistic work that the secret of spirit-filled preaching that led men to Jesus Christ was the exposition of the Bible. (*Pulpit Giants* 108-109)

Charles Erdman attributed Moody's success in ministry to "the character and quality of his dedication to biblical preaching" (qtd. in Larsen 512).

Another notable preacher during this time was William Ashley Sunday (1863-1935), who was a Presbyterian. Born in a farm in Iowa, he later moved to Chicago where he became a prominent professional baseball player for the Chicago White Sox. However, after being converted, he began to work in the YMCA. Ultimately, he helped to organize revival campaigns with J. Wilbur Chapman but later became involved in the revival circuits of larger cities. These preaching circuits were first begun by Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899). By 1917, during a ten-week campaign in New York, Billy Sunday is reported to have preached to 1.5 million people with 98,264 converts (Holland 73).

In his book *The Company of Preachers*, David Larsen gives a profile of the impact of Sunday's preaching. He informs us that

Billy Sunday preached to more than one hundred thousand people from 1908 to 1920. Even New York City responded to the preacher who preached with every muscle in his body. Carnegie Hall was filled and thousands milled about outside. Not even Andrew Carnegie himself could get in!... He led great crusades against liquor and special interests. He preached in a time of growing urbanization and understood where so many of his hearers came from. His warnings about immorality and dangers of the city were needed and in many cases heeded. (673)

Larsen goes on to observe that the response to Billy Sunday's crusades was just phenomenal. He tells us that

Billy had a great day at the University of Pennsylvania.... In Columbus, Ohio, the eighteen thousand converts included the chief of police and all the policemen detailed to duty at that tabernacle.... Gordon H. Clark, the noted apologist and philosopher, was converted under Billy Sunday (673-74)

He quickly adds that the reason for Billy Sunday's great impact was that "a typical Billy Sunday sermon ... [was a] textual-topical message ... *saturated with Scripture*

[emphasis mine]” (674). At his funeral, people crowded every inch of the auditorium at the Moody Church which had 4,400 seats (673).

Following the Civil War, fueled by the new urban population, the American industry grew rapidly and produced new concentrations of wealth. However, the church had also to face new social problems and divisions that came along with industrialization. Many preachers applauded the great industrialists as divine instruments and condemned the growing labor movement (with its unions and strikes). However, an increasing number of preachers also began to relate the gospel to the new social realities of the American cities. Washington Gladden (1836-1918), pastor of the First Congregational Church in Columbus, Ohio, came to be called the “father of the social Gospel.” His sermons emphasized the application of Christian principles to economic and political life as well as for individuals (Duduit, “Preaching” 44).

Preaching in the Twentieth Century and the Contemporary Period

During the twentieth century, several critical issues and events have plagued the Church. Many of these have affected the growth of the Church and called for the attention of preachers. The early years of the twentieth century witnessed American Protestantism beginning to divide along theological and ideological lines. The successors of Gladden were moving away from what the conservatives considered the basics of the Christian faith. Instead, they were emphasizing social involvement of churches, acceptance of the theory of evolution, and a less authoritative view of the Bible. This controversy resulted in the creation of several new denominations. One of the most outspoken liberals who emerged during this time was Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878-1969). He was pastor of New York’s Riverside Church and an extremely gifted preacher.

He became the most prominent spokesman for the liberals. Many consider Fosdick as the greatest single influence on preaching in the twentieth century (Duduit, "Preaching" 45).

Standing in opposition to the liberals were preachers like Clarence Macartney (1879-1957) and David Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981). Macartney was both a Presbyterian minister and biblical preacher. In an article entitled "The Ten Greatest Preachers of the Twentieth Century," Michael Duduit tells us that

Clarence Macartney was a lifelong bachelor ... [who] preached five times weekly yet maintained an active schedule visiting in homes and hospitals three days a week. His preaching reflected a love for people, urgency about their salvation, and a commitment to Christ and to God's word ... From the neo-gothic stone building where he preached at the heart of Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle, he touched thousands of lives. His influence was such that many people recall how he had access to his rich, famous and politically powerful contemporaries. ("The Ten Greatest" 16)

During the decades following the Civil War, the Church became the most important institution for African-Americans. Preachers became civic and political, as well as spiritual leaders in their communities. As time went by, churches also came to the forefront of the civil rights movement. The key leader of this movement was Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968). King was a gifted African-American civil rights leader as well as an eloquent Baptist preacher. Although his political rhetoric echoed the rhetoric of the black pulpit, with strong biblical imagery, his sermonic appeals for justice and personal activism helped change the course of American life. Writing about him, Duduit observes that

though his theological training was provided in a context of theological liberalism, as King's ministry progressed—as pastor of Montgomery's Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, then Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church—his preaching grew more evangelical and biblical. His sermons became more Christ-centered, with a growing emphasis on the cross. Steeped in the rhetorical traditions of the African American church, King displayed gifts in the pulpit and the political arena that made him one of the most compelling speakers of the century.... He saw no incompatibility between biblical preaching and preaching on relevant social issues. That is only part of his

legacy to modern preachers. King has helped ministers to recover the relevance of preaching for our day, to motivate Christians to blend their theology with their ethics, and to translate their faith in God in the social, economic and political struggle, while not being afraid to use philosophy and formal reasoning. (“Preaching” 7)

Wilbur M. Smith referred to David Martyn Lloyd-Jones as “the greatest Bible expositor in the English-speaking world” (qtd. in Larsen 774). Lloyd-Jones was a Welshman who initially trained as a medical doctor. Yet his practice of medicine failed to satisfy him, and he increasingly struggled with what seemed to be God’s hand on him to preach. In 1921, he and his new wife, Bethan (who was also a medical doctor), took over the pastorate of the Bethlehem Forward Movement Mission Church in Sandfields, Aberavon. When he came, this congregation of miners, dockworkers, and metalworkers numbered ninety-three. Eleven years later, the membership grew to 850. Many came as new converts (Catherwood 61). Larsen points out that

the Doctor, as he was often referred to, exerted a powerful and profound influence at the heart of London with reverberations all around the world. His ministry was essentially the opening of Scripture to a vast congregation three times a week.... His preaching silence[s] those who claim that the preaching of historic orthodoxy under the unction of the Spirit makes no impact in postmodern times. The current panic to market-driven preaching and abandonment of text-driven preaching needs to come to terms with how God used Lloyd-Jones. (Larsen 775)

During the 1890s, women also began demanding equal treatment in political and economic realms as well as increasing demand for a place for women in the pulpit. However, the early decades of the twentieth century were marked by a slow progress especially in the mainline churches. A woman in the Presbyterian Church was first licensed to preach in 1912, but this was revoked the following year. Not until 1956 was full ordination permitted for women. Today, women are increasingly moving into ministerial roles in the mainline denominations (Duduit, “Preaching” 45-47).

The American Great Economic Depression, which started with the stock market

crash in 1929 and lasted throughout the 1930s, was also associated with religious depression. Thus, the churches suffered along with the rest of the nation. Church membership declined, budgets were slashed, missionary enterprises were stranded, and professional church workers were discharged as churches and chapels closed for lack of money. However, newer and smaller religious groups, particularly Pentecostals, continued to prosper. This was possible through a preaching ministry to the economically depressed classes who either had no church home or were unable to economically sustain membership in a regular, mainline church (Holland 85).

Before the Church could even recover from the depression, World War II started, and nearly all Church programs had to be “put on hold” as most denominations turned their energies to the war effort. When the war ended, many Americans who had served overseas returned home not only with vastly broadened views but also seeking to resume usual business in the prosperous economy that followed the war. Many were getting married, having children, and desiring moral and spiritual guidance for their families. As they filled the churches, the 1950s and early 1960s became a time of unprecedented congregational growth and participation in the history of the Protestant Church (Holland 85-86).

Commenting on the religious trend during this period, Michael Duduit, editor of *Preaching* magazine and Director of Development and Church Relations at Samford University in Alabama, writes,

In the midst of an era of sub-urbanization, new mobility, and economic growth, Americans joined churches at a rate twice that of population growth. By 1960, about 70 percent of Americans were members of a religious body, and more than a billion dollars had been spent on church construction during the 15 years leading up to 1960. (“Preaching” 46)

A new generation of evangelical preachers emerged during this period. Among these is Billy Graham (1918-), a Baptist minister from North Carolina who has become an international figure through mass crusades and televised specials. Though not primarily a pastor, as an itinerant evangelist, Billy Graham has been given a hearing probably more than any other preacher in the twentieth century. He has ministered largely to people of all denominations and of all levels of life. Although no final figures can be given, the estimate already is that in preaching, Billy Graham has reached more millions of people in his lifetime than any other person in all history. In a chapter entitled "Preaching: Few Rights and Prophecy," William Pannell appraises the impact of Billy Graham's preaching as well as that of Martin Luther King, Jr. He writes,

By the early 1960's [North America] had been powerfully affected by two Baptist preachers, one black and the other white, who had, between them, set the parameters of public discourse in the nation. They were Billy Graham, the evangelist and Martin Luther King, Jr., the prophet. Together, though on many issues far apart, they shaped the meaning of Christianity in the minds of millions of people worldwide. They did it by preaching. One of them brought massive crowds to numerous outdoor stadiums, while the other added a little marching to his moving rhetoric and helped to change the face of the nation. (16)

Another preacher who became popular during this time is Norman Vincent Peale (1898-1993). After college, Peale worked as a reporter for the *Detroit Journal*. However, he eventually attended Boston University School of Theology and followed his father into ministry initially becoming an ordained Methodist minister. Later, he accepted a call and transferred to the Reformed Church in America when he became a pastor of New York's Marble Collegiate Church. He served there from 1932 until his retirement in 1984, having built the church during the Great Depression and World War II. While there working with Smiley Blanton, a former student of Sigmund Freud, Peale developed a clinic combining religion and psychiatry. This clinic trained thousands of religious-based

counselors. Quoting the *New York Times*, an anonymous obituary article appearing in *Christian Century* in January 1994 summarized the impact of Peale's preaching:

After 50 years of preaching the "power of positive thinking," Peale ... [came to be] called ... [the] 'minister of millions.' ... [He] told presidents and business executives and millions of other people that the proper state of the mind, induced by simple prayer, could produce spiritual and material success on earth, which he demonstrated by becoming a wealthy man. ("Peale" :41)

Writing another obituary article that appeared in *Christianity Today* in February 1994, Randy Frame observes that Peale is "considered by many to be the patriarch of the twentieth-century self-help movement" (56). He goes on to add that under the leadership of Peale, Marble Collegiate Church

took the innovative and landmark step of combining psychology and religion in ministry. But it was his books, 41 in all that enabled Peale to make his mark on both the national and international religious scenes. His best-known work, *The Power of Positive Thinking*, was published in 1952. It remained on the bestseller list for more than three years. *The Power of Positive Thinking* has been published in 41 languages and has sold nearly 20 million copies. (56)

Frame is also quick to point out that the secret in the success of Peale's preaching lay in his pursuit of relevance. He hints at this by quoting Randall Balmer, an American religious historian, who observed that

his genius was in the simplicity of his message.... That message fit the tenor of the times in the middle decades of this century. It was a message of hope, optimism, and American middle class values.... [Peale is] probably directly or indirectly responsible for everything from Robert Schuller to the prosperity gospel. (56)

However, the trend of religiosity and burgeoning churches faded quickly in the late 1960s. Instead, this was a time of social and political tumult with issues such as the anti-war movement, the women's movement and the civil rights movement affecting the church in a variety of ways. Holland summarizes the situation:

Perennially optimistic, America began to sense that everything was not OK in its world.... Everything went wrong—the Bay of Pigs fiasco, the Vietnam police action,

the assassinations of the Kennedy's and Martin Luther King, Jr., mounting unrest, discontent, and burnings and bombings in the cities.... Black power took over leadership of the black revolution, ejecting whites, and some long, hot summers followed. The Supreme Court ruling on one-man-one-vote cut into the political power of the Protestant establishment. Another ruling made compulsory prayer and Bible reading in public school unconstitutional, much to the distress of majority of Americans. (93)

Many American citizens attending churches realized that the mainline denominations—Catholic, Protestant, and Eastern Orthodox—supported the *status quo*. They began to realize the terrible impotence of the American Church in its prophetic ministry. Once again, Once again, Holland brings this out when he observes that

the church simply was not dealing with the “now” world. It had divided the kingdom and had limited God's redemptive forces to purely personal and otherworldly spheres. This realization of the church's isolation from prophetic issues drove disillusioned members from her ranks. Other church people of the conservative position were encouraged that the church was not involved with secular matters and found even more time and money to support her. Mainline denominations declined in membership but dating from mid-1960s, non-evangelical and fundamentalist groups achieved a new strength and growth. (95)

As noted earlier, effective preaching is preaching that is relevant. Therefore, most of the said growth in the non-evangelical and fundamentalist churches was attributed to preaching considered relevant in that it sought to address contemporary, burning issues. Such preaching emphasized not only Christian experience and personal morality but also social consciousness.

During the 1960s, many “experts,” including “church growth experts,” began to predict and proclaim the death of the pulpit. As noted earlier, many claimed that preaching was no longer relevant to the needs of the average person in society; however, ironically, the last two decades (1980s and 1990s) have seen an explosion of interest in preaching in the Church. Evangelicals, mainline churches, and even Roman Catholic parishes are placing a high priority on preaching (Duduit, “Preaching” 47). This trend

seems likely to continue as churches follow the model of the early Church leaders who “never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ” (Acts 5:42, NIV).

Based on the above biblical and historical examples, one can rightly assume by way of conclusion that the rise and fall of the Church parallels the rise and fall of preaching. Where ignorance and apathy of the word resided, such as in the Middle Ages, the life of the Church was weak (Wilde 4). Preaching seemed to be a cause of both quantitative and qualitative growth in the Church.

The View of Preaching in the Church Growth Movement

Some background information about the church growth movement should provide a good basis for examining the view of preaching held by its proponents. Such information would also help to prevent unjustified criticism of the movement. Hence, the need for a historical overview of the movement.

An Historical Overview of the Church Growth Movement

As mentioned earlier, generally, a movement arises in response to a need for change in a given social institution. We also observed that in the case of the church growth movement, it arose in response to the American churches’ experience of declining membership, especially in the 1970s.

Again, as implied earlier, movements with their concerns and agendas, always have a context. Obviously, a historical overview of the church growth movement would be helpful in understanding this context. Unfortunately, Herbert Works reminds us that no written, comprehensive, up-to-date history of the church growth movement exists. (qtd. in Eiler 42). Wagner says that its history may be categorized into three periods: the

incipient years, 1955-1965; the institutionalized years, 1965-1972; and, the years of application, 1972-1979. Indisputably, the early history of the church growth movement is largely the biography of its founder and pioneer, Donald A. McGavran. The first period formally began with the publication of McGavran's book, *Bridges of God*, and it concluded with his move to Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. The second period covers the years of McGavran's teaching at an institution of wide reputation with accredited degree programs. The final period begins with the first attempt to apply church growth thinking to the church context of North America (Wagner, *Recent Developments* 507-508).

McGavran, the founder of the church growth movement. Donald A. McGavran was born of missionary parents in India in 1897. His father came from the American "Disciples of Christ." However, he undertook both his undergraduate and graduate education in the United States. After ordination, he returned to India where he served in the Harda province as a superintendent of the Disciples Educational Ministry for thirty-one years. During this time, he became deeply disturbed by the relatively small number of converts in Harda compared to the extensive Disciples' involvement over the years and especially his thirty-one years of ministry. Consequently he sought to discover what causes churches to grow or to fail to grow (Eiler 43-44).

Upon the completion of his service in India, McGavran returned to the United States in 1954. Between 1955 and 1959, he spent a great deal of his time teaching as a visiting professor of missions in various Disciples' colleges. He also did a lot of study, research, traveling and writing. In this way, he was able to broaden and refine his developing church growth concepts. His first book, *Bridges to God*, was first published in

1957 (Eiler 45).

In 1960, McGavran started the Institute for Church Growth on the campus of Northwest Christian College in Eugene, Oregon, with a single student. Within a period of five years, the institute grew to fifty-six graduate level students. Most of these were career missionaries on furlough who were interested in understanding missions and sharpening their skills. Allan Tippet, an Australian Methodist and a trained anthropologist as well as an experienced career missionary in the Fiji Islands, later joined him (Eiler 46).

In 1961, following successful negotiations, McGavran moved the Institute to Fuller Theological Seminary at Pasadena, California. There, it became the School of World Mission. He continued as dean and professor of church growth until he retired in 1971. By 1970, his mimeographed class text on church growth had been published under the title *Understanding Church Growth*. This book is considered the most comprehensive study ever-published on church growth. In 1972, he and a young colleague, C. Peter Wagner, successfully developed and team-taught a course on Church Growth Philosophy and Methods for North American Churches (Eiler 47-48).

Wagner, successor to the founder. When McGavran retired as professor of church growth at the School of World Mission, C. Peter Wagner succeeded him. Wagner was born in 1930. He claims that he remained a pagan until he was born again while taking his undergraduate studies at Rutgers University. He then served for fifteen years as a missionary in Bolivia under the Andes Evangelical Mission. In the course of those years, he rose to become the associate secretary general of the Andes Evangelical Mission. However, during his service in Bolivia, something kept perplexing his inquisitive and

pragmatic mind. In spite of the careful, extensive, and prayerful preparations for the mass evangelistic rallies, little or no numerical growth of the church occurred. Comparatively, the apparently poorly prepared and poorly trained Pentecostals experienced tremendous numerical growth—something that not even the Pentecostals could explain.

Consequently, when his furlough came between 1967 and 1968, he enrolled at the school of World Mission and studied church growth under McGavran. As a result, he became fully convinced that McGavran's theories provided the dynamics and the tools for missionary work.

As an associate professor of Church Growth and Latin American Studies, he took over and taught all the church growth courses that McGavran taught. The pilot course he co-designed and team-taught with McGavran made church growth thinking and methodology available to North American pastors. It also marked the beginning of his shift of focus to that area. His further research and conclusions in the area were published in various articles and, finally, in his book entitled *Your Church Can Grow*. Clearly Wagner became to McGavran what Elisha became to Elijah—a protege. Like his predecessor, he came to the movement as an evangelical Protestant who also had a great deal of experience. Wagner was also equally determined to use social sciences, especially anthropology, to enhance evangelism (Eiler 48-50).

Arn, the consultant of the church growth movement. The third key church growth leader, one that every serious investigator of the church growth movement must consider, is Win Arn. He was born in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, in 1923. He studied for Christian ministry at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and earned both his master's and doctoral degrees there. He then served with Youth for Christ, an evangelical

Christian organization that regularly used mass rallies in its earlier years. However, an evaluation of the follow-up on persons indicating decisions for Christ really disturbed him and made him question the effectiveness of the crusades. It revealed that most of those making decisions for Christ during those mass rallies never became active in any congregation. As a result, he left Youth for Christ and became a Christian education consultant for the Evangelical Covenant Church of America in Southern California. While there he came into contact with the church growth movement. He was among the first people to enroll for the pilot seminar for North American churches in 1972 (Eiler 50).

Armed with the new church growth principles, a new approach to evangelism, and utilizing his training in education and communication, he developed a series of films for churches that wanted to grow. In 1973, he founded his Institute for American Church Growth as a “venture of faith,” locating it in Pasadena near the Fuller campus. This institute provides training seminars, contractual consultant services, and, beginning in January 1978, a bimonthly magazine, *Church Growth America* (Eiler 51-52).

Schuller and the Garden Grove Church: the principles applied. The church growth movement points to Robert Schuller as one of the best examples of the practice of its principles. He is the founding pastor of the Garden Grove Community Church. Schuller was born in 1927 in rural Iowa, among the Holland Dutch. He trained at Hope College and later graduated from Western Theological Seminary in 1950. Both schools are in Holland, Michigan. Following his graduation from seminary, he served effectively as a pastor of a Reformed church in southern Chicago for five years during which time the church experienced tremendous vitalization and growth. In 1955, he undertook an

ambitious project for his denomination in the new and rapidly growing Orange County, California. He would start a new church. Initially, not only did he lack a suitable place to meet, but also enough Dutch families in this new area. Therefore, he opted to do several things. First, he decided to downplay the “Reformed Church” name to avoid a negative or ambiguous image for the new project. Instead, he called it Garden “Community Church.” Second, he deliberately targeted people who were not involved in any church (the unchurched). Third, he contracted for the use of a drive-in theater and used the roof of the refreshment stand as his pulpit. Utilizing the church growth principles, Schuller was able to lead the Garden Grove Community Church into progressive growth. Within fifteen years, the church had moved to its third facility, the new Crystal Cathedral with a seating capacity for three thousand persons. In 1969, he initiated his institute for successful church leadership, a quarterly, on-location training event for clergy and laity. This seminar was later promoted on videocassettes in structured seminars held in various locations around the country. His principle of church growth may be very well summarized in what has come to be known as the Schuller dictum—find a need people are experiencing, meet it, and your church will grow (Eiler 52-53).

Thus, the success of the Garden Grove Church propelled Schuller into the forefront of the church growth movement. Writing in his book entitled *Mountains into Goldmines*, Denis Voskuil tells us that

the [church] growth movement has become a vital force in North America. And Schuller is generally credited as playing a significant role in the history of the movement. He not only provided a model for the growth, he also implored American Christians to “think church growth.” (37)

From the foregoing, McGavran, Wagner, Arn, and Schuller are obviously all different persons. Yet, they all have certain things in common. They all emphasize

numerical growth as a primary objective in the church's ministry. To some extent, they all seem to have been shaped within, if not by, North American evangelical Protestantism. They all share the evangelistic motive, that is, the desire to reach the "lost" or the "unchurched." Each one of them is convinced that the secular disciplines, especially social and behavioral sciences, can be effectively used for the benefit of the Church. They are all prolific authors. Their only major difference seems to be the settings within which they operate. McGavran and Wagner tend to operate out of the classroom. Arn seems to be a field consultant and manager who utilizes adjunct presenters. Schuller is a preacher and television celebrity with a large staff. Through their efforts the church growth movement developed.

A Critique of the Role of Preaching in the Church Growth Movement

As noted earlier, Donald McGavran is the founder of the church growth movement. He should, therefore, be the best person to turn to regarding the movement's stand on the role biblical preaching plays in church growth. His book, *Understanding Church Growth*, is recognized by many as the most comprehensive study ever published on church growth. The most interesting thing is that in this book McGavran makes very little mention of the pulpit ministry. As a matter of fact, when preaching is mentioned, it is done in a deprecating manner. Consider this:

Research should make a sharp distinction between reproducible patterns of growth and those which cannot be duplicated. Some of the most striking church growth is the work of extra-ordinarily gifted men—geniuses. We rejoice in these men, but do not expect to find many Dwight L. Moodys or Henry Ward Beechers in our congregation ... for the church growth which is dependent on exceptional men one thanks God; but realizes He probably will not grant us that kind of growth. Research should look for reproducible patterns of growth possible to ordinary congregations, ordinary pastors, and ordinary missionaries. (119)

Wagner, McGavran's successor, is also quick to minimize the importance of preaching in church growth. He seems to reduce the pulpit to a platform for the pastor's agenda when he says,

Some pulpit committees overemphasize preaching to the extent that it is virtually the only quality they really look for. Many growth pastors are not golden-mouthed orators, but they understand the function of the pulpit in the broader context of worship, leadership, and group dynamics. (*Leading* 170)

In his book *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*, Wagner lists twenty-seven gifts, but preaching is not one of them (9). In the same book, he acknowledges that he may be wrong about not equating prophecy with preaching. Yet, he sees no correlation between preaching and church growth. He writes,

Some authors equate the gift of prophecy with good preaching ... I personally do not adhere to this viewpoint.... Because I respect these people so much, I have to keep an open mind. After all, I may well be the one who is wrong. But having said this, let me add that I have not yet found a correlation between one or the other and church growth. (100)

In a chapter he wrote in the book *The Pastor's Church Growth Handbook*, Win Arn, the other notable collaborator with McGavran on church growth writes,

Unfortunately, many churches, in choosing a pastor, place greatest priority on the man's ability to preach. Certainly, congregations are entitled to prepared and well-delivered messages. Yet sermon delivery represents a very small portion of the pastor's total workweek. (12)

He goes on to add that "indications are that the sermon ... is a relatively minor factor in the growth of the church (12). Hence, he minimizes preaching as a factor in selecting a pastor. Herb Miller, another supporter of the church growth movement, uses the Disciples of Christ as his focus as he identifies nineteen principles present in their fastest growing congregations. He concludes, "[T]he style of pulpit work seems little related to church growth. Nor is the quality of oratory significant" (30). The subtitle of *The Pastor's*

Church Growth Handbook reads: *America's Leading Authorities on Church Growth Share the Keys to Building a Dynamic Church*. Knowing what role these experts assign to biblical preaching as a factor in church growth is important, but the truth is that preaching is not mentioned in Ken Parker's *Seven Characteristics of a Growing Church* (61-62), nor is it one of Robert Schuller's *Three Characteristics of a Successful Pastor* (92-94).

A description of Robert Schuller's early ministry in Garden Grove, Orange County shows his de-emphasis on biblical preaching. Once again, Voskuil informs us that when he came to Garden Grove, Schuller claims to have discovered what impressed the unchurched in that area. They were not taken with biblical preaching, denominational labels and organized religion. Human needs, however, were all important. Success, sincerity, beauty, modernity, honesty, and service to the needs of the individual—these were what impressed the affluent unchurched American driving past on the Santa Ana Freeway. (42)

Again, according to O. D. Emery, preaching is not even mentioned in "What Makes a Church Grow?" (136-41).

In 1977, McGavran and Arn teamed together to write *Ten Steps for Church Growth*. Unfortunately, preaching is not one of those steps (i). A glaring fact is that either preaching as a factor for church growth is ignored or the proponents of the church growth movement devalue its impact.

Nevertheless, today's preacher need not become demoralized by the church growth movement's low view of preaching. Some other encouraging thoughts are worth pondering. First, history shows that minimizing or downplaying the importance of preaching is not new. Joseph Sittler, in *The Anguish of Preaching*, tells us that preaching has and will always be in trouble (26-27). Clyde E. Fant underscores the same fact by pointing out that no generation of preachers ever escaped criticism. According to him,

even during the so-called golden age of preaching, when Spurgeon, Liddon, Parker, Beecher, MacLaren, and Brooks were at the height of their careers, Mahaffy wrote *The Decay of Modern Preaching* in 1882 (5).

Second, in an article entitled “Seven Characteristics of Growing Churches” published in *Church Administration* in 1975, Lyle E. Schaller observes,

The first, the most highly visible and the most important of these seven characteristics is a strong emphasis on biblical preaching. People today are hungry for biblical preaching. While the bottom has fallen out of the market for ordinary quality topical preaching, the market demand for biblical preaching has never been stronger than it is today in the second half of the 70s. (34)

Third, in 1969, Wesley W. Nelson took a sabbatical and conducted an informal study in seven interdenominational American churches chosen at random but reputed for their success. The study was aimed at discovering qualities, attitudes, and methods that led to the success of these churches. His conclusion was that

nothing the minister does poses a greater threat to him than his preaching.... [This is because] people in the churches witnessed to the effect of preaching on their lives.... [Although some] observers might not be attracted to the preaching, it is significant that preaching is still relevant to multitudes of people in a time critics are denying its effectiveness. (16-18)

The above examples are representative evidence that many homileticians and preachers strongly believe that preaching is a critical factor in church growth. Biblical preaching has a strong impact on both the numerical and the spiritual growth of the Church. Yet, in defiance of all the evidence, the church growth movement seems to either disregard or minimize the role played by preaching in church growth. Moreover, these church growth proponents continue to devalue preaching despite the fact that their church growth principles have not worked. The continued decline of the Protestant Church in America is evidence that the church growth principles developed by the church growth

movement have not worked as perfectly as the developers anticipated.

As seen above, in his early ministry, Robert Schuller de-emphasized the role of biblical preaching in the growth of the Church. However, as the years went by, he seems to have shifted from a position against preaching as a church growth factor, to a position of some particular kind or style of preaching, but the style has to do with who Robert Schuller is.

Dennis Voskuil succinctly describes where Robert Schuller comes from theologically. He tells us that

the trademark of Schuller's religious enterprise is "possibility thinking." This upbeat expression, which so compactly epitomizes the thrust of his ministry, has served to give Schuller a special identity. And like most patented trademarks, this one is ubiquitous: it is neatly stamped to everything related to Schuller and his twenty-two acre spiritual shopping center in Garden Grove. Three of his popular books bear the trademark: *Move Ahead with Possibility Thinking*, *Peace of Mind Through Possibility Thinking*, and *The Greatest Possibility Thinker Who Ever Lived*. (71)

Although Schuller reluctantly compares his brand of possibility thinking philosophy with that of Norman Vincent Peale, he acknowledges an intellectual indebtedness to him, having asked Peale to endorse and preface some of his books. Schuller does not merely add a few Bible verses to psychological method; rather, he adds a religious component, which is generally missing from messages of the secular possibility thinkers. His possibility thinking is, therefore, more than just a blend of psychology and physiology in that it is anchored in an evangelical view of new life in Christ. This is why Robert Schuller is regarded as one among many evangelicals who are promulgating the gospel of success (Voskuil 72).

In his preaching, Schuller appeals to well-known authorities to support his program of possibility thinking. He also quotes extensively from psychologists like

Viktor Frankl. He also appeals to biblical texts, but the biblical texts chosen always have a positive outlook in order to allow him to expand on his favorite theme. Schuller is a textual rather than expository preacher. Voskuil further clarifies Schuller's preaching by observing that

[Schuller] contends that sermons should be need oriented and positive rather than controversial. He admits that he avoids touching upon issues of controversy but claims that his mission is that of healing rather than raising issues which produce negativity and division. He sees his role as that of a pastor rather than a prophet. (61)

Students of preaching also need to listen to Joe Harding. After having served as a district superintendent in the United Methodist Church in Seattle, he appears to have reached the conclusion that biblical preaching is a critical factor in church growth. He says that as a district superintendent

I soon became aware that there was one recurring request from the local church leaders: "Send us a preacher. Send us someone who can preach." I visited Seattle area churches Sunday after Sunday. I observed that Churches where pastors placed high priority on preaching tended to be growing churches. Where the message was dull, lifeless, poorly organized, and ineffectively delivered, there seemed to be an atmosphere of defeat and despair, followed closely by decline in attendance and membership. Furthermore, my observations were shared by my bishop and fellow district superintendents. (15)

Summary and Research Methods

Several issues arise from this historical study. For preaching to be biblical, it must originate from Scripture, must be communicated in a relevant manner, must be clearly understandable, and must depend partly upon the person (integrity) of the person who is delivers it for its success and impact. Historical research established a connection between biblical preaching and church growth. Biblical growth was directly connected to the phenomenal growth of the Church recorded in the book of Acts. Holland, Dargan, and several other church historians recorded tangible evidence of the positive correlation

between biblical preaching and church growth throughout church history. The Great Awakening centered around the biblical preaching of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield.

Obviously, biblical preaching is not the only factor in church growth, but it is key. Yet, in spite of the clear evidence that a correlation exists between biblical preaching and church growth, the early writings of the church growth movement proponents tended to minimize or de-emphasize the role biblical preaching plays in the growth of the church. Moreover, although the above overview offered some plausible evidence linking biblical preaching with church growth, it was not an exhaustive study. The need is for further study to establish whether biblical preaching played any significant role in contemporary church growth. The task of this study was to do exactly that—examine how biblical preaching relates to the phenomenal, contemporary numerical and spiritual growth among evangelical churches in Kenya.

The study was an evaluative, descriptive, correlational study utilizing researcher-designed questionnaires and closing interviews. Describing evaluation research, Wiersma informs us that

evaluation research can be considered close to applied research. Evaluation uses many of the same methods as research. Typically, the function of evaluation is to assess the merits of a practice or program in a specific situation. The application of the results is at a given site or sites and this is the primary focus for the evaluation. Evaluation results aid in decision making in a specific situation as with applied research. (12)

Commenting further on applied research itself, he points out that

the purpose of applied research is to solve an immediate, practical problem.... An example ... would be to conduct a survey of the elementary school teachers in a school system to determine their preferences and opinions about several available reading programs. The survey would be conducted by a curriculum committee or by the school system's administration, who are concerned with the problem of selecting

the reading program or materials to be purchased. The results of the survey would provide information necessary for decisions about the purchase. (Wiersma 10-11)

As noted earlier, descriptive research methods were used to evaluate the impact that biblical preaching may have had on the growth of some evangelical churches in Kenya. Descriptive statistics are used to describe distributions and relationships between variables.

[They] are measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion, and measures of relationship.... [T]he most commonly used measures of variability ... the variance and the standard deviation. Measures of variability are intervals (or their squares) on the scale of measurement. (Wiersma 359)

Surveys were used to record the responses from pastors, local church leaders, and congregations of participating churches. The study was limited to some evangelical churches in Kenya.

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The project began with the thesis that a correlation seemed to exist between biblical preaching and the numerical and spiritual growth in a local church. Although homileticians agree that the most effective kind of preaching is “biblical preaching,” they differ concerning the appropriate structure that the “biblical” sermon should take. Therefore, need arose to clarify that “biblical preaching” must originate from Scriptures, must be communicated in a relevant manner, must be clearly understandable, and must depend partly upon the integrity of the preacher for its success and impact.

Whereas many other factors contribute to growth in a local church, a literature review established a consensus that a correlation exists between biblical preaching and church growth. An overview of both the New Testament and church history offered plausible evidence that biblical preaching is so directly connected to the numerical and spiritual growth of the church that the rise and fall of the church paralleled the rise and fall of biblical preaching. Yet in defiance of such evidence, proponents of the church growth movement in their early writings either ignored or devalued the impact of biblical preaching as a factor for church growth.

Nevertheless, the overview raised some questions and pointed to the need for the development of suitable tools to measure the interface of biblical preaching in the growth of some contemporary churches. As a result, a question arose for this study: Is there a correlation between biblical preaching and the growth of the evangelical church in Kenya? This study, therefore, aimed at asking more detailed questions in order to answer the above question by evaluating the impact of biblical preaching upon numerical and

spiritual church growth among ten evangelical churches in Kenya.

Research Questions

In pursuit of the above, the study addressed four fundamental questions.

Research Question #1

What is the decadal growth rate in the churches of the study?

In answering this question, I did a ten-year study of the worship attendance statistics of ten evangelical churches located in Nairobi and Mombasa, Kenya's two largest cities. The decadal growth rate of these churches were cross-linked with the percentage of the time per week that the preaching pastor devoted to preaching (both preparation and delivery) in regard to the overall evangelistic plan of the local church.

Research Question #2

What evidence of spiritual growth exists among the participants in this study?

In answer to this question, I used several questions (see Appendix C., numbers 7, 11, and 12) to evaluate the congregational members' perception of their spiritual growth since joining the church they were currently attending.

Research Question #3

What is the strength of biblical preaching as perceived by participants of the study?

Again, in answer to this question, I used questions 9 and 10 in the congregational survey (see Appendix C) as well as questions 7 to 16 in the pastoral/leadership surveys (see Appendixes D and E). the questions were aimed at evaluating both the congregational members' as well as leaders' perceptions of the relationship between pastor's preaching and both the numerical and spiritual growth of the church.

Research Question #4

What is the relationship between the numerical decadal growth rate, spiritual growth, and the observed strength of biblical preaching?

In answering this question, I focused on the congregational members' and leaders' perceptions of the importance of biblical preaching in causing people to start attending, to continue attending, to grow spiritually, as well as in helping leaders to accomplish their ministry.

Methodology

This study is an evaluative study in the descriptive mode utilizing researcher-designed instruments. As noted earlier (see Summary and Research Methods p.76), evaluation research is related to applied research which produces a solution to a specific problem by conducting a survey aimed at contributing to the general knowledge of the field (Wiersma 10). Thus, surveys were used to record the responses from pastors, local church leaders, and congregations of ten participating evangelical churches in Kenya.

Descriptive research methods were used to evaluate the impact that biblical preaching may have had on the growth of the evangelical churches in Kenya. Descriptive statistics are used to analyze data by describing distributions and relationships between variables (see definition p.76). The relationship between two variables is described by the correlation coefficient (Wiersma 359). According to Wiersma, descriptive and inferential statistics are often used in combination when analyzing research data. In inferential statistics,

a specific group is studied with the intention of generalizing to some larger group. For example, surveys are conducted of large populations, not by surveying everyone in the population, but by surveying a group of that population, called a sample, and then using the sample data to generalize to the population.... In any event, an attempt is

made to infer something about a relatively large group by using a subset of that group. (363)

Hypothesis and Proposal

The hypothesis in this study stated that whereas many factors contributed to growth in a local church, a correlation existed between biblical preaching and both numerical and spiritual church growth. Assuming that the above hypothesis was correct, then my proposal for this study was that if a positive correlation exists between biblical preaching and both the numerical and spiritual growth of the church, then tangible evidence also exists that the emphasis of biblical preaching positively impacts church growth more than any other factors.

Population and Sample

The population in this study consisted of ten evangelical churches located in Nairobi and Mombasa, the two largest cities in Kenya. Kenya is a country with a population of about 28 million people, and the members of all the evangelical churches in the country are approximately over fifteen million, with three of the largest evangelical churches (denominations) each having approximately four million, three million, and two million members respectively.

Sampling has been defined as the process of selecting an element or elements for observation (Babbie 163). Moreover, a representative sample is the selection of elements that has the same characteristics relevant to the total population under consideration (Kerlinger 119). However, in view of the impracticability and impossibility of observing all the evangelical churches in Kenya, I endeavored to ensure that the sample chosen was a fair representation of the larger population. I was also aware of a high potential for bias and error if I chose a sample that only included growing churches and excluded non-

growing churches. Moreover, doing so would not only have been unfair and illegitimate, but it would also have prejudiced the results. As Borg observes,

When samples are not random, the possibility of biases (that is, systematic differences between subjects in the sample and those in the population) may occur. These limit the confidence we have in generalizing the research results to the population. (9)

As mentioned above, the population of this study was all the evangelical churches in Kenya, but, as noted above, observing all the churches in the population would be impossible, if not unrealistic. Hence, the intent of the study was to draw conclusions based on observations from a representative sample of ten churches (some growing and others static). These were local churches of several evangelical denominations located in Nairobi and Mombasa, the two largest cities in Kenya.

At the 1989 census, the city of Nairobi had a population of about 1.8 million people; whereas, by the year 2000, it had a population of about two million people. Not only is Nairobi the capital of Kenya but also the largest city in the country. Similarly in 1989, Mombasa, the second largest city in Kenya, had a population of 800,000 people. By the year 2000, the population had grown to approximately 1.2 million (Barrett et al. 160).

As noted earlier in Chapter 1, owing to economic and political development, these two cities have attracted people from almost all the forty different ethnic groups in Kenya. Moreover, following a statistical survey for the years 1900 and 1972, David Barrett et al. concluded that “during the 20th century, the Christian faith has been expanding in Kenya at a meteoric rate, and is still expanding faster than in almost all other countries of the world” (157). A general consensus also existed among most clergy in the two cities of Nairobi and Mombasa that ten of the fastest growing evangelical

churches were located in these two cities. Thus, a study of these fast growing evangelical churches would provide an ideal representative sample of the church growth among the evangelical churches in Kenya.

Moreover, these twenty representative, evangelical churches from several denominations were chosen for several reasons. First, they were chosen because of a general consensus among most clergy in these two cities that at least ten of them were among the fastest growing local churches in the whole country. They seemed to have experienced tremendous numerical growth over the last ten years. Second, regardless of their denomination, most of these fast growing churches seem to have started experiencing numerical growth when a “powerful preacher” appeared. Third, most of the non-growing churches fall within the same geographic locations as the growing ones, and, in some cases, they are either of the same denomination or of generally the same belief.

I deliberately studied both the fast growing and also the static local churches from different denominations in order to avoid skewing the results. The churches selected include both large and small churches.

The actual sample, therefore, consisted of at least four hundred members from ten churches located in both Nairobi and Mombasa. From each of these churches, twenty men and twenty women were interviewed. Each of these was a member of the church for at least one complete year.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

As mentioned earlier, surveys were used to gather data. Borg reminds us that in a survey, the researcher records information about the participants (or perhaps asks them to

record the information themselves). Although questions are asked, or measurements taken, the researcher exerts no influence, nor does he or she manipulate the subjects in any way (Borg 10-13).

Six surveys were used to measure the correlation between preaching and church growth, both quantitative and qualitative. An Average Sunday morning attendance survey aimed at measuring the decadal growth rate as well as the annual rate for each church. All participating churches filled out a card listing the known average attendance for the recorded years. Such a record should display the measurement of numerical growth or decline. Each participating church received the following note:

“If you will help in this study, please record the average Sunday morning worship attendance (or combined average if you have more than one morning service) for the following years” (see Appendix B).

A *demographic survey* was also used. The secretary and/or pastor of the participating church completed this. It was aimed at measuring the vital statistics of the church and its surrounding community. In particular, this instrument elicited general information about the community surrounding the church and the makeup of the church itself. This information included the year the church began, age of the neighborhood, age mix, growth, evangelism strategies, and milestones of the local church. Such information was useful in the collation and analysis of the data received from the other surveys.

Generally, the most common reasons people give for starting to come to church and continuing to come to church may be divided into four categories: programs, relationships, the pastor’s preaching, and friendliness of the people. Consequently, a *congregational survey* aimed at measuring the third category—the role the pastor’s

preaching has in influencing people's starting to come to church as well as their continuing to come. Specifically, it measured the response of members and visitors from a particular participating church. This helped determine three things. First, whether preaching was an important factor in influencing people's starting to come and continuing to come to the church. Second, whether preaching was perceived as an important factor in the growth of growth in the church. Third, whether preaching contributed significantly to the respondent's own spiritual growth.

Following similar criteria to the congregational survey, a *pastoral survey* examined the role played by preaching in church growth. In other words, this survey explored what the preaching pastor of the participating church perceived as the correlation between preaching and church growth. The *leadership survey* was very similar to the pastoral survey and was aimed at validating the pastoral survey through the responses of deacons, elders, and other leaders such as women, youth, and group leaders. The duplication of the questions for both the preaching pastor and the leaders had one major advantage. It provided a check and balance to the response from the pastor because the leadership survey provided input from individuals who were more aware of the overall ministry of the church than the rest of the congregation. All of the surveys were in the form of a questionnaire. Finally, an *interview* with the pastor provided an additional method of collecting survey data. This interview was conducted face-to-face. Unlike a questionnaire or written survey, the questions in this survey were verbal and I recorded the responses. A computer was then used to configure the large amount of survey data.

Interviews and Responsiveness of the Churches

In the middle of July 2000, initial contact was made with twenty evangelical

churches located in Nairobi and Mombasa. The Nairobi churches initially contacted included

1. Africa Inland Church Jericho—my own local church,
2. Africa Inland Church Kariobangi,
3. Calvary Temple Buru Buru,
4. Deliverance Church Umoja,
5. Nairobi Baptist Church,
6. Nairobi Chapel,
7. Nairobi Lighthouse,
8. Nairobi Pentecostal Church,
9. Outreach Community Church Eastleigh, and
10. Parklands Baptist Church.

The Mombasa churches initially contacted were

1. Africa Inland Church Kongoea,
2. Africa Inland Church Tudor,
3. Deliverance Church Makupa,
4. Jesus' Celebration Center,
5. Jesus' Restoration Center, Changamwe,
6. Likoni Baptist Church,
7. Royal Church,
8. Mombasa Pentecostal Church,
9. Glory Tabernacle, and
10. Mombasa Miracle Center.

Because I personally knew most of the pastors of these churches, the initial contact was a telephone call in which I briefly explained the project and invited them to be involved. For the few churches where the pastors did not know me personally, I had someone personally known to the senior pastor make the initial contact on my behalf. Of the twenty churches that qualified for the study and were asked to participate, only ten participated.

The other ten churches were unable to participate for various reasons. Six of them, though among the largest and fastest growing churches, were simply unable to participate because of the hierarchy and bureaucracy of church leadership. As a result, I found reaching the senior pastor extremely difficult, if not almost impossible. The other four churches were willing to participate but due to the short notice, they just simply could not fit me into their busy schedule.

The second step was to follow up this initial contact by sending an introductory letter to each of these pastors (see Appendix A). As noted above, ten of these senior pastors responded positively. As a third step, I then either visited or had a follow up telephone conversation with each of these ten senior pastors. During this time, I had each of them give me an appropriate date and time (preferably on a Sunday) when I would either personally attend and worship in their church or send a reliable representative to do so on my behalf. During the worship service, the pastor would then briefly introduce either my representative or me and also explain the purpose of the research. The pastor would also, on my behalf, appeal to forty people from the congregation who were in attendance that day to volunteer to take between thirty and sixty minutes after the worship service to fill out and return a congregational survey. These would be twenty males and twenty females

that had regularly attended the particular church for at least one whole year. A confirmation of the willingness and availability of these volunteers was usually done by the raising of hands. Similarly, an appeal would be made for between five and ten leaders in the church (both male and female) to kindly volunteer following the worship service to fill out a leadership survey for me (see Appendix E) while the pastor filled out a pastoral survey for me (see Appendix D).

In the seven churches that I personally visited and in which I worshipped, I utilized the time by also doing several other things. After having collected the congregational, leadership, and pastoral surveys, I would also, through the senior pastor, request and have the church secretary fill out for me a demographic survey (see Appendix F). At the same time, I conducted a face-to-face audiotape recorded interview with the senior pastor (see Appendix G). For the three churches where I sent representatives, I, later on, set up an appointment for a closing interview with the senior pastor during which time I also made sure that the demographic survey was completed and returned to me (see Appendix F).

From the ten churches that participated in the study, a total of 393 people completed the congregational survey. Also, a total of fifty-four leaders (including ten pastors) completed both the leadership and pastoral surveys.

Analysis of Data

As hinted above, the project was carried out under the assumption that church growth should reflect a correlation with the kind of preaching that finds its origin in the Bible, is relevant, is clearly understandable, and relates to the exemplary person of the preacher.

The analysis of the data collected is reported in four sections. The first section outlines the decadal growth rates of the ten participating churches. The second section presents the findings of the congregational survey, showing the congregations' perception of the strength of biblical preaching in table form as well as charts. Similarly, section three reports the findings of both the pastoral and leadership surveys. The last section examines the other findings also in the light of the importance of preaching in the local church and its relation to both numerical and spiritual growth.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This chapter reports the findings of the field research portion of the project. Responses of the ten churches that participated in the study are discussed in detail. The results of the different questionnaires as well as the interviews with the pastors are also analyzed.

As noted above, this study was an evaluative study in the descriptive mode utilizing researcher-designed surveys seeking to answer four research questions:

Research Question #1

What is the decadal growth rate in the churches of the study?

Research Question #2

What evidence of spiritual growth exists among participants in this study?

Research Question #3

What is the strength of biblical preaching as perceived by participants of this study?

Research Question #4

What is the relationship between the numerical decadal growth rate, spiritual growth, and the observed strength of biblical preaching?

Moreover, several key issues prompted this study. First, the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 revealed that both the Bible and history demonstrated that preaching promoted church growth. For example, the church growth cited in the book of Acts was associated with preaching. Second, from church history, a connection existed whereby the rise and fall of church growth paralleled the rise and fall of preaching. The Great Awakening

included the preaching ministry of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. Dargan and Holland recorded biblical preaching resulting in the numerical and spiritual growth in the history of the Church. This provided evidence that a positive correlation exists between growth in the Church and preaching.

Third, further review was also done regarding the church growth literature as it relates to preaching and more specifically the role of preaching in the church growth movement. This revealed that the church growth movement presented a different view of preaching and its relationship to growth from what the Bible and Church history recorded. McGavran and Wagner, who were very instrumental in the development of the church growth movement, in their early writings, de-emphasized the role that preaching plays in the growth of the Church. Preaching was not one of the seven vital signs of the church growth movement. Instead, preaching was only seen as a platform for sharing vision.

Fourth, a general consensus existed among most evangelical clergy in Kenya that powerful preaching was the highest factor attributed to the fastest growing evangelical churches in Kenya and that most of these fast growing churches were located in the cities of Nairobi and Mombasa.

Thus, the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 revealed the need for a well thought out study design for the purpose of examining the role of biblical preaching in the growth of the evangelical churches in Nairobi and Mombasa. These churches provided an ideal representative sample of the growth of the evangelical church in Kenya. Consequently, following the survey guideline requirements listed by both Earl Babbie in *The Practice of Social Research* and Walter Borg in *Applying Educational Research*, several specific

survey instruments were written: congregational, pastoral, leadership, demographic, and a closing interview. The study was then conducted in an endeavor to explore the relationship between biblical preaching and the numerical and spiritual growth of these churches.

Responsiveness of Churches

Ideally, the population of this study was all the evangelical churches in Kenya. However, due to inconceivability to observe all the churches in the population, a sample of ten evangelical churches was derived.

Churches of the Study

As noted above, these ten churches located in Nairobi and Mombasa, Kenya's two largest cities, represented some of the fastest-growing evangelical churches in the country.

Africa Inland Church Jericho, Nairobi

As mentioned earlier, AIC Jericho that began in 1969 lies approximately seven miles southeast of the city-center of Nairobi, Kenya's largest city. The church is located in the densely populated, low-income Jericho suburb. However, the church also draws its membership from the surrounding middle-income suburbs of Buru Buru, Donholm, and Kimathi. Between 1991 and 2000, its average Sunday worship attendance grew from seven hundred to 3,200. This is a 357 percent increase.

Africa Inland Church Kariobangi South, Nairobi

AIC Kariobangi South, Nairobi, lies approximately ten miles east of the city-center of Nairobi. It is approximately three miles north east of Africa Inland Church Jericho. From the time this church was planted as a daughter church of AIC Jericho in

January 1996, AIC Kariobangi South has continued to experience explosive growth over a period of five years. The average Sunday morning worship attendance grew from fourteen in January 1996 to three hundred and fifty people in July 2000. This is a 2400 percent increase.

Calvary Temple Buru Buru, Nairobi

Calvary Temple Church is an indigenous Pentecostal church in Buru Buru (one of Nairobi's suburbs) located about eight miles east of the Nairobi City center. It is approximately one mile northeast of AIC Jericho. By the time the church acquired and moved to its present site in 1991, it had about eight hundred people meeting in a tent every Sunday. By July 2000, the average Sunday worship attendance was 4,500. This is a 462 percent increase.

Deliverance Church Umoja, Nairobi

Deliverance Church Umoja is also another indigenous Pentecostal church. It is located in Umoja Estate, one of Nairobi's a most densely populated working class suburb, approximately twelve miles southeast of the city center. The church started in the late 1980s, and by 1991, it held an average worship attendance of three hundred people. By July 2000, the Sunday worship attendance had risen to 1,700. This is a 750 percent increase.

Outreach Community Church Eastleigh, Nairobi

In the year 2000, Outreach Community Church was meeting in a rented hall in Eastleigh estate, Nairobi, approximately four miles northeast of the city center. The Church was started in 1996 by a former AIC pastor after experiencing some leadership differences with the Regional AIC leadership. During the first three years (1996-1998),

the church experienced dramatic growth, with average Sunday worship attendance rising from 170 to 230. However, owing to support-raising efforts as well as new church-planting efforts, the founding pastor left leadership of the church to a lay leader who did not appear to be as a powerful preacher as the founder was. By July 2000, the average Sunday worship attendance was 250. This reflects a mere 47 percent increase.

Africa Inland Church Kongoea, Mombasa

AIC Kongoea, Mombasa, is located in the low-income residential area of Kongoea, approximately five miles east of the city center. The church started in 1985 as a daughter church of AIC Tudor with about forty people. Between 1991 and 2000, the average Sunday worship attendance rose from one hundred and thirty to 1,800. This is a 1284.6 percent increase.

Africa Inland Church Tudor, Mombasa

AIC Tudor was the first Church of the AIC Kenya denomination to be started in the city of Mombasa in the early 1970s to cater for AIC members from upcountry that had come to work in the city. The church, which is located two miles east of the city center, has encountered numerous problems. In 1984, a splinter group of about 150 people calling themselves "*Zion Brethren*," left the church. Again, in 1997, several leaders became dissatisfied with the style of preaching as well as the leadership of the Church and left with a group of over one hundred people to form their own indigenous Community Church. Not surprisingly, between 1991 and 2000, the average worship attendance rose only from 280 to 350, a mere 25 percent increase.

Deliverance Church Makupa, Mombasa

Like AIC Tudor, DC Makupa was among the pioneer Pentecostal indigenous

churches to venture into ministry in Mombasa. When in 1991 the church moved to its new site, about five miles southeast of the city center, it had an average Sunday worship attendance of sixty people. However, by July 2000, the church had several things that validated its growth. The church had transferred some of its key members to a daughter church (Deliverance Church Kyaani in 1993). They had also groomed other church leaders who left to form their own ministries. Moreover, they had also survived a 1995 pastor's scandal that not only took away several hundred church members but also threatened to destroy the church. The average Sunday worship attendance had also grown to 450. This is a 650 percent increase.

Jesus' Restoration Center Changamwe, Mombasa

Jesus' Restoration Center is located approximately four miles northwest of the Mombasa city center in the densely populated, low-income suburb of Changamwe. This indigenous Pentecostal church was started in 1996 by a charismatic lay preacher from upcountry (from Kitui District in Eastern Kenya) after he developed a vision and passion for preaching the gospel to the needy residents of this area, most of whom originally came from his home area in Kitui. Within a period of five years, the church continued to experience explosive growth, requiring it to extend its present temporary wooden worship structure three times. The average worship attendance rose from one hundred people to 1,500. This is a 1400 percent increase.

Royal Church, Mombasa

Originally, Royal Church started its ministry right at the city center of Mombasa (at Lotus Cinema Hall) in 1991 under the name "*Glory Tabernacle*" and with an average Sunday worship attendance of about 210 people. The founding pastor was a charismatic

preacher from Nigeria (West Africa). During the first ten years, the church continued to experience steady growth. In 1995, the church had to transfer its location to a larger hall in Hotel Sapphire. By 1998 when the church acquired its own premises located approximately two miles north of the city center, the attendance had risen to a peak of an average of 350 every Sunday. However, owing to leadership differences the founding pastor of the church left to start another "*Glory Tabernacle*" in the Mombasa city center. The ministry of the church was left in the hands of a local (Kenyan) lay leader who was not an equally enthusiastic preacher as the founder. The new leadership also changed the name of the church from *Glory Tabernacle* to *Royal Church*. In the following two years (1999 and 2000), instead of growing, the church attendance declined from 350 to 200. This is 75 percent decline.

A total of sixty leaders (including the ten senior pastors) from these churches were asked to complete pastoral/leadership surveys. The goal was to have at least five local church leaders fill out and return these Pastoral/Leadership surveys. Also, a total of four hundred congregational surveys were handed to the congregational members of the ten participating churches. The goal was to have twenty males and twenty females that had regularly attended the church for at least one year fill out and return the congregational surveys.

The final result was that fifty-four leaders (including ten pastors) completed and returned the pastoral/leadership surveys. This was a 90 percent return rate. Also, out of the 405 congregational surveys handed out, a total of 393 were completed and returned. This is a 97 percent return rate.

Respondents were between twenty-nine and sixty-two years old, giving an

average age of thirty.

Decadal Growth Rates

A study of the worship attendance statistics of the ten participating churches from 1991 to 2000 was conducted. The decadal growth rate indicates that most of the churches of the survey are growing churches. Table 4.1 lists each church and their growth rate over a period of between five and ten years. Apart from outlining the decadal growth rates of the churches, this table also cross-links the growth or decline with the percentage of time per week that the preaching pastor devotes to preaching in regard to the overall evangelistic plan of the local church.

Three of the ten participating churches (AIC Kariobangi South Nairobi, AIC Kongoa Mombasa, and Jesus' Restoration Center Mombasa) experienced a percentage growth of between 1284 percent and 2400 percent. Such growth can be regarded as explosive or fast.

Four of the ten churches studied also experienced very steady reasonable growth of between 357 percent and 750 percent. These are AIC Jericho Nairobi, Calvary Temple Buru Buru Nairobi, Deliverance Church Umoja Nairobi, and Deliverance Church Makupa Mombasa. Two of the churches (AIC Tudor Mombasa and Outreach Community Church Eastleigh Nairobi) experienced what may be termed as a slow growth of between 25 percent and 47 percent. Only one church (Royal Church Mombasa) experienced a decline of 4.76 percent. All the seven churches that experienced phenomenological growth also exhibited a high percentage of preaching in their overall evangelistic ministry of the local church.

This study shows an almost parallel pattern of worship attendance growth or

decline with the percentage of time per week that the preaching pastor devotes to preaching in regard to the overall evangelistic plan of the local church.

Table 4.1

Decadal Growth Rates of Participating Churches Cross-Linked with Percentage of Preaching in Overall Evangelistic Ministry

Church	Attendance Decrease/Increase 1991-2000 or 1996-2000	5-10 yr. Decline/ Growth %	% Devoted to Preaching Per Week in overall Evangelistic Ministry
Africa Inland Church Jericho Nairobi	(1991-2000) 700 to 3200	357	45
Africa Inland Church Kariobangi South, Nairobi	(1996-2000) 14 to 350	2400	50
Calvary Temple Buru Buru Nairobi	(1991-2000) 800 to 4500	462	45
Deliverance Church Umoja, Nairobi	(1991-2000) 300 to 1700	750	40
Outreach Community Church Eastleigh, Nairobi	(1996-2000) 170 to 250	47	25
Africa Inland Church Kongoea, Mombasa	(1991-2000) 130 to 1800	1284.6	45
Africa Inland Church Tudor, Mombasa	(1991-2000) 280 to 350	25	30
Deliverance Church Makupa, Mombasa	(1991-2000) 60 to 450	650	40
Jesus' Restoration Center Changamwe, Mombasa	(1996-2000) 100 to 1500	1400	55
Royal Church Mombasa	(1991-2000) 210 to 200	- 4.76	25

with the percentage of the time the pastor devoted to preaching.

5-10 year % growth

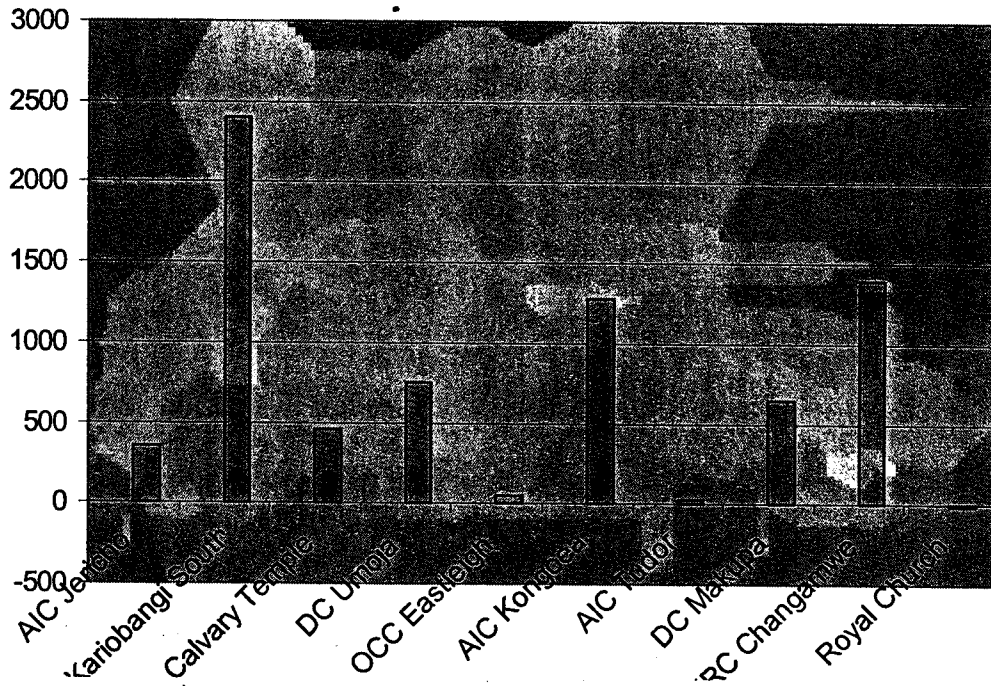


Figure 1 Churches' 5-10 Year Percentage of Growth Rates

% Devoted to Preaching

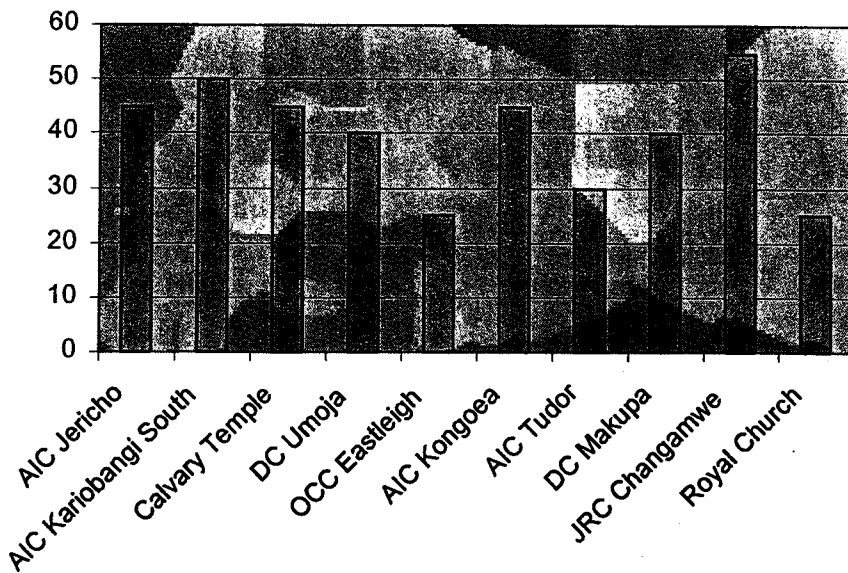


Figure 2 Percentage of Ministry Time Devoted to Preaching

Figures 1 and 2 above provide a basis from which to compare the growth/decline rates

The Congregational Survey

As noted above, in the ten churches that participated, 393 people completed the congregational survey. Out of the 393, only one was not a member of the church at which he or she responded to the questionnaire. This means that the other 392 (99 percent) were members of the ten participating churches. These participants had attended their churches for an average of five years.

In question 4, the congregational members were asked to indicate the style of preaching that their pastor used most frequently. Out of the 393 respondents, 379 (96 percent) indicated that pastors from their churches most frequently preached expositional sermons. As noted earlier in James Earl Massey's definition of preaching, the only major difference between textual and expository preaching is the length of the passage with which one deals. Whereas the textual sermon deals with a single text or short passage, the expositional sermon is concerned with an extended passage of Scripture. Craig Loscalzo sheds more light on the understanding of expository preaching when he says that

topical sermons are more prone to proof-texting because the preacher typically chooses the topic, decides what to say about the topic, and then finds Scripture to support his or her view of the topic. Expository preaching is the proclamation of biblical message by exposing the meaning of a passage of Scripture and showing the passage's relevancy for the lives of your hearers.... Expository preaching is not necessarily a running verse by verse commentary on a passage. Expository preaching transcends a particular preaching style or sermon form. Expository sermons can be preached narratively, inductively, and creatively; even monologue sermons can be expository. An expository sermon is not determined by its form but by its faithfulness to the passage of scripture. ("Back" 30)

This means that the sermons delivered by the pastors of these churches fulfilled one of the most crucial requirements of biblical preaching in that they found their origin in the Bible.

Based on the most common reasons that people often give, questions 5, 6, and 7 asked the congregational members to rate the importance of six factors in regard to having caused them to start coming to church, continuing to come, as well as having contributed to their spiritual growth. These were programs, relationships, pastor's preaching, the people's friendliness, worship, and pastoral or staff leaders. The rating was done on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = very unimportant, 2 = unimportant, 3 = uncertain, 4 = important, and 5 = most important). These questions sought to answer the third research question of this study. What is the strength of biblical preaching as perceived by the participants of the study?

In regard to the importance in having caused people to start coming to church based on the above scale of 1 to 5, the above factors had different average scores. Pastor's preaching scored the highest average of 4.82. Friendliness of the people had the second highest score of 3.64. Programs came third with an average score of 3.62. Relationships came last with an average score of 3.45. Thus, according to the congregational survey, aggregately, pastor's preaching was the most significant factor in causing people to start coming to church. It exceeded the second highest factor (friendliness of the people) by a mean score of 1.17.

Table 4.2

**Congregations' Perceptions of Strength of Six Factors in Causing
Start/Continuation of Attendance, and Spiritual Growth(N = 393)**

	Pastor's preaching		Friendliness of people		Programs		Relationships		Pastoral/ Staff Leaders		Worship	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Importance in causing people to...												
Start attending church	4.81	0.45	3.64	0.73	3.62	0.85	3.48	0.86	3.42	0.81	3.46	0.84
continue attending church	4.80	0.51	3.65	0.72	3.83	0.71	3.48	0.85	3.80	0.71	3.43	0.81
grow spiritually	4.81	0.42	3.83	0.69	3.92	0.59	3.70	0.72	3.98	0.37	3.97	0.33

Similarly, in regard to the perceptions of why people continued attending the church, the pastor's preaching led with an average score of 4.80, followed by programs with an average score of 3.83, friendliness of the people with an average score 3.65, while relationships came last with an average score of 3.48. Evidently, according to the congregational survey, the pastor's preaching was the most important factor in causing people to continue coming to church. It exceeded the second highest factor (programs) by

a mean score of 0.97.

The importance of the six factors in causing people to grow spiritually was also rated. Once again, pastor's preaching led with an average score of 4.81. Second was pastoral or staff leadership with an average score of 3.98. Worship came third with an average score of 3.97, while programs came last with an average score of 3.92. This shows that according to the congregational survey, the pastor's preaching was the most important factor in causing the church members to grow spiritually. It exceeded the second highest factor (pastoral or staff leadership) by a mean score of 0.83 (See Table 4.2). Figure 3 also shows the comparison of six factors in causing congregational members to start attending church, causing them to continue attending, and to grow spiritually.

Figure three provides a visual "benchmark" from which to view the congregational responses. The figure gives clear visual answers to the third research question which sought to discover the strength of biblical preaching as perceived by the participants of the study. Clearly, the figure shows the respondents' ranking of six factors in regard to having caused them to start coming to church, continuing to come, as well as having contributed to their spiritual growth. The respondents ranked pastor's preaching higher than all the other five factors. Thus, the respondents' indication that they came to church to hear the preaching of God's word, came as confirmation to the thesis of this study.

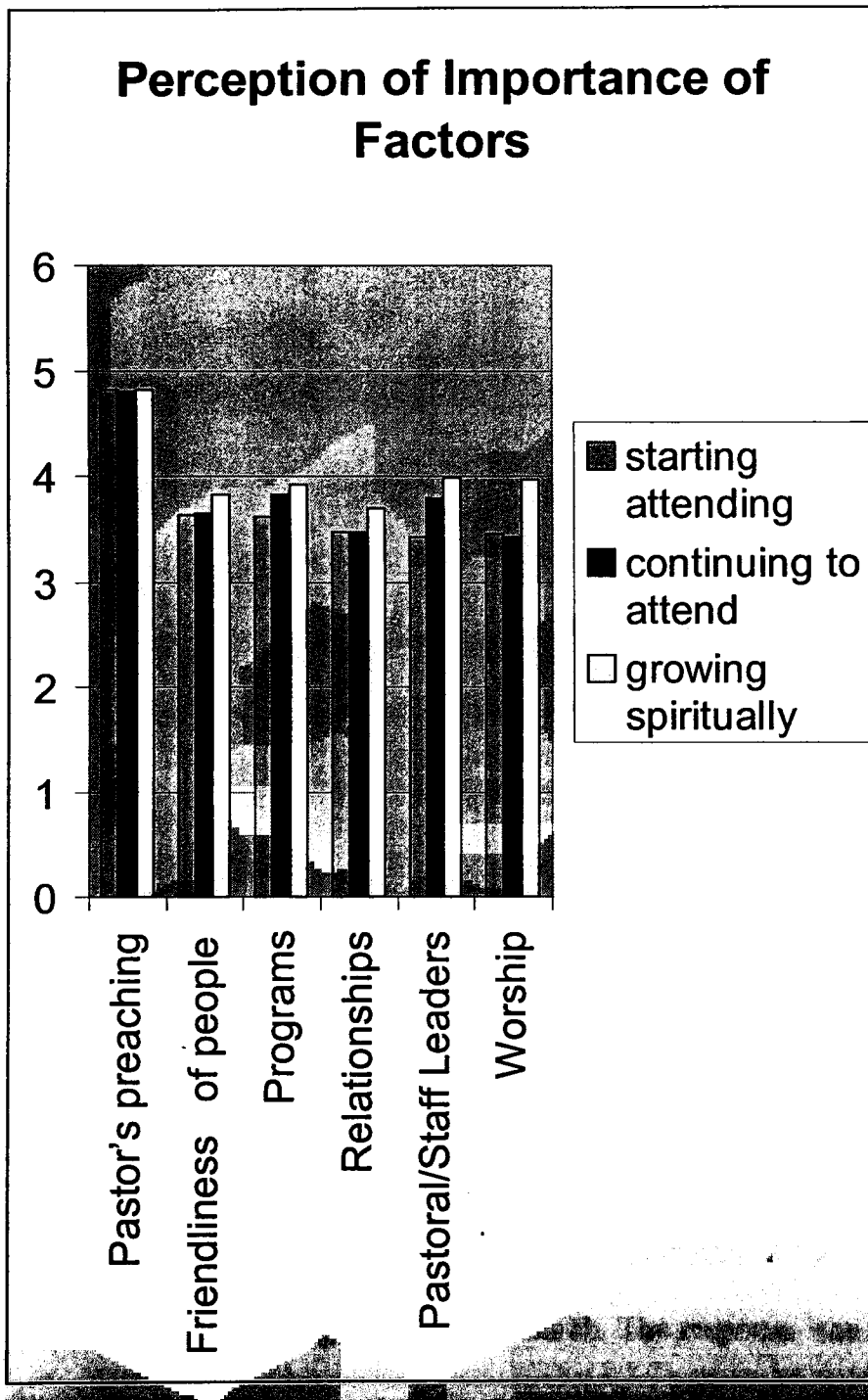


Figure 3 Comparison of Congregational Perception of the Importance of Six Factors in Causing Start/Continuation of Attendance and Spiritual Growth.

Question 7 sought to discover the congregational members' perception of their spiritual maturity before beginning to attend the present church. Using a scale of 1 to 4,

(where 1 = very immature, 2 = immature, 3 = mature, and 4 = very mature), the congregational members were asked to rate their spiritual life before joining the church. The mean rate from the 393 people who responded was 2.13. This shows that over 90 percent of the congregational members regarded themselves as having been spiritually immature before joining their present churches. Question 8 sought to discover the congregational members' perception of their spiritual growth since joining their present churches. Using a scale of 1 to 4 (where 1 = not grown at all, 2 = grown a little, 3 = grown quite a bit, and 4 = grown very much), the congregational members were asked to rate their spiritual growth since joining their present churches. The mean rate from the 393 congregational members who responded was 3.65. This means that over 90 percent of the congregational members from the ten participating churches believed that they had grown spiritually since joining their present churches.

Questions 9, 10, 11, and 12 sought to discover the congregational members' perception of the relationship between pastor's preaching and the spiritual growth of the church. Using a scale of 1 to 4 (where 1 = disagree strongly, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4 = agree strongly), the congregational members were asked several questions. Question 9 asked them whether they believed that that preaching was a major factor in both the numerical and spiritual growth of the church. The response was a mean rate of 3.78 which means that 97 percent of the congregational members from the ten participating churches at least agreed that pastor's preaching was a major factor in both numerical and spiritual growth of the church.

Question 10 asked the congregational members whether the pastor's preaching always helped them to understand the Bible better. The response was a mean rate of 3.73.

This means that 97 percent of the congregational members from the ten participating churches either agreed or agreed strongly that the pastor's preaching always helped them to understand the Bible better.

Question 11 was aimed at evaluating the congregational members' perception of their spiritual growth since joining their present churches. The question asked the congregational members whether since joining the present church they felt that they had grown more spiritually than they had grown in the churches that they had previously attended. The response was a mean rate of 3.72. This means that 97 percent of the congregational members from the ten participating churches either agreed or strongly agreed that they had grown more spiritually in their present churches than they had grown in the churches that they had previously attended.

Question 12 asked the congregational members whether they usually felt more connected to God as a result of their involvement in their present churches. The response was a mean rate of 3.73. This means that 97 percent of the congregational members from the ten participating churches either agreed or strongly agreed that they always felt more connected to God as a result of their involvement in their present churches.

The above statistical evidence shows that the pastor's preaching was the most significant factor in causing both numerical and spiritual growth in the ten participating churches. At least 97 percent of the congregational members from the ten participating churches agreed that since joining their present churches they had grown more spiritually than they had grown in the churches they previously attended. We can, therefore, draw the conclusion that biblical preaching causes both numerical and spiritual growth in the church.

The Pastoral/Leadership Survey

The pastoral survey rated the senior/preaching pastor's perception of the importance of preaching compared to pastoral/staff leaders, worship, and programs. The leadership survey (which was identical to the pastoral survey in design) rated the church leaders' perception of the importance of preaching compared to pastoral/staff leaders, worship and programs. This survey validated the answers to the Pastoral survey. Walter Borg defines validity as

the degree to which a test actually measures the variables it claims to measure.... Different kinds of test validity are relevant to different types of measures and different testing situations. When a new measure is developed, the developer attempts to establish the validity of his measure. A researcher should always check the validity evidence available on measures he employs and describe this evidence in his research report. (117)

Table 4.3 outlines the comparison of the results from these two surveys.

Table 4.3

Church Leaders' Perception of the Strengths of Four Factors in Enabling Them to Lead (N =54)

	Pastor's Preaching		Pastoral/Staff Leaders		Programs		Worship	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
helping leaders to lead their churches	4.78	0.42	3.94	0.45	3.57	0.72	3.37	0.90
helping leaders to promote church growth	4.78	0.47	3.96	0.43	3.83	0.54	3.83	0.69
helping leaders to communicate vision	4.72	0.53	3.93	0.38	3.67	0.61	3.46	0.88

	Pastor's Preaching		Pastoral/Staff Leaders		Programs		Worship	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Importance in								
moving the congregation to deepen commitment to Christ	4.70	0.50	4.02	0.46	3.91	0.56	3.48	0.82
motivating the congregation to support missions	4.76	0.43	3.78	0.63	3.63	0.68	3.24	0.64
motivating the congregation to witness to others or to share the gospel	4.69	0.61	3.98	0.46	3.56	0.82	3.67	0.75
motivating the congregation to serve in the church	4.70	0.50	4.04	0.55	3.76	0.70	3.67	0.75
helping the congregation to grow spiritually	4.85	0.36	4.04	0.19	3.67	0.75	3.80	0.68
Helping the congregation to achieve spiritual maturity	4.72	0.56	4.04	0.51	3.83	0.69	3.70	0.72
Helping the congregation to discover their talents/spiritual gifts	4.67	0.61	3.80	0.71	3.48	0.69	3.43	0.81

The senior/preaching pastors and the church leaders (including local board elders, deacons, women, youth, and different program leaders) answered the same questions. This duplication of questions provided a check and balance to the response from the pastor. Their input is, therefore, given in the same report.

The final result was that fifty leaders (including ten pastors) completed and returned the pastoral/leadership surveys. This was a 90 percent return rate. The leaders were asked to rate the importance of four factors (pastor's preaching, pastoral/staff

leaders, programs, and worship) in helping them to accomplish ten leadership activities in their churches (see Table 4.3). Particularly, questions 5, 6, and 7 of the questionnaires carried the main thrust of measuring the importance of these four factors. The rating in these questions (5, 6, and 7) were based on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = very unimportant; 2 = unimportant; 3 = uncertain; 4 = important; and, 5 = very important). On the above scale, pastor's preaching led as the most important factor in helping the leaders to accomplish their tasks with mean scores of between 4.67 to 4.78. The second most important factor was pastoral/staff leaders with mean scores between 3.80 and 4.04. Programs came third with mean scores of between 3.48 and 3.91. Worship came fourth with mean scores between 3.24 and 3.80. Thus, in the leaders' perception, the pastor's preaching was the most important factor in helping the church leadership accomplish its multifaceted task. Figure 4 shows the comparison of the leaders' perception of the importance of these four factors.

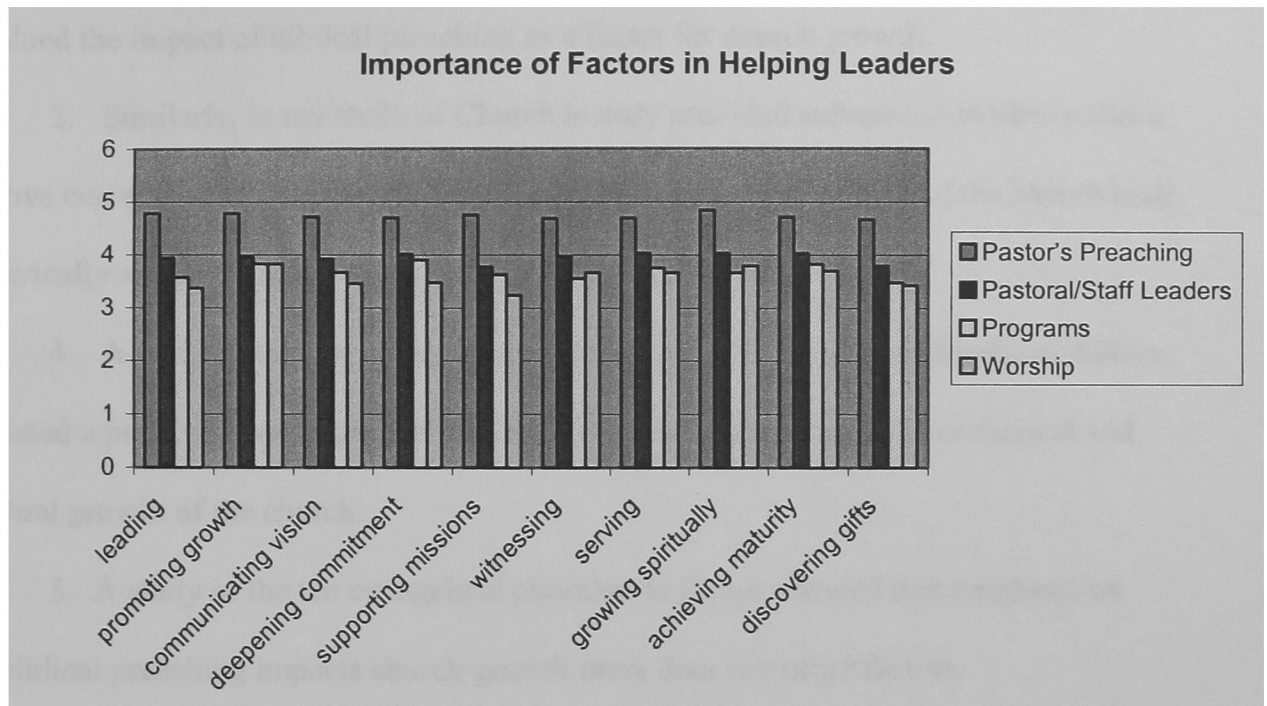


Figure 4 Comparison of Church Leaders' Perception of the Importance of Four Factors in Enabling Them to Lead

The majority of the pastors in the closing interviews also expressed their support that preaching was the most important factor in helping them to lead their churches. For instance, Pastor Isaac M. Kaesa of Jesus' Restoration Center Changamwe, Mombasa said, "I consider the ministry of the word (both preaching and teaching) as both the greatest need as well as the most important factor in the ministry and growth of the local Church today." Similarly, Frederick Muunde observed that "biblical preaching and prayer are the most crucial factors in the ministry and growth of the local Church."

Summary of the Major Findings

1. A biblical study revealed that a positive correlation existed between biblical preaching and church growth.
2. In defiance of glaring evidence that biblical preaching impacts church growth, proponents of the church growth movement in their early writings either ignored or

devalued the impact of biblical preaching as a factor for church growth.

3. Similarly, in my study of Church history provided substantial evidence that a positive correlation existed between biblical preaching and the growth of the church both numerically and spiritually.

4. A study of ten evangelical churches located in Nairobi and Mombasa, Kenya, validated a positive correlation between biblical preaching and both the numerical and spiritual growth of the church.

5. A study of the ten evangelical churches in Kenya showed that emphasis on biblical preaching impacts church growth more than any other factors.

6. Pastors, church leaders, and congregational members of ten evangelical churches in Kenya listed biblical preaching as the most important factor in drawing people to church, influencing their continued stay, and also impacting individual spiritual growth of the participants.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A theological reflection of Acts 6:7 and 2 Timothy 4:2 and the literature review in Chapter 2 provided the basis for the study. In this literature review, both the Bible and history demonstrated that biblical preaching promoted church growth. The church growth cited in the book of Acts was associated with biblical preaching. DeWitte Holland, a church historian, noted that biblical preaching was inherent in Church history. A connection existed whereby the rise and fall of church growth parallels the rise and fall of biblical preaching. The Great Awakening included the preaching ministry of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. Dargan and Holland recorded the results of biblical preaching in the numerical and spiritual growth in the history of the Church. This provided evidence that a positive correlation exists between growth in the Church and preaching.

Further literature review was also done in regard to church growth literature as it relates to preaching and more specifically the role of preaching in the church growth movement. This revealed that the church growth movement presented a different view of preaching and its relationship to growth from what the Bible and Church history recorded. McGavran and Wagner were very instrumental in the development of the church growth movement. In their early church growth movement writings, they de-emphasized the role that preaching plays in the growth of the church. Preaching was not one of the seven vital signs of the church growth movement. Instead, preaching was only seen as a platform for sharing vision.

Verification of Biblical Preaching Definition

The majority of the senior/preaching pastors interviewed in this study confirmed my definition of biblical preaching in Chapter 2. They agreed that biblical preaching finds its origin in the word of God. The apostle Paul gave Timothy the charge, “preach the Word” (2 Tim. 4:2). Craddock reminds us that “sermons not informed and inspired by scripture are objects dislodged, orphans in the world, without mother or father” (27). Several of them testified in agreement to this. James Brown Masinde, the founder and senior pastor of Deliverance Church Umoja, Nairobi for sixteen years, told me, “My sermons always start with what the Bible says. I take a portion of Scripture and then draw principles of God’s faithful dealing with his people at a particular point in their lives.”

Rev. Karanja of Deliverance Church Makupa, Mombasa had this to say:

My preaching is always word based. I am one of those pastors who strongly believe in detailed exposition of the Bible. And I do not regret it. When I came to this church four years ago, I inherited a discouraged congregation from a pastor who had gotten involved in sin. But through the consistent preaching and teaching of God’s word, the church has grown numerically from three hundred members to 450, and as you may have sensed, it is now thriving spiritually.

Similarly, Rev. Daniel Ogutu K’Ogembo of Outreach Community Church Eastleigh, Nairobi had this to say: “My preaching always centers on the detailed exposition of God’s word. This is because only God’s word has the power to transform people’s lives.”

Biblical preaching must also be relevant. The Senior/Preaching pastors in this study understood that relevancy was part of the definition of biblical preaching. One of them told me, “I always emphasize more on positive preaching because people are already hurting, and what they need most is encouragement” (K’Ogembo). Pastor Frederick Muunde of Africa Inland Church Kariobangi South, Nairobi said “Although

my preaching centers on detailed exposition and teaching of Scripture, the texts and topics I choose focus on the most immediate needs of my congregation.”

Moreover these senior/preaching pastors also understood the integrity of the preacher was crucial in making preaching truly biblical. Rev. Karanja observed that “the reason I inherited a discouraged church had to do with the integrity of my predecessor. Although he was a better trained and a more fiery pastor than I am, his unbecoming conduct affected his preaching and brought negative effect in the Church.”

Major Findings

Many other factors may affect church growth. However, when I began this study, I believed that I would find a correlation between biblical preaching and church growth. Consequently, the major findings of this study did not come as a surprise to me.

In confirmation of the thesis of this study, respondents from ten Kenyan evangelical churches (both congregational members and pastors/leaders) perceived biblical preaching as the most significant factor in drawing people to church and in causing spiritual growth. Four surveys and a closing interview designed to evaluate the perceived role of biblical preaching in numerical and spiritual growth produced evidence that biblical preaching is the most significant factor in Church growth.

Three hundred and ninety three congregational members from the ten participating churches (97 percent of the participating congregational members) listed preaching as the most important reason why people start attending a particular church. According to the congregational survey, aggregately, pastor’s preaching was the most significant factor in causing people to start coming to church. It exceeded the second highest factor (friendliness of the people) by a mean score of 1.17. The same percentage

(97 percentage) also ranked preaching as the most important reason why people continued to attend a particular church. Preaching exceeded the second highest factor (programs) by a mean score of 0.97. Moreover, preaching also came out as the major factor in the individual growth of the participants. According to 97 percent of the participants in the congregational survey, the pastor's preaching was the most important factor in causing the church members to grow spiritually. It exceeded the second highest factor (pastoral or staff leadership) by a mean score of 0.83.

Thus, the results of this study provided evidence contrary to the low view of preaching and its relationship to church growth presented by the early writings of the proponents of the church growth movement. Such a view was evident in statements such as Arn's to the effect that "the sermon ... is a relatively minor factor in the growth of the church," (*Pastor's* 12). We are also reminded that Wagner was also quoted as having said, "I have not yet found a correlation between [preaching] and church growth" (*Your Spiritual Gifts*, 100). Yet, this study of ten Kenyan evangelical churches, in a contemporary setting, produced evidence that emphasis of biblical preaching positively impacts numerical and spiritual growth of the church. In any case, as noted earlier, the church growth principles do not seem to have worked as perfectly as the proponents of the church growth movement anticipated. No wonder in 1991, Ken Sidey quotes Wagner himself as having admitted that these principles did not seem to work and, consequently, as having suggested that something else was needed.

"I don't think there's anything intrinsically wrong with the church-growth principles we've developed, or the evangelistic techniques we're using. Yet, somehow they don't seem to work," Wagner says. He points to the fact that in spite of church growth's advances in the eighties, the percentage of the American adults attending church has remained almost the same (about 45 percent), while Protestant church membership has actually declined.... Maybe something else is needed so these

principles we've been diligently working on will have better effect out in the marketplace. (46-47)

As answer to that "something else" that is "needed" to supplement the church growth principles, I point to the evidence in this study that the emphasis upon preaching and teaching of God's Word brings about growth in the local church.

Conclusion

In the literature review in Chapter 2, a study of both the Bible and church history was conducted to determine what impact biblical preaching has on Church growth. A biblical study revealed that a positive correlation existed between biblical preaching and church growth. Similarly, in my study of Church history, I discovered substantial evidence showing a positive correlation existed between biblical preaching and the growth of the church both numerically and spiritually.

Further study was aimed at testing the hypothesis that a positive correlation between biblical preaching and both the numerical and spiritual growth of the church exists and that tangible evidence exists that the emphasis of biblical preaching will impact church growth more than other factors. A study of ten evangelical churches located in Nairobi and Mombasa, Kenya, validated a positive correlation between biblical preaching and both the numerical and spiritual growth of the church and that emphasis on biblical preaching impacts church growth more than any other factors. Just as the literature review had pointed out earlier, data collected from pastors, church leaders, and congregational members revealed and, therefore, affirmed that preaching was a significant component in the numerical and spiritual growth of the churches. The ten churches surveyed listed preaching as the most important reason why people started

coming to church and also continued to stay at church. Preaching was also listed as the major ingredient in the individual growth of the participants.

In the process of my study, I came to draw three timeless qualities regarding the role of biblical preaching in church growth. First, biblical preaching is a major factor in the numerical and spiritual growth of the church. Second Timothy 4:2 is the singular New Testament occurrence where the Greek word *κηρυσσω* is linked with local church ministry as opposed to proclamation of the gospel to the lost. In this passage, Paul charged Timothy to “preach the word” as his prescription for church growth strategy. In Acts 6, the apostles avoided the temptation of being distracted from their priority task of preaching. By delegating social work, they were freed to preach the Word and as a result of the “spreading of the Word” (Acts 6:7a), rapid numerical growth as well as spiritual growth (see “increase in faith”) occurred (Acts 6:7b). McGavran, the father of the church growth movement, stresses that in order for churches to grow, they needed “reproducible patterns of growth possible to ordinary congregations, ordinary pastors, and ordinary missionaries” (*Understanding* 119). In my opinion, not only is biblical preaching “reproducible” but also possible to all the people mentioned above. Biblical preaching, therefore, fits McGavran’s proposal very well. Tangible evidence from the Bible, Church history, and the contemporary setting has clearly supported the principle that the Word of God is a major factor for church growth.

What then does this mean for pastors in Kenya? It means that those pastors who desire to lead their churches toward numerical and spiritual growth can do nothing more important than preaching God’s word. Instead of succumbing to the pull of being a “jack-of-all-trades and masters-of-none,” such pastors could decide to delve into the work of

the exposition of God's Word at the minimization (if not exclusion) of other duties.

Biblical preaching should compose one of the primary tools in each pastor's ministry tool kit. Church leaders and congregational members who recognize this principle will make an effort to free their pastors from social work and encourage them to devote significant time towards preaching. Obviously, leaders must be willing to take on most of the social responsibilities in the church in order to free their pastor for preparation.

The second principle is that biblical preaching is a major factor in drawing people to attend church. The Bible and Church history showed clearly that biblical preaching drew multitudes. Throughout the centuries, biblical preaching has influenced many spiritually. Noteworthy is the fact that "France had no Wesley, and France had her bloody revolution. Britain with her Wesley, had an eighteenth century Wesleyan revival, and there was no bloody revolution" (McGraw 56). Ninety-seven percent of those surveyed in the ten Kenyan evangelical churches said that the primary reason they attended their particular church was because of biblical preaching. I, therefore, recommend the use of preaching as an attraction to the local church. If preaching is what people are looking for in a church, then it should be given the attention and promotion that it deserves. Churches that take this principle seriously could advertise the preaching ministry in the radio, newspapers, or flyers in the neighborhood.

Third, biblical preaching is extremely important to people who attend church. What this means for the preaching pastor is that he or she must give enough time and effort to ensure good preaching for those who come to hear God's Word. This means Word-based, clear, relevant messages delivered by people of integrity in the power of the Holy Spirit. Since biblical preaching causes spiritual growth, pastors must make sure

their preaching includes not only “milk” but also the “meat” of God’s Word that is so necessary for maturity (see 2 Pet. 2:2).

Implications of the Findings

The findings affirmed what the literature review had insisted upon all along. The findings also helped to verify a correlation between biblical preaching and the growth of the church, both numerically and spiritually. Thus, the findings helped to bring a needed correction to the impression given in the early church growth movement writings that preaching was not a significant factor in relationship to numerical and spiritual growth of the church. Consequently, I would suggest that instead of marginalizing the role of preaching or taking a stance of silence, the church growth movement should begin advocating the evidentially strong role of the pulpit in church growth. Some of the church growth movement experts appear to have realized the indispensability of preaching to church growth. A good example is where Lyle Schaller in one of later writings observes that “It is difficult to overstate the power of good preaching today, and it usually is the number one factor in determining where the baby boomers go to church” (“Twenty-one” 5).

Clearly, from the results of the study, an emphasis in biblical preaching had a great impact in both the numerical and spiritual growth of the evangelical churches in Nairobi and Mombasa, Kenya. This led me to a few more specific implications for the evangelical church in Kenya.

In my study, I discovered that most evangelical churches in Kenya tended to rely upon and to utilize either the evangelistic crusade method or the person-to-person evangelism method in their pursuing numerical church growth. However, based on the

results of this study, the churches do not need to spend so much time, energy, money, personnel, and equipment in organizing evangelistic crusades and training people for person-to-person evangelism. Instead, it would perhaps be more beneficial for the evangelical churches to seek enabling their pastors to become more effective biblical preachers. This could be done through deliberately committing more resources towards providing for more training, refresher courses, and seminars in biblical preaching; providing more and relevant materials; and, also providing an ideal place and time for sermon schedule planning and preparation. According to this study, the resultant biblically based preaching would lead to both numerical and spiritual growth of the church. This would mean more congregational participation in the ministry of the local church, including increased giving.

Kenyan Bible schools and colleges should also put more emphasis on preparing pastors to become effective biblical preachers. Apart from organizing refresher courses and seminars, such institutions could also avail and encourage local pastors to use their libraries and resource materials to enable them to become better biblical preachers.

I also suggest that Seminaries, Bible colleges and, Bible institutes in Kenya would be wise in including a stronger philosophy of preaching in their curricula. This would mean deliberately increasing and requiring more courses in biblical preaching, especially for those training to become pastors.

The fact that God has prominently blessed preaching in the history of the church clearly indicates its significance. It also shows that regardless of the effectiveness of sociological factors, we cannot ignore preaching and substitute it with these mechanistic sociological factors that the church growth movement emphasizes.

Limitations of the Study

The most obvious limitation of the study was in the number of churches surveyed. Although both the leaders and congregational members in the study genuinely represented the population of some of the fastest growing evangelical churches in Kenya, the sampling lacked the ideal totality of the volume. A larger group would definitely not only have made the study stronger but also given a clearer picture. The study would, therefore, be stronger by encompassing a larger percentage of the evangelical churches in Kenya including more declining churches.

Another apparent limitation was that whereas most of the pastors in the survey (owing to their training) understood clearly the different styles of preaching used, probably not all the congregational members had the same understanding based on their weekly sermon experience.

Suggestions for Further Study

Regarding the role of biblical preaching in the growth of churches in Kenya, or Africa for that matter, this was a groundbreaking study. It suggests a number of areas for further study. First, the results of this study need to be replicated with larger numbers of churches in more cities, if not throughout the country.

These results indicate that much of the early church growth movement writings about preaching are not accurate. Nevertheless, one question that further research would answer is Are these results only unique to the evangelical churches in Nairobi and Mombasa or do they also apply to churches in other cities in Kenya as well as other parts of Africa?

Second, I proposed Acts 6:7 and 2 Timothy 4:2 as the model for biblical church

growth. A more detailed development of this model is indicated in light of the results from the study. An important question that needs an answer is, What step does contemporary church need to take in order to effect renewal using this model?

Third, this study depended entirely on input given by regular church attendants. Research needs to be done among those who do not attend church at all as well as among those who do not attend Church regularly. Such further research would answer the question What factors would initiate their attending and staying in church?

Fourth, the relationship between church growth and the different types of preaching may also require further consideration. Does one preaching style—expositional, inductive, deductive, narrative, storytelling, etc.—promote church growth in Kenya and in Africa more than another?

All the above notwithstanding, biblical preaching promotes numerical and spiritual church growth. Although other factors besides preaching impact church growth, in this study, no factor was found that has a more positive impression upon the growth of the church than preaching. I personally believe that preaching will continue to exert a dynamic force upon the growth of the church until the Lord Jesus Christ comes back for his Church.

APPENDIX A

Introduction Letter to Pastors of Participating Churches

Dear Pastor _____,

This letter follows the telephone conversation/discussion we/you had/
with _____.

As one of the pastors of Africa Inland Church Jericho, Nairobi, as well as a student at Asbury Theological Seminary, I am involved in an endeavor that will benefit both you and me. Let me explain.

I am in the process of completing my doctoral dissertation on the impact of biblical preaching upon the growth of the evangelical church in Kenya. By evaluating evangelical churches like yours, I will not only gather information vital to my dissertation but also provide you with planning and evaluation tools for your own church growth at no cost.

My evaluation of your church is conducted by easy-to-use surveys involving you, your Sunday morning congregation, and your key leaders.

Following your participation in this evaluation, I will provide you with charts, graphs, and other information pertinent to your church's growth.

This survey is, of course, important to me as I seek to fulfil the requirements of my dissertation. However, I am also confident that it will benefit you and your church as well. Please fill out and return as soon as possible the enclosed, stamped, self-addressed postcard (Appendix B). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Festus K. Kavale
Pastor—Africa Inland Church Jericho, Nairobi.

P.S. I look forward to hearing from you and working with you for the advancement of the Lord's work in Kenya.

APPENDIX B

Evaluation Study of Preaching and Church Growth

My name is Festus K. Kavale. I am one of the pastors of Africa Inland Church Jericho, Nairobi, as well as a student at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky. Currently, I am in the process of completing my doctoral dissertation on the impact of biblical preaching upon the growth of the evangelical church in Kenya. By evaluating evangelical churches like yours, I will not only gather information vital to my dissertation but also provide planning and evaluation tools for the growth of evangelical churches in our lovely country, Kenya. Please assist in this worthy cause by carefully filling out and returning to me as soon as possible this questionnaire. Thank you for your time and consideration, and may God bless you.

Please check (tick) one response:

Yes, I will help in this church growth evaluation.

No, I am not able to help in this church growth evaluation.

If you will help in this study, please record the average Sunday morning worship attendance (or combined average if you have more than one morning service) for the following years:

1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000

Your Name

Your Office or Residence Phone Number

Name of Your Church

APPENDIX C

Congregational Survey

My name is Festus K. Kavale. I am one of the pastors of Africa Inland Church Jericho, Nairobi, as well as a student at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky. Currently, I am in the process of completing my doctoral dissertation on the impact of biblical preaching upon the growth of the evangelical church in Kenya. By evaluating evangelical churches like yours, I will not only gather information vital to my dissertation, but also provide planning and evaluation tools for the growth of evangelical churches in our lovely country, Kenya. Please assist in this worthy cause by carefully filling out and returning to me as soon as possible this questionnaire. Thank you for your time and consideration, and may God bless you.

1. How old are you? _____ years.
2. How long have you attended this church? _____ years. (If less than one year, please write '1').
3. Are you a member of this church?
Yes No
4. What style of preaching does your preaching pastor use most frequently in your Church? (Check or tick the **one** best answer)

Expositional	Topical	Needs Based	Other (Specify)

Rate each of the following responses using the scale of 1 to 5 by checking (ticking) the appropriate box.

5. How would you rate the importance of the following 4 factors in regard to their having caused you to start coming to this church?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, music/choir, youth, and vacation Bible school) attracted me to this church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Relationships (such as family, friend, or neighbor) brought me to this church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching attracted me to this church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Friendliness of People attracted me to this church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

6. How would you rate the importance of the following 4 factors in regard to causing you to **continue** coming to this church?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, music/choir, youth, and vacation Bible school) keep me wanting to come to this church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Relationships (such as Family, friend, or neighbor) keep me coming to this church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's Preaching keeps me coming to this church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Friendliness of People keeps me coming to this church

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

7. How would you rate the following 4 factors in regard to their importance in contributing to your **spiritual growth**?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, small groups, youth, and vacation Bible school) are important in making me **grow spiritually**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in making me **grow spiritually**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's Preaching is important in making me **grow spiritually**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including Music and choir) is important in making me **grow spiritually**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Check (tick) the box that best describes your opinion on the following statements:

8. Before beginning to attend this church, I would have described my spiritual life as:

4 Very Mature	3 Mature	2 Immature	1 Very Immature

9. Since beginning to attend this church, I have grown spiritually:

4 Very Much	3 Quite a bit	2 A little	1 Not at all

10. I believe that preaching ministry is a major factor in both numerical and spiritual growth of this church.

4 Agree strongly	3 Agree	2 Disagree	1 Disagree strongly

11. The Pastor's preaching always helps me to understand the Bible better.

4 Agree strongly	3 Agree	2 Disagree	1 Disagree strongly

12. Since I joined this church I feel that I have grown more spiritually than I had grown in the church I attended before.

4 Agree strongly	3 Agree	2 Disagree	1 Disagree strongly

13. I usually feel more connected to God as a result of my involvement in this church.

4 Agree strongly	3 Agree	2 Disagree	1 Disagree strongly

APPENDIX D

Pastoral Survey

(To be filled out by the Senior/Preaching Pastor)

My name is Festus K. Kavale. I am one of the pastors of Africa Inland Church Jericho, Nairobi, as well as a student at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky. Currently, I am in the process of completing my doctoral dissertation on the impact of biblical preaching upon the growth of the evangelical church in Kenya. By evaluating evangelical churches like yours, I will not only gather information vital to my dissertation but also provide planning and evaluation tools for the growth of evangelical churches in our lovely country, Kenya. Please assist in this worthy cause by carefully filling out and returning to me as soon as possible this questionnaire. Thank you for your time and consideration, and may God bless you.

1. Please let me know some of the things you have done to make your church grow numerically.

2. Briefly, tell me the kinds of things you have done to cause spiritual growth in your church.

3. What style of preaching do you use most frequently? (Check or tick the **one** best answer)

Expositional	Topical	Needs Based	Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Definition of the above terms:

Expositional: Preaching that accurately communicates a specific text (such as chapter, book, or passage) of the Word of God to the people in ways that touch their

needs and moves them to obedience.

Topical: Preaching focused on topics or ideas (such as Grace of God, Forgiveness, and so on) as opposed to book or chapter exposition.

Needs based: Preaching that centers on the felt needs of the congregation (such as depression, victory, or mainly “How to” messages).

4. With regards to the total hours spent per week in ministry, what percentage do you devote to sermon preparation? Please Indicate: _____ %
5. What percentage of worship service is devoted to preaching? Please indicate: _____ %
6. What importance would you place upon preaching in regards to the overall evangelistic plan in your church? (Check the **one** best answer)

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

7. How would you rate the degree of importance each of these has contributed to the spiritual growth of your church? (Check the **one** best answer).

Programs (such as children’s Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in making me **grow spiritually**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in making me **grow spiritually**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor’s preaching is important in making me **grow spiritually**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in making me **grow spiritually**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

8. How important are each of the following areas in **communicating vision** to your congregation?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in helping me **communicate Vision**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in helping me **communicate vision**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in helping me **communicate vision**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in helping me **communicate vision**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

12. How important are each of the following areas in helping the people of your church achieve **spiritual maturity**?

Programs (such as children’s Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth,) are important in helping people **achieve spiritual maturity**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in helping people **achieve spiritual maturity**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor’s preaching is important in helping people **achieve spiritual maturity**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in helping people **achieve spiritual maturity**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

13. How important is each of these areas in helping people discover their **gifts/talents** in the church?

Programs (such as children’s Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth,) are important in helping people discover their **gifts/talents**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in helping people **discover their gifts/talents.**

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in helping people **discover their gifts/talents.**

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in helping people **discover their gifts/talents.**

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

14. How important are each of the following areas in helping you to **lead** your church?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in helping me **lead** my church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in helping me **lead** my church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in helping me **lead** my church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

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Worship (including music and choir) is important is important in helping me **lead my church**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

12. How important is each of the following areas in helping to **motivate** people in your church **to witness** or share the gospel?

Programs (such as children’s Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in **motivating people to witness** or share the gospel.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in **motivating people to witness** or share the gospel.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor’s preaching is important in **motivating people to witness** or share the gospel.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in **motivating people to witness** to or share the gospel.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

13. How important is each of the following areas in **motivating people to serve** in your church?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in **motivating people to serve** in the church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in **motivating people to serve** in the church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in **motivating people to serve** in the church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in **motivating people to serve** in the church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

14. How important is each of the following areas in helping you to **promote church growth**?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in helping me to **promote church growth**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in helping me to promote church growth.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in helping me to promote church growth.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important is important in helping me to promote church growth.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

15. How important is each of the following areas in **moving members** of your church to **deepen their commitment to Christ**?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in **moving people to deepen their commitment to Christ.**

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in moving people to deepen their commitment to Christ.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in moving people to deepen their commitment to Christ.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in moving people to deepen their commitment to Christ.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

16. How important is each of the following areas in motivating the members of your church to **support missions**?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in **motivating people to support missions**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in **motivating people to support missions**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in **motivating people to support missions**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in **motivating people to support missions.**

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Please write any other information or comments you think will be helpful regarding what you believe has caused both numerical and spiritual growth in your church over the last ten years:

APPENDIX E**Leadership Survey**

(To be filled out by the Deacons/Elders/Local Church Board or Council Members)

My name is Festus K. Kavale. I am one of the pastors of Africa Inland Church Jericho, Nairobi, as well as a student at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky. Currently, I am in the process of completing my doctoral dissertation on the impact of biblical preaching upon the growth of the evangelical church in Kenya. By evaluating evangelical churches like yours, I will not only gather information vital to my dissertation but also provide planning and evaluation tools for the growth of evangelical churches in our lovely country, Kenya. Please assist in this worthy cause by carefully filling out and returning to me as soon as possible this questionnaire. Thank you for your time and consideration, and may God bless you.

1. Please let me know some of the things you have done to make your church grow numerically.

2. Briefly, tell me the kinds of things you have done to cause spiritual growth in your church.

3. What style of preaching do you use most frequently? (Check or tick the **one** best answer)

Expositional	Topical	Needs Based	Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Definition of the above terms:

Expositional: Preaching that accurately communicates a specific text (such as chapter, book, or passage) of the Word of God to the people in ways that touch their needs and moves them to obedience.

Topical: Preaching focused on topics or ideas (such as Grace of God, Forgiveness, and so on) as opposed to book or chapter exposition.

Needs based: Preaching that centers on the felt needs of the congregation (such as depression, victory, or mainly “How to” messages).

4. With regards to the total hours spent per week in ministry, what percentage do you devote to sermon preparation? Please Indicate: _____ %
5. What percentage of worship service is devoted to preaching? Please indicate: _____ %
6. What importance would you place upon preaching in regards to the overall evangelistic plan in your church? (Check the **one** best answer)

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

7. How would you rate the degree of importance each of these has contributed to the spiritual growth of your church? (Check the **one** best answer).

Programs (such as children’s Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in making me **grow spiritually**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in making me **grow spiritually**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in making me grow spiritually.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in making me grow spiritually.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

8. How important are each of the following areas in **communicating vision** to your congregation?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in helping me **communicate Vision**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in helping me **communicate vision**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in helping me **Communicate vision**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in helping me **communicate vision**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

9. How important are each of the following areas in helping the people of your church achieve **spiritual maturity**?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth,) are important in helping people **achieve spiritual maturity**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in helping people **achieve spiritual maturity**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in helping people **achieve spiritual maturity**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in helping people **achieve spiritual maturity**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

10. How important is each of these areas in helping people discover their **gifts/talents** in the church?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth,) are important in helping people discover their **gifts/talents**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in helping people **discover their gifts/talents**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in helping people discover their **gifts/talents**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in helping people discover their **gifts/talents**.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

11. How important is each of the following areas in helping you to **lead** your church?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in helping me **lead** my church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in helping me lead my church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in helping me lead my church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important is important in helping me lead my church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

12. How important is each of the following areas in helping to **motivate** people in your church to **witness** or share the gospel?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in **motivating people to witness** or share the gospel?

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in **motivating people to witness** or share the gospel.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in **motivating people to witness** or share the gospel.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in **motivating people to witness** to or share the gospel.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

13. How important is each of the following areas in **motivating people to serve** in your church?

Programs (such as children's Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in **motivating people to serve** in the church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in **motivating people to serve** in the church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in **motivating people to serve** in the church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in motivating people to serve in the church.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

14. How important is each of the following areas in helping you to promote church growth?

Programs (such as children’s Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in helping me to promote church growth.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in helping me to promote church growth.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor’s preaching is important in helping me to promote church growth.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important is important in helping me to promote church growth.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

13. How important is each of the following areas in moving members of your church to deepen their commitment to Christ?

Programs (such as children’s Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in **moving people to deepen their commitment to Christ.**

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in **moving people to deepen their commitment to Christ.**

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor’s preaching is important in **moving people to deepen their commitment to Christ.**

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in **moving people to deepen their commitment to Christ.**

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

14. How important is each of the following areas in motivating the members of your church to **support missions**?

Programs (such as children’s Sunday school, small groups, vacation Bible school, and youth) are important in **motivating people to support missions.**

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastoral Staff/Leaders are important in motivating people to support missions.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Pastor's preaching is important in motivating people to support missions.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Worship (including music and choir) is important in motivating people to support missions.

5 Very important	4 Important	3 Uncertain	2 Unimportant	1 Very Unimportant

Please write any other information or comments you think will be helpful regarding what you believe has caused both numerical and spiritual growth in your church over the last ten years:

APPENDIX G

Closing Interview with the Senior/Preaching Pastor

Pastor's Name _____

Date Interviewed _____

Name of Church _____

1. Background information:

- a. What denomination is your church? _____
- b. How long have you been in ministry? _____ Years.
- c. How long have you been at this church? _____ Years.
- d. What kind of denomination affiliation do you personally have?

Strong	Moderate	Weak	None

- e. What education have you had?

High School	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate

2. What do you feel is the greatest need of pastoral ministry today? In other words, where should the pastor focus most of his/her attention in ministry today?
3. Approximately what percent of your preaching involves positive emotions and issues (such as "God loves you," "God forgives," and so on) and what percent involves negative emotions or issues (such as "Guilt," "Sin," "Consequences for disobedience," and so on)?

% Preaching involving positive emotions	% Preaching involving negative emotions

4. If not balanced, why is your preaching more positive/negative?

5. When you preach through a book of the Bible, do you cover each section, or do you skip some parts of the book? If so, why?

I Cover Each Section	I Skip Some Parts	I Do Both

6. When preaching through a book of the bible or topic, do you just hit the highlights or do you plumb the depths of the passage(s)? Why?

I Hit the Highlights	I Plumb the Depths	I Do Both

7. Does the congregation protect your study time? If so, how?

8. a. Do you believe that preaching is an essential factor for growth in your church? By *essential*, I mean is preaching a sign of life, growth, and health in the church?

Yes	No	Maybe

b. If so, can you give any specific examples or proof that preaching is an essential factor in your church?

9. What is the average length of your message? _____ Minutes.

10. Is your church located in a community or neighborhood that is (Check the **one** best answer)?

New	Established	Transitional	Declining

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