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Africa: Adventist Mission in Africa: Challenges & Prospect

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Introduction

This address on the challenges of Christian mission in Africa comes from the perspective of an African in the diaspora, an *émigré* presently living in the United States. From this particular viewpoint, three "realities" seem especially relevant and important for framing my ideas. First, Christian mission is rooted in the nature of the Gospel and the nature of the Church: the Gospel is for everyone (Rom 1:16) and, in the oft quoted words of Emil Brunner, "The church exists by mission, just as fire exists by burning" (in Miller 1961:79). Secondly, the church is now solidly rooted in Africa. Thirdly, on the continent the word *mission* is problematic as it is often ambiguous and misunderstood. In light of the foregoing, I have decided to examine the topic of the challenges of Christian mission in Africa in light of the Gospel by exploring the following issues: the church as African and its implication for mission, the meaning of mission in Africa, the place of Africa in the world, the opportunities for Christian mission in Africa, and the requirement of integrity for the agents of mission.

The Church as African: Implications for Mission

Today the presence of the church in Africa should be an important aspect of any discussion of Christian mission to or from the continent. Given the abundant literature documenting the presence of Christianity in Africa, its growth and its impact, it would seem unnecessary to call attention, once again, to the fact that Christianity is alive and well in Africa and bears an African imprint. There are, however, reasons for a reminder that, in Africa, the church is indeed African and has been so for a very long time. According to Andrew F. Walls, "Christianity is indigenous to

Africa, [and] it antedates the oldest African Islam.... [M]odern African Christianity is not only the result of movements among Africans, but has been principally sustained by Africans, and is to a surprising extent the result of African initiatives" (Walls 1989:4, 5).

In spite of the above, some people either express skepticism about African Christianity or seem surprised to learn that the "continent [is now] a major base of the Christian faith" (Bediako 1995:252). One even finds statements that give the impression that the Christian presence in Africa is a paradox. So, for example, a 1996 publication on mission introduces its survey of Africa with these words: "In Africa, optimists quickly become realists. Realists become pessimists. And pessimists become cynics.... An abysmal education system, along with many other sad measures of economic and social illness. Yet Christians live there. They are sharing Africa's pain and pointing her to a future beyond the worst hurts this world can offer" (*Mission Today* 1996:69).

Should we really be puzzled to find Christians in places where "sad measures of economic and social illness" prevail? Should we not just acknowledge the fact that "Africa has become, or is becoming, a Christian continent in cultural as well as numerical terms"? (Sanneh 2003:36). For reasons that cannot be fully understood, the human problems of the continent do not seem to have adversely affected the growth of the church in Africa. One thing is certain, "[d]uring the past thirty years, the economy of Africa has deteriorated at the same inverse proportion as church membership has grown. The more Christian the continent becomes, the more *pauperized* it is increasingly becoming" (Mugambi 1998:357). It is an undeniable fact that in Africa, Christian vitality exists in a context of poverty. The question is not why and how but what lessons can be learned? Here is neither the occasion nor the place for an investigation of lessons to be learned from Christianity in Africa. I will rather point out a major mission implication of the present situation: Christian mission in contemporary Africa must address multiple complex issues at once. In this continent doing mission with integrity and with the whole Gospel in mind requires that one accepts the fact that "with the 1990s a new period of African church history has begun: *A Church Challenged by a Continent in Crisis....* In this situation the church has to live up to the challenge and find answers

to the cries of the time, to the fears and anguish which plague the minds of so many Africans today" (Baur 1994:371).

In order for the church to "live up to the challenge" she must make teaching and training a key aspect of mission. In my experience, "mission to and in Africa" often means evangelization and making converts. This conception of mission seldom includes the necessary aspects of pastoral care and the deepening of the faith of those who identify themselves as Christians. But Christian mission is not just about gaining converts; it is also about making sure that the converts become mature disciples and servants of Christ. That is why, in the words of Art Glasser, "the Christian movement must focus on consolidation while reaching out in expansion" (1984:726). Consequently, one of the greatest missiological challenges of the Christian movement in Africa is the ability to continue the practice of mission as evangelism (meaning the focus on increasing the number of converts) without neglecting the requirement of devoting enough energy and resources to the need "to cope with the elementary issue of absorbing new members, let alone with the deeper issues of formation and training" (Sanneh 2003:37).

While evangelism is still needed in Africa in spite of the geometrical progression of Christianity, for the foreseeable future "formation and training" will be significant frontiers of mission because of what Isaac Zokoué calls "the crisis of maturity in Africa" (1996:354). Why is it, then, that evangelism is still considered the primary focus of mission in Africa? I do not presume to know all the answers to this very important question. I think that the lack of a clear ecclesiology may provide a clue. In many cases mission agencies produced what may be called "junior" churches in Africa, described by Sidbe Sempore as a "'missionary' hurriedly built for Africans and without Africans" (1977:15). It is not surprising that these "hurriedly built" churches have not paid sufficient attention to significant aspects of church life. Moreover, Klaus Fiedler contends that "when faith missions started their work in Africa, they did not think much in terms of ecclesiology for their converts, because they simply did not expect the developments that took place....This poses for faith missions the challenge to take conscious ecclesiology seriously.... The priority of the faith missions was always evangelism" (1994:401). I do not believe that "faith missions"

are alone in giving priority to evangelism. Be that as it may, the question is: What can we expect from "junior" churches? What does "participation in mission" mean for them?

Mission by Africa

In his book *The Crisis of Mission in Africa,* Kenyan theologian John S. Mbiti wrote: "The church in Africa has far too long been missionary minded, but only in terms of receiving missionaries and depending on them. This philosophy must change" (1971:4). In 1989, another Kenyan theologian, Jesse N. K. Mugambi, made this observation: "Up to the present, there is virtually nothing published by African theologians on the mission of the church in Africa" (1989:3). Only people unfamiliar with the ambiguities surrounding the word "mission" in Africa can be surprised by that. Many years ago Lesslie Newbigin noted that "the very word 'mission' has come to suggest an operation in which one reaches down in pity and sympathy to the less fortunate, the unenlightened, the underprivileged" (1964:14-15). This idea of mission and the fact that, in Africa "the missions introduced a clear dichotomy: mission is the foreigners' affair, the church is for the 'natives'" (Fiedler 1994:364) have contributed to Africans' misunderstandings. It is for this reason that "we in Africa have misunderstood our call to mission. The word mission itself raises certain ambiguities in our understanding. Mention mission and missionaries and you think of all the foreign brothers and sisters who live in our villages working in hospitals, translating our Bibles, and teaching women hygiene and sewing.... Thus mission among ourselves and for ourselves is not an issue that keeps us awake with concern" (Kanyoro 1998:221).

As long as such misunderstanding persists, there will be no significant qualitative participation of Africans in mission. Africans will continue to position themselves as recipients of mission thereby delaying the requirement to "rethink our mission task as Africans in Africa." For me this requirement is essential for the integrity of mission in the continent because "no movement can merit the title 'church' unless it is a missionary community" (Kanyoro 1998:226). However, the church in Africa will not take her rightful place in mission unless she deals adequately with the numerous issues related to the place of Africa in the world.

Africa in the World

In Europe and the United States one faces "the constant portrayal of Africa as a place beset by famine, drought, and civil war, or as an open-air ethnographic museum for the West" (Achebe, in Lyons 1998:118). This portrayal of Africa reinforces the continent's "otherness." The perception of Africa as distant and other may be the result of the particular relationship between Africa and Europe. As Chinua Achebe writes, "It is a great irony of history and geography that Africa, whose land mass is closer than any other to the mainland of Europe, should come to occupy in European psychological disposition the farthest point of otherness, should indeed become Europe's very antithesis" (1998:105).

In today's world Africa has easily become the "very antithesis" of all other continents. One can make the case that this image of Africa describes the continent's place in the world. Africa's "otherness" exposes the continent to all sorts of experiments by and from the outside and pushes Africans to the margins of humanity. No wonder there is so much pessimism about Africa in the world. It would appear that at no time in recent memory has there been as much pessimism concerning the present and the future of the African continent and its nation-states as now. The pessimism is often due to the dire economic conditions of the continent. So, for example, a 2002 publication of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development states: "Africa's participation in the world economy has declined alarmingly over the past 50 years in terms of GDP, exports, and foreign investment. Only the continent's share of global population grew as its birth rate accelerated during the 20th century" (*OECD Publications on Africa* 2002:1). For African *émigrés* living in the United States, like myself, the weight of pessimistic news about Africa is sometimes unbearable. In January 2000 in a series of articles the *Chicago Tribune* devoted to Africa someone commented: "No wonder everybody is going *out of Africa*!" Then, in June, Steve Chapman (a journalist of the *Chicago Tribune*) put it succinctly in the Commentary section: "Africa's sad present and its very grim future: ... the opening of the 21st century is a time of optimism about the future of humanity. Until you consider Africa. For years, the continent has been a bleak landscape of chaos, bloodshed, failure and stagnation. Unhappy as the colonial era was for Africans living under foreign rule, the post-colonial era has been far worse" (Chapman 2000:25).

Chapman is only one of the more recent Afro-pessimists. Afro-pessimism should, therefore, be the broader context for any reflection on the African continent these days. Even if Afro-pessimism is the background against which one must examine the challenges and opportunities facing Africa, I do not wish to engage in refuting or examining it in detail. Rather against this background I want to consider four major challenges and three great opportunities for Africa and Africans.

Challenges Facing Africa and Africans

In the twenty-first century, as Africa enters a significant phase of her post-colonial period, her children face, I think, the following four major challenges: They must deal with the lingering effects of Afro-pessimism, they must come to terms with the marginalization of Africa in the present world order, they must refuse solutions to Africa's problems based on ignorance, and they must find room for God and morality in nation building.

Afro-pessimism will, for the foreseeable future, represent an important lense through which many people see Africa and react to Africans. Afro-pessimism reinforces the negative image of Africa and Africans. The negative image and the undeniable fact that Africa "trail[s] the rest of the world in practically every area of human endeavor" (Onwona 2000:15) mean that "Africa stands naked before the rest of the world" (Nyang 1994:1582). Since Afro-pessimism contributes significantly to the "nakedness of Africa," Africans need to devise ways of coping with its lingering effects. But how? Should Africans engage in major media campaigns promoting a positive image of the continent? Should they focus on the analysis of the causes for the continent's present predicament with the hope that better understanding will promote a more balanced assessment of Africa and Africans? Is it more prudent to rally Africans around "a bright vision for Africa" with concepts like "African Renaissance"? Is it not best to ignore Afro-pessimism altogether?

I do not believe that we need to invest time and energy in attempts to mount a rebuttal to Afro-pessimism. Such attempts at rebuttal may concede too much to Afro-pessimism and may, at the same time, be overly optimistic. Take the concept of African Renaissance for example. Its proponents use it to point to positive indicators in the continent. These indi-

cators signal rebirth. The very notion of rebirth implies that there is death or general breakdown. But Africa has not died; she has not experienced a general breakdown. She certainly has had, and she continues to have, many problems caused by her sons and daughters as well as by outsiders. Can we seriously equate these problems with death or general failure? Moreover, how sure are we that we are now living at a time of rebirth for Africa? Has Africa not seen other periods of "Renaissance"? What have we learned from them? I recall a history professor from my high school days in Burkina Faso who, in 1967, spent much time on the idea that the nineteenth century was a time of African Renaissance! I have often asked myself: "What is the legacy of this nineteenth century Renaissance?"

Die-hard Afro-pessimists cannot be silenced with indications of an African Renaissance. Given the complexity of the continent and the multiple challenges it faces, one can always find enough bad news to illustrate "Africa's sad plight"! Afro-pessimism is not, however, just about reporting bad news on Africa. Ultimately Afro-pessimism can cripple the self-confidence of Africans because, as Siradiou Diallo points out, the scorn it generates towards Africa and Africans erodes Africans' dignity (1990:33). In light of this, I think that the protection of the dignity of Africans is one of the best ways of dealing with the lingering effects of Afro-pessimism. Africans may sometimes have to appeal to God directly, through prayer, as I did in 1990, and implore God to restore their self-confidence and human dignity. Christians can have a significant role in the restoration of Africans' human dignity if their theology and practice of mission are solidly based on what the Bible teaches regarding human nature.

The marginalization of Africa in the present world order, which is the second challenge Africans face, is linked to Afro-pessimism. Since it is often taken for granted that Africa is marginal in the world, especially in economics and politics, I will not provide much description here. Africa's marginalization takes many forms. At times she is ignored altogether even by people and nations claimed to be her partners in development. At other times silence and indifference are replaced with comments such as "Africa, the bottomless pit of need!" "On Africa, No Attractive Options for the World" (*Herald Tribune*, November 23-24, 1996:8); "Some Places Globalization Forgot: Africa and Mexico" (*Herald Tribune*, January 2, 1997:2).

The marginalization of Africa also affects events in the continent. It

seems to be related to present uncertainties. These uncertainties have implications for nation-building, social stability, as well as Christian mission. So, on the one hand we are witnessing the destruction of many African nation-states by implosion or by the revival of ethnic or micro-nationalism as in other countries in the world. On the other hand, fewer Africans seem to trust in the worth of nation-building as they point out the failures, the mistakes, the greed, and the impasse to which the past forty years (or so) of independence have led us. Indeed, it appears that we live at a time when Africa is once again ruled by chaos. In such a situation, how does one address the topic of nation-building?

I do not believe that Africa's problems, whatever they are, can be solved by outsiders. This means that, in a sense, Africa's marginalization by the outside world (whether such is possible, real or fiction) does not have an immediate impact on nation-building. Nevertheless, taken together with the implosion of many African nation-states and many Africans' misgivings about the worth of nation-building at the present time, Africa's marginalization must be taken seriously.

The third challenge Africans face is the need to refuse solutions to Africa's problems that are based on ignorance. The marginalization of Africa, the dysfunctional nature of many of her nation-states and many Africans' doubts about the merits of nation-building may promote the idea of looking to outside sources for help and solutions. Indeed, non-Africans sometimes reinforce the idea that positive changes in the continent come from the outside. In 1995 Jacques Godefrain, then France's Minister of Cooperation, declared: "Fifty years ago we told Africans to become nations and they became nations. Ten years ago we told them to become democrats and they became democrats" (1995:9). No wonder some have wondered if Africa does not need to be re-colonized! Yet, many solutions to Africa's problems may be based on selfishness, even on the part of foreign states or they may be the application of policies formulated out of ignorance. As far as selfishness or self-interest is concerned, we must never forget this sobering statement attributed to Charles de Gaulle: "A state does not have friends, it has interests!" (*Un état n'a pas d'amis, il a des intérêts!)*

Matters are further complicated by the widespread ignorance of African realities. Let me illustrate. *The New York Times* is recognized as a reputable daily newspaper in the United States. One can assume that it can

inform its readers accurately. Yet, over the course of forty years (1955 to 1995), *The New York Times* has consistently portrayed Africa negatively. I note, in fairness to *The New York Times*, that Howard W. French, currently a senior writer for the daily and formerly its Africa correspondent, has recently published *A Continent for the Taking: The Tragedy and Hope of Africa*. This book offers a rather balanced treatment of the continent.

It is, frankly, a pity that so many of us look to the outside for solutions to Africa's problems. What kind of solutions can one expect from states that are bent on protecting their own interests and whose "African" policies are often rooted in negative images of Africa? Elochukwu E. Uzukwu is right: "The solution to Africa's problems is through mobilizing and ably harnessing its internal resources instead of depending on external aid" (1996:8). Let us always remember that nation-building and development cannot be the results of philanthropy.

The fourth challenge, that of finding room for God and morality in nation-building, is especially important for us Christians. Here I only present why and how this is a challenge. I will indicate below how Christians can respond to this challenge positively. The challenge is brought into focus by the following paradox. On the one hand religious people (Christians in particular) stress the positive role of religion in nation-building. On the other hand some writers seem to have a particular problem with religion when it comes to nation-building: for them religion has a negative impact on nation-building and development. Edem Kodjo's ...*et demain l'Afrique* (1985) provides an illustration of this attitude. Although the book is an analysis of the African condition and a proposal of hope for the future of the continent, it contains no substantial treatment of the role religion or Christianity can play in what he calls the path to salvation (*la voie du salut*, chapter 13) for Africa. There are only oblique and negative references to religion such as "the future of the continent is neither in autarchy (isolationism) nor a new millenarianism" (*L'avenir du continent africain ne se trouve ni dans l'autarcie ni dans un nouveau millénarisme*) (289). Edem Kodjo is not alone in viewing religion negatively in matters pertaining to nation-building and development. Consider, for example, Daniel Etounga-Manguelle's opinion in "Does Africa Need a Cultural Adjustment Program" (2000). He seems to attribute Africa's backwardness and stagnation to the power religion has over Africans. For him Africa will

progress only if she is liberated from religion and invisible powers. I find this negative view of religion, on the part of an African academic, a serious intellectual bias. Likewise, the dismissal of religion by an African politician of the statue of Edem Kodjo represents a fundamental misunderstanding of the continent by a person who is charged with the responsibility of enabling citizens to be about nation-building. No person with religious convictions should allow this bias and this misunderstanding to remain unchallenged!

Opportunities for Christian Mission in Africa

The present challenges facing Africa may provide us (Africans and non-Africans alike) with the greatest opportunity for a fresh and creative examination of issues related to Christian mission in the continent. I see three areas of opportunity for Africa and Africans: Africans can turn marginalization into a resolve to find intra-African solutions to African problems; Africans may be able to think realistically about nation building and development; Churches in Africa have a window for being hope generating churches. These areas of opportunity are, in my mind, the positive side of the challenges Africa faces at this time.

I have already tipped my hand, as it were, when I presented the third challenge. I will therefore be brief as I direct your attention to the first area of opportunity. We can turn our present marginalization in the world order into a resolve to find intra-African solutions to African problems. This collaboration in nation-building is crucial at this time when Africa seems to be facing its greatest challenges since its partition during the age of imperialism.

The current situation of the continent also provides the opportunity to think realistically about all aspects of life in Africa, nation-building, development, social harmony, and religion. For me, whatever else nation-building is and means, it is about providing citizens with the conditions for them to peacefully contribute to the common good of the society and nation of which they are members. Given this, freedom and justice are two of the foundational pillars of nation-building. When the state provides these two ingredients or strives to do so, citizens can carry on the task of nation-building. It is in this connection that I think the following words of Scripture are particularly meaningful: "Righteousness and jus-

tice are the foundations of [God's] throne" (Ps 89:14) and "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" (Prov 14:34).

For us to think realistically about nation-building and development, we must ask if the state in its present form in Africa, provides its citizens with the necessary conditions for participating in nation-building. In the following analysis of the nation-state I am indebted to Jean-François Bayart (1989a & b) and to Achille Mbembe (1988).

According to Mbembe the authoritarian principle best describes how the state functions in post-colonial Africa. This authoritarian principle has led the state into becoming what he calls the theologian-state (*l'Etat-théologien*), that is, the state grants itself the right of being the sole possessor of truth, particularly in matters related to politics and nation-building (1988:127, 128). Lamin Sanneh expresses the same phenomenon when he writes about "the state that is over-extended with the rhetoric of omnicompetence" (1992:16).

Though they may not be familiar with the terminology, Africans know, at the practical level and by experience, what it means to be governed by a state which perceives itself as all-competent. All Africans have dealt with either centralized bureaucracies, or single party politics, or arbitrary laws or governments refusing to be accountable to citizens they claim to serve and represent. In essence the theologian-state, in granting itself all competence, has monopolized all political power, activity, and discourse. In so doing it has prevented the population from active participation in politics and therefore in nation-building (see Mbembe 1988, 141). This means that generally civil society is absent from most aspects of nation-building in independent Africa.

Another characteristic of the post-colonial state in Africa is that of unchecked profiteering, which has been graphically described as the rule of the stomach. The rule of the stomach expresses itself in corruption of all kinds and by the exploitation of the citizens by the state.

The authoritarian principle, the rule of the stomach, and the presence of pirates or bandits in power produce one net result: institutionalized injustice. In this sense the post-colonial state in Africa has perverted the Pauline belief according to which "rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong.... [The state] is God's servant to

do you good" (Rom 13:3, 4). The African state seems to operate by the opposite principle.

The nation-state, in its present condition in Africa, has failed to provide citizens with the basic requirements for nation-building as mentioned above: freedom and justice. Given this reality one should not be surprised that Africans concluded that they should protect their own interests since the state was not going to look after its citizens' interests. Even when majority rule is adopted as a result of political reforms people may not see a better tomorrow because, as Gerald P. O'Driscoll, Jr. writes, "In a system of majoritarian rule with no protected rights, democracy is just two wolves and a sheep deciding what is for lunch" (2002:10). Alas, there are instances (too many perhaps) in Africa where the church is one of the wolves! Her participation in the integrity of mission requires that she cares for the rights of the weak, the downtrodden, and exploited members of society as she embraces the fact that "it is not enough that Christian mission be redemptive; it must be prophetic as well" (Glasser 1984:726).

For me, thinking realistically about nation-building, development , social harmony, and mission means that we must always remember that no human endeavor that is worth doing can be accomplished in one individual's lifetime or by just one individual. This is true of nation-building; it requires the contribution of all citizens and it cannot be done in a few short years.

The church, like other organized bodies of African societies, has tended to work for the short-term and, unfortunately, her "language and practice are not different from the tyrannies which are called governments in Africa" (Uzukwe 1996:121). In addition, John S. Pobee notes that "[a]buse of power—the corruption of power—the sinful use of power is as much evident in church as in politics"(1998:105). This means that, among other things, the church has tended to adopt the common attitude of protecting her own interests. Consequently, in many African countries the church denounces institutionalized injustice only when her own interests are in jeopardy. This can hardly count as participation in nation-building. And such behavior is certainly not an example of Christian mission done with integrity.

The Church's attitude is sometimes rooted in questionable theological understanding of what position the Christian should adopt vis-à-vis the

state. A theology of "preaching Jesus Christ ... [for an] appointment for the hereafter" (Chipenda and Karamaga 1991:26) coupled with an interpretation of Romans 13 which implied blind and complete obedience to the state as a minister of God removed Christianity from influencing the direction in which nation-building moved.

The way forward is for Christians and churches to abandon worldly foolishness and interested vigilance. In so doing they may become hope-generating churches. This is the third area of opportunity. Hope is necessary for nation-building because "despair does not constitute the basis for the reconstruction of our continent" (Uzukwe 1996:149). But how can churches generate hope if they are not different from other institutions of society? For, as Lesslie Newbigin wrote, "The most important contribution which the church can make to a new social order is to be itself a new social order" (1991:85). That is, the church should be what God intended her to be. This is both the greatest challenge and the greatest opportunity for African Christians today in nation-building and Christian mission. It requires integrity on the part of those involved in mission.

Integrity: Required Characteristic in the Agents of Mission

The multiple crises affecting the African continent have been fertile ground for a situation of "generalised insecurity" (Karamaga 1991:27) which is conducive to what Hannah W. Kinoti calls the *mutatu culture* where "making money is the most important thing" (1997:255). Let me note, in passing, that the glorification of "making money" and the "grabbing mentality" are not specific or limited to Africans and the African continent. Nevertheless, an overall climate of economic instability can foster a culture where this general human tendency is reinforced. In this culture (due to insecurity and the scarcity of everything) the basic reflex is to grab as much as possible, as quickly as possible, and by any means possible. Consequently, ethics and morality tend to be viewed either as nuisances or as irrelevant and unimportant. I have, in fact, heard an African student/church leader say: "I am too poor to be honest!" In this kind of context, where the satisfaction of one's appetites has the highest priority, can Christians contribute to "a new social order" unless they, by their moral commitment, provide a way of true and costly service? For me moral commitment is integrity. But, what is integrity?

One should not have to define integrity for religious people in general and Christians in particular. After all, the word integrity is more readily associated with religion than it is with politics and economics. Perhaps the simplest way of defining integrity for our purposes here is "wholeness" as its synonym. For the Christian, integrity is that "wholeness in obedience to God" (Carter 1996:8) which is manifested in moral uprightness in word and deed. According to Stephen L. Carter, integrity requires three steps: "(1) *discerning* what is right and what is wrong; (2) *acting* on what you have discerned even at personal cost; and (3) *saying openly* that you are acting on your understanding of right and wrong" (1996:7).

Thus explicated, integrity is not exclusively a Christian virtue but it is the "stuff" without which it is impossible to live the Christian life. I wonder, quite frankly, if it is possible to sustain a life of integrity without the kind of transformation of heart and mind (which is the work of the Spirit of God) available only to people who know God as articulated in the Bible. It is, therefore, a tragedy when Christians who claim to know God lack integrity because integrity is essential to their identity. This lack prevents them from doing mission with integrity.

In themselves, Carter's three steps of integrity could provide an agenda for African Christians who intend to serve church and society and carry out God's work in a manner consistent with the Gospel. But there is an even more fundamental reason why integrity should be the basis for what is currently called reconstruction in Africa: integrity is anti-corruption. In Carter's words, "If integrity has an opposite, perhaps it is corruption—the getting away with things we know to be wrong" (1996:12). Nobody can deny the fact that corruption is an impediment to nation-building and to church life in Africa as so many people seemingly have made it a practice to "get away with things we know to be wrong." I should think, then, that an antidote to corruption would be worth examining as a possible ingredient in a missiology focused on accomplishing mission with integrity.

Can integrity really have that function and can it also be an agenda for reconstruction at the national level? I provide the following example as an illustration that integrity can even be part of politics and economics at the national level lest it seems that the foregoing is just theory and rhetoric. In 1983 Thomas Sankara and the group of revolutionaries who seized power in what was then Upper Volta promoted the idea that there is a link be-

tween integrity and nation-building. It is instructive that in 1984, on the first anniversary of the August Revolution they gave a new name to the country: Burkina Faso (Fatherland of the Upright People or Home of the People of Integrity). The new name of the country signaled their ideal to make integrity a very important and public aspect of governance and a basis for the fight against corruption. Consequently during the Sankara years (1983-1987) many dignitaries accused of embezzlement were publicly tried by the *Tribunaux Populaires de la Révolution* (Popular Revolutionary Tribunals). Some were found guilty while others were acquitted. This and other similar practices of the Sankara government contributed to a reduction in corruption.

The Sankara years were certainly difficult for the citizens of Burkina Faso. So my purpose here is neither to praise Sankara nor to idealize/idolize everything he and his colleagues did. I simply want to point out what a focus on integrity can do for national life and politics. For me Sankara's Burkina Faso shows that integrity can be part of public life. What would happen if churches and Christian mission organizations made integrity their ethical and moral imperative? Would this not be significant for doing mission with integrity and in the power of the Spirit of God? I realize that integrity is an unfinished agenda like all moral qualities and like life itself; it must be practiced daily and in community and cannot be sustained without the kind of renewal and inner fortitude brought by God. That is the reason integrity should be a constant characteristic of the agents of God's mission.

I have offered, in the foregoing, what I think are some of the most urgent matters that must be examined as we consider the nature of the integrity of Christian mission in Africa. May God grant all parties involved the strength, the courage, and the grace to address them well.

Prayer for Troubled Africa

Gracious God, Creator of Heaven and Earth,
　　　　　　　Father of all Mankind,
　　　　　　　My soul is troubled today,
　　　　　　　Because Africa, your creation, is troubled.
Gracious God, I call on you because

You alone care about your creation
When no one else cares.
My soul is troubled today, Gracious God, for I have
heard distressing news concerning Africa.
I have heard that some of your own creatures
wish that Africa, your creation, would disappear.
Some of them, French journalists, amuse themselves
by predicting that
if, through some cataclysmic event,
Africa were to disappear
the world would not miss it very much.
My soul is troubled today, Gracious God,
Creator of Heaven and Earth,
Father of all Mankind,
for they give fifteen to twenty years of life
to Africa, your creation.
Then...? Then, they say, Africa's AIDS-ridden
socially dysfunctional population
WILL BE EXTINCT.
I am troubled, troubled and confused. Are they right,
Gracious God,
Creator of Heaven and Earth,
Father of all Mankind?
But then, what if?
What if Africa were to disappear?
If Africa were to disappear,
the people who now wish her disappearance
would have to look for other means of livelihood.
If Africa were to disappear,
there would be no more specialists of African
affairs,
no more African Studies Departments in
Universities,
no more publications on Africa,
no more Africana publishing houses.
If that were to happen, Gracious God,
I would PRAISE YOUR GREAT NAME!
For if Africa were to disappear,
the world would be

> without famine,
> without AIDS,
> without development workers,
> without diplomats needing hardship wages
> for being posted in God-forsaken Africa.
If Africa were to disappear,
suddenly nations would balance their budgets
since they would save all the money they now spend
on the African bottomless pit.
You know, Gracious God,
Creator of Heaven and Earth,
Father of all Mankind,
that if Africa were to disappear,
> Christians would have
>> more time,
>> more energy,
>> more resources
to concentrate on fewer
> unreached,
> pagan,
> benighted,
> heathens.
That would surely quicken the fulfillment of the Great Commission
and hasten your Son's return!
Lord, God, if Africa were to disappear,

THE WORLD WOULD SURELY BE A BETTER PLACE!

So, Gracious God,
Creator of Heaven and Earth,
Father of all Mankind,
I, troubled man from troubled Africa,
> humbly pray,
grant their wish: please make Africa disappear.

P.S.:   And one more plea: Before you grant their wish,
please take Africa and her sons and daughters to yourself,
and let others remain on earth to enjoy it.
Bring Africa, her sons and daughters to that place where,

at long last THEY SHALL NO LONGER BE TROUBLED.
Komõ de kalesoro de worowe
New Haven, Connecticut, April 26, 1990

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Biography

Dr. Tite Tiénou is Senior Vice President of Education, Dean of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and professor of theology of mission at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. He has been at Trinity since 1997.

Prior to coming to Trinity, Dr. Tiénou served as president and dean of the Faculté de Théologie Evangélique de l'Alliance in Abidjan, Côte 'Ivoire, West Africa, and taught for nine years at Alliance Theological Seminary in Nyack, New York. He was the founding director and professor of the Maranatha Institute in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, in addition to being a pastor in the Central Church of the Christian Alliance Church.

Dr. Tiénou earned the Doctor of Philosophy in intercultural studies and the Master of Arts in missiology at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. He earned the Maîtrise en Théologie at Faculté Libre de Théologie Evangélique in Vaux-sur-Seine, France, and the Bachelor of Science in theology at Nyack College in New York where he graduated cum laude.

Dr. Tiénou's areas of expertise include missions, theology, and the church in Africa. He has been a member of the African Studies Association since 1991 and the Overseas Ministries Study Center Study Group on Mission Issues since 1985. Dr. Tiénou has also been a member of the Nyack Honor Society and received the Contextualization Award at the School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary in 1984. Dr. Tiénou has authored numerous books and articles, published in English and French.

Dr. Tiénou served as the senior mission scholar in residence at Overseas Ministries Study Center in New Haven, Connecticut, and research fellow at Yale Divinity School from January to May 1990. He has also been chairman and chairman emeritus for the International Council of Accrediting Agencies from 1989 to 1992 and was a member of the International Advisory Council for Lausanne II in Manila from 1986 to 1989.

Dr. Tiénou resides in the Chicagoland area with his wife, Marie, and their four children.

2 | An Overview of the State and Challenges of Adventist Mission in Sub-Saharan Africa

Adefemi Adesina

Introduction

Mission has always been at the heart of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, although developing the vision of global mission took some time. The Church at first concentrated her mission efforts in North America ("Jerusalem"), but soon extended its mission to Europe ("Judea"), and eventually to "Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). By the 1870s, the Church's definition of mission had grown to include the whole world. Today, the Church has a presence in over 228 nations recognized by the United Nations (Adventist statistics are from World Church Statistics). This paper presents an overview of the current state of the Church in Sub-Saharan Africa, reviews methods and strategies, and discusses the challenges that now confront the Church.

The beginning of Adventist work in Africa was not the result of formal strategic planning. William Hunt, an American miner from Nevada, went to South Africa in 1878, not long after being baptized into the Church, to become the first unofficial Adventist missionary. Hunt arrived with some Adventist literature which he shared with colleagues and acquaintances. Before long a small group was formed that worshipped on the seventh-day Sabbath (Neufeld 1976:1363). Eventually, that small group was linked with headquarters at Battle Creek and official mission work began.

As the work in South Africa was being established and strengthened, God was working in a similar way to establish his work in West Africa. In 1888, the Three Angels' Message was introduced to West Africa through tracts which accidentally reached Apam, Ghana. It was these tracts that led to the conversion of Francis I. U. Dolphin of Apam (A National Cente-

nary Commemoration Bulletin 1988; Neufeld 1976:512). Dolphin, partner-
ing with some other Western missionaries, soon became part of the first
Adventist pioneering team in West Africa.

The work in East Africa started differently as it is the only region en-
tered by an official Adventist initiative. The Church in Germany sent the
first missionaries to Tanzania (Neufeld 1976:1459). From there the work
expanded to the other parts of the region.

The Present State of Religions in Sub-Saharan Africa

The CIA Fact File reports that Christianity is now the majority reli-
gion in Sub-Saharan Africa, with 53% of the population. Christianity is
followed by Islam with 26%, and African Traditional Religion (ATR) with
20% of the total. Other religions such as Hinduism share the remaining
1%. The following table shows the distribution of the largest religions in
the three Adventist divisions.

Table 1. Religions in Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Region	Population	Christianity	Islam	ATR
East-Central Africa Division	281,346,904	62%	26%	12%
Southern Africa Indian Ocean Division	142,387,393	64%	08%	24%
West-Central Africa Division	317,532,159	34%	43%	23%
Africa	741,266,456	53%	26%	20%

Table 1 shows that the greatest challenge for Christian mission in Af-
rica comes from Islam and ATR. The challenge Islam presents to Christian
mission is greatest in West Africa where it is the dominant religion. Al-
though the challenge of Islam is less in East Africa than in West Africa, it
is significant nonetheless. The challenge of Islam in Southern Africa is less
strong than in the West and East.

 African Indigenous Religion accounts for about twenty percent of the
population and has a noticeable presence in all the sub-regions. In my
opinion, ATR constitutes the greatest challenge to Christianity in Africa.
This is because ATR, like the air we breathe, permeates all of African life,
including the lives of many professed Christians. Apart from forming the

bedrock of the beliefs and practices for many African Initiated Churches (AIC), ATR also has great influence among members of more mainline churches. This is why much of Christianity in Africa is syncretistic, tending toward dual or multiple allegiances.

The Present State of the Adventist Church in Sub-Saharan Africa

The current Adventist membership in the Sub-Saharan Africa of 5,121,919 is distributed among three divisions: East Central Africa Division (ECD), Southern Africa Indian Ocean Division (SID), and West-Central Africa Division (WAD). The three divisions are currently organized into twenty-one unions and 145 local conferences, missions, associations, and attached fields. The membership is as follows: ECD—2,283,279; SID—2,064,919; WAD—773,621. These three divisions constitute approximately 34% of the Adventist world membership of 14,913,231 and thus play an important role.

Although Adventists enjoy relatively good growth rates in Sub-Saharan Africa, the challenge of mission remains great. With a total population of 741,266,456 in the three divisions, Adventists have just 0.69% of the total and there are 145 people per member. Although the 1:145 ratio is favorable when compared to some other world divisions, the membership is not spread evenly, and major areas lack significant Adventist membership. Growth rates may be relatively good, compared to other world regions, but the table below shows that they are not consistent, ranging from 0.51% to 8.76%.

Table 2. Analysis of Growth Rates 2003-2006

Year	ECD	SID	WAD	Africa
2003-2004	0.51%	8.76%	5.37%	4.43%
2004-2005	4.55%	5.14%	4.01%	4.75%
2005-2006	3.54%	3.86%	2.27%	3.47%

Methods and Strategies for Adventist Mission in Africa

The Adventist Church has historically employed a variety of methods and strategies in Africa.

Education

Education has been part of Adventist mission in Africa from its earliest days. At present the Church operates hundreds of elementary schools, seventy-five secondary schools, and twelve degree-offering colleges and universities in the three African divisions. These institutions serve three basic purposes: (1) training workers for the church, (2) assisting governments in the general task of education, and (3) leading students to accept Christ. The Church has a good record of achievement in all three areas.

Despite the record of success in the educational sphere, there are some issues that should be noted. First, however good education may be, it needs to be more affordable, especially for Adventist members. Babcock University has a commendable "heritage award" that other institutions could emulate. Plans are needed that take into account different family income levels in setting fees.

Second, Adventist institutions need to be staffed predominantly by Adventists to maintain the essential character needed to achieve their mission. Perhaps an appropriate goal for both teaching and non-teaching staff would be that seventy-five percent be Adventist.

Third, Adventist education needs to include more vocational training. In the economic context of Africa, people need access to training that will prepare them for good jobs, even if they do not qualify for degree programs. Vocational training has great potential for contributing to development goals in Africa.

Healthcare

Another method used from the earliest days of Adventist mission in Africa has been healthcare. Adventist theology defines human beings as a unity of body, mind, and soul. Hence, the use of healthcare alongside education and evangelism. Besides offering compassionate care for sick bodies, Adventist healthcare is often a vehicle for sharing Christ and leading people to follow him.

There are currently 217 Adventist medical institutions in the three divisions, made up of hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries. In many nations these institutions play an important role in providing healthcare for the whole nation. As the continent battles with HIV/AIDS, malaria, sickle-cell-anaemia, and other ailments, Adventist healthcare is more relevant than ever. The level of need cries out for much more to be done.

Publishing

The publishing of books, pamphlets, and tracts is a third method used extensively in Adventist mission. Today, there are twelve Publishing Houses and many Adventist Book Centres in Africa that provide literature for sale. There are some challenges to be addressed for publishing to be more effective:

1. Sometimes there are books on helpful topics like health and family life but not enough books on the core Adventist message.

2. Books are often not affordable because of being published outside of Africa. More publishing needs to be done within Africa where production costs are low.

3. Much Adventist literature is either only in a non-African language or translated from original works by non-Africans. While such literature may play an appropriate role, many more articles and books written by African authors for the local context are needed.

Public Evangelism

The most prominent method used in Adventist mission to the continent is public evangelism. In the typical approach, the evangelist preaches the Adventist message for two to four weeks and concludes with a baptism. While this approach is popular and is often viewed as the most successful, it also attracts some criticism. Converts often seem to be hurried into the baptistery and then abandoned or given inadequate discipleship training afterwards. Drop-out rates are very high.

Electronic Media Evangelism

The use of electronic media (radio, television, satellite, internet) is a more recent addition to mission methodology than those discussed thus

far. The electronic media often convey the same basic content as evangelistic campaigns. Electronic media approaches have the potential of reaching into homes, work places, and other environments inaccessible in any other way. Closed or resistant people groups can sometimes receive the Adventist message through the electronic media. The greatest challenge for using the electronic media is making effective linkages between responsive people and Adventists who can guide and nurture their spiritual growth. Electronic media evangelism needs to be intentionally linked with other methods of Adventist mission.

Personal and Small Group Evangelism

Another method commonly used for mission and evangelism in Sub-Saharan Africa is personal evangelism. The small group is frequently used as the organizing unit for personal evangelism. There is a significant consensus that personal evangelism functioning from a small group within the local church is more effective in the long term than the more dramatic but short public evangelistic campaign. Perhaps the ideal approach is to integrate both methods. As with so many good methods, the challenge is in implementation. More careful training and motivation is needed among the Adventist members of our continent.

The Challenges of the Adventist Mission in Sub-Saharan Africa

Although the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Sub-Saharan Africa has had successes, there are also enormous challenges.

The Challenge of Sustainable Growth

True church growth must be sustainable in the long term. Following are some suggestions for realizing sustainable growth in Sub-Saharan Africa:

1. The church should aim at being a missiologically healthy community of faith that will work to attract and support mission efforts and reduce or eliminate any negative public image.

2. The church should be relevant to the people within their context.

3. The church needs to build upon its strength by emphasizing areas

of proficiency and effectiveness and seeking to correct areas of weakness.

4. The church should recognize the interdependence of its mission, its message, and the personal and societal needs of the communities it serves.

5. Instead of simply seeking a larger membership the church should examine opportunities to build a coordinated effort at the level of both policy and praxis.

6. The skills, visions, and willingness of its membership should be developed.

7. The church's efforts should be aimed at developing mature disciples instead of merely winning more converts.

8. Members should be given a sense of ownership in the affairs of the church, of which they can be proud.

9. All members, regardless of their background, gender, education, or economic level, should be trained and mobilized for service.

10. Administrators should evaluate and assess conditions that impact the church, for better or worse.

Sustainable growth requires participation from all sectors of the spiritual community, both to determine growth needs and to identify and implement innovative and appropriate solutions to sustainable growth challenges.

The Challenge of Retaining Members

Achieving sustainable growth and retaining baptized members are overlapping challenges. Many churches have far fewer members in attendance than are on the membership rosters. Efforts have been made to correlate attendance and membership records. Pastor Gilbert Wari, Executive Secretary to the West Central Africa Division, reports that a membership audit has yielded some helpful information about membership and attendance in some of the WAD territories (Wari 2007). This initial membership audit needs to be extended to include additional research, probing more deeply into the factors that cause members to drop out.

Poor retention may result from inadequate evangelistic methods or from an unwelcoming environment in the churches new members join. The lack of a vibrant worship service makes church unfulfilling for young

people. In my opinion, the retention of newly baptized young people should be number one in the goals of church leadership.

The Challenge of Overcoming Dependency

Since the time of the early missionaries, the work of the African church has been seen by missionaries and local members alike as being the responsibility of the "parent"—the church of the West. Traditionally, the church in the West has provided financial support for building projects and operating budgets. Apart from financing the work in Africa, the West has supplied logistics, human resources, programs, and even ideas. This has caused the church in Africa to be a dependent church. To become a healthy and mature church, this dependant, parasitic state needs to be overcome. The church needs to become a truly "four-self" church—self-theologizing, self-governing, self-financing, and self-propagating. The "four-self" model assumes remaining unified in belief and practice with the global Adventist Church.

The Challenge of Being Relevant to the Context

Churches that are relevant are churches that make lasting impact on their members and their context. Being relevant means purposefully ministering to the all needs of the people, their hurts, their aspirations, and feelings. It is identifying with their problems and showing them the God who can bring relief and restoration.

The ministry style of Jesus Christ is the only standard for developing a truly relevant ministry. Christ performed his miracles and discussed issues that affected people's daily living and their salvation. He not only met people's spiritual needs, but he also addressed their physical, social, and psychological needs.

The Challenge of Developing Pastoral Leadership

Although the pastor is not the church and the ministry of the laity is a biblical teaching, good pastoral leadership is a critical need. Pastors may possess the basic human qualities needed to be good leaders but they will not provide the leadership the Church needs if they lack proper pastoral education. Presently, the Church in Africa does not provide the level of

pastoral education needed to fulfil its mission. Sometimes it seems that the church has not really accepted the obligation of providing good pastoral education. This failure needs to be addressed through the development of new programs at all educational levels.

The Challenge of Developing Effective Departments and Agencies

The numerous departments and agencies of the church (like ADRA, publishing, healthcare, educational, and youth ministries) need to be more effective in contributing to the mission of the Church. One of the challenges is that many employees of these various ministries are not Adventists. Another challenge is that many employees who are Adventist view their work from a secular or business perspective, failing to discern and participate in the spiritual mission of the church through their particular agency. Several steps could be taken to address these problems:

1. Leaders in all parts of the Church need to receive mission-focused education that highlights the spiritual mission of their work.

2. Adventist employees need to receive well-planned training that shows how their work contributes to mission.

3. Non-Adventist employees need to be the focus of a loving witness that attracts them to Christ and to the mission of the Church.

The Challenge of Achieving Unity within Diversity

Although many people understand that Africans have major economic differences, many do not perceive the full extent of cultural diversity in Africa. Within Africa, many struggle with the concept that Christian unity can be experienced within cultural and economic diversity. The Church suffers from disharmony that threatens its mission because of nepotism, favouritism, regionalism, and nationalism. Yet, the challenge of Jesus Christ is that all of his peoples become one in him. One important step toward promoting unity within diversity would be to offer comprehensive leadership training on cross-cultural ministry using the insights of cultural anthropology.

The Challenge of Working Contextually and Strategically

Church work in Africa often suffers from imported materials and methods that are not appropriate to the local context and which are used without benefit of strategic planning. The Bible says in Proverbs 29:18 that "where there is no vision, the people perish." That vision needs to be born within the minds of Africans and applied using materials and methods developed by Africans, for Africa. This is not to suggest that African Adventists should refuse to use what is helpful from elsewhere. When the vision, the materials, and the methods are developed they must be used in strategic coordination so that the work of each part of the Church builds on and strengthens the work of the other parts.

The Challenge of Other Religions

Not much research has been done on converts to Adventism in Africa but the pattern is clear—the majority have been members of other Christian denominations before becoming Adventist. Because the Church in Africa depends so heavily on imported methods and materials from the West and because Adventists in the West work almost exclusively for Christians, the emphasis in Africa has been on evangelizing fellow Christians. The large populations of non-Christians in Africa, of which Muslims are the largest, have not been evangelized in an effective way. This focus needs to shift. Pastoral education and lay training needs to include the study of other religions and contextualized methods for evangelizing their adherents.

The Challenge of Dealing with Change

The great respect African cultures tend to have for tradition influences the church and its mission in Africa. Most people know that change is inevitable, necessary, and potentially helpful but they tend to resist it nevertheless. Even change that offers clear benefits may be resisted because "that is not how we do things." Ironically, the general pace of change is fast in tradition-loving Africa because of its drive for development. People want to become "modern" while also holding onto their cherished cultural traditions. This contradiction produces a strong love-hate relationship with change. Church leaders working in the contemporary African setting clearly need to be expert facilitators of change and managers of con-

flict. The church must neither become an obsolete relic that is out of step with its times nor a fad-seeking organization that loses its biblical roots.

Developing African Seventh-day Adventism without Compromise

In the context of rapid change described above, the Church in Africa must intentionally seek to remain always biblically faithful as well as culturally appropriate. A sure path to compromising biblical principals is to ignore the African context completely. When church policies, practices, publications, hymns, architecture, or liturgies are thoughtlessly imported without consideration of the African context, Christianity seems like a foreign religion and the door is open for culture to sidestep the scrutiny of the Bible. On the other hand, when the local cultural context is studied seriously so that all aspects of church life can be appropriate to the culture, the door is open for the Bible to judge African cultures as it judges all other cultures. Just as Jesus of Nazareth was incarnated into Jewish culture, so His church must be fully incarnated into each culture where His followers are located.

"The Church is not to carry the stigma of being an alien body, drawing men away from their natural social and political institutions" (Phillips 1949:129). In a letter to two missionary families in South Africa, Ellen White stressed how important it was for the missionaries to take context into consideration (White 1887: Letters 1887a and 1887b). According to White, Paul varied his manner of labor, always shaping his message to the circumstances under which he was placed (White 1887: Letters 1887a and 1887b). In White's opinion

> the people of every country have their own peculiar, distinctive characteristics, and it is necessary that men should be wise in order that they may know how to adapt themselves to the peculiar ideas of the people and so introduce the truth that may do them good. They must be able to understand and meet their wants. (1923:213)

Conclusion

This paper has not provided an exhaustive summary of the state of

the Adventist Church in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, I believe that it highlights the major issues and challenges. Now is the time for active, thoughtful, intentional church leadership in this continent which is one of the fastest growing regions of the Seventh-day Adventist. Just as today's Church is feeling the impact of leadership in the past, the Church of the future will be shaped by what Church leaders do today.

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Biography

Pastor Adefemi Samuel Adesina was born in Nigeria. He earned a BA Theology and MA Pastoral Ministry from Andrews University, Babcock University Extension, and the MDiv from Andrews University. He is a PhD candidate in mission and ministry studies at Andrews University. His work experience includes that of church planter, district pastor, evangelist, and radio and TV evangelist. He and his wife Folasade have been blessed with two children.

3 | Adventist Responses to Mission Challenges through Theology and Contextualization

Jon Dybdahl

Introduction

Over the past several years I have been thinking there was a need to redefine theology, particularly in multi-cultural environments such as we find in the church. Current definitions seemed abstract and not helpful. I have also been burdened about contextualization, which is the framing and explaining of what we teach in a way other cultures can readily understand. It seemed so hard to teach contextualization in a way that its validity and necessity was accepted. Eventually it dawned on me that the hesitance about contextualization was based on an assumed definition of theology. Theology, for many Adventists is doctrine, especially doctrinal truth. Truth is important to us and truth does not change. I can even remember in my boyhood hearing my parents and grandparents use the term "the truth" as a synonym for the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its belief system. While that terminology has to a large extent died out, much of that feeling remains. For many, contextualization seemed to question that truth and was thus threatening. My conviction grew that, at least in part, this dilemma could be solved by a lucid understanding of the meaning of theology, doctrine, and scripture. A clear definition of theology seemed to be the key.

My feelings that a clearer definition of theology is needed were strongly confirmed by my time in Nigeria during the summer of 2007. As part of the Doctor of Ministry (DMin) program for the thirty-four students from the West-Central Africa Division each was asked to do an introductory chapter describing themselves, their culture, spiritual gifts, leadership style, etc., but also their theology as it related to their project. The

description of themselves was no trouble for them. On the other hand, for many the theology part left them with question marks. What did this strange American mean? Further discussion revealed that for them theology was the package of Adventist beliefs and doctrines that they held to. That package was not up for change. They understood that package but wondered how it applied to their topics such as ministering to AIDS sufferers, dealing with Muslims, and designing people group specific Bible studies.

On reflection, I decided to do a lecture defining theology (as well as contextualization) along the lines I had been thinking. It seemed to work and so I share some of those ideas in this article.

Definition of Theology and Contextualization

Probably the closest to a definitive or generally accepted definition of theology would be the one proposed in *The Reign of God: An Introduction to Christian Theology from a Seventh-day Adventist Perspective* (Rice 1985:2). This volume is widely used in Adventist colleges and universities to teach Seventh-day Adventist doctrine and theology. It suggests that theology has two basic meanings; it summarizes what Seventh-day Adventists believe and it also attempts to examine these beliefs in a careful and methodical way. This definition seems to equate theology with a summary and examination of doctrine. It is clear that many, including many of my African (and Global North) colleagues have internalized the first part of the definition. That also means that the second part of the definition is simply taken to mean that we accept this body of belief and use theology to examine it.

While this definition may work in some mono-cultural settings, it is inadequate for a multi-cultural world church and in particular for the African church. Due to time constraints, I will not elaborate on my critique of this definition, but rather propose a new one with the reasons for it and demonstrate how this is so crucial for Africa and African theology.

I suggest that theology is prayerful, reflective application of biblical content to a specific situation**.** In connection with this definition, a number of points can be made.

Theology Is Devotional and Faith Based

There is a reason for the word *prayerful*. While *atheist theologians* may exist in the Global North, in cultures immersed in the supernatural, they do not make sense. True theology is done in the context of a heart of devotion and relies on the work of the Holy Spirit to guide and lead. The same Spirit that inspired the Bible leads the mind in theology. God's guidance is prayerfully sought.

Theology Employs Reason and Time for Thought

Theology employs reason and allows time for thought. That is the implication of the word *reflective*. While theology is faith-based, it is reasonable and has been carefully considered and thought over. It is seasoned by time and contemplation. True theology believes that we can love God with our minds and that those minds can be used to discern and rationally explain what is believed. This thinking, however, is always under the authority of Scripture.

Theology and the Bible Are Different

For many, theology and the Bible are equally authoritative. A careful distinction must be drawn between the two. The Bible is inspired canon, theology is not. The Bible does not change, theology does. The Bible is authoritative universally, theology is not. To question or alter theology is not necessarily to question or alter Scripture. This sets us free to begin to look at Scripture with fresh eyes because its interpretation has not been authoritatively fixed. To believe that traditional interpretations are authoritative is Roman Catholic doctrine. Theology then can be authentically African (or from within any other culture) and Adventist when it is based on Scripture.

Theology Is Practiced by All Bible Believers

Anyone who reads the Bible and attempts to apply it to life is a theologian. Theology is not an elitist occupation that requires years of special study. Specialized study can enhance theological work but non-specialists also do theology. People do not need to preface their remarks by saying, "I am not a theologian but I believe that the Bible teaches . . . "

Such a statement is a clear sign that they are about to do theology in spite of their disclaimer. The question is not whether people do theology but rather whether it is well done or poorly done, carefully prayed over and reflected on or not.

Theology Is Contextualization and Contextualization Is Theology

This definition takes seriously the fact that *all* theology arises out of a specific situation or context. All theology, whether knowingly or not, is heavily influenced by the language, culture, history, and experiences of the theologian. Calling this exercise *theology* emphasizes the subject of this study—God. Also calling this exercise *contextualization* points to the recognition that it happens within a specific human situation.

With this definition the question is *not* whether it is valid to do theology or contextualization. This definition makes it clear both are being done all the time. The question is rather, how do we do it well so that it bears good fruit for the Kingdom?

Since we have defined and discussed the terms theology, contextualization, and Scripture it is appropriate to briefly mention the fourth term mentioned earlier—doctrine. Doctrine means *teaching* or *belief*. As we use it, the reference is clearly to teachings that the Church holds to be standard or authoritative, especially for Adventists, as summarized in the twenty-eight fundamental beliefs. Theology can explicate, explain, defend, apply, and question these specific doctrines on the basis of Scripture but is not limited to those topics or beliefs.

Practical Observations and Applications

If we accept these definitions certain observations can be made. While in principle they apply to all situations, I apply them here with special emphasis on Africa.

This Definition Permits and Encourages Creative Theology

If all theology arises out of a context it means those most familiar with that context would be the best suited to do theology in that situation. I am very poorly qualified to do Ibo theology. This encourages Africans to do theology because they know their situation better than anyone. Africans

are more qualified to do African theology than Europeans or Americans.

I have a strong sense that there is a large, powerful underground spring of theological creativity building up that is just waiting to be released. I am saying; let's take the cap off of it. Let it go. It has not really erupted in the African Adventist Church because of the strong sense of tradition and loyalty. Let us now say that this theological spring is not a criticism of the Church. This is an attempt to take full advantage of the marvelous opening God has given the church in Africa. Like loving parents, let us release the youthful Church in Africa to make Adventism fully Adventist in an African context.

We must admit that in many ways the Adventism proclaimed in Africa was originally designed for another context. The framing of our Bible studies and evangelistic studies demonstrate that.

Interestingly enough the original Adventist statement of belief in the *Yearbook* arose in part because of the African context, however, not as we might expect. Several European colonial powers wondered about the orthodoxy of the Adventist Church which was doing increasing mission work in their colonial territories. Because of this the African Division of the Church made a request to the General Conference. L. E. Froom quotes from the General Conference minutes of Dec. 29, 1930:

> A request was presented from the African Division that a statement of what Seventh-day Adventists believe should be printed in the *Yearbook*, since they feel that such a statement would help government officials and others to a better understanding of our work. (Froom 1971:410)

This means that the original statement of beliefs presented the Adventist doctrines but in a way that emphasized mainline Christian orthodoxy. Would this statement have been the same if it had been drafted to speak in the context of African Traditional Religion? I doubt it.

The creativity I am suggesting is not a threat to core Adventist doctrine, and in particular not a lessening of biblical authority, but seeks to organize, state, prioritize, and explicate core doctrines in a way that fits the specific setting. This creativity will allow for the possibility of a differ-

ence of opinion on controversial issues such as polygamy and women's ordination.

When I asked my DMin co-learners to do a theology for their projects I was greeted for the most part by dubious stares. When I said that this means asking the question, "What is the Bible basis for what I plan to do?" the lights went on. They were ready and eager to work on the question of "What is the Bible rationale for your project?" while the question of "What is a theology of your project?" was confusing. Phrasing the issue in a way they could relate to, which implied this definition of theology, released their creativity.

This Definition Allows Us to Learn from Each Other

Some African leaders who had staunchly opposed women's ordination, had never heard a theological/biblical and contextual defense of women's ordination. While most may not change their minds because of the context they can change the way they think about the issue. In the same way we in the Global North will learn more than we realize from theologians from other contexts.

I vividly remember my experience of having an African doctoral student come in and propose a project on burial customs in his culture. I did not refuse the project but wondered aloud to him if he would find enough biblical material to lay a theological foundation for his work. He got a funny little smile and said he would be back in about two weeks. He came back with page after page of material and after reading it I apologized to him. I could not look at Scripture with African eyes and I had not been taught by my education and culture to be interested in burial customs. I learned not only about burial customs but experienced, in a deeper way, the truth that we need all of God's children to be doing theology and all of us need to learn to listen and learn from each other.

The More One Knows about the Bible and One's Own Life Situation, the Better Theology Can Be Done

An extension of this is also true. Those not intimately familiar with the cultural situation need to be careful about dictating their theology to others. One's situation and history can blind one to aspects of biblical

truth while putting new questions to the Bible from a cultural setting can enhance our knowledge of God's Word. While culture must not cancel biblical truth it can give us new glasses to see even greater meaning in God's Word.

Theological Training Should Teach Students the Process of Doing Theology Along with the Results of Earlier Theologizing

My contention is that most theological training done by Christians is what I would call *historical theology.* We teach what Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley, etc. taught. If you are an Adventist you can add J. N. Andrews, James White, M. L. Andreason, etc. Even the latest Bible doctrines book is, for Africa, historical theology. There is nothing wrong with *some* of this.

However, I believe that equal time should be given to asking and answering the question of how theologians arrived at their conclusions. Where did this come from? I suggest Lutheran theology would be very different if Luther had been raised and educated in a Muslim context. I believe Adventist doctrine and its statements of belief would be much different if they had been birthed by people born and socialized in Sri Lanka or Thailand.

Students must be taught then not only historic theology but they must also learn the process of creating a contemporary theology for their situation. They must learn to read not only historic theology but their Bibles and their society and then take steps to create out of their matrix a theology that allows Jesus to be seen and understood clearly in their setting.

Concluding Practical Appeal

In conclusion I want to make a two-fold appeal which needs to be taken seriously if what I have discussed above is to really happen.

Resources, Personnel, Time, and Money Must be Poured into the Creation of Practical Materials for Evangelism and Nurture

I have stated publicly that if I had a million dollars to give I would pour it into the creation of contextualized evangelistic and pastoral resources for the church. You may have thought that my main concern was to see

high-level theological materials born in Africa. That would be good but I think the most desperate need now is for practical, down to earth things like Bible study materials and evangelistic sermons that are not simply borrowed and translated from English.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church must move beyond just translating and putting in African pictures and calling that enough. The Church must learn to do better and African leadership must find courage to "just say no" to the groups who want to come and fight in American armor.

I am delighted that a number of the projects coming out of our DMin at Babcock deal with the production of resources specifically designed for the African setting. I hope and pray that these materials can be produced and that non-African evangelists, instead of insisting on their own materials, will take seriously what is produced locally. I have seen first hand in other places like Cambodia the power of contextualized material to spread the gospel news rapidly.

In due time I believe material like *Missionary Contextualization* (Klingbeil 2005) which comes from the Adventist University in Argentina but includes along with the majority of Latin America authors, writers from Europe and the United States, will emerge from our universities in Africa. I also believe that day is closer than we think. The theology that begins to emerge as that great underground spring is tapped must be given ways that it can be expressed and communicated.

False Stereotypes of Africa Must be Rejected

Kenneth Ross has suggested that there are two Africa's (Knighton 2004:149, 150). The first one could be called *Christian* and the second one could be called *crashed.* The first Africa is the Christian continent that is the new center of gravity for the Christian world. This Africa sees rapid Christian growth, fervor in worship and prayer, and a strong faith in God's ability to act. This is the Africa of mega churches and people movements. This is the Africa that pastors in North America for which would give their right arms if they could imitate the number of conversions their brothers and sisters in Africa regularly see.

The other Africa is the one the Global North media often portrays. This Africa is viewed as a political and economic disaster area. Dictatorship,

corruption, tribalism, civil wars, AIDS, etc. are reported on in great detail while the other side is rarely mentioned. The continent is believed to be locked in a downward economic spiral of decline. Unfortunately many Christians and Adventists emphasize this second Africa which is to a certain extent an image manufactured by Western media. This leads to false pessimism and dismays many Africans as well.

As I was preparing for my trip this summer, I was directly warned by my travel agent to be very careful in lawless Africa. My doctor complimented me on my bravery in going. Both of these people are educated Christians whose view of the continent is one sided. I made the mistake of mentioning my travel agent's words to one of my hosts and the hurt feelings based on that generalizing stereotype were obvious. Africans know their countries and continent have problems. We must remember that the Global North also has many problems. As one told me, our political leaders often betray us. Africans however, like all humans, want to be respected and taken seriously. They want to be understood fairly and they want people not to forget that first Africa. If the second Africa is mentioned, the least that should be done is that the first Africa should be acknowledged and the tendency to paint with a wide brush should be avoided.

The problem, of course, is that this overly negative stereotype of Africa affects how we view ideas and theology coming from the continent and the confidence of those suggesting those ideas. As we grow to respect Africa and African self confidence grows, the freedom to act and the power of new ideas will blossom.

I firmly believe that the greatest missionary sending continent within the next forty years will be Africa. If that is so, we must urgently begin to prepare now to not only encourage Africans to write theology for the new Africa, but learn the process so well they can use it as they become cross-cultural missionaries to help the neo-pagan parts of the world write their own new theologies.

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Biography

Dr. Jon Dybdahl was born in the United States. He has served as a pas-
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4 | Adventist Responses through Evangelism and Discipleship
Gorden R. Doss

Introduction

A commitment to world evangelization is part of the DNA of every true Adventist. Two major texts have been foundational for that commitment.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt 28:19-20).

"Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people" (Rev 14:6).

This commitment to evangelization has been part of Adventist work in Africa for well over a hundred years. In 1900 there were 428 Adventists in Africa. By 1950 the number had grown to 95,000 and by 2000 there were over 4 million Adventists in Africa (*Annual Statistical Reports*). Today one of every three Adventists resides on the continent of Africa. As we speak, fellow believers in Africa are sharing the Good News with vigor, in a variety of ways.

Like other Christian groups, early Adventist missionaries moved quickly to the use of indigenous pastors and evangelists for work in the villages. From the 1960s onwards Africans began to occupy leadership positions but from the beginning they were the "foot soldiers" of the Gospel. During the final quarter of the last century, when most leadership positions were held by Africans, the membership grew from 588,000 to over 4 million. To God belongs the honor, glory, and praise.

Challenges to Evangelism

As we give thanks for God's blessings, we also realize that Adventists face many challenges in faithfully performing the work of evangelism. In July 2007 I was privileged to work with thirty-four Doctor of Ministry students for four weeks at Babcock University, Nigeria. What follows is a summary of the challenges to doing evangelism they identified. No doubt more points could be added to the list and not all points apply everywhere.

1. Local churches tend to depend on professional evangelists to do all the work of evangelism. The ministry of the laity is not well understood. Members are not given training in personal evangelism. Members are sometimes willing to volunteer but want payment for working with the evangelist and for singing. Some members want only a pastor to do evangelism because they do not trust lay leaders.

2. The use of "celebrity" or "hero" evangelists whose abilities and equipment make pastors, lay people, and even some full-time evangelists feel unable to do evangelism and undermines Adventist mission.

3. Lack of discipleship training and nurture after the campaign diminishes long-term effectiveness. Evangelists may suggest, plan, or even fund follow-up work but local people often do not see that it is done.

4. Church members have a problem of spiritual lethargy and dual allegiance (or split-level religion) that diminishes their participation and effectiveness in evangelism.

5. Conversion is often seen as a move toward upward mobility. New converts expect their material needs to be satisfied by the church. If not, they may drop out.

6. Adventists in Africa have an inadequate strategy for evangelism among Muslims.

7. Adventists in Africa have an inadequate strategy for addressing African Traditional Religion, which is the prevailing religious/cultural context even for people who are Christians. Pentecostals offer a religious experience that is highly attractive because they often incorporate elements of African Traditional Religion freely.

8. Adventists in Africa have an inadequate strategy for evangelizing the wealthier, educated, upper classes.

9. Social-cultural-religious analysis is usually not done beforehand as part of making an evangelistic strategy for a particular place.

10. Evangelists develop a single methodology and use it wherever they go. Little creativity is used.

11. Religion is seen as a family legacy that cannot be changed.

12. Spiritual counseling is not provided alongside evangelism.

13. In some countries Adventists are seen as being a sect. Some groups of Adventists have a very low self-concept and hold themselves apart from the larger society.

14. The pastoral workforce is small, meaning that pastors do not have time to perform either pastoral or evangelistic duties well.

15. Pastoral education is inadequate in preparing pastors for the full range of mission in Africa.

16. Membership growth sometimes outpaces the construction of new church buildings.

Historical Factors

Clearly, I cannot possibly address all of the challenges identified by my brothers in West Africa. What I will do is to discuss some factors that I believe have relevance to many of the challenges. I wish to start with several historical factors influencing evangelism in Africa. Sometimes missionaries of the past are demonized and sometimes they are elevated to sainthood. As a third generation missionary I know that both approaches are wrong. The success of Adventist mission in Africa suggests that some good work was done in the early years. At the same time, the lessons of history must be learned.

Personal Observation and Experience

My personal observation of evangelism began when my parents and I arrived in Malawi in 1954. The annual camp meeting was the focal point of evangelism at that time. People who responded to the call at camp meeting joined a one-year "Bible-class" at their home church, followed by a one-year "baptismal class" that met in parallel with the weekly Sabbath School classes. They were baptized at camp meeting after the second year of preparation. Over the years public campaigns lasting 3-4 weeks have

replaced the camp meeting as the main place of evangelism. Today, baptismal classes continue in local churches during Sabbath School. Even in the colonial era (which ended in 1964 for Malawi) most evangelism was done by Malawian pastors and full-time evangelists. The last decade has seen the arrival of short-term mission evangelistic teams from overseas that conduct three week campaigns.

I feel reasonably safe in saying (without the benefit of empirical research) that converts have the best chance of becoming well established, lifelong church members when they enter through small-scale evangelism done by local churches, with pastors and lay people working together. Anecdotal evidence suggests that large-scale, city-wide campaigns suffer high attrition rates following baptism. In my experience, the linkage of converts with local churches is good in theory but very problematic in practice where high profile campaigns take place in a stadium or large meeting place. Hence, my preference for smaller-scale, local-church-based evangelism done by well trained pastors and lay people.

Critical Contextualization

A century ago, when Adventists were starting mission work in Africa, the necessity of facilitating good contextualization was not part of general missionary theory. Many missionaries did not understand the basic fact that the Bible is inevitably and necessarily contextualized wherever it is read. However, part of the missionary task is to facilitate biblically faithful and culturally appropriate contextualization. In other words, when people anywhere learn about and accept biblical truth they must apply it within their contexts. For example, the Sabbath is a universal day of rest but Sabbath rest is experienced differently by people living in industrialized Europe, fishermen in Asia, or agricultural peoples of Africa. How do people in these diverse contexts experience the full reality of the biblical Sabbath? Decisions about how to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy" have to be made in each context. When contextualization is not done intentionally and skillfully it occurs haphazardly and can increase levels of syncretism.

Looking back on a century of Adventist evangelism in Africa I believe it is accurate to say that the story of contextualization is mixed. Both mis-

sionaries and African leaders could probably have done better had the process of critical contextualization been understood.

Today's evangelism in Africa must be founded on the assumption that critical contextualization[1] is essential. The cultural specificities of living as an Adventist cannot be simply transplanted from one African context to another any more than from England to Kenya. The work of evangelism demands a very deep engagement with culture or else conversion will be superficial and the danger of syncretism will be great. Visiting evangelists do well to use African pictures and illustrations but these adaptations do not make the deep level penetration that is needed. Critical contextualization is best done by cultural insiders.

African Traditional Religion

Many early missionaries assumed that African Traditional Religion did not need to be understood or engaged in dialogue because it would disappear with the acceptance of Christianity. Some missionaries did not see African Traditional Religion as a "religion" at all because it often lacked features they associated with religion. There were no written scriptures, defined doctrines, ordained priesthoods, or sacred architecture. If African Traditional Religion was not seen as a religion, engaging it in dialogue was not possible. The common assumption was that these "pagan superstitions" would simply fade away as people became Christians and adopted a "real" religion. Africa was a *tabula rasa* (clean slate) upon which Christian mission would write.

Another reason colonial-era missionaries did not address African Traditional Religion came from the limitations of their own worldview. Their worldview included what Paul Hiebert called the "flaw of the excluded middle" (Hiebert 1994:189-215). In Hiebert's model the cosmos is divided into three zones. The High or Upper zone contains the Creator God and

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[1] The term "critical contextualization" was coined by Paul Hiebert. The use of "critical" in this term should not be associated with "higher criticism." Higher criticism can be seen as bending the Bible to fit Western culture. Critical contextualization intends the opposite. While remaining respectful of culture, the Bible is taken seriously as the standard of faith and practice for all cultures. The outcome of critical contextualization done well is a truly biblical form of Christianity expressed within culture.

is invisible to humanity. The Lower zone is the seen, empirical world of everyday human life. The Middle zone is occupied by spirits, ancestors, demons, angels, and powers who are usually unseen though occasionally seen.

In most traditional religions the Middle zone is the major focus of attention. The High zone is acknowledged but is very transcendent and remote. For matters of everyday life people turn to the Middle zone. A vast cultural-religious system of sacrifices, offerings, prayers, practitioners, ancestors, and spirits in the Middle zone mediates human contact with the High zone. The main goal of everyday life is to have good relationships with the Middle zone.

Into a religious context that emphasized the Middle zone came European or American missionaries whose worldview saw its fairies, trolls, and mystical beings as having no ontological reality. European religion of the Middle Ages had included all of those things but "modern" Christians "knew" they were all figments of the imagination. The message to African converts was clear: "Those things are a part of your pagan past that do not even exist. Stop believing in them and you will have no trouble with them." But the problems persisted and the questions arising out of African Traditional Religion went unanswered.[2]

In today's Africa, Adventist evangelism must engage African Traditional Religion directly. As sermons are written and the order of topics planned, evangelists must apply biblical truth to the thinking and living of people for whom African Traditional Religion remains powerful.

Methodology

Missionaries of the past typically used and taught a methodology of evangelism that had been developed in nineteenth-century America. This is not to suggest that African evangelists performed like American evangelists in every respect. But America was the "mother" and her methods were generally copied. The same order of sermon topics, sermon outlines,

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[2]Using Hiebert's model, SDA cosmology affirms that the Middle zone is occupied by good angels and evil angels (or demons), all of whom are created beings. As Creator, God exists in the Upper zone by himself. Angels and demons have an ontological reality. Demons use numerous forms to deceive peoples around the world in different ways.

and illustrative materials were often used.

Adventist evangelism was developed in the American context where the audience was mostly Christian. When the member of another denomination becomes an Adventist she adds to or adapts a belief system that is already part of her life. When a non-Christian becomes an Adventist he has to turn his whole belief system inside-out, making a radical change in his beliefs and practices. Because the American style evangelism imported to Africa was designed for other Christians, early Adventists did not really have an approach designed for African Traditional Religion people. Statistics are not available to show what proportion of Adventist converts came from other Christian groups but anecdotes and observation suggest to me that the majority did so. The charge of being "sheep stealers" was often made by other denominations, because Adventists did not do much of the "heavy lifting" of converting people directly from the traditional religion.

Pat Gustin has noted that American-based, traditional evangelism has several features: A heavy reliance on literature, public preaching, a dialectical apologetic style, use of an American/English logic system, an assumption of previous biblical knowledge often including a conversion experience, and a proof text use of Scripture (Gustin 2007). Pre-literate or semi-literate adherents of traditional religion are not easily reached by evangelism based on these assumptions and approaches.

David Bosch, the late South African missiologist, asserts that "there is no universally applicable master plan for evangelism" (1991:420), either spelled out in the New Testament, or, for Adventists, by Ellen White or in our historical practice of evangelism. Evangelism in today's Africa needs methodology suitable for Africans. This should not imply a reactionary rejection of anything and everything from outside of Africa. But African Adventists need to be allowed and they need to allow themselves to borrow what is good from elsewhere and add what is good from within Africa.

Looking Outward and Inward

What has resulted from the historical factors discussed above? The growth of the Church briefly described above indicates that the Adventist

evangelism in Africa has been very successful. But there are some thought-ful questions to be asked. With a more contextualized approach could the basic numbers have been much greater? Could more adherents of tradi-tional religion have been converted directly into our church? Could the spiritual experience of those who were converted have been better than it has been? Could drop-out rates have been kept lower? Could syncretism, or the mixing of biblically unacceptable elements with Christianity, have been decreased? I think the answer to all of these questions is "Yes." I wish to discuss some consequences by taking a look outward and then inward.

Looking Outward: Unevangelized Peoples

There are many people groups in Africa that have not been evange-lized, partly because of the factors already discussed. Time prevents me from giving a detailed picture of unevangelized peoples in Africa. Per-haps the greatest single challenge is that of leading Muslims to Christ. While it is true that evangelism among Muslims faces unique challenges it is also clear that Adventists have not always used the best methodology for reaching them.

Looking Inward: Split-Level Religion

One of the major challenges faced by Adventists and Christians of oth-er denominations is the persistence of what has been called "split-level Christianity."[3] "Split-level" could refer to any kind of divided heart a Christian might have that would prevent full commitment and disciple-ship—such as consumerism, materialism, or hedonism. What this paper refers to is one variety of split-level religion.[4] Split-level Christianity exists when, among a particular group

> most Christians live on two unreconciled levels. They are mem-bers of a church and ascribe to a statement of faith. But below the

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[3]The term was coined by Jaime Bulatao in 1962 and elaborated in his *Split-Level Christianity* (Manila: Ateneo de Manilo, 1992).

[4]One of the best discussions of "split-level Christianity" is by the African missiologist, Tite Tiénou, and his co-authors, Paul Hiebert and Daniel Shaw (Hiebert, Shaw, and Tiénou 1999). The authors emphasize that the phenomenon exists all around the world, including the West.

system of conscious beliefs are deeply embedded traditions and customs implying quite a different interpretation of the universe and the world of spirit from the Christian interpretation. In the crises of life and rites of passage the Church is an alien thing. (Williamson 1965, cited in Hiebert, Shaw, and Tiénou 1999:15)

1. This definition highlights several points about split-level Christianity: First, believers have formally accepted Jesus Christ and a set of doctrines. They may be long-time, multi-generation Christians.

2. Second, a competing set of deeply held assumptions, beliefs, and practices has been retained.

3. Third, the differences between the two religious systems have never been addressed, even though they contradict each other.

4. Fourth, during the transitions of life (birth, puberty, marriage, death) and the crises of life (famine, flood, war, plague, death, etc.) believers turn to traditional religion for answers, solutions, and power. Sometimes Christians resort to traditional religions after seeking but failing to find Christian solutions.

In a recent teaching assignment in Africa I was impressed by the candor of students who shared many anecdotes illustrating the split-level experience among Adventists. I can add my own anecdotes from my time in Africa. I recall one pastor who obtained an amulet to enhance his preaching.

The result of split-level religion is a "religious schizophrenia" in which Christianity is "limited to a segment of people's lives," and personal and corporate spiritual vitality is sapped by an all-pervading sense of guilt (Hiebert, Shaw, and Tiénou 1999:15). On their Christian side, believers know they should not do certain things which on their traditional side they feel compelled to do. The Christian side deals with the more cognitive, intellectual parts of their lives but the traditional side goes deeper into matters of the heart.

Charles Kraft is well known for his focus on the power element of religion. He correctly notes that allegiance to two power sources is at the heart of split-level religion.

> Dual allegiance is the condition of those who pledge allegiance to Christ but retain their previous allegiances to traditional power sources mediated by traditional religious practitioners such as shamans, medicine men/women, diviners, fortune-tellers and priests. Since they find no power in the churches to displace the power they depended upon previously, they continue to go to the shaman to meet those needs. (Kraft 1996:201)

Christians seem to fall into one of two extremes—either having a powerless religion that rarely experiences the reality of the Spirit's power to confront evil persons or powers or a power-obsessed religion that loses focus on truth. Split-level religion repeats the idolatry of ancient Israel by looking to spirits, powers, and gods that are antagonistic to the Creator God.

The tragedy of split-level religion extends beyond believers, themselves, to the unevangelized. What message do Adventists have for people immersed in unbiblical traditional practices when they are also immersed? Yet, the unevangelized have a right to hear the Gospel and Adventists have a duty to proclaim it effectively.

Recommendations

After looking at challenges facing Adventist evangelism, considering some historical factors, and then looking outward and inward I wish to make some recommendations or suggestions.

1. *Evangelism is to be viewed as a key element within the broader mission of the church.*

Bosch observed that "mission and evangelism are not synonymous but, nevertheless, indissolubly linked together and inextricably interwoven in theology and praxis" (1991:411). Evangelism must be done missiologically.

Viewed in this way, evangelism is more than a member recruitment strategy. Rather, it is one activity interwoven with others that fulfill the role given by God to the church. This wholistic approach deepens and broadens the effectiveness of evangelism. Coordinated strategies can be made so that healthcare, relief and development, and education can be linked with evangelism, discipleship training, and spiritual nurture. Mis-

sion suffers when human and material resources are not used in a coordinated way.

2. *In-depth study and understanding of the cultural-religious-economic-political context, especially African Traditional Religion, is needed to provide a foundation for mission theory and strategy.*

Bosch notes that "authentic evangelism is always contextual" (1991:417). Most people rightly assume that they understand their mother-cultures quite well. However, effective mission in a complex, changing world requires deeper knowledge than what we gain automatically by growing up in a certain context. The perspectives and methods of the social sciences can provide the deeper view that is needed. As already noted, early modern missions in Africa did not benefit from an understanding of traditional religion.

3. *The methods of evangelism require the same scrutiny and integrity as the message of evangelism.*

In evangelism, of all endeavors, the ends do not justify the means because the ends involve proclaiming the best Good News available to humanity. The mere fact of doing evangelism is not enough. When evangelism is done both its message and methodology must be as flawless as is humanly possible under the guidance of the Spirit. The real danger of vaccinating honest truth-seekers against the Gospel because of faulty methodology needs to be taken seriously.

4. *The New Testament model of evangelism is church-based.*

We have already noted that the Bible does not provide a detailed plan for evangelism in all contexts. But the New Testament does provide a large-scale pattern onto which we can trace a small-scale contextualized methodology. In the Pauline paradigm an itinerant missionary-evangelist planted and nurtured a church. Once the church was established it took over the central role in mission in its community. Paul was always careful to respect local leaders and not to out-shine them or weaken their role in the local community.

Says Bryan Stone:

> Insofar as evangelism is the heart of this mission … [the congregation] constitutes both the public invitation and that to which the

> invitation points. That is why all Christian evangelism is funda-
> mentally rooted in ecclesiology. It can be said that the church does
> not really need an evangelistic strategy. The church *is* the evange-
> listic strategy … Christian salvation *is* ecclesial … its shape in the
> world *is* a participation in Christ. (Stone 2007:15)

Because the local church is central to evangelism, the overall strategy of the global church should focus on enhancing the work of pastors and lay people. Great care should be taken not to undercut their effectiveness.

5. *The goal of evangelism is to develop mature discipleship.*

The Great Commission includes the imperatives to "go," "make disciples," "baptize," "teach," and "observe" (Matt 28:19-20). However, evangelistic success among Adventists usually focuses on the baptismal imperative. I wish to suggest that the long range goal of evangelism that combines all of the Commission imperatives is to "make disciples." Baptism is the birth of a new Christian who then is led and nurtured toward mature discipleship. Mature discipleship does not mean either the attainment of behavioral perfection or senility but a settling into spirituality, belief, service, church fellowship, good family relationships, good personal lifestyle, etc. As a third generation Adventist pastor, I have heard about the problems of merely counting baptisms all my life and I am tired of it. I challenge my colleagues in ministry to make mature discipleship the goal of mission.

6. *Evangelism methodology is to be culturally and technologically appropriate and economically sustainable.*

Methods used in evangelism need to correspond to local patterns. For example, highly literate peoples can make good use of literature while pre-literate or semi-literate peoples often have a preference for the spoken word. Some peoples have a tradition of preaching-type activities while others prefer teaching or dialogue. When technology is used it must be appropriate and economically sustainable by the local people. If visiting evangelists use high technology that locals cannot themselves afford to use there is a danger they will conclude that only foreigners or wealthy locals can do evangelism. Every church member must see evangelism as something that is doable by their own congregations, using their God-

given spiritual gifts. Technology needs to be kept in its place as a tool that is not necessarily helpful in all times and places. New technology draws a crowd but does it produce long-term results? In many African contexts evangelism is best done with Bible in hand, standing under a tree in the village, or in a modest building in the city.

7. *Evangelism by indigenous people is understood as the most effective.*

Effective evangelism among people of other religions, notably African Traditional Religion and Islam, is clearly best done by same or similar culture and language Christians. Saying it in another way, the wider the cultural/linguistic gap the more difficult the evangelism. This is not to invalidate cross-cultural mission but to recognize the value of cultural commonality. Reaching an African Muslim is usually easier for an African Christian than an American. Foreigners attempting to penetrate traditional religion face numerous obstacles not faced by local people.

Visiting evangelists from abroad bring with them an element of excitement or novelty that has recognized value. They may be of various ethnicities, wear fancy clothing, have different accents, and use new technology. The elements of novelty are part of the tool box the world Church can use appropriately. However, there are two cautionary notes to be sounded. First, the magnetism of special guest speakers may undercut the work of local evangelists who cannot afford the accoutrements of the visitors. Second, if in-depth contextual knowledge and proclamation is needed for effective evangelism, visitors (especially if they come with pre-packaged, one-size-fits-all methods) cannot expect to preach penetrating messages. Using an agricultural metaphor, soil preparation, planting, cultivating, and harvesting need to be done by a farmer who knows the farm. Likewise, in evangelism, every stage from first contact to instruction to decision to baptism to mature discipleship is best done by the local congregation with whom a new member builds lasting relationships.

8. *Evangelism done by visitors from abroad is to be seen as secondary or supplemental to local evangelism.*

Hospitality is a cherished and generously practiced cultural value in Africa. When fellow Adventists from abroad come to visit, a sense of linkage across the oceans is developed that is truly priceless. Based on the foregoing points, the contribution of evangelists from abroad is best seen

as supplemental to the central role of locally conducted evangelism, for several reasons. First, many visitors come from places where evangelism is less effective than in Africa. This means that Africa has a lot to teach its spiritual siblings about evangelism. Second, given the economic-technological disparity that often exists between visitors and locals, care is needed to maintain the confidence and effectiveness of African pastors and members. Third, playing a secondary or supplemental role is true to the Pauline paradigm.

9. *Material support from abroad is best channeled into pastoral and lay training for evangelism.*

Adventist visitors from abroad often come with the intention of making material contributions. In view of the foregoing points, I suggest that the best investment for such contributions is in the training of local people in evangelism.

Conclusion

We started by observing that every true Adventist has evangelism in his/her DNA. By that measure, African Adventists are indeed true Adventists. Like every continent, Africa presents a set of factors that challenge Christian evangelism in particular ways. May God give us wisdom to understand and love Africa as He does so that His beloved children who live there can receive a full and generous invitation to dwell with Him for eternity.

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Biography

Dr. Gorden R. Doss was born in USA and grew up in Malawi. His work experience includes pastoral work in the United States, departmental and teaching work in Malawi, and teaching mission at Andrews University since 1998. He earned the BA, MDiv, and DMin degrees at Andrews University and a PhD in Intercultural Studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois. Gorden and his wife Cheryl have two children and one grandchild.

5 | Adventist and Self-Reliance
Pardon Mwansa

Introduction

This article is written because I share the concern that many have about Africa. Many are concerned that Africa continues to be a suffering continent that has failed to attain financial self-reliance both in political circles and in the Seventh-day Adventist Church itself.

It is impossible for any one paper to deal with the issues of this continent and be fair to all regions of Africa. Africa, being the second-largest and second-most-populous continent (after Asia), cannot be dealt with as if it is one country with one culture. Because of this limitation, I have focused on broad principles rather than on details of any country or region. I believe that principles transcend national borders.

This paper attempts to do the following:

1. First, to present facts that show that there is a problem in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Africa when it comes to self-reliance. Hopefully these facts will motivate us to do something about the situation.

2. Second, to define the state of self-reliance.

3. Third, to identify causes and factors that have contributed to a spirit of dependency in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Africa.

4. Fourth, to present a biblical overview of self-reliance and how it is attained.

5. Fifth, to present reasons why the church should expand its stewardship program or promotion beyond that of appealing to members to be faithful.

6. Sixth, to review literature on the impact of aid to Africa and what that has done to Africa.

7. Seventh, to present seven practical suggestions to consider for imple-mentation as a means to start changing the picture of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Africa from a dependent church to a fully self-reliant church.

Problems

The first step in solving a problem is to acknowledge that there is a problem. Therefore, I acknowledge that there is a problem with the Sev-enth-day Adventist Church in Africa in being self-reliant and in caring and providing for quality services for the membership. The following evi-dences have led me to conclude that there is a problem:

1. The number of pastors employed on the continent to care for the large numbers of believers and large territories is inadequate and results in poor care to church members. In 1950 the ratio of pastors to member-ship was 1:300 (337:93,527) and by 2005 the ratio had become 1:1,444 (2,793:4,888,138). The work load of the pastor in 2005 was four times what it was in 1950. The worsening trend continues.

2. While the Adventist Church has been in many African countries for over 100 years, it is still operating most of its work under *mission* status in-stead of *conference* status. One of the characteristics of a conference is that it does not receive operating appropriations from outside of its territory. Out of 24 unions operating in Africa, only 4 operate under conference status while the other 20 are operating under mission status. Out of 121 organized church entities operating in Africa, 42 are operating under con-ference status, while 79 operate either as missions, fields, or associations. That means that out of the 121 entities, 79 are still receiving some operat-ing appropriations and are not yet self-reliant in some sense of the word.

3. In spite of growing from 689 churches in 1950 with a membership of 93,527 to 25,689 churches in 2005 with a membership of 4,888,138, Africa is not able to build houses of worship in most places without asking for foreign aid. Take for example Mozambique. This Union has over 220,000 members with a total of 974 organized churches, but has only 13 church buildings. In 2007, Maranatha International Volunteers, a foreign organi-zation, kindly decided to build 1,001 churches for that Union.

4. Over 90 percent of the pastors in Africa do not have a reliable form

of transportation with which to perform their demanding duties for their churches and members.

5. The major capital projects such as a university campus or publishing house development still depend on most of the money coming from outside of Africa.

6. From 1981 to 2005 (about 25 years), out of almost $1 billion dollars spent in the development and operations of the Adventist Church in Africa, about 50 percent came in the form of appropriations from outside of Africa.

7. The brain drain from the continent among both church employees and non-employees is symptomatic of something gone wrong. Whether this is true or not, or even right or wrong, one of the factors causing the brain drain is a lack of good working conditions and care for worker's needs.

The list could go on, but the above should be enough to prove the point that there are problems in Africa when it comes to self-reliance.

A Working Definition of Self-Reliance

What do we regard as self-reliance? How are we going to tell when Africa has become self-reliant? The following will help in serving as a definition and at the same time as performance indicators of self-reliant. Self-reliance in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Africa will be attained when it is able to raise sufficient financial resources to carry out a viable ministry that includes:

1. sufficient operating income for all its entities, excluding donations and appropriations, to cover its operating expenses;

2. provide church buildings for the ever growing church congregations using locally generated income;

3. care for its employees by providing a livable wage and other needs for their performance of ministry such as transportation, etc.;

4. operate all or most of its entities as conferences rather than missions; and

5. contribute its due share to the world budget to enable the world church to evangelize the un-entered territories of the world.

Factors Contributing to African Dependence

Below are listed several factors that have contributed to make Seventh-day Adventists in Africa so dependent on foreign aid.

1. The missionaries brought both the gospel and the gold, thereby creating a spirit of dependence among the local people. When the missionaries who came to Africa brought the message they also brought with them financial aid to help establish institutions and run ministries in Africa. While this was good, it communicated to the local people that the same people who brought the message were responsible for its funding. There was no systematic plan to move from this *feeding* mentality to a *take over* mindset.

2. Stewardship teachings have focused on helping people to be faithful without helping them know how to make wealth. Most of our methods in stewardship have continued to focus on teaching people to be faithful in returning tithe and offerings, the assumption being that people have money.

3. Principles of good internal control are not implemented in the church treasury system in Africa. In the treasury seminars that I have attended, I have heard it repeatedly said: "The Church in Africa would double its income if it implemented basic internal control measures in its financial management system."

4. Wealthy people in Africa who are faithful to God have not been taught to make wills that benefit the church upon their demise. When a rich person dies in Africa, his support to the church has ended. If the wealthy people in Africa where taught to name the church in their wills they would continue supporting the church even after their death.

5. Not enough education has been done in telling Africa that the Bible teaches people to work hard and take care of their own needs so as not to be a burden on others. Many people in Africa would qualify as *beggars*. A begging mentality is destructive to self-reliance. Unless a person changes his mind to that of a hard worker, one who does not beg, one cannot grow out of a begging mentality. The Adventist Church has not strongly promoted, taught, and upheld the biblical views on hard work, independence in providing for one's needs, and for caring for the material and spiritual well being of one's family.

6. The newly converted people coming into the church in recent years, especially those brought in through large campaigns, have not been ad-equately taught proper stewardship. Many people have been baptized who have not heard of or even demonstrated true discipleship through practices such as faithfulness in the returning of tithe.

7. The brain drain—the migration of Africans out of Africa in search of a better life—has immerged in recent years as one of the biggest factors contributing to Africa failing to attain self-reliance. "Some analysts say that as many as 50,000 PhDs, or 30% of Africa's university-trained pro-fessionals, currently live and work outside the continent—in Britain, Eu-rope, and the United States. Others put the number higher: 70,000 skilled graduates are leaving each year" (*Sawubona Magazine* 2007:112). The im-pact on the Seventh-day Adventist Church caused by this loss is that the church is losing and continues to lose some of its best people who could help solve the problem of inadequate self-reliance.

Biblical Principles

The Bible presents important principles that apply to the African situ-ation.

Self-Reliance

Paul gave this counsel to Timothy as sound teachings on self-reliance:

> In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live ac-cording to the teaching you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread

they eat. And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right. If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother. (2 Thess 3:6-15)

This profound passage has several key points that I would like to outline to ensure they are clearly understood:

1. Paul teaches that being self-reliant should be a *model* life style, one that all believers should aim for (3:9).

2. In order to be self-reliant, people have to believe in working hard and working hard sometimes may call one to work nights and days (3:8).

3. If people are not willing to work hard so that they can supply their own needs, they should not then enjoy a life they have not worked for. If they are not willing to work, they should not eat (3:10).

4. Believers should not to be a burden to others. Being a burden to others happens when people look to others or expect others to supply their needs. Paul is not saying we should not receive help from others because he himself gave examples of how he took gifts from one church to the church in Jerusalem, but rather he is saying we should not live in a manner that makes others responsible to supply our needs (3:7).

To Paul, these teachings are not a minor subject. This subject was so important that he personally practiced it. He refused to receive support from church members so that he would not be a burden. "Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you" (1 Thess 2:9). So strong were his convictions on this that he wrote to the Corinthians, "And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so" (2 Cor 11:9). There is one point I need to stress. For Paul, self-reliance was not merely a personal life style preference but part of being a Christian. He writes, "I have not coveted anyone's silver or gold or clothing. You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions.

In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:33-35).

Paul's teachings are consistent with the rest of the Bible. When sin first entered, God reminded Adam and Eve that because the ground was cursed, they were going to have to work and sweat through painful toil to live. "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return" (Gen 3:17-19). Before eating, before enjoying any life style, before enjoying comfort, before enjoying anything there is hard work!

Hard Work

Hard work as a concept and life style is strongly promoted by Scripture. Solomon, the wise servant of God, wrote and said, "All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty" (Prov 14:23). He repeated the same counsel in other passages using different examples. "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest—and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man" (Prov 6:10, 11; 24:33, 34). Solomon taught that "the lazy man does not roast his game, but the diligent man prizes his possessions" (Prov 12:27).

Getting things free was not encouraged in the Bible. Even when a young man wanted to marry, he was required to prove that he was hard working and could keep his wife and the family. When Jacob negotiated marriage with Laban he said, "I'll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel" (Gen 29:18). Embedded in the forth commandment was the concept of working. "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work" (Exod 20:8-9).

Biblical Examples

Since the Fall, God's people have followed God's advice to work hard with the soil, to work hard to earn a living, and God has blessed the work of their hands. The Bible records that God placed Adam and his family in the garden to work. "Now Abel kept the flocks and Cain worked the soil" (Gen 4:2) Noah, "a man of the soil" started a garden as soon as he

came out of the ark (Gen 9:20). God's people in the Old Testament based their economy on animal raising or tilling the soil. It is said of Isaac and the use of the soil, that "Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundredfold, because the Lord blessed him" (Gen 26:12). And it is said of Uzziah that "he had people working his fields and vineyards in the hills and in the fertile lands, for he loved the soil" (2 Chron 26:10). The keeping and raising animals was so important in the Hebrew economy that when the family of Jacob went into Egypt they asked for fertile land. When Pharaoh asked the sons of Jacob about their occupation, they answered, "Your servants have tended livestock from our boyhood on, just as our fathers did" (Gen 46:34). Even women were shepherdesses (Gen 29:9).

The examples given above are not intended to make either agriculture or animal husbandry the only occupations that God's people are to have, but they serve as examples of how God's people made use of the natural gifts of God, the soil and nature, to establish a livelihood. These people worked and God blessed their labor and they did not depend on someone to provide for their needs. Others had other trades, but all the same, those trades provided their means of living. Paul was a tent maker (Acts 18:3) and Lydia was a dealer in purple cloth (Acts 16:14). The disciples were fishermen (Mark 1:6). The point really is not the specific occupation but that they had an occupation or trade by which they earned their living, thereby avoiding being a burden to others.

God's Promises

A careful study of the promises of God reveals that God puts a blessing on his people's labor and not on their idleness. While the nature of blessings is different in different areas of life, here is how God promised he would bless his children if they had a relationship of loyalty with him.

> If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God: You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country. The fruit of your

womb will be blessed, and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock--the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. Your basket and your kneading trough will be blessed. You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out. The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. The Lord will make you the head, not the tail. If you pay attention to the commands of the Lord your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them, you will always be at the top, never at the bottom. (Deut 28:1-6, 12, 13)

Before I conclude this section, I do not want to leave the impression that I am saying that Africans are not hard workers. Many of them are. What I am saying is that all people should approach life with this attitude. By working hard, sometimes very hard, sometimes day and night, one is to provide the needs of life. This attitude will lead people not to look to other people to meet their needs, but rather to look to self as the supplier of one's needs. Africans and all of God's people need to adopt and internalize this attitude. Begging is not of God's order for his children.

Reasons to Enhance Stewardship Education

The current emphasis in stewardship education that only appeals to members to be faithful in returning tithe and offerings is not adequate in dealing with the subject of self-reliance in Africa. For people to give or support God's work materially they must have wealth or something to give. The Church, either through the Department of Stewardship or some other entity should therefore expand their teachings to include empowering believers with knowledge and means to work hard and make money.

When I once shared the points above, a person asked me, "Well, what do those people eat if they claim they do not have money?" The answer is that they eat food and mainly it is the kind of food that is not transferable to cash. Take for an example a person who grows some vegetables and cassava for consumption. Subsistence farmers often do not produce enough to sell. They are living from hand to mouth. I have never forgotten what my mother told me in a letter one day in her early days as an Adven-

tist. "Pastor, the church has given us a goal for tithe from each member. My goal is $20 for this year. Would you please send that money as I do not want to be the only one not to pay?" My mother was faithful to the church, but she could not give faithfully to the church since the church needed money, of which she had none.

You can only give what you have. This point was made very vivid to me when I was in Ukraine conducting a seminar on money management. The seminar was advertised and on the first day a lot of people turned up. The hall was packed with standing room only. After I made my first two presentations teaching the people how to best manage money, one man raised his hand and said something I will never forget. "Sir, before you can teach us how to manage money can you please first teach us where to find this money that we will be managing." Because I was not prepared to do that, by mid-day I had lost half of the people because very few of them were interested in learning about managing money they did not have. It is not enough, especially at this time, for the church to continue appealing to people to be faithful in returning tithes and offerings. It is said that over 80 percent of the believers in Africa are women and young people below age twenty-five. Most from these two groups do not have jobs and nor do they make money. They can be very faithful, but if they do not have money, they will not give it and the church will not become financially independent.

As a result of the two points I have made above, I would like to suggest that the church should expand its teachings to its members by starting to teach church members how to make money. If the church expects to receive financial support from its members, and such support can only come if people have the means, the church then should extend its work to not only helping people be faithful but also teaching people to know how to work hard and make money.

The Impact of Aid

In order to understand what those who have spent time to study and write about the issues of poverty alleviation and aid to Africa, I recently reviewed three books:

1. *Beyond Structural Adjustment: The Institutional Context of African*

Development, edited by Nicolas Van de Walle and Nicole Ball.

2. *The Trouble with Africa: Why Foreign Aid Isn't Working,* by Robert Calderisi.

3. *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good,* by William Easterly.

There are many things that these authors have said but three points caught my attention.

1. Pouring aid into Africa has not helped Africa to develop. Data show that in spite of over $2.3 trillion dollars that has gone as aid to Africa in the past 60 years, Africa has not become economically better off than it was in the past (Easterly 2006:11). "Around the world, successful countries are those that have chosen the right policies for their own reasons and seen foreign aid as a complement to their own efforts rather than as a bribe for undertaking difficult reforms" (2006:7).

2. It will take Africans themselves to develop and solve the problems of Africa. Foreign aid will not solve the poverty or joblessness in Africa. Big plans to change the poverty situation in Africa that come from foreign donors have failed to develop Africa.

3. Research has shown that the best form of aid is that which helps individual people. "The aim should be to make individuals better off, not to transform governments or societies. The outside world cannot fix the governments in Africa, but they can choose to empower individual people who in turn can be self-reliant" (Easterly 2006:368).

Seven Suggestions for the Future

Following are seven suggestions to stimulate the mind and to put something on the table:

1. Expand the teachings of stewardship to include not only teaching people to give faithfully, but helping people how to start their own businesses so that they can make money. Where possible, employ an extra person to work in the stewardship department whose responsibility will be to teach church members how to start businesses and make money.

2. Teach and implement the Bible command of 2 Thess 3:10, "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." African should learn to say "No" to gifts that perpetuate a begging and dependent mentality or alternatively re-

duce or eradicate a begging mentality. Begging does not go well with self-reliance. And if "begging is done" let it be begging for a hook instead of a fish.

3. Change the current emphasis that stresses the number of people baptized to emphasize the quality of people that are being baptized. Many who are baptized do not even know what being an Adventist or even a Christian means. Emphasize the preparation of people coming into the church by teaching them and nurturing them into true disciples rather than hurrying them into baptism.

4. Implement sound principles of internal control, such as accountability, transparency, etc. This may call for employing local church auditors and pursuing people who defraud the church with legal action.

5. Start creating a culture that encourages people to express their support for God's work by including support of that work in their written wills.

6. Africans will continue to immigrate to Western countries and many of them may not return to Africa. Since there is little we can do about that, let us find a way to involve those Africans living outside of Africa in solving the problems of Africa. This would include, but would not be limited to getting them involved in training and human development, the investing of their resources in Africa, and their involvement in the financial support in building Africa. "Until the gifted and enterprising people can be attracted to return, most of the world's peace-making efforts on the continent, and certainly most of its aid, will have little effect" (Calderisi 2006:5). Aid cannot end poverty. Only homegrown development based on the dynamism of individuals and firms in free markets can end poverty.

7. Start to have continent-wide meetings in Africa where the issues of concern for Africa are discussed and solutions sought.

Optimistic View

Many things may collapse in Africa, and yet one thing that has not yet collapsed is the African spirit of hope. I am optimistic about the future of Africa. Rightly guided, the members of the Adventist Church in Africa will not only be able to support the work of God on the continent without depending on foreign aid, but will be able to go a step further and share

their resources with other parts of the world for the spreading the gospel of salvation. This will call for doing things differently. Someone defined madness as "doing the same things over and over again, but expecting new results." Africa should try something new that they have not tried before and then see if it will not bear fruit.

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Biography

Dr. Pardon Mwansa was born in Zambia. He earned his BA, MDiv, and DMin degrees at Andrews University. His extensive work experience includes the pastorate and departmental and administrative duties at conference, union, and division levels. Stewardship has been a specialty. Dr. Mwansa now serves as General Vice-President of the General Conference of SDA and Speaker/Producer of the Wait a Minute Pastor program on Hope TV. Dr. Mwansa and his wife Judith have two sons and two daughters.

6 | Adventist Responses to Mission Challenges in Africa through Education and Leadership

Chiemela N. Ikonne

> "In the *highest sense* the work of education and
> the work of redemption are one."
>
> Ellen G. White, 1903:30

Introduction

Seventh-day Adventist missionaries first came to Africa through its northern and southern geographical ends, namely Egypt and South Africa, respectively. Later they started working in East and West Africa. According to Baker, "European Adventists first made contact with Italians in Alexandria, Egypt, in 1877, and Americans went to Cape Town, South Africa, in 1887" (1988:16a). Babalola (2004:15) adds that the General Conference sent Lawrence C. Chadwick to West Africa in 1892 to explore the possibility of establishing mission stations along the coast. The result of this exploratory visit was that E. L. Sanford and K. G. Rudolhin were sent to Ghana in 1894. From these late-nineteenth century beginnings, the Adventist Church and its institutions have gradually grown and spread throughout much of the African continent, south of the Sahara.

The purpose of this paper is to show how the Adventist Church has employed education as a means of spreading the gospel, past and present. It will conclude by identifying knowledge gained from our past and present experiences, and how this knowledge could guide the development of future educational policies and practices of the Church in Africa so as to strengthen the evangelistic power of Adventist education.

This paper is organized in the chronological order of the coming of Adventist missionaries to Africa, using the names of the current divisions of

the Adventist Church in Africa, with the exception of North Africa which does not have an Africa-based division. The three Africa-based divisions (East-Central Africa, West-Central Africa, and Southern Africa-Indian Ocean) were reorganized in 2003. It is for this reason that statistical information about them starts from this year.

Adventist Education in North Africa

Although Adventist missionaries were in Egypt as early as 1877, the growth of the Church in North Africa has been extremely limited. Evidently, converts were made right from those early years (see Bruinsma n.d.:35), and the first church was organized in 1901 (see Baker 1988:16a). However, the *2006 Yearbook* reports only seven churches and 209 members for the Trans-Mediterranean Territories (covering North Africa and some parts of the Middle-East), which have a population of 580,019,000. Likewise, the *2005 World Report of Adventist Education* around the world does not record any school for this region. Undoubtedly, there is a dire need for effective means of sharing Christ Jesus with the over half a billion inhabitants of this large area.

North Africa, which falls within the 10/40 Window mission territory, is one of the challenges to Adventist education. For this writer, Adventist education could conceivably be the much needed key for opening the iron door of Islam in North Africa. This is especially plausible at this time when most of the Muslim nations are open to basic educational programs from non-governmental organizations for their citizens. Adventist educators should therefore design educational programs suitable for the Muslim mind by way of academic standards as well as by inoffensive ways of witnessing Christ to them.

Adventist Education in the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID)

Officially, Adventist mission in Southern Africa started in 1887 when American missionaries arrived in Cape Town, South Africa. From the very beginning, it appears that Adventist pioneer missionaries saw education as a very viable means of achieving the mission of the Church. Addressing this Bruinsma writes, "Wherever Adventist presence was established, schools were built. Africa was to be no exception. From an early

date many of these schools produced evangelistic workers who would soon join forces with expatriates and gradually assume responsibilities" (Bruinsma n.d.:39).

The establishment of Helderberg College, in Somcorset West, Africa in 1893, marked the beginning of Adventist education in Southern Africa. This was followed by the opening of an educational/medical center at Solusi, in Zimbabwe in 1894. The occurrence of these events soon after the arrival of the first Adventist missionaries attests to the importance those pioneer missionaries attached to education as an essential means of evangelism. Today, Helderberg College and Solusi University (which became the first Adventist senior college for Black Africa in 1958) remain important centers of education.

Table 1. Early Schools of SID

Date	Place	Event
1893	South Africa	An Adventist school was established in Helderberg.
1894	Solusi	An educational/medical center was opened at Solusi.
1902	Malawi	A black American minister opened a school near Blantyre.
1910	Lesotho	Emmanuel Station was established for both day and boarding students.
	Malawi	Classes for young ladies were begun at Malamulo Mission (YB: 1902).
1927	Malawi	Four government-accredited medical teaching programs were emphasized at Malamulo Hospital.
1938	Madagascar	A training school was opened just outside of Antananarivo.
1960	Zambia	Rusangu Secondary School (first established in 1951), a coeducational boarding senior secondary school, was reopened at Monze.

Source: Baker 1988.

As the years passed, church membership increased, and many other schools were opened. The early establishment of Adventist education in

Southern Africa has been largely "chronologized" by Baker (1988:16a-c) as shown in table 1. From this small beginning, Adventist education has spread all over Southern Africa. Table 2 shows that in December 2005 there were 338 schools, 3,155 teachers, and 94,342 students. SID records the fourth largest world church membership, but ranks seventh in the worldwide Adventist student enrolment.

It is interesting to note that most of these schools are located in rural and suburban areas. However, they are serving the Adventist Church as well as the communities and countries where they are located. They serve the Church by nurturing the children in the way of salvation through Christ Jesus. This is achieved through the integration of love, faith, hope, and moral values in their teachings. The schools also prepare workers for the Church, and many of the leaders and other workers such as pastors, teachers, nurses, accountants, in SID received some of their training from these Church institutions.

**Table 2. South Africa-Indian Ocean Division:
Schools, Teachers, Students, and Baptisms**

	2003	**2004**	**2005**
Number of schools	264	306	338
Number of teachers	2,822	3,434	3,155
SDA teachers	2,016	2,520	2,343
Non-SDA teachers	806	914	812
Percentage of SDA teachers	71.4%	73.3%	74.2%
Teachers graduated from SDA institutions	273	750	666
Number of students	103,012	107,893	94,342
SDA students	38,200	56,209	31,939
Non-SDA students	64,812	51,684	62,403
Percentage of SDA students	37%	52%	33.8%
Students baptized during the year	6,399	3,884	3,462
Total SID baptisms	121,476	185,683	141,835
Schools % of baptisms	5%	2%	2%

Source: World Report: Adventist Education Around the World, 2003, 2004, 2005; Education Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Marenus De Paula, former president of the Indian Ocean Union, affirmed the contribution of Adventist education ministry to the mission of the Church in his claim that

> the education work in Madagascar also played a major role in the development of the work. In 1938, an Adventist Training School (College Adventist de Soamanadrariny) was established in Central Madagascar. Other schools followed: the Adventist Scholl of Ankanzambo in 1951 for the Northern Mission; Ivoamba School for the Southern Mission, in 970; the Ambatoharanana School for the East Coast in 1954; and a primary day school in 1965. Several of these schools were closed during the 1980s but have been reopened. (Tetteh n.d.:32, 33)

Because Adventist schools are open to anyone who is willing to comply with its principles of operation, many non-Adventists, young and old, avail themselves of the opportunity of the quality, wholistic education offered by these institutions. The average percentage of non-Adventist students in SID from 2003-2005 is over 55%. By offering education for the harmonious development of the spiritual, mental, social, and physical powers, Adventist educational institutions in SID are not only preparing these non-Adventist students for a career but also sharing Christ with this daily, ready audience. In this way, the schools are contributing in the balanced development of the communities and countries hosting them.

But the greatest evidence of how Adventist schools in SID are meeting the challenge of Adventist mission is seen in the number of persons that are led to accept Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior through baptism in these schools. Table 2 shows that the baptisms in SID schools were 6,399 in 2003, 3,884 in 2004, and 3,462 in 2005. These figures represent 5%, 2%, and 2% of the total baptism in the division for the corresponding years. Many of these baptisms are from non-Adventist students in SID schools. Modest as these figures might be, they nevertheless give evidence to the contribution that Adventist schools in SID are making towards the accomplishment of the mission of the Church. By integrating biblical faith and moral values in every school activity, SID schools are teaching and preaching the everlasting gospel so that all who hear it will accept Christ Jesus as

their Lord and Savior, and publicly demonstrate it through baptism.

In summary, Adventist educational institutions in SID are conscientiously *training* workers for the Church, *nurturing* Adventist students, *evangelizing* non-Adventist students in attendance, and contributing in the *development* of their host communities. The writer designates this fourfold function of an Adventist school as the "TNED" mission. SID schools have trained workers who are serving at every level of the Adventist Church organization as well as the society at large.

Adventist Education in the West-Central Africa Division (WAD)

The visit of Lawrence C. Chadwick to Ghana in 1892 marked the official beginning of Adventist mission in West Africa. Two years later (1894), E. L. Sanford and K. G. Rudolhin came to Ghana to permanently establish the Adventist mission. Like their colleagues in Southern Africa, Adventist pioneer missionaries in West Africa gave maximum consideration and attention to education (Babalola 2002:107). As a result, schools were planted along with churches. For example, David Cadwell Babcock started a school in Freetown, Sierra Leone in 1907 two years after he arrived there. In Nigeria, he started a vernacular school at Erunmu in 1914, the very year he went there to establish an Adventist presence. The following year (1915), Babcock moved to Sao where he immediately opened another village school which in 1918 became the first Adventist formal school in Nigeria where early Adventist workers were trained. This school was moved to Oke-Bola in Ibadan in 1928.

Jessie Clifford's approach to evangelism and education was the same as that of Babcock. Clifford started a school at Aba, Nigeria in 1923 the same year he arrived there to start the Adventist mission, and by 1927 pupils could acquire a formal education through the school he established. Thereafter, he and other Adventist missionaries, with the collaboration of church members, opened primary schools in most of the major districts of Southeastern Nigeria, and in 1948, the first SDA Secondary School, Practicing School, and Teacher Training College in Eastern Nigeria was established at Ihie.

In Cameroon, as the Adventist work began in Nanga Eboko in 1928,

Robert L. Jones started a Bible literacy school that same year. Later in 1932, Suzanne and Charles Cornaz upgraded the Bible school to a full primary school. It was in 1937 that Aime and Madeleine Cosendai added a secondary school level to the primary school, and thereafter recruited graduates from the secondary school to be trained as pastors in the Adventist Seminary of Nanga-Eboko which they started in 1945. In 1995, the Adventist University Cosendai was established on the same campus of Nanga-Eboko where the Adventist mission and education began in Cameroon.

Table 3. Early Schools of WAD

Date	Place	Event
1907 1908	Ghana	Christian A. Ackah opened a school at Cape Coast which was transferred to Kikam in 1908. Schools started in Axim and Atuabo by Christian A. Ackah.
1907	Sierra Leone	David Cadwell Babcock established a training school in Freetown.
1914 1915	Nigeria	David C. Babcock established a vernacular school in Erunmu. David C. Babcock established a village school at Sao.
1923	Nigeria	Jessie Clifford arrived at Aba and started Bible classes which in four years transformed into a formal school.
1928	Cameroon	A Bible literacy program started at Nanga-Eboko which transformed into a primary school in 1932.
1937		A secondary school was opened in Nanga-Eboko.
1948	Nigeria	Secondary, Practicing, and Teacher Training Schools started at Ihie.
1955	Nigeria	The Adventist Teachers' Grade III College was opened at Otun-Ekiti.
1958	Ivory Coast	A primary school was started in Divo and a secondary school in Bouake.
1959	Nigeria	Adventist College of West Africa (now Babcock University) was established.
1975	Cameroon	A primary school with over 3,700 pupils was established in Yaounde.

Source: Babalola 2001; Baker 1988; Owusu-Mensa 2005.

According to Babalola, early Adventist missionaries "knew that the strongest weapon for propagating Adventism was education" (2002:107).

In fact, education was so important to Adventist pioneer missionaries in preaching the gospel in West Africa that from 1914 to 1958 Adventist missionaries in Western Nigeria alone had established twenty-seven schools. This early tradition of emphasis on education for evangelism might help to explain the very large size of Adventist education in WAD. Table 3 exhibits some of the early schools established by missionaries and local church leaders in the West-Central Africa Division.

These early schools were adequately developed, and some gained national reputation in spite of the fact that they were located in rural and suburban areas. However, the monopolistic educational policies of many West African countries that were in effect from the early 1970s through the 1990s had a severe adverse effect on faith-based schools of which Adventist schools were among. Those policies gave the right of operating schools only to the government. In effect, different governments and at different times took over all the educational institutions including those of the Adventists. This situation set Adventist education back for over twenty years—a setback that it began to recover from in the early 1990s. Nevertheless, Adventist education in WAD has been in full gear since the early 1990s to the point that in 2005 it recorded 955 schools with 7,359 teachers and 214,046 students (see table 4).

Beyond statistical figures, Adventist education in WAD, especially at the tertiary level, has given the Church the publicity and popularity that is envied by other religious faiths. For example, on October 26, 2002, the then president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, on a visit to Babcock University, declared: "I am impressed with the level of progress made in this institution." The echo of the state governor, Chief Olusegun Osoba, who accompanied the President, was "To God be the Glory for a great Institution. May God bless all. Amen."

In Ghana, the President of the Republic, John Agyekum Kufuor, personally came on May 28, 2006, during the 12th graduation exercise of Valley View University (VVU), and presented the Charter Certificate to VVU as a demonstration of the confidence his government has in VVU. The excerpt below from President Kufuor's speech helps one better appreciate the extent to which the Ghana government respects and honors VVU and, in effect, it's proprietor, the Adventist Church.

**Table 4. West-Central Africa Division:
Schools, Teachers, Students, and Baptisms**

	2003	2004	2005
Number of schools	974	988	955
Number of teachers	7,210	7,056	7,359
SDA teachers	4,120	3,446	3,382
Non-SDA teachers	3,090	3,610	3,977
Percentage of SDA teachers	57.1%	48.8%	45.9%
Teachers who graduated from SDA institutions	140	139	500
Total number of students	219,309	218,820	214,046
SDA students	69,818	72,236	79,266
Non-SDA students	149,491	146,584	134,780
Percentage of SDA students	31.8%	33%	37%
Students baptized during the year	2,972	3,309	1,545
Total WAD baptism	42,183	47,053	34,807
Schools % of baptism	7%	7%	4%

Source: World Report: Adventist Education Around the World, 2003, 2004, 2005. Education Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

It is with great pleasure that I participate in this historic twelfth Commencement Ceremony of Ghana's first accredited private University. This year's ceremony is historic not only for Valley View University but also for our country. It is my hope that the significance of today's ceremony will not be lost by our historians. Let it be known that today higher education in Ghana has reached a significant milestone. For the first time in our history, a private university is being granted a Charter. This gives certain rights and privileges to the University as prescribed in the relevant legislative instrument. In the world of Academia, this Charter confers a sort of sovereignty. Thus, your University is now fully-fledged….

Mr. Chairman, on this happy occasion, I should single out the Seventh-day Adventist Church for special commendation for establishing Valley View University as a trail blazer in the field of private tertiary education. Your university was the first to be accredited in 1997 among the many up-and-coming private universi-

ties in the country. Valley View University has since been developing with the requisite foresight, determination and consistency.

The National Accreditation Board has therefore deemed it fit to recommend that I grant your University the Charter, to which I readily appended my signature. Today, I am happy to be here to present the Charter Certificate myself in appreciation of the good work being done by the university....

My presence here today to participate in the 12th Commencement Ceremony of Valley View University, and to present the Charter Certificate is a demonstration of the confidence government has in you in particular, and also the hope it has in the other private tertiary institutions, in general for our nation's development.

Although most of the great national leaders who associate with our educational institutions may not openly declare membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, they certainly have known the beliefs of the Church and, therefore, have heard the gospel.

It is interesting to know that although WAD ranks in eighth place in the Adventist world church membership, it ranks second, after ECD, in Adventist worldwide school enrolment. As seen in table 4, WAD schools contributed 7% of total division baptisms in 2003 and 2004, and 4% of the same in 2005, with an average of 6% for the three years. Many of these baptisms are from the non-Adventist students who comprise over 60% of the student enrolment. The percentage baptism in WAD schools is among the highest in the Adventist educational system.

To summarize, as is the case in SID, WAD schools are actively involved in the TNED mission: *training* personnel for various services in the Church, *nurturing* Adventist students, *evangelizing* non-Adventist students in attendance (as well as other persons who come in contact with them), and contributing in the total *development* of the communities hosting them. Graduates from WAD schools can be seen serving right from the local churches to the General Conference, and from the village school to the national parliament.

Adventist Education in the East-Central Africa Division (ECD)

As German missionaries entered Tanzania in 1903, they later started "developing the Chasu grammar and Swahili primer for education and translation of the Bible" (Baker 1988:16a). This was followed by the educational work of Scandinavian missionaries in Eritrea in 1907. Five years later (1912), the Kamagambo High School and Training College was established in Kenya.

There is sufficient evidence showing that Adventist missionaries in East Africa have very widely employed education in spreading the gospel. Writing on Adventist education work in Rwanda, Paulo Leitao, former president of the Rwanda Union Mission observed that "the education work was begun along with evangelism: the first school started in Gitwe in 1921 and at Rwankeri in 1925. In the following years several schools were opened to such an extent that in 1928 there were 31 schools enrolling nearly 2,500" (Tetteh n.d.:41). The early establishment of Adventist education in the East-Central Africa Division is highlighted in table 5.

Table 5. Early Schools of ECD

Date	Place	Event
1903	Tanzania	Education work started in the Pare region by German missionaries
1907	Eritrea	Scandinavian missionaries started education programs in Eritrea
1921	Ethiopia	Akaki Adventist School was opened
	Rwanda	Gitwe mission school was established
1924	Tanzania	Teacher Training College was opened at Suji
1925	Kenya	Kendu Mission Hospital was established with a nurses' training school
1928	Kenya	Kamgambo Adventist High School and Teachers' College was opened
1948	Uganda	Bugema Adventist College was opened
1950	Ethiopia	A nursing school was opened in Gimbie
1978	Kenya	University of Eastern Africa, Baraton was established and classes started in 1980
1978	Rwanda	Adventist University of Central Africa was established in Gisenyi and classes started in 1984

Source: Baker 1988.

As was the case in South and West Africa, the pioneer schools of East Africa have mushroomed all over East-Central Africa Division such that in 2005 there were 1,118 schools, 9,296 teachers, and 271, 948 students (table 6).

Table 6. East-Central Africa Division: Schools,
Teachers, Students, and Baptisms

	2003	2004	2005
Number of Schools	940	984	1,118
Number of teachers	9,146	8,667	9,296
SDA teachers	6,220	5,857	6,458
Non-SDA teachers	2,926	2,810	2,838
Percentage of SDA teachers	68%	67.5%	69.4%
Teachers who graduated from SDA institutions	1,542	1,919	817
Number of students	240,188	262,380	271,948
SDA students	117,690	133,048	134,788
Non-SDA students	122,497	129,332	134,360
Percentage of SDA students	49%	50.7%	49.5%
Students baptized during the year	6,778	10,892	7,862
Total ECD baptism	138,312	179,614	148,169
Schools % of baptism	5%	6%	5%

Source: World Report: Adventist Education Around the World, 2003, 2004, 2005, Education Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Since 2003 ECD schools are contributing about 5 percent of annual division baptisms. As is normally the case, many of those baptized are non-Adventist students. It is noteworthy that this division which ranks 3rd (after IAD and SAD) in world church membership has the highest student enrollment in the Adventist worldwide educational system. This is another evidence that Adventist Church leaders in the East-Central Africa Division are applying education as a major tool for mission.

In summary, it is evident that the Adventist Church in the East-Central Africa Division, like the two other Africa-based divisions, is widely using

education in meeting the TNED mission of Adventist schools, namely, *training* personnel to serve in the Church, *nurturing* Adventist students, *evangelizing* non-Adventist students, and assisting in the *development* of their immediate and extended communities. Graduates from ECD Adventist educational institutions are serving the Church as well as the society at various levels.

From this brief review of Adventist education and its role in accomplishing the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Africa, a number of major points have come to light:

1. Adventist missionaries opened various kinds of schools (vernacular, vocational, religious, formal, and health) along with the preaching of the Word of God and the planting of churches.

2. Subsequent Adventist Church leaders are continuing the educational work of the pioneer missionaries.

3. The schools are training workers for the Church as well as for the society at large.

4. Adventist schools nurture church members in attendance so they grow and become more mature in their faith.

5. The schools are contributing to church growth by leading non-Adventist students to accept Christ Jesus and be baptized.

6. The schools are contributing to the development of their immediate communities as well as the larger society by offering quality, wholistic Christian education to the citizens. By doing so, they render an essential service that helps to alleviate human suffering and sorrow—even as Christ Jesus did and commands His Church to do.

7. Most of the Adventist schools are located in rural and suburban areas.

Adventist Education Trends: Comparisons Between Africa and the World

For a better understanding and appreciation of the extent to which Adventist education has been effectively employed in addressing mission challenges in Africa, it is helpful to make statistical comparisons between Africa and rest of the world Church.

Membership-Student Percentages

The membership of the world church and that of the three African divisions for 2003-2005 are exhibited in table 7 for the purpose of showing the percentage of membership the African divisions constitute. The data shows that the African divisions together comprise a little over 33 percent of the world membership for the period under consideration. At the same time, student enrollment in African Adventist schools comprises 45 percent of total world church school enrollment. This comparison demonstrates the great potential value of education for Adventist mission in Africa.

Table 7. World-Africa Comparison: Membership-Student Percentages

	2003		2004		2005	
	World	Africa	World	Africa	World	Africa
Membership	12,894,005	4,539,509	13,936,932	4,566,971	14,399,072	4,838,910
Africa –world %	35.2%		32.7%		33.6%	
Students	1,257,578	565,509	1,295,532	619,093	1,336,681	580,336
Africa –world %	44.9%		47.7%		43.4%	

Source: World Report: Adventist Education Around the World, 2003, 2004, 2005, Education Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Baptisms in Adventist Schools

A comparison of Adventist education related baptisms from 2003–2005 (table 8) lends additional credence to the commitment of Adventist leaders in Africa in applying education in meeting mission challenges in Africa. During this period the African divisions, which had 33% of Adventist

Table 8. World-Africa Comparison: Baptisms

	2003		2004		2005	
	World	Africa	World	Africa	World	Africa
Baptism	30,849	16,149	36,222	18,085	30,422	12,869
Africa %	52%		50%		42%	

Source: World Report: Adventist Education Around the World, 2003, 2004, 2005, Education Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

world membership and 45% of students enrolled in Adventist schools, reported 48% of all education related baptisms in the world Church.

Schools and Teachers

Whereas 45% of Adventist students worldwide are in Africa, only about 33% of the schools (table 9), and 29% of the teachers (table 10) are in Africa. This suggests that many of the Adventist schools in Africa have larger enrolments when compared with other Adventist schools else-where. Further, it suggests that many of the Adventist teachers in Africa have more students in their classes than their colleagues outside Africa.

Table 9. World-Africa Comparison: Schools

	2003		2004		2005	
	World	Africa	World	Africa	World	Africa
Elementary	5,253	1,799	5,322	1,871	5,362	1,947
Secondary	1,316	346	1,386	374	1,462	436
Worker Training	39	17	37	15	36	14
Tertiary	99	13	101	13	106	14
Totals	6,707	2,178	6,846	2,273	6,966	2,411
African %	32.4%		33.2%		34.6%	

Source: World Report: Adventist Education Around the World, 2003, 2004, 2005, Education Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Table 10. World-Africa Comparison: Teachers

	2003		2004		2005	
	World	Africa	World	Africa	World	Africa
Elementary	36,217	13,484	36,178	13,375	36,880	13,330
Secondary	20,776	4,883	21,246	4,982	22,678	5,510
Worker Training	416	206	415	213	431	229
Tertiary	8,270	605	7,143	587	8,882	741
Totals	65,679	19,178	64,982	19,157	68,871	19,810
African %	(29%)		(29.4%)		(28.7%)	

Source: World Report: Adventist Education Around the World, 2003, 2004, 2005, Education Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The situation of fewer schools and teachers in Africa, in spite of a comparatively large student enrollment, might be taken as an evidence of a high level of commitment and dedication by Adventist educators in offering quality Christ-like education despite very challenging conditions. This, in turn, underscores the determination of the Adventist Church in Africa to apply education in achieving the mission of the Church in Africa.

Membership and Student Enrollment

One more way of ascertaining the extent to which the Adventist Church in Africa has actually employed education in addressing mission challenges is to compare student ratios for the African Adventist Church membership with those of the worldwide Adventist membership. As shown in table 11, from 2003-2005, there is one student (Adventist and non-Adventist) to 10 Adventist members worldwide (1:10). For Adventists in Africa, there is one student (Adventist and non-Adventist) to eight members (1:8). In comparing students who are either baptized Adventists

**Table 11. World-Africa Comparison:
Membership and Student Enrollment**

	2003	2004	2005
World membership	12,894,005	13,936,932	14,399,072
Number of students	1,257,578	1,295,532	1,336,681
Ratio of students to members	1:10	1:10	1:10
Total number of SDA students	638,165	574,615	575,686
Ratio to members	1:20	1:24	1:25
Total membership – Africa	4,539,509	4,566,971	4,838,910
Total number of students – Africa	565,509	619,093	580,336
Ratio to members	1:8	1:7	1:8
Number of SDA students – Africa	225,708	261,493	248,793
Ratio to members	1:20	1:17	1:19

Source: World Report: Adventist Education Around the World, 2003, 2004, 2005, Education Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

or from an Adventist family, there is one student to 23 Adventist members worldwide (1:23). For African Adventists, there is an average of one student to 19 members (1:19).

The foregoing statistical comparisons strongly indicate that the Adventist Church in Africa has been taking good strides in the use of education for the advancement of Adventist mission in Africa—the growing of disciples for Christ Jesus.

Plans for the Future

In planning for the future of Adventist education in Africa, it seems appropriate to apply a SWOT analysis in identifying what has been its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This approach will lead to an accurate determination of the policies and practices that should be continue or modified, as well as those that should be completely changed.

Strengths of Adventist Education

On the basis of what has been presented in this paper so far, the strengths of Adventist education in Africa will include the following:

- Opening schools along with the planting of churches
- Establishing various kinds of schools at the appropriate time (vernacular, vocational, religious, formal, and health)
- Offering quality, Bible-based wholistic education of high reputation
- Focusing on the TNED role
- Training workers for the Church
- Nurturing Adventist students
- Evangelizing non-Adventist students
- Contributing in community development
- Locating schools in fairly unentered, rural, and suburban areas
- Continuity from missionaries to local church leaders

To adequately plan for the future, Adventist educators should insist that these areas of strength be continued, including the original tradition of opening schools for basic education wherever churches are planted. The need for the Church to educate its youth appears to be much more pressing now than ever.

The positive effects of the wholistic nurture provided by Adventist education has been documented by Rice (1991). In his North American study of a group of Adventists who graduated from Adventist schools and those who did not, Rice found, among other things, that overall those who graduated from Adventist schools were much more committed to God and to the Church than those who graduated from non-Adventist educational institutions. For example, 77% of those who graduated from Adventist schools were still church members as compared with 37% of those who graduated from elsewhere. And 78% percent of Adventist school graduates were married to other Adventists as opposed to 27% of non-Adventist school graduates. Indeed, Adventist education better equips the youth to face the perilous times of this age. Adventist educators should therefore continue to impress, at every level of the Church, the importance of providing this harmonious development education for Adventist youth at an affordable cost.

Weaknesses of Adventist Education

In the early years of Adventist education, the tradition of locating schools in the rural areas was advantageous because they provided easy access, among other things. However, society has changed so much that this tradition has become a weakness. In light of the fact that about half of the world's population is living in the mega cities, Adventist educational institutions should no longer be limited to rural and suburban locations. Just as the world Church has started to allocate budgets for constructing representative church buildings in the large cities of the world, so should they do for Adventist education in Africa and all around the world. This is particularly important because the members who will fill those big city churches will also need Adventist schools for their children. In addition, the representative city schools, with their traditional Adventist quality education, will attract members of the upper classes of the society whom the Church may not effectively reach through any other means.

Opportunities for Adventist Education

The standard of public education in Africa has declined so much that educational leaders as well as parents have lost confidence in it. Conse-quently, many private educational institutions are springing up to offer

high quality education. This is, therefore, a period of great opportunity for Adventist Church leaders and educators in Africa to open more schools, especially for the purpose of evangelism, nurture, and community development. Specifically, such evangelism or mission schools are needed in the Muslin nations of Africa where other forms of evangelism are either strictly prohibited or very limited.

The hunger and thirst for quality education is seen everywhere in the African continent. May I have your permission to draw from my personal experience from serving as education director, earlier in thirty-two countries, and now in twenty-two countries in Africa.

The Gambia: During a visit to The Gambia in West Africa in 1999, I was taken to see an Adventist primary school under construction. While we were in that district, people sent a message to a neighboring district informing them of our presence in the area. As we were leaving the school area, three men ran after us. They had come from the other district. Their message was simple but firm: "If you don't come to open a school in our district, never come here to evangelize."

In 2003, the Church in The Gambia conducted an evangelistic series that led to the baptism of many families that had been members of other Christian faiths. As the new converts joined the Adventist Church, their former churches denied their children admission to their schools. Happily, the General Secretary of the General Conference, Elder Matthew Bediako, witnessed this pathetic event and quickly appealed for funds to build a school for the Adventist children.

Gabon: Since 2002 the government of this central African nation has been making it difficult for missionaries of any religious organization which does not have schools, health, and social support facilities to secure visas to the country. They reason that religious organizations should contribute to the total development of the society.

Central Africa Republic: I met with the Minister of Education during my visit to this central African country in 2002. He concluded his comment by saying, "We have seen what the Catholics and Baptists have done in education and social welfare, we are still waiting to see what the Adventists will do."

Mauritius: In the course of an integration of faith and learning seminar

I held for Adventist teachers in this island nation in 2000, the teachers felt that the seminar was too good to be kept to themselves alone. They took me to the Minister of Education who, after seeing the program, immediately summoned all the high school principles to come for the seminar. They received all our training materials with great appreciation.

These are a few examples showing how much the world around us needs quality, Bible-based wholistic education. The Lord has so graciously committed the gift of evangelism through education to the Adventist Church. This is evidenced by our having the largest Protestant educational system in the world. The Church should ever strive to maximize the utilization of the gift of evangelism through education in growing disciples for Christ.

The school, as a means of evangelism, has some great advantages over every other form of evangelism:

1. It is very rare to find a community in Africa or elsewhere in the world that does not welcome the establishment of schools for the education of its members.

2. The basic schools minister to the children when they are most receptive to the gospel. It is much more difficult to influence the mind with the gospel, especially in the Muslim world, after the period of basic education.

3. The schools engage the children in an effective interactive learning and for a longer period of time than any other institution of teaching and learning. Because of this very advantage, the teachers have the greatest opportunity to influence the children more than any other group.

4. Schools teach children how to read, write, and compute—the three basic knowledge capabilities every human needs to advance in other domains of knowledge and understanding. In other words, schools prepare the patrons and audience for the print and audio-visual evangelistic arms (Hope Channel, Adventist World Radio, Literature Evangelism, etc.) of the Church.

The afore-mentioned reasons, among others, should motivate Adventist leaders (pastors and educator) in Africa to invest more in the establishment of schools in the 10/40 Window evangelistic region of Africa. Doing so will be like sowing seeds that will be reaped some generations

later if the Lord still tarries. But the same principle holds true for non-Muslim areas. The Roman Catholic Church has the practice of building "a small church and a big school" first. Later on, the graduates of the big school will build a big church. Perhaps, the Adventist Church in Africa, and possibly worldwide, can experiment with this.

Threats to Adventist Education

In developing policies for Adventist education in Africa, due attention should be given to the factors that pose serious threats to its success. The factors include lack of adequate number of Adventist teachers and students, lack of adequate funding, and competition among the schools.

As shown in table 2, the average percentage of Adventist teachers in SID is less than 75%. In WAD it is less than 55% (table 4), and it is less than 70% in ECD (table 6). Given that there truly can be no Adventist education without Adventist teachers, this situation constitutes a serious threat. This situation is even more serious because the average percentage of Adventist students in SID is less than 45%, less than 35% in WAD, and less than 50% in ECD. Many Adventist schools in Africa have too many non-Adventist teachers and students to create a truly Adventist learning environment. This is indeed a threat that must be overcome if our schools are to remain truly Adventist. Therefore, earnest effort must be made to develop policies that will make it financially easier to train, attract, and retain adequate numbers of Adventist teachers so they can transmit the right knowledge to the students. Such policies should also consider subsidizing the fees of Adventist students so many more parents can afford to send their children to Adventist schools. WAD universities have been applying such a subsidy since 2002.

In addition to having adequate numbers of Adventist teachers is the need to assist them to be maximally effective in integrating faith and learning. In a global needs assessment study of Adventist teachers Bradfield, Juste, and Thayer found, among other things, that "lack of training in the Adventist worldview and lack of understanding of how to integrate faith were perceived as problems to two-thirds (65.5% and 63.9%) of the teachers. Even higher percentages listed lack of good IFL teaching materials (73.5%) and lack of library reference materials (69%) as problems" (2005:14).

Teachers in this study requested training and tools that enable them and their students to better live the Adventist faith. One of the recommendations of this study was that an IFL training-of-trainers process and curriculum be developed and implemented. Evidently, continuous training and retraining of teachers and the provision of materials for maximum effectiveness in the transmission of biblical faith and values in Adventist schools are among the major challenges Adventist educational leaders should continue to address through policy and practice.

Sometimes Adventist schools in Africa, especially at the tertiary level, tend to compete with one another for scarce human and material resources. Such competitions constitute a threat not only to the entire Adventist educational system but also to the mission of the Church. For a more prosperous future for Adventist education in Africa, Church leaders and educators should emphasize collaboration among every level of our educational system. Because our mission and ultimate goal is one and the same, collaboration, not competition, should govern the relationship between Adventist educational institutions. And in this way Adventist schools will continue to accomplish greater things for the Lord in their mission of redeeming and restoring humans to their Creator.

Conclusion

This paper has given a very brief survey of the establishment and development of Adventist education in Africa. Available facts and figures show that Adventist pioneer missionaries had the tradition of opening various kind schools in rural and suburban areas along with the preaching of the gospel and the planting of churches. This tradition has been maintained by succeeding local and national church leaders. In addition, Adventist schools have applied Bible-based wholistic education in the training of workers for the Church, nurturing Adventist students and evangelizing non-Adventist students. As a result, Adventist education in Africa is very strong; comprising over 45% of Adventist worldwide student enrolment.

Because of their wholistic approach and Christ-centeredness to education, Adventist schools in Africa have produced many well qualified workers for every level of the church organization as well as for the private and public sectors. Moreover, it is making a significant contribution

to the growth of the Adventist Church in Africa and the world through the baptism of many non-Adventist students which averages to over 48% of baptisms in Adventist schools worldwide. These facts and figures affirm Ellen White's statement that "in the highest sense the work of education and the work of redemption are one" (1903:30).

In light of the foregoing, Adventist Church leaders and educators should establish policies and practices that will enable and facilitate the opening of Adventist schools in areas where there are none, including the big cities. Such schools should been seen as evangelistic centers, just as every Adventist educational institution is supposed to be. Further effort must be made to develop policies that will make it financially easier to train, attract, and retain adequate numbers of Adventist teachers who will totally commit themselves to transmitting biblical love, faith, hope, and values to the students. Finally, because the mission and ultimate goal of all Adventist educational institutions are one and the same—redeeming and restoring humans to God—collaboration, not competition, should be the policy governing the relationship between Adventist educational institutions.

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Biography

Dr. Chiemela Nwa Ikonne was born in Nigeria. He earned BSc Biology, MEd Educational Administration, and PhD Educational Administration degrees from the University of Alberta, Canada. He has served as a lecturer and in several academic administration positions at the Adventist Seminary of West Africa, Nigeria. Since 1998 he has been Education Director for the West-Central Africa Division, Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. Dr. Ikonne is married to Chinyere Nkechi Ikonne and they have two sons.

7 | Adventist Responses through Health and Development

Ron Mataya

Introduction

We have been discussing the development of humans so that they reflect the image of their Maker on this earth, albeit imperfectly. As Christians, we seek good health for ourselves and others. The World Health Organization defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Sustainable development is defined as "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (from Brundtland Report 1987).

If we put this into a Christian context, health and sustainable development are therefore the ultimate earthly goals for all God's creatures. Ellen White said, "Higher that the highest human thought can reach is God's desire for His children. Godliness—godlikeness—is the goal to be reached" (1903:18). Godliness, or godlikeness, includes well being in all dimensions of human life—the physical, mental, social, and spiritual. In order to be good disciples and stewards, we must ourselves be healthy and well developed mentally, physically, spiritually, and socially. We must not be maladjusted Christians in a world that needs readjustment.

In simple terms, I believe the responses Adventist have made to the challenges of Africa can be summarized as follows: We have built churches, clinics, hospitals, and schools. We have held temperance and health seminars in our churches. Our publishing houses have produced printed materials and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency has addressed physical and social needs.

More than a century after Adventist evangelization work began in Af-

rica what do we have to show for it. We have hospitals and rural health units in Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Botswana, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Swaziland, Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Djibouti. We also have educational institutions, ranging from primary schools to university level graduate schools. What is very interesting is the geographic locations of most of these facilities. If you compare Asia and Africa, our first health care and educational institutions in Africa where predominantly located in rural areas. One wonders whether this was by design or coincidence. The pioneering men and women, whether they went out on their own or sent by the General Conference decided to establish these institutions where they are today. I wonder what they would tell us today if we were to ask them why they chose to establish Malamulo Hospital, Malamulo Publishing House, Teacher Training College, and Secondary School in the middle of the tea-growing region of my home country of Malawi, far away from the commercial city of Blantyre. I wonder what they would tell us why they established Gimbie in Ethiopia and many other such facilities. Were they guided by the perceived needs of the communities or were they driven by a sense of adventure? I would like to believe that they were driven more by what they perceived as needs of the communities for health and development. Many of these men and women were jacks of all trades, often acting as teachers, preachers, physicians, nurses, mechanics, water/sanitation engineers, accountants, business managers all at once or in some combination of these skill sets in order to meet the needs of the communities they served.

A Malawian Case Study

I will use Malawi as a case study for that is what I am most familiar with. The Malawi Union has twenty-one health care institutions, six educational institutions and one publishing house. Two of the health care facilities are located in urban centers of Lilongwe and Blantyre offering fee-for-service care and are therefore self-supporting. The rest of them are located in rural areas and do receive a subsidy from the government and the Union. All the educational institutions are located in rural areas except for one that is located in Blantyre.

It is important to point out that first and foremost our institutions were established to bring the gospel message to unbelievers or to believers of other denominations who would voluntarily convert. However establishing such institutions makes us, the Adventist Church, knowingly or unknowingly, a development and service provider partner of the state. The church does not function in its own insular environment although this is sometimes how we are perceived by the community at large. Let us remind ourselves that there is an underlying philosophy of "making man whole" that moved and continues to move the Adventist Church to engage in a holistic approach to sustainable development and health which should be our calling. There seems to be a growing awareness among us that, in the words of John Stott, "the world is the arena in which we are to live and love, witness and serve, suffer and die for Christ" (Stott, Wyatt, and McCloughry 2006:27).

I say this because we continue to be challenged by why we do development work without converting entire communities to the Adventist Church. We have not acknowledged clearly and loudly enough that the Church does have a social and moral responsibility to improve livelihood and well being. That "you are the light and the salt of the world" translates into Christian men and women being beacons of selfless service to humankind as well as mingling with the world with the healthy saltiness of Christian virtues. This means rescuing men and women from the jaws of paralyzing ignorance and superstition and the cruelty and the dehumanizing effects of preventable diseases and abject poverty. Our institutions are there to bring knowledge not just of the saving grace of Christ but of saving oneself and one's community and family from poverty, hunger, and starvation through diligent and profitable labor. Our institutions will train men and women imbued with a sense of compassionate mission to serve in different capacities, in the church, in the public, and in private sectors.

The impact our message and social services have had on entire communities around our institutions is evidence to what can be done by small groups of committed men and women. Some questions we can ask are: Do people living around Adventist hospitals and schools in Africa have a healthier life style or is it only those who convert to Adventism who do

so? Are health indicators such as maternal and infant mortality better for villages around Adventist institutions? What about literacy rates? What about gender equality? What about HIV and AIDS prevalence rates? What about food security, water, and sanitation? These are some of the general indicators of health and the level of development of any community.

Building Capacity

Whether you define development in terms of human capacity building or the establishment of health care facilities or educational institutions, the Adventist Church did very well. A small faith-based international organization such as ours, has done more to establish such facilities than other larger organizations. What is interesting, though, is that whereas institutional development meant infrastructure construction and maintenance, there was a glass ceiling for human capacity building. The highest educational goal a national would aspire to or be made to aspire to was school teacher, medical assistant, nurse, or preacher at less than junior college level. The Church in its early years did not have plans to train Africans to become physicians and/or health administrators, university professors, accountants, or any such higher educational levels. This generated the idea that these jobs where reserved for foreign missionaries only. There was no equality of development between those who came to evangelize, educate, and provide health care and those who accepted the gospel message. Little did we know that this would hurt our mission, especially as African countries gained political independence. As a "church" we found ourselves asking questions such as, "Who is going to take over when we leave?" Statements such as "Things will fall apart once we leave" became common among the missionaries who had given such faithful service to the church. These were very important considerations but little effort to organize plans to answer these questions was ever made.

Allow me here to go a bit into development lingo. Capacity building means transfer of knowledge, skills, and appropriate technology to local individuals, communities, government, and non-governmental organizations in order to enable them to attain a decent and acceptable standard of performance and thereby enhance health and development. It means that the recipient of the knowledge and skills becomes as competent as or even

better than the teacher or trainer. Ultimately as a result of this skills and knowledge transfer, the trainer may actually work himself or herself out of work. There is deliberate equitable distribution of resources and joint planning of development projects.

This may have happened in a few cases during the early missionary years but in most instances, it was always the missionary who was seen as the provider, fixer-all, and problem solver. The "native convert," to use the lingo of the day, watched in awe of all that the missionary was able to do.

Those of us who grew up in that era of decolonization never thought that the missionary might be forced to leave or to find it difficult to get work permits. We wondered how we would run the institutions without the missionaries. We had not been trained to lead or manage. We had been trained to follow. This to me was one of the major failures of our missionary endeavor as a church. It would take us a very long time for national leadership to be developed to an equal level of competency and ownership of the Church with the expatriate co-worker. I believe that in some countries we lost institutions to nationalization because we did not have nationals who spoke for the Church and felt that the Church belonged to them just as much as it belonged to the expatriates. As I say this, I am mindful of the fact that we are a global movement and the "we" the natives and "them" the expatriates, can sometimes hurt the gospel. We are all in this together as we continue to serve the Master. But it will be especially useful to also remind ourselves that the little effort we paid to raise the education of the local may have hurt the work as it had not been possible to scale-up efforts.

There were some ambitious and self-motivated Adventist nationals who did attain higher education and returned to work in their countries. Many of these went out on government scholarships or were sponsored by well wishers abroad. The General Conference continued to recruit this cadre of workers from North America and later from other parts of the world, notably from the Philippines and South America. It is true that many of the ones who were sent abroad for further training did not return. It is also true that those who came back with degrees were not treated equally with their expatriate counterparts in remuneration and even

housing. This situation where the nationals may not be treated equally with the expatriate continues in some regards to this day.

As many of the African countries became independent, and nationalization was becoming the order of the day, the Church found itself with a poorly trained and inexperienced national work force. As a result of this, much of our institutional infrastructure started to literally fall apart. Our finances were poorly managed, resulting in the closures of some institutions. Another example of poor planning and not building local capacity was the closure of one of only two vocational training schools in Malawi, Matandani Technical School. Carpenters, motor vehicle mechanics, electricians, brick layers, plant maintenance technicians who were in great demand at the time Malawi became independent are no longer being trained because the expatriate teachers left and there were no national teachers. With an Adventist membership of over 300,000, the Malawi Union continues to struggle with simple management of its institutions.

Community Outreach

The integrated approach to health and development as demonstrated by the Adventist Church is something that should be studied and documented for the rest of the world to learn from. A mission station such as Malamulo had several institutions on one campus—a hospital to provide health care and training for nurses, medical assistants, and laboratory technicians; a publishing house to improve access to the printed page and share the gospel message; and elementary and secondary schools. At one time Malamulo had the only flying doctor service in the country. This was not a small undertaking for an organization such as ours. For a poor country like Malawi, these services, provided and paid for by the church, complemented and augmented government health and development services.

It should not come as a surprise for us to recognize that a healthy population is more productive and thus suffers from less poverty and disease. In very simple terms this is what health and development are about. As a Christian I would also like to believe that healthier Christians are more likely to support the church financially and therefore the church will grow because of its grassroots support by healthy and productive members.

The outreach services reached a peak at the time my dear friend and colleague, Gilbert Burnham, was medical director. Burnham believed that institutional health care would not get better or easier if health and development at the community level were not improved. In other words, community health or primary health is the foundation for the reduction of disease burden at the institutional level. Our hospitals will continue to be congested and our healthcare providers overworked if the communities around them do not have clean water, enough food, do not use malaria prophylaxis or nets and are not recipients of health education which would help them adopt new behaviors that promote health and well being.

Burnham established the Community Health Department at Malamulo Hospital which developed community-based programs in immunization, family planning, HIV, and AIDS prevention, nutrition, TB treatment, water, sanitation, and food security. What was amazing about his work is that he did this while at the same time improving the facilities at the hospital. For instance, he proposed and received funding for new wards, operating rooms, teaching facilities, and residential halls for the students. He wrote proposals for funding for the river blindness program which continues to this day. Malamulo became a model institution for the government of Malawi on how an integrated approach to health and development should be institutionalized.

Malamulo demonstrated that preventive and curative services are essential for health and development to take place. One hopes that this model will be emulated in other institutions throughout Africa. Often our work has been more institutionally based rather than community based. We make people come to us for care rather than us going out to them for prevention. It is better for us to prevent them from coming to us for treatment when they are ill, because it costs them less and they will not be taken away from their homes and their daily activities.

Adventist Responses to HIV and AIDS

We cannot discuss Adventist responses to health and development in Africa without specifically touching on our responses to HIV and AIDS. This disease has challenged our moral and spiritual values. It has chal-

lenged our cultures and communities. Needless to say, our early responses were weak, timid, and muted. The Church watched in silence as entire communities were being decimated by the pandemic. Many Adventists felt this was the disease of the outsiders. When our members started coming down with the illness, we were not theologically or philosophically prepared to respond. The question many of us asked secretly or openly was "How did an Adventist contract HIV?" It took us quite some time for us to develop Christian responses to the disease. Needless to say there is still a lot of work that has to be done to wipe out blind ignorance, stigma, and discrimination against people infected whether they are church members or not.

With an adult HIV prevalence rate of 15% or higher in most southern African countries, the Church has been affected, in many instances just as much as the "outsiders." What is sad is the recent revelation that in Malawi, of all the faith-based organizations, adult male Adventists have the highest prevalence rates for HIV (Malawi Government 2004:232). No specific reasons have been given for this finding but it will be interesting to study why this is so. Could it be that our Church continues to deny access to appropriate information about sexual and reproductive health to youth in our schools, homes, communities, and our congregations? Are Adventists in the groups that have the knowledge about HIV transmission and infectivity but have not effectively adapted Christian standards of sexual behavior?

With the establishment of the Adventist AIDS International Ministry, the General Conference, and the Church in Africa, demonstrated their commitment to confront the pandemic head on. Drs. Oscar and Eugenia Giordano have done so much to establish centers of caring and compassion in many of our churches in the three divisions. There have been a couple of workshops which brought together church leaders to discuss the church's response to HIV and AIDS. We deliberated, fellowshipped, and ate together as a church with HIV positive church members who continue to be faithful and committed to the church.

I have highlighted institutional work and it would be unfair if I did not bring up the response of the Church through the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). Having worked at ADRA for seven years, I

learned to appreciate the fact that ADRA is part, and parcel of the Church and that it would lose its identity if it severed its ties with the Church. In Africa, ADRA's work in education, literacy, food security, health, and economic development have brought even more credibility to the Adventist Church. We are seen not only as people of the Word but also as people who care about the suffering of fellow humans. We are a people who will not only pray to God for deliverance, we will also partner with Him in solving the world's social and economic problems. The Church is now recognized as a relevant and serious partner in health and development. We are not seen as being so heavenly minded that we are of no earthly good!

There are some within the Church who continue to question why we have ADRA when it does not hold evangelistic meetings and bring souls into the church. Let us remind ourselves that in His public ministry, Jesus both "went about teaching, and preaching (Matt 4:23; 9:35 RSV) and "went about doing good and healing" (Acts 10:38 RSV). In consequence, "evangelism and social concern have been intimately related to one another throughout the history of the Church .… Christian people have often engaged in both activities quite unselfconsciously, without feeling any need to define what they were doing or why" (Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization 1982:19).

What does the future hold for our health and development work in Africa? Health is always going to be attached to institutions and communities while development is an overarching activity. Development embodies health, education, water, and sanitation, infrastructure development, trade, communications, technology, and many other issues. The Church has been involved in all of these at one time or another without really defining why it is involved at all. It is the maintenance of institutions that challenges the church.

As in many developing countries where the majority of the population lives way below the poverty line, our healthcare institutions, most of which are located in poor rural areas, are faced with the challenge of survival. The subsidies from government continue to be cut as governments face challenges in providing public healthcare services. The Church's subsidies do not cover operating costs. It is a miracle that our hospitals

continue to provide healthcare at all. Many function on shoestring budgets. They employ interdivision physicians because very few nationals want to work in rural areas and the salaries we offer them are much lower than even in the government sector. It is wonderful that the General Conference continues to allocate budgets to support interdivision physicians and in some instances even nurses and healthcare administrators. This to me is a demonstration of a sustainable commitment to the mission of our global Church. However there should be strategic planning focused on how we will sustain these institutions at the current level of funding. It may be time for the Church to focus more on community-based interventions rather than institutional interventions. In saying this I am certain there are people who will say, "But our institutions have a history that is inextricably linked to the Church. How can we close them?" I am not suggesting that we close them but that we should develop equally strong community-based programs, which emphasize prevention and adaption of health seeking behaviors.

Adventist Health International (AHI), based at Loma Linda University, although not a General Conference entity, was organized to assist with capacity building and recruiting of young medical and dental graduates to work in some of these hospitals. This is a unique partnership between the Church and a non-profit entity. AHI has helped with proper financial management systems and mobilizing funds for infrastructure development and rehabilitation. Today we have Loma Linda graduates at hospitals where we would have had no doctors or dentists if it were not for AHI. Some of these are Chad, Ethiopia, Malawi, and Cameroon. Such partnerships should be encouraged as they bring in resources that the Church cannot mobilize otherwise. The majority of international bilateral and multilateral donor agencies do not fund infrastructure development or personnel working in private faith-based institutions. They may fund specific programs to be implemented by these institutions but will not cover operational costs for the entire facility.

Conclusion

I hope that the world Church will not lose its vision of the health ministry as the right hand of the gospel and that it is through it that we can

partner with God in making humans whole. We need to commit ourselves to the support of our holistic global mission work of health and development by ensuring that our hospitals and educational institutions continue to provide services to the poorest of the poor and the neediest of the needy.

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Biography

Dr. Ronald Mataya was born in Malawi. He is married to Jean Hsu and they have a daughter and a son. He obtained his Doctor of Medicine degree from the West Visayas State University in the Philippines, did his residency training in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Taiwan Adventist Hospital in Taipei, Taiwan and was a Hubert Humphrey Fellow in Health Policy and Management at Emory University, Rollins School of Public Health, in Atlanta, Georgia. Mataya was Medical Director and OB/Gyn specialist at the Blantyre Adventist Hospital in Malawi for many years before moving to ADRA International in Silver Spring, Maryland as Associate Director for Health and later as Director for Health for seven years. Two years ago he joined Loma Linda University School of Public Health as Chair of the Department of Global Health.

8 | Adventist Responses to Multiple Allegiances
Bruce L. Bauer

Introduction

Multiple allegiances are not a recent mission problem. Since the very beginning, when Satan successfully tempted Adam and Eve, the devil has enticed people to mix their allegiance to God with things in their cultural framework that pull them away from God.

Money and material things hold the highest value for some people in the West. I have asked people if they would be willing to become Buddhist if I gave them $5,000. They shake their heads. But when I ask if they would become Buddhist for three months if I gave them fifty million dollars, they begin to do mental gymnastics to see if there is some way they could accept the money.

Another allegiance that crowds out God's truth and purity is modern media, TV, the web, and videos that give a constant menu of sex and violence that undermine the biblical values that should characterize the people of God. In other parts of the world people have a value system that places a high value on power.

All these situations can lead to syncretism, dual allegiance, split-level Christianity, and Christo-paganism among those who call themselves Christian. What are the causes, and how can the church effectively intervene? Since this consultation focuses on Africa, this paper will look at some of the factors that divide the allegiance of many Christians on the African continent.

Christian leaders have a growing awareness and concern about

the persistence of a two-tier Christianity around the world despite centuries of instruction and condemnation by missionaries and church leaders. Deeply committed Christians faithfully attend church services and pray to God in times of need, but feel compelled during the week to go to a local shaman for healing, a diviner for guidance, and an exorcist for deliverance from spirit oppression. (Hiebert, Shaw, and Tiénou 1999:15)

This paper will briefly describe some of the underlying causes of syncretism and dual allegiance, followed by suggestions on how the church can effectively and appropriately respond in biblical ways.

Definitions

Syncretism—"Blending of one idea, practice, or attitude with another. Traditionally among Christians it has been used of the replacement or dilution of the essential truths of the gospel through the incorporation of non-Christian elements" (Moreau 2000:924).

Dual or Multiple Allegiance—Double allegiance occurs when adherents of Christianity find "little or none of the spiritual power they crave for the meeting of their needs for healing, blessing, guidance, even deliverance from demons" with the result that they continue in "their pre-Christian practice of going to shamans, priests, diviners, temples, shrines and the like for spiritual power" (Kraft 2005:361), or "when people add to their Christian commitment a dependence on occult powers (e.g., Freemasonry, New Age, Eastern Martial Arts, fortune-telling, astrology, horoscopes, psychic healing)" (Kraft and Kraft 1993:349).

Biblically Faithful—Adventist mission is deeply committed to the Word of God so any response to conditions in a particular culture should be undertaken with the understanding that only those methods, approaches and outcomes that are in harmony with biblical principles will be practiced.

Functional Substitutes—Biblically appropriate replacements for cultural ceremonies, customs, celebrations, and procedures for pre-Christian practices in order to avoid creating a cultural void or vacuum.

Causes of Multiple Allegiances

Multiple allegiances occur around the world, have many causes, and take many different forms.

Cultural Baggage from the Enlightenment

A very common cause of multiple allegiance has been the very different worldview of those who *brought* Christianity as compared to those who *received* Christianity. Two hundred years ago, when Christian mission was just gearing up and beginning to take Protestant Christianity to Africa and Asia, missionaries were largely coming out of cultures that had been the Enlightenment, by optimistic humanism, by the concept of the "white man's burden," and by the belief that the old animistic ways of the people they encountered were "primitive" superstitions that could be ignored or easily brushed aside.

The early missionaries of the colonial era did not have many of the social science tools and perspectives that contemporary missionaries have. Insights concerning worldview values, premises, and assumptions were largely unknown. Too many of those pioneer missionaries did not spend the time or the effort needed to understand that in the host cultures they were going to, success in all areas of life was believed to depend on living in harmony with and ritual obeisance to deities, spirits, and ancestors. Neither did they understand the deeply held belief that rituals and sacrifices were needed to control the evil spiritual forces at work in society. Rather than sensing the importance of the old cultural practices and prescribing biblically appropriate functional substitutes they attempted to destroy without replacing. Their approach towards much of what they encountered was to label everything in the culture pagan and unfit to carry the gospel message (Hiebert 1985:184), so the missionaries set about to Westernize before they could Christianize. They substituted English, French, German, Spanish, and Portuguese for the languages of the people, believing that through the process of teaching them a "superior" culture they would also produce Christians in the mold of Western Christianity.

However, in setting out to give the peoples of Africa, the Americas, and Asia a new language, culture, and religion, the missionaries, more often than not, did not take seriously the old animistic practices. They felt that

if people dressed like them, worshipped like them, sang the same songs, read the Bible, and prayed like them, that the old ways had disappeared. But too often, the missionaries only succeeded in driving the old ways underground where they were practiced in secret (Hiebert 1985:184), and where, too often, they continue to be practiced today.

Excluded Middle

Hiebert, in his article on the flaw of the excluded middle (1994:189-201), points out that missionaries and church leaders often do not talk about Christian responses to local gods, ancestors and ghosts, spirits, demons and evil spirits, magic and astrology, mana, charms, amulets and magical rites, the evil eye, or the evil tongue. Instead of meeting these practices head on and openly discussing them and sharing biblical ways of dealing with these issues, too often these subjects have been ignored in the hope that they will disappear. "Christianity has been presented as the answer to the quest for eternal life but offers little to provide protection, healing, and guidance for the present. This contrasts with the great concern for such things in the people's pre-Christian faith, leaving voids in areas of great importance to them" (Kraft and Kraft 1993:349).

Not Enough Emphasis on Spiritual Power

Kraft suggests that another cause of dual or multiple allegiances is an unbalanced emphasis on truth and allegiance to the exclusion of God's power. In the early 1990s Kraft wrote "What Kind of Encounters Do We Need in Our Christian Witness?" (1991) and "Allegiance, Truth and Power Encounters in Christian Witness" (1992). In these two articles he suggested that there needs to be a balance between an emphasis on truth, allegiance, and power.

The Adventist Church and many Evangelical churches stress the importance to giving allegiance to Jesus Christ and of being grounded in biblical truth. Yet, these same churches often neglect or only weakly present much on biblical power. "A Christianity that talks about and promises spiritual power but leaves out the experiencing in this area . . . is a great disappointment to many. Such Christianity leaves itself open to the problem of dual allegiance" (Kraft and Kraft 1993:350). Yet power that protects

from evil spiritual forces is one of the greatest felt needs in many animistic societies. Because Christian churches often present a powerless Christianity, members continue to seek out the old power sources to satisfy their fears and needs in this area.

Lack of Training and Preparation

Another factor that has led to the present situation is that most pastors do not receive adequate training in dealing with witchcraft, evil spirits, curses, and the power of the evil one. I remember the first time I came face to face with a demonized person. It happened early in my ministry in Japan when a troubled young girl with eyes that looked demonic hissed at me—"I am Satan." I didn't know what to do. I had never had a course or even heard a lecture suggesting ways to deal with demonized people. So I did what came naturally—I ducked and ran. As I backed away from the girl who needed to experience the freeing power of Jesus Christ, I said, "I'll be praying for you."

Too many Adventist leaders tolerate dual allegiance among members because they do not know how to deal with the demonic in biblically faithful ways. Too often the only model Adventist pastors have is a Pentecostal model that falls short of following biblical principles in many important areas. As a result, the issues of dual allegiance and syncretism in the area of evil spiritual powers is allowed to fester and grow until today it is becoming an almost accepted part of Adventist culture and church life in many parts of the world.

Cultural Void

Many missionaries and church leaders did not realize that when they forbade certain practices that were important in the old scheme of things without replacing them with Christian functional substitutes they created a cultural-religious vacuum or void (Hiebert 1985:184). It is this void that is a primary factor leading to dual or multiple allegiances.

The rise and rapid spread of traditional African Initiated Churches is largely the result of a response to the cultural void created by Christian missions (Kraft and Kraft 1993:351).

> The movement frequently is led by a prophet and may be mes-
> sianic. Its motivation is to regain something believed to have been
> lost—taken away by the white man. This recovery is usually ex-
> pressed in a millenarian doctrine. Maybe some Christian elements
> are retained but the traditional will be uppermost. The result will
> be syncretistic; the very thing the missionaries tried to avoid. (Tip-
> pett 1987:200)

The same cause that has led to the rapid growth of African Initiated
Churches has also caused some dual allegiance within Adventism.

Alan Tippett has written extensively on the relationship between the
cultural void and dual allegiance. "The failure to provide adequate func-
tional substitutes in the newly planted church leaves a void. Voids create
longings. Longings lead to unrest and unrest in time to violent reaction"
(Tippett 1987:201). When Christianity did not meet the needs of the people
in certain areas, the longing for answers led the people to continue the old
practices in secret, leading to dual allegiance or split-level Christianity.

> The cultural void, like the intellectual and spiritual voids, is a dan-
> ger spot because it always has room for the 'wrong thing' if the
> 'right thing' is denied. . . . I suggest that, in the newly planted
> church of animist converts, a direct relationship exists between the
> effectiveness of the functional substitutes and the possibilities of
> reaction against cultural voids. Cultural voids might be reduced
> by paying greater attention to any cultural institution rejected
> upon the acceptance of Christianity: what are its functions in so-
> ciety and what kind of Christian substitutes might be advocated?
> (Tippett 1987:201)

Bronislaw Malinowski, in *The Dynamics of Cultural Change*, suggests
that societies organize their institutions, beliefs, and customs so as to per-
mit the individuals in the group to cope with the everyday problems they
face (1945:42). The changing of any of the institutions in a society causes
ramifications in every other aspect of social life. However, one way to
reduce the impact of the loss of an institution is to work at replacing its
function in society with a new institution. "One kind of institution can be

replaced by another, which fills a similar function" (1945:52). Adventists, like most Christian groups, have not worked hard enough to make such replacement.

This brief discussion of some of the underlying causes for dual or multiple allegiances has suggested that the cultural baggage from the Enlightenment with its deistic overtones, a high view of Western civilization, and a distain for the "primitive" peoples who held animistic beliefs was one of the factors at play in producing conditions favorable to allowing the development of a split-level Christianity. The failure to address issues related to evil powers and practices (Hiebert's "excluded middle") and the presentation of a powerless Christianity contributed to conditions where dual allegiance could exist. But the factor that has been most at play is the creation of cultural voids in the area of how to deal with the questions of everyday life that were of extreme importance to people with an animistic worldview.

Responses to Multiple Allegiances

How should the church respond to multiple allegiance? How can the weaknesses caused by the factors discussed above be overcome?

The starting point is to make a serious study of local concepts of reality, beliefs, values, and practices. Theological education must not only stress biblical understanding, but also needs to stress the importance of understanding the cultural context, the beliefs and values of those with whom the gospel is shared. Pastors and church leaders need to use anthropological and religious study literature to inform them of the deep significance of cultural practices. Instead of fearing and avoiding local religious practitioners, church leaders can engage them in dialogue to enhance their understanding of the local context.

A second suggestion is to engage leaders and scholars in open discussions and analysis of the situation. The issue needs to be placed on the table and sympathetically and candidly talked about instead of treating it as something that is to be avoided. "Unless the church provides clear teaching on the subject of the spirit world and its practitioners, as well as providing alternatives to going to such practitioners, the problem will continue as it has in the past" (Henry 1986:94).

A third suggestion would be to teach a course on biblical responses to evil spiritual forces to equip the next generation of pastors to deal biblically with the issue. Reuel Almocera has begun developing an Adventist theological response (see Almocera 2000:16-22).

Biblically Faithful Functional Substitutes

One of the greatest challenges is the development of biblically faithful and culturally appropriate functional substitutes to replace biblically unacceptable beliefs and practices. In those areas of the world where multiple allegiances are commonly practiced, many Adventists seek spiritual power and help for a number of problems. "Marriage problems, barrenness, sickness, business or crop failure, accidents, broken relationships are all seen as involving spirit activity. In addition, success, health, fertility of fields, animals and people, protection from danger, and the like are seen as requiring supernatural activity" (Kraft and Kraft 1993:349, 350). Unless and until the church responds with clear teaching in these areas of importance there will be very little change.

Following are some examples and ideas about possible functional substitutes dealing with some of the issues listed above.

1. *Protection from evil spiritual powers*. In an animistic setting people are always looking for ways to ward off evil. In Cambodia most children wear a string around their neck or belly or wrist with some charm or talisman to protect them from evil. When the Adventist Church made a conscious effort to teach about the indwelling Holy Spirit and His power to protect, and taught about guardian angels and their role and function, people were more willing to trust God's power instead of the old ways (See Schantz 2007:74).

2. *Healing of diseases*. Prayer for the sick should become commonplace in Adventist churches so that those who are sick can experience the healing power of Jesus Christ and feel the concern and compassion of fellow believers. One church in Cambodia developed the practice of having a time immediately after the worship service each Sabbath where the members would push their mats into a circle in the middle of the church floor, have anyone who was sick come and sit in the center, then several of the members would lay hands on them and pray for them in their area of need.

3. *Blessings for crops, finance, and success*. People in many societies follow the practice of appeasing the spirits or offering sacrifices to the spirits in order to ensure good crops and financial success. God's Word says to

> bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. "Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the Lord Almighty." (Mal 3:10, 11)

As the pastors taught these concepts in Cambodia they encouraged their members to be faithful in tithing. Since the people were rice farmers and had little cash income, the people were encouraged to tithe their rice harvest with the deacons selling the rice in the market and turning the money in to the church. Just one year after Mr. Ee had started tithing his rice crop, the cut worms invaded the rice paddies and whole fields started to wither and turn yellow. Mr. Ee prayed for his rice fields, claiming God's protection from the worms. His neighbors started coming to ask what kind of medicine he had put on his fields, because his fields were green and lush and untouched by the worms. He just pointed up and said that his God was protecting his fields.

4. *Happiness and harmony in marriage (children).* Barrenness is a major cause of disharmony in societies where children are the greatest wealth anyone can have. The biblical record is clear that God is in the business of opening barren wombs and blessing families with children (see Gen 18:10-14; Judg 13:2, 3; 1 Sam 1:2-20; 2 Kgs 4:14-17; Luke 1:7-15). Are Adventist pastors trained to pray for barrenness? Does the church encourage special prayers for childless couples? Some do, but many do not with the result that some church members revert to the old cultural practices in this area.

5. *Death, funerals, and the next life*. Roy Shearer discusses the challenges Christian missionaries faced in Korea in connection with funeral ceremonies and the struggle in knowing how to deal with dead ancestors. Most

missionaries had demanded that the people make a clear-cut break with the old ways of ancestor worship, but gave no biblical functional replacement for the old practices. Later, Korean pastors developed Christian memorial services that treated the heritage and blessing of previous generations in biblical ways (Shearer 1967:258-260).

6. *The control of "bad" spirits*. In animistic contexts the spirit world is known and the fear of spirits is real so that people expend much energy, time, and cost to ensure that evil spirits do not cause trouble or disruption in the family. How is a Christian to deal with evil spirits? What functional substitutes does the church teach as a means for new Christians to control evil spirit activity? Have we taught new Christians about who they are in Jesus Christ? Have we carefully taught on the indwelling Holy Spirit as a powerful protector? Have we taught them that they have authority over evil spirits (Luke 9:1, 2; Luke 10:9, 17; Mark 3:14, 15), not only for personal protection, but also authority in Christ to drive out spirits and set people free?

7. *Knowledge of the future*. In many parts of the world the day to open a business, the day to be married on, the day on which to become engaged are all carefully researched and the help of a diviner sought in choosing the right day. How do we provide biblical substitutes in this area? It is not complicated, but when nothing is taught, a void is created that causes fear and concern that can lead new Christians back to their pre-Christian practices. Clear teaching that the Creator God makes each and every day a good day, that Christians can rejoice in all days and do not have to fear any day (Ps 118:24) goes a long way in dealing with this situation.

8. *Dedication of houses and businesses, motorcycles and cars*. Cambodian people followed a custom of calling the shaman to dedicate newly constructed houses. As Cambodians became Adventists the church was faced with the choice of either labeling the practice pagan, or developing a biblically appropriate functional substitute. I remember participating in the first such ceremony. A group of Christians walked the boundary of the property, singing and stopping at each corner of the lot, pausing to pray that God would make this property a light to the whole community. The group then proceeded to walk around the house, pausing to read Scripture at each corner of the house. Then we went into the house and prayed

a dedication prayer in each room, asking God to guard and protect the family, asking the Holy Spirit to be present, and asking for God's holy angels to give their constant care to the house, property, and family. The family was extremely grateful for knowing that their new God was so much more powerful than the spirits they had feared in the past.

Greater Emphasis on Spiritual Approaches to Life

Adventist teaching and evangelistic preaching have often been characterized by a strong emphasis on biblical truths. This is as it should be, however, if those truths are not encapsulated and lived out spiritually in the lives of the presenters and believers in an Adventist community, rational propositional statements about faith will rarely hold believers from straying to other power sources. Adventist faith communities must continually demonstrate a living relationship with God. Prayers for the sick, intercessory prayer, anointing services, and teams of people ready and willing to minister to those who are harassed by the evil one would be vitally important elements needed to hold Adventists from seeking other power sources.

"Christianity can seem too abstract, too concerned with words, and not sufficiently able to meet the day-to-day needs. . . . For that reason, certain aspects of the old system will endure, even for centuries, alongside Christianity" (Schreiter 2003:156). I believe that toleration of this type of condition for centuries is unacceptable.

Adventists must admit that the problem exists and that dual or multiple allegiances have become an almost accepted part of Adventist church life in some parts of the world. Therefore, I recommend the following initial steps.

Recommendations

1. A series of Bible conferences should be held to deal with dual allegiance, functional substitutes, and biblical responses to the problem, led by the Biblical Research Institute and the church's missiologists with meetings held for those unions where dual allegiance is a matter of concern.

2. Worker's meetings should be planned where time is spent develop-

ing a list of local needs that drive people to seek out other power sources with additional time spent developing biblically faithful functional substitutes as practical responses to each listed need.

3. More detailed Bible studies could be prepared in the format of question and answers to the types of questions that deal with the real life issues that have driven people back to the old ways. We presently teach doctrinal truths more from the perspective of rational, propositional statements. This can be part of the process, but unless and until practical application is made in ways to impact personal experience not much progress will be realized in the area of dual allegiance.

4. A college and seminary course should be developed that teaches Adventist pastors how to pray for the sick, engage in deliverance ministries, develop functional substitutes, and offer biblical, spiritual responses to the underlying factors that have driven Adventist members to seek help in pre-Christian ways.

5. When it is known that a church worker is tolerating split-level Christianity among members, discussions should ensue that would seek to give guidance on how to deal with the situation. In instances where a denominational worker engages in pre-Christian practices there should be a very low toleration for such actions.

6. Christians live in a wicked world where sickness, suffering, death, disease, and problems of many types afflict God's people. When adversity strikes, when prayers and medication do not heal, when crops fail and businesses go under, Adventist members need to understand that the solution is not to search out an alternative power source, but to stand clearly on God's side and say like Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him" (Job 15:13). Adventists need to understand the issues of the Great Controversy so clearly that they will reply like "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, 'O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up'" (Dan 3:16-18). Until Adventist members have this level of conviction the Church's responsibility to teach, disciple, and nurture is unfinished.

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Biography

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