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ABSTRACT

**DUAL ALLEGIANCE AND THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
CHURCH IN AFRICA: HOW TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE IN
AN OPEN DIALOGUE IN THE WEST-CENTRAL
AFRICA DIVISION**

by

Gilbert Wari

**Advisers: Bruce L. Bauer
Rudolf Maier**

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: DUAL ALLEGIANCE AND THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN AFRICA: HOW TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE IN AN OPEN DIALOGUE IN THE WEST-CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION

Name of researcher: Gilbert Wari

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Date completed: March 2010

Problem

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Africa in general, and the West-Central Africa Division in particular, has been facing the issue of dual allegiance or “split level Christianity.”

Method

The Bible, Spirit of Prophecy, and other related books and articles concerning the issue of dual allegiance were studied, then theological and religious-cultural data were analyzed, a strategy was put in place by using a Logframe Matrix and a Gantt Chart so as to address and deal with the issue from a biblical point of view.

Results

A spirit of dedication and commitment started manifesting itself among pastors, administrators, and church members which led to a successful satellite evangelistic campaign (February 28 to March 14, 2009), and the leadership of unions and institutions having understood this initiative decided to embark on it by holding two weeks of prayer and fasting programs (April 2009, May 2-9, 2009) according to the Word of God.

Conclusions

When issues are talked about and biblical principles applied in the management of the church of God, God's people become more Bible oriented. They are set free for the truth sets people free (John 8:32). They get more power and authority to proclaim the Gospel "with boldness" (Acts 4:31). There is no room for dual allegiance, rather, single allegiance or "undivided allegiance" or "supreme allegiance" to the Lord Jesus as the Pharisees saw it with the disciples, and "they marveled" (Acts 4:13).

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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AFRICA DIVISION

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by

Gilbert Wari

March 2010

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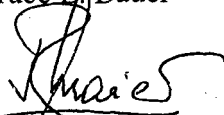
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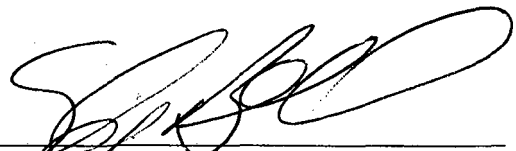
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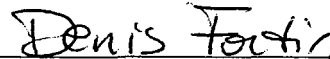
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MARCH 15, 2010

Date approved

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my dear parents Abraham Ndaissala and Rachel Maiferle, my dear wife, Josephine, my children, Nene Angeline, Eric, and Salem, to my former secondary school principal and tutor, Dr. Paul Pichot, to the former university (AUCA) President, the late Elton Wallace and his wife, Evelyn, to the former ASWA President, Professor Adekunle A. Alalade, to my former Union President (CAUM), the late Leonard Newton, to Andrews University President, Dr. N. Andreasen and his wife, and to all who, in one way or another, are struggling with the issue of dual allegiance.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASQ	American Society for Quality
ASWA	Adventist Seminary of West Africa
ATR	African Traditional Religions
AU	Andrews University
AUCA	Adventist University of Central Africa
BU	Babcock University
CAUM	Central Africa Union Mission
GC	General Conference
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis
PEP	Participatory Evaluation Process
SDA	Seventh-day Adventist
WAD	West-Central Africa Division

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Problem

The West-Central Africa Division (WAD) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA), like the rest of Christendom, faces the issue of dual allegiance which Paul Hiebert calls “split level Christianity.”¹ Many people believe one thing, yet in practice they do even the opposite at times. Church members believe in the omnipotent God, yet they consult other sources of power for knowledge and wisdom in their times of crisis or need. Sidney William emphasizes this point by saying that “most Christians live on two unreconciled levels. They are members of a church and ascribe to a statement of faith. But below the system of conscious beliefs are deeply embedded traditions and customs implying quite a different interpretation of the universe and the world of spirits from the Christian interpretation. In the crises of life and rites of passage the Church is an alien thing.”²

Bruce Bauer suggests in an article that dual allegiance could be called “multiple

¹Paul Hiebert, *Understanding Folk Religion* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2001), 15.

²Sidney William, *Akamba Religion and the Christian Faith* (Accra, Ghana: Ghana Universities Press, 1965), 158.

allegiances” because of its various dimensions.³

It is not surprising in Africa for someone to hear a report about church elders who visit a witch to try to stop the election of someone because they do not like the person or because they want someone else to be elected.

In another case an ordained pastor who was ministering in God’s church was involved in other strange activities until the Lord used a visiting pastor to deliver him from his dual allegiance. During the day he was serving the Lord and His people. At night, he was on the other side of the Great Controversy.⁴ Unfortunately, there are numerous other examples of this kind of dual allegiance.

There are also those who belong to the evil one yet who join the church of God to become Satan’s agents among God’s people. These agents participate in all the church proceedings, are baptized, and join the church of God. They regularly attend the meetings of God’s people, but they also go to spiritualistic meetings. They meet with God’s people but they also are involved with the activities of God’s enemy.

In African cities, church members are invited to join secret societies such as the Masonic lodge which are presented to them as a philosophical group but where they become involved in dual allegiance in order to get rich, acquire knowledge, improve their reputation, or power. Some would say that such societies merely provide a way of maximizing the potential in people, for one never knows for sure which power works best since no one has ever been to heaven. Therefore, they conclude, no one knows the road

³Bruce Bauer, “Adventist Response to Multiple Allegiances” (paper presented on Adventist Mission in Africa Conference, Berrien Springs, MI, October 20, 2007).

⁴See Ellen G. White’s book, *The Great Controversy* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1945), describing the conflict between Christ and Satan, between Good and Evil.

and how to get there. This is another way of saying that “all roads lead to Rome” but such pluralistic thinking is syncretistic.

As in the days of Elijah the prophet, a faltering “between two opinions” (1 Kgs 17:18) is becoming more and more common, and this syncretistic way of living the Christian faith is becoming very a real threat to Christianity. It is time for leaders, scholars, and members to address this key issue before it is too late.

Purpose of Project

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate and address the issue of dual allegiance in the WAD in order to sensitize pastors and administrators concerning this serious issue and suggest concrete measures to deal with this challenging situation. Case studies will be used to help assess and acknowledge the depth of the problem so that the recommendations that will be suggested may be adequate, appropriate, and efficient.

Justification

Over the past few years, the issue of dual allegiance has become more open, undermining the unity of the Adventist Church in the West-Central Africa Division. It also undermines what God can do for His Church. Compromise creeps in gradually in one way or another so God cannot bless His church according to His promise. Because of this serious problem there is loss of confidence in the leadership and a loss of members. A membership retention survey shows that between 40-45 percent of new members are lost every year (see appendix A).

Root Causes

This project will look at a number of root causes that seem to have contributed to this serious problem.

Spiritual starvation. Often leaders and/or scholars are not providing conducive support and/or training to equip the shepherds who are to feed the sheep and the lambs (John 21:15-18). Sometimes pastors are not well equipped for teaching about spiritual issues, therefore the flock itself is busy eating “junk food” and spending money and time for what is not bread (cf. Isa 55:2) or not eating at all. Because the members are not feeding upon the Word of God, there is a spiritual famine in the land. And when the flock has not eaten well and is not satisfied, they misbehave, they scatter, they look for food anywhere, any time, and any how as animals do when they are hungry. They often become unmanageable in this state.

Curiosity. As it happened with Eve and Adam in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3) some church members try new ways; they want to experience the unknown. Talking about Eve in Eden, it is said about her that “unmindful of the angels’ caution, she soon found herself gazing with mingled *curiosity* and admiration upon the forbidden tree. The fruit was very beautiful, and she questioned with herself why God had withheld it from them”⁵ (italics mine). Curiosity often leads people into situations where they find themselves trapped by the evil one.

Satan’s agents in the church often confuse, and mislead the children of God. With regard to this aspect of the problem, Ellen White says:

I saw that Satan was working through agents in a number of ways. He was at work through ministers who have rejected the truth and are given over to strong delusions

⁵Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1958), 54.

to believe a lie that they might be damned. While they were preaching or praying, some would fall prostrate and helpless, not by the power of the Holy Ghost, but by the power of Satan breathed upon these agents, and through them to the people. While preaching, praying, or conversing, some professed Adventists who had rejected present truth used mesmerism to gain adherents, and the people would rejoice in this influence, for they thought it was the Holy Ghost. Some even that used it were so far in the darkness and deception of the devil that they thought it was the power of God, given them to exercise.⁶

Fear/anguish. Often people are perplexed because of suffering and problems.

When they call upon God in times of need or crisis, God does not answer or He does not answer quickly enough. Therefore, they lose patience and in desperation seek other solutions. The example of King Saul is very revealing. The biblical account says,

When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. . . . Then Saul said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her." And his servants said to him, "In fact, there is a woman who is a medium at En Dor." So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes, and he went and two men with him; and they came to the woman by night. And he said, "Please, conduct a séance for me, and bring up for me the one I shall name to you." (1 Sam 28:5-8).

Compromise. Notice what the following quotation says about compromise.

After this I saw Satan consulting with his angels and considering what they had gained. True, they had, through fear of death, kept some timid souls from embracing the truth; but many, even of the most timid, had received the truth, and thereupon their fears and timidity immediately left them. . . . And when called to yield their own lives, they maintained their faith with such patience and firmness as caused even their murderers to tremble. . . . Satan and his angels decided that there was a more successful way to destroy souls, one that would be more certain in the end. Although Christians were made to suffer, their steadfastness, and the bright hope that cheered them, caused the weakest to grow strong and enabled them to approach the rack and the flames undaunted. They imitated the noble bearing of Christ when before His murderers, and by their constancy and the glory of God which rested upon them, they convinced many others of the truth. . . . Satan therefore decided that he must come in a milder form. He had already corrupted the doctrines of the Bible, and traditions which were to ruin millions were taking deep root. Restraining his hate, he decided not to urge on his subjects to such bitter persecution, but lead the church to contend for various traditions, instead of for the faith once delivered to the saints. As he prevailed on the church to receive favors and honors from the world, under the

⁶Ellen G. White, *Early Writings* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1945), 43, 44.

pretense of receiving benefits, she began to lose favor with God. Shunning to declare the straight truths which shut out the lovers of pleasure and friends of the world, she gradually lost her power.⁷

Seeking for health, wealth, and/or power. The love of power and wealth has often misled people who ended up trying to serve two masters. Paul says, “But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil” (1 Tim 6:9, 10). Poverty can make some people lose their mind and push them to do things they would never have done if they were wealthy.

Poor mismanagement of success. Like King Solomon successful people can end up becoming so proud they try even forbidden activities. Those who come back to their senses like the wise king end up saying, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity” (Eccl 1:2). But many never repent, rather they carry on “deceiving and being deceived” (2 Tim 3:13). Some of them do not get rid of such practices because of fear of the evil forces that threaten to kill them, but they keep alive both allegiances.

Superstition. Africa as a whole is known as a continent full of superstition. African Traditional Religions and almost everything in the culture is given a spiritual interpretation. Could that attitude to life be a root cause of dual allegiance since everything has to be given a spiritual explanation?

The above list is far from being exhaustive, but this illustrates many of the root causes of dual allegiance. In view of the fact that dual allegiance is religious syncretism which must be dealt with seriously, and knowing that the future of the Seventh-day Adventist Church lies in its unity since “united we stand, divided we fall” and “unity is

⁷Ibid., 226-227.

strength,” one can see the *raison d’être* of this dissertation. This project comes as a call to both leaders and members to work in unity so as to address the issue and come up with a strategy that will help deal with the issue of dual allegiance properly, adequately, and efficiently for the glory of God and the betterment of His people.

Definition of Terms and Acronyms

Dual Allegiance (DA): Dual or double loyalty; the syncretistic practice of mixing the Christian faith with other non-Christian beliefs.

Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA): One of the Protestant churches.

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (GC): The worldwide headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, located in Silver Spring, Maryland, USA, made of thirteen regional offices, called “divisions.”

International Monetary Fund (IMF): One of the United Nations specialized financial agencies whose role is to promote trade by increasing the exchange stability of the major currencies (see Economics).

West-Central Africa Division (WAD): One of the thirteen regional territories of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s administrative units in West and Central Africa, comprising twenty-two countries, all the way from the Cape Verde Islands to the River Congo.⁸

Evaluation: Periodical assessment of the project based on the measurable and verifiable indicators.

⁸The WAD territory comprises Benin Republic, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Cote d’Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea (Conakry), Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

Strategic planning: “An overall approach, plan, or way of describing how we will go about reaching our goal or solving our problem,”⁹ “an attempt to anticipate the future and achieve the project put up in that effect.”¹⁰

Output: Final “quantity produced or turned out,” “what is produced in a given time period,” “the material produced or yield; product.”¹¹

Monitoring: “The act of observing [someone] something (and sometimes keeping a record of it).”¹²

Logical Framework or Logframe: “The matrix in which a project’s intervention logic, assumptions, objectively verifiable indicators, and sources of verification are presented.”¹³

Gantt Chart: “A method of presenting information graphically, often used for an activity schedule.”¹⁴

Impact: “A forceful consequence; a strong effect”; “the influence, the effect”¹⁵ on someone or something.

⁹Edward Dayton and David Fraser, *Planning Strategies for World Evangelization* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 13.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 14.

¹¹S. B. Flexmer, Stuart Berg, L. C. Hauk, eds., *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language*, 2nd edition (New York: Random House, 1987), s.v. “output.”

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³I owe this definition to Steve Thomas, “A Strategy for Developing Holistic Churches in London: A Case Study of North Wembley Seventh-day Adventist Community Church” (D.Min. diss., Andrews University Theological Seminary, 2005), 10.

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵*The Random House Dictionary*, s.v. “impact.”

Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA): An Adventist Non-governmental Agency (NGO) that ministers to the social needs of the population in the community.

Limitations

It is not the purpose of this dissertation to explore and analyze the different philosophical and sociological theories in relation to dual allegiance. Neither does this dissertation pretend to be exhaustive. It will rather limit itself to developing strategies that will help deal with the issue of dual allegiance in the WAD.

Another limitation has to do with the time of implementation. Because of the depth of the issue of dual allegiance, the needed time to see significant change(s) will extend beyond the time limits for this dissertation since the change(s) will go through several stages. Therefore, the expected lasting results will not be seen until after the project is completed.

Methodology

The dissertation project starts with a review of existing literature dealing with dual allegiance in order to assess how deep and widespread the problem is. Testimonies with regard to the issue of dual allegiance will constitute appendices as backup material whereby the veracity of the various testimonies are narrated to present and describe the situation of dual allegiance in the church of God, so that people may read and understand them for themselves.

A Logical Framework Matrix (Logframe) will be built that includes the overall picture of the project as well as its goal and purposes with expected results or outputs that

the strategic plan aims at achieving, that is bringing about revival and reformation that will help God's people in the West-Central Africa Division do away with syncretistic Christianity and develop a single-minded relationship with the Lord God Almighty.

In order to develop and put in place the activities with outputs that will be assessed, a Gantt Chart will list a timetable for each output with measurable and verifiable indicators. In addition, needed resources will be put in place, for no project can ever be carried out successfully without the necessary resources.

Outline

The dissertation is divided into five main chapters including an introduction which constitutes chapter 1.

Chapter 2 will describe my spiritual and theological foundations for ministry. It will investigate my life as a person, including my spirituality and temperament, and my skills (spiritual giftedness, leadership style, and task-type preference) as a Doctor of Ministry candidate.

Chapter 3 will consist of an analysis of the cultural background of the area involved in the research (socio-political and socio-cultural contexts) as well as the religion of the people concerned. This study will help understand and establish some links between dual allegiance and those elements in the cultures and worldviews in the WAD that cause this problem.

Chapter 4 will develop a strategy for addressing and dealing with dual allegiance in the WAD based on the case studies, and placed within the Logical Framework (Logframe) Approach and the Gantt Chart.

Chapter 5 will describe the implementation and evaluation of the dissertation project, draw general conclusions, list lessons learned, and make recommendations for local and general use.

CHAPTER 2

SPIRITUAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR MINISTRY

Introduction

The purpose of ministry is to be God's representative here on earth. Through our words and deeds we have been called to preach the Word of God and make Him known to the world. As such, the life of the ministers, their spiritual and theological understanding of ministry, the way they apply various tools to ministry, as well as the needed talents for such a task are of great importance. Not all ministers are bestowed with the same talents and abilities, but all are invited to put whatever they have at God's disposal. This chapter will discuss my temperament and the various gifts which I bring into God's church for service.

Personal Profile

Life Journey

My life's journey is full of ups and downs, particularly after I became a Seventh-day Adventist on July 2, 1977. I will review my life journey in the context of the six "Cs" that Reggie McNeal describes in his book *A Work of Heart*.¹ McNeal says that there are six major factors, each starting with "C" that affect and shape the leader's life. These

¹Reggie McNeal, *A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders* (San Francisco CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000), xii, xiii.

are: (1) *culture*, including the historical period, the socio-political situation, and traditions, (2) the *community* in which the person grew up, (3) the *call* into the ministry, (4) *communion* with the Lord, and connection, or relationship with Him, (5) *conflict*, all leaders face conflicts; how they manage conflicts is another key element of life and ministry, and (6) *common place*, for the way an individual handles the ordinary and routine challenges/crises determines and shapes the way he/she will face the greater ones in the future.

Culture

I was born in 1960, in Werscore-Kaele, in the Mayo Kani Division of North-Cameroon. We were a polygamous family of shepherds. My mother bore ten children, but only seven are alive; whereas the second wife of my father bore five children of whom four are still alive. My three older brothers died before I was born, so I became the oldest son by default. I started caring for my parents' flock of sheep and goats when I was four years old. Even at such an early age, the Lord helped me to develop a sense of leadership. That experience has deeply influenced my understanding of ministry and leadership. I was sent to school at the age of eight because I had to wait for my immediate sister to turn six so she could take over the responsibility of the flock, but I continued to help her on weekends.

My parents were illiterate yet displayed outstanding parental wisdom. In a context where beating children was the rule, my father chose not to beat his children. He preferred talking and offering advice. He resorted to shouting only when the situation was bad. Whenever my dad spoke we would listen carefully, and we would do what he said.

Community

Our family and community were animistic. I witnessed many times as my parents performed rituals to idols (gods). In spite of their animistic beliefs, my parents also feared the God Almighty. Life was not easy for them, even from their early life. They told us that they thought that my three brothers who died in infancy were actually killed by one of my father's half-brothers. When my grandfather passed away, my uncle took over from him as the patriarch of our family. However, he could not get along with my father who was still a small boy at that time. When my dad grew up, his oldest brother wanted to arrange a marriage for him. My dad refused and chose to look for his wife himself. His half brother did not like that, and he vowed that my father would not have any children. When my mother bore a child, he poisoned the child. He did that three times. The third time he even wanted to kill my mother as well since she would not listen to him and leave my father. It was in this turmoil that my parents started receiving visits from "the God of their dream" (that is what they called Him). When I was born, the God of the dream told them that I would survive. When I was two-years old, my uncle tried to kill me as well but this time he paid with his own life. From childhood, my parents told me that I was a child of destiny. All the love they could not express to my brothers who died they lavished on me and my other brothers and sisters. However, no connection was made between the God of the dream and the God of the Christians who was not known to my people.

In 1970, I left my village to live with another uncle (my father's junior brother) who happened to be in the Presidential Guards in Yaounde, the capital city of Cameroon. In Yaounde, I was exposed to the Christian religion. I followed my uncle's wife to the

Roman Catholic Church, attended the baptismal class, and was baptized in December 1971. My confirmation in the Catholic Church took place two years later. I was introduced to the Adventist message through Adventist education in 1974. My parents agreed to send me to the Adventist secondary school Bergström in Dogba, Maroua upon the recommendation of my father's best friend who was living in Maroua and who had heard of the school. I studied in Dogba from July 1974 to June 1978. I resisted the Adventist message for three years. At the end of the third year, I gave up and decided to attend a baptismal ceremony where three of my fellow students and friends were being baptized. I decided to go and see "the foolishness of being dipped into the water" which they called baptism. At the baptism, when the preacher delivered his message, I memorized all the references he was quoting. When I got home I cross checked every text. Since I did not have a Bible of my own, I asked a friend to lend me his Bible. After reading the texts I was convinced and was baptized on July 2, 1977. After completing my GCE "O" Levels in June 1978, I could not go to our Adventist secondary school at Nanga-Eboko because of lack of financial support, nor was I willing to attend the Maroua Public High School because I knew that I would face Sabbath problems. I decided to work full time as a secretary in the Dogba secondary school from July 1978 to August 1979 in order to save some money. During this time I suddenly got sick on April 26, 1978. When I was taken to the hospital, the French medical doctor told me that I had been poisoned. I almost died, but God, in His mercy, preserved me. I had always been healthy. Even malaria did not affect me very much. But the poisoning nearly killed me. On my sick bed I wondered whether I had made the right decision in becoming a Seventh-day Adventist. However, the Lord really was in control. In August 1979, a Spirit

of Prophecy seminar was organized in Nanga-Eboko. One of the guest speakers was Dr. Raymond O. West. He heard about me through the director of the secondary school, Pastor Paul Pichot, who translated for the speaker. Dr. West decided to help me by sending me \$500.00 for each school year. I studied theology (lower level) for two years (1979-1981). After that my local mission asked me to be a primary school teacher for one year. In September 1982 I went back to school and completed my “A” Levels in French Literature and Philosophy, graduating in July 1985.

Call and Conflict

I never intended to become a gospel minister. My dream from childhood was to become a medical doctor and specialize in surgery. I had always viewed my fingers as made to work on human bodies in the surgery theater. After finishing high school in Nanga-Eboko in 1985 I pleaded with the Lord to allow me to become a medical doctor, telling Him how the church would greatly benefit from that. I even promised God that I would become a doctor-evangelist, and would be able to win more souls into the Kingdom. I applied for medical school but was not accepted. I even applied for business administration, but that did not work either. As soon as I applied for theology in order to prepare for the ministry things changed rapidly. The same God who called the disciples to “follow me” (Matt 4:19),² invited me to follow Him in order to be made a shepherd of human beings. Although I accepted His invitation my conflict has not ceased even until today. McNeal acknowledges that conflict will force its way into the life of every spiritual leader, whether we like it or not. “For some, it comes more often and more

²All Bible quotations are from the New King James Version—except where otherwise indicated.

intensely than for others.”³ The good news is that these conflicts, also called spiritual challenges and struggles, provide extraordinary fertile ground for heart shaping⁴ as well as ministry shaping. I can testify that ever since I joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church, my life and my ministry have helped to shape and build my character.

In 1993, while attending the Yaounde Central Adventist Church, I met Lucie Josephine who became my wife on January 16, 1994. The Lord blessed us with a daughter, Salem, and two children through adoption, a girl and a boy—Nene Angeline and Eric.

Communion

Because of so many conflicts/trials, the Lord helped my wife and me to develop a special personal relationship with Him. We often spend time walking, talking with, and listening to our Lord. Ellen White reminds us,

Trial is part of the education given in the school of Christ, to purify God’s children from the dross of earthliness. It is because God is leading His children that trying experiences come to them. Trials and obstacles are His chosen methods of discipline and His appointed conditions for success. He who reads the hearts of men [human beings] knows their weaknesses better than they themselves can know them. . . . Often He permits the fires of affliction [conflict] to burn, that they may be purified.⁵

She adds that “God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning, and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as co-workers with Him.”⁶ I have experienced this principle over

³McNeal, 190.

⁴Ibid., 191.

⁵Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1940), 524.

⁶Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1940), 224, 225.

“Myers-Briggs Temperament Type Indicator” (MBTI) test to identify the sixteen different patterns of temperaments:⁹

INFP	ISFP	INTP	ISTP
ENFP	ESFP	ENTP	ESTP
INFJ	ISFJ	INTJ	ISTJ
ENFJ	ESFJ	ENTJ	ESTJ

According to the MBTI test, I discovered that I am an IXTJ and INTP type. The X indicates that I exhibit both intuition (N) and sensation (S) as well as judging (J) and perceiving (P) characteristics. It appears therefore that I am a combination of INTJ, ISTJ, and INTP. These characteristics are discussed in more detail below.¹⁰

INTJ

INTJs are the most self-confident of all the types, having an awareness of “self-power.” They live in an introspective reality, focusing on possibilities, using things in the form of empirical logic and preferring that events and people serve some positive use. Decisions come naturally to them. A word which captures the essence of INTJs is *builder*—a builder of systems and the applier of theoretical models. INTJs are natural brain-stormers, always open to new concepts and, in fact, aggressively seeking them. They can be very single-minded at times. They are more interested in moving an institution forward than commiserating about mistakes of the past. They are usually firm and consistent in their discipline and rarely care to repeat directions given to children or to other people. The most important preference of an INTJ is *intuition*.

⁹When some people find themselves in a mixed type, there is a provision of an X.

¹⁰Keirsey and Bates, 180-183, 189-192.

and over again as a district pastor (1992), a union mission departmental associate director (1993-1995), a mission president (1996-98), a union departmental director (1998-2001), a conference president (2001-2002), division general secretary (2002-2008), and currently as division president. My wife and I have learned to experience, like the Apostle Paul, the grace of suffering with the Lord. "For to you it has been granted, on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake" (Phil 1:29).

Commonplace

Because of our experiences my wife and I have learned to be content wherever we find ourselves with the Lord. Communion with the Lord taught us not to look at life the way the world does, but rather in God's way. We have learned to appreciate, value, and love simple things, to the extent that the commonplace is no longer seen as shameful and humiliating, but as opportunities whereby the Lord will glorify His name in a special way.

Temperament

As human beings we all have been endowed with talents and characteristics. Karl Jung found that people have eight types of temperaments which he called E (Extravert), I (Introvert), F (Feeling), J (Judging), N (Intuition), P (Perceiving), S (Sensation), and T (Thinking).⁷

David Keirse and Marilyn Bates in their book *Please Understand Me*⁸ use the

⁷See David Keirse and Marilyn Bates, *Please Understand Me: Character & Temperament Types* (Del Mar, CA: Gnosology Books, 1984), 3, 19.

⁸Ibid., 12, 13. This test is called the Myers-Briggs Temperament Type Indicator (MBTI).

I see myself in all the above characteristics. I enjoy my introspective life, processing many thoughts. I am never bored with quietness, rather, I love it. Things are to be thoroughly worked out. Patience with work is another element in my life. I will take my time to complete a task. I also have a very strong sense of fairness and justice. Achievement is a key word in my work and ministry. Therefore, I prefer taking a wrong decision and acting even though I will have to apologize later to not taking any action at all. Wherever I find myself, I need to see that things are moving from point A to point B, than from B to C, and so on. People find me dependable and reliable. They can confide in me, and almost never will they hear that I have disclosed their secrets. And as a pastor, this quality has helped me a lot in my ministry.

ISTJ

ISTJs are characterized by decisiveness in practical affairs, are the guardians of time-honored institutions, and, if only one adjective could be selected, *dependable* would best describe this type of people. Whether at home or at work, ISTJs are rather quiet and serious. They are extraordinarily persevering; they love thoroughness, details, justice, practical procedures, and a smooth flow of personnel and material leads them to occupations where these preferences are useful. ISTJs are patient with their work and with procedures within an institution, although not always patient with the individual goals of people in that institution. I see myself in this type of temperament. I believe my word is myself. As Jesus said, I try to keep my word (Matt 5:37). People find me very dependable; I keep secrets. I like being thorough in everything I do. When I start something, it must be completed before I leave for something else. Justice (fairness) is a key word in my vocabulary. That is why, in handling the personnel of the West-Central

Africa Division, I try hard to be fair with everyone. I seldom talk; rather I listen to people and apply principles. In so doing, everybody feels assured, protected, and I believe the name of the Lord is glorified.

INTP

INTPs exhibit the greatest precision in areas like thinking and language of all types. They are deep thinkers. They detect contradictions in statements no matter how far apart the contradictory statements were produced. They can concentrate, and that is probably why they can remember a lot of things. INTPs can be intellectual snobs and may show impatience at times with others less endowed intellectually. That is why they may be seen as arrogant at times. Once again, I see myself clearly here. I do not like repeating myself. I like precision. My spiritual motto for service is “excellence suits my Father’s glory.” People know me for that. I like being thorough no matter how much time it may take. When a job is started, it must be completed well. Order and discipline, and beauty are key words in my life.

In short, I enjoy my introspective life, processing many thoughts. I am never bored by quietness, when I find myself in such a situation, then I can meditate and do some deep thinking, exploring many possibilities so as to process even the difficult ones.

Life Boundaries

My challenges in life are not unique to me alone. Because of sin, we all face challenges throughout our lives. To overcome them requires attention and much effort. The problems build pressures which weigh heavily on people. Richard Swenson identified four key areas of problems that undermine our lives and where people need

what he calls *margin*¹¹. Far too often these problems of life prevent us from having time and energy to attend to our basic needs such as family, personal rest, and a balanced life. Swenson says that since our lives are without margins, they look stuffy. The four disturbing factors¹² are (1) *Financial* (too much financial pressure to make ends meet), (2) *Physical* (too much work to meet the financial pressure, and therefore lack of rest and sleep), (3) *Emotional* (too much abuse, frustration, loneliness, so people get depressed), and (4) *Time* (no time, being too busy). How do these four areas affect me personally and my ministry?

Personal Finances and Emotions

The Lord has endowed me with some gifts. Maybe due to my strong personality (choleric, phlegmatic, and melancholic at the same time), I enjoy the life of contentment and a life of simplicity. Financially, the Lord helps me live within my means. Emotionally, He keeps me from being controlled by external forces to the extent of losing self-control. I know why I am on planet earth. The Lord, who gave me life, will give me whatever He has in His plan for me. For I still believe the Scriptures that say, “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it” (Ps 127:1); for “a man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven” (John 3:27).

Physical

I struggle in this area of physical margin. I am one of those who believe the task

¹¹Richard Swenson, *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1992), 79-147.

¹²Ibid.

must be thoroughly completed and well done. Therefore, when I start working, unless it is completed, I will not stop. Even when I am exhausted, I will only take a short break and come back to the business because it must be completed. On the pastoral or administrative level, I view myself as a sort of fire brigade commander. When a situation was tough in a field/district, the members of the executive committee would send me there, and I would not refuse, since my temperament is that of an achiever. By the grace of the Lord, I am not afraid of challenging situations, and as a popular saying puts it, "When the going gets tough, the tough keep going."

Time

Since I am so driven to complete tasks, I do not have any margin in the area of time. I am always busy doing something or reflecting on something. My family has suffered because of that. I sincerely apologize to my wife and my children. I can see that at times they have been neglected. Perhaps my time consciousness is derived from the following quotation from E. G. White when she says, "We claim to be Christians, waiting for the second appearing of our Lord in the clouds of heaven. Then what shall we do with our time, our understanding, our possessions, which are not ours, but are entrusted to us to test our honesty?"¹³ She adds, "Our time belongs to God. Every moment is His, and we are under the most solemn obligation to improve it to His glory. Of no talent He has given will He require a more strict account than of our time. . . . We are admonished to redeem the time. But time squandered can never be recovered. We cannot call back even

¹³Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1940), 116, 117.

one moment.”¹⁴ Because of this sense of seriousness of the above admonition, I did neglect many other things, including my family which should not be the case.

Swenson’s book comes as an eye opener. As the apostle Paul puts it, talking about how he persecuted the saints of God, that he acted in ignorance (1 Tim 1:13), I was behaving in ignorance as well. I pray that the Lord may grant me His grace, so that from now on, I may learn to be balanced as far as time and body management is concerned. For I desire to glorify His wonderful name in everything (1 Cor 6:20; 10:31). I do understand that this requires discipline since the fruits of the Spirit contain, among others things, *temperance* or *self control* (Gal 5:23).

Spiritual Giftedness

Spiritual giftedness is a key element of biblical teachings and doctrines (see 1 Cor 12; Eph 4:7-16). Before engaging in ministry it is a good thing to know what one’s spiritual gifts are. This has not always been emphasized. However, as knowledge increases, it has become very important to identify one’s spiritual gifts in order to better serve God’s people. In this context, Dan Dick and Barbara Miller in their book *Equipped for Every Good Work* have come up with a very useful tool. First, they define spiritual gifts as “supernatural powers—given to each and to all for the building up of the body and the kingdom.”¹⁵ Second, the “spiritual gifts discovery is a tool to help us begin to hear the still, small voice, to breathe in the *ruach*, the breath of God, to find and trust the spark of the Holy Spirit that will fill and empower us to know ourselves and each other

¹⁴Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1941), 342.

¹⁵Dan R. Dick and Barbara Miller, *Equipped for Every Good Work: Building a Gifts-Based Church* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 2001), 21.

better, discern and trust God's will, and find again the joy of living in God's will for our lives."¹⁶

Third, they developed a spiritual gifts inventory based on the list found in the Scriptures to assist people to discover their spiritual gift(s).¹⁷ According to this test my primary gifts constitute a cluster of gifts: wisdom, knowledge, shepherding, discernment, faith, miracles, healing, and all scoring sixty-nine out of seventy points each. Then follows another cluster: administration, prophecy, teaching, and compassion with sixty-eight points each. Then leadership and evangelism follow with sixty-five points each. I now understand why in 1994, Pastor Leonard Newton, my union president, said that he did not know exactly where to post me. He said that according to him I had more than one outstanding spiritual gift. This is both a blessing and a real challenge. For it is written: "For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12:48). But thank God, there is nothing to fear. For He who has called us is faithful; He will also do it (1 Thess 5:24); for He works in us both the willing and the doing for His good pleasure (Phil 2:13). This is a key point. "You must believe God is who He says He is and that He will do what He says He will do."¹⁸ I believe He will help me use all these spiritual gifts for His glory. After we have experienced God's goodness, we will also understand that we can depend totally on Him (Ps 34:8).

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷For the exhaustive inventory, see Dick and Miller, 27-47.

¹⁸Henry T. Blackaby and Claude V. King, *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 1998), 233.

Leadership/Interaction Styles

Dick and Miller also identify four basic Leadership/Interaction Styles which they describe as Director, Dreamer, Pleaser, and Thinker.

Director

Leaders in this group are achievers, who get things done. "They seldom get sidetracked."¹⁹ They love keeping promises and meeting deadlines. The problem with such leaders is that they are so task-oriented that they easily forget people. Fellowship is often neglected by this type of leader.²⁰ And this is exactly me. I love planning and organizing; I need a systematic follow-up plan to be in place in order for me to operate well.

Dreamer

"Dreamers see possibilities, and they are fearless when it comes to trying new ideas."²¹ Dreamers are community builders. The problem dreamers often face is that they tend to ignore their limitations; they have a hard time seeing things from other points of view.²²

Pleaser

Pleasers are known as the diplomats in the community. "They focus on

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid., 66.

maintaining good interpersonal dynamics within the group.”²³ They always try to balance tasks with people so as to maintain some sort of social equilibrium. The problem with this Aaron-like leadership type is that they tend to forego the principles for the benefits of people since they try not to hurt feelings and they try to avoid any clash. They do not hold people accountable when they misbehave.²⁴ They are ready to sacrifice principles provided that they maintain peace with everyone. I do not see myself in this group.

Thinker

“Thinkers are detail masters, and they make sure that things get done”²⁵ and in the best possible way. They are cautious and stay focused. The big problem that thinkers face is that they are often slow in acting, and they do not want to try new ways. “Thinkers tend to withhold information, and they can sometimes torpedo programs by a rigid adherence to the rules.”²⁶

When I consider all the above characteristics, I view myself as a *director* and a *thinker*. I love planning, organizing, and need a systematic follow-up plan to be in place in order for me to operate well. Moreover, I love details and rules. I usually withhold information until I have crosschecked all necessary related details. I also avoid being complacent. I am not afraid of standing alone provided that it is for the right thing. I do not have elements of a *pleaser* at all.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid., 67.

²⁶Ibid.

Spirituality Web

Dick and Miller have developed a web made of six points to describe spirituality. These six points are Head, Heart, Pilgrim, Mystic, Servant, and Crusader. The description of each of them is significant because they help me identify where I fit into this scheme.

Head Spirituality

Head Spirituality describes people who focus more on the intellectual aspects of spirituality. The study of the Scriptures for instance “means gathering information” for a deeper knowledge of God and His will.²⁷ As far as the Lord’s Supper and fasting are concerned, this group of people view them as rituals, and prayer is formal.²⁸ I can identify myself with this group because I love the intellectual aspects of studying the Word of God. I love challenging my brain to deal with difficult biblical issues. That is why I delight in difficult subjects in the Word of God such as the sanctuary, prophecies, and predestination.

Heart Spirituality

“Heart” people focus more on a relationship with Jesus. The study of the Bible has to do with a life of true faith in relationship with God.²⁹ I view myself as a strong “heart” type. This probably justifies my prayer life; I talk with the Lord as to a friend.

Pilgrim Spirituality

This group of people is continuously searching for meaning and for answers to the

²⁷Ibid., 75.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid., 74.

various biblical questions.³⁰ Here I can say that my questions get easily lost in my relationship with the Lord. Because of that strong relationship, I know that the answer will come in due course. I need not struggle for that. However, I view myself more of the mystic spirituality.

Mystic Spirituality

Mystic spirituality types focus on the mysteries of God for contemplation and meditation are of great importance.³¹ Mary, Martha's sister can easily be identified with this type. She "sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word" and listened to Him attentively (Luke 10:39). I know that I am also a very strong Mystic because of my introverted life that prefers dreaming, contemplating, and analyzing.

Servant Spirituality

People in this group believe in the doing and not just in the hearing of the faith.³² Like Martha, faith and love should be expressed in a practical way in attending to the needs of people (Luke 10:40). But like Martha people in this type easily get caught up in the distraction of serving (Luke 10:40a). It is good to talk of practical Christianity. But the key phrase here is to "keep balanced."

Crusader Spirituality

This last group is characterized by single-mindedness with discipline as a focus. Success is the driving motive. I do not see myself in this group.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

In conclusion, for this section, I view myself as a strong *Heart* and *Mystic* as far as spirituality is concerned. As a heart spirituality type, a true relationship with the Lord is very important to me. This is a key in my life journey as a church leader. Since I am an introvert, I love contemplating my Savior and Lord and meditating on His Word. This is one of the best hobbies I enjoy. This is where I draw my spiritual strength from. Even my best sermons come to me through this process. It is a wonderful thing to walk with the Lord in this way. Even burdens become light.

Task Type Preferences

Whereas the spiritual gifts focus on our relationship with God and with one another, leadership styles help show how those relations are applied in our behavior on the job. Task Type Preferences explore ways in how we put them together in order to do our work.³³ Dick and Miller present four types of task preferences.

Project

This Task Type Preference has to do with planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating all aspects of a project.³⁴ In many ways this is really me. I love planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating with a systematic follow up. Otherwise, things seem messy to me. Even in ordinary life (in my room, office), I like seeing things well organized. I feel happy, and I can work more efficiently. If not, I become nervous, and lose a lot of energy.

³³Ibid., 87.

³⁴Ibid., 90.

Work

A work group wants to be active on the front line.³⁵ They have no time to waste for planning and strategizing. As far as I am concerned, I love working, but I believe things should be planned and organized in order to save time, energy, and means. When I do not plan or when I rush into doing a task, I often mess up. Since I know myself as having this type of temperament and task preference, I save time and try to be proactive in planning the work in advance. In so doing, the execution, the monitoring, and the evaluation will be easier and better done.

Process

Process people enjoy brainstorming and being part of committees.³⁶ In my work, I attend a lot of committees not because I like committees but because that is where I will influence people to plan and organize in order to move the work forward.

Fellowship

People with this preference enjoy the fellowship of a group more than the task itself.³⁷ As an introvert, I do not have much fellowship with people since I enjoy being alone. I do not despise the fellowship of the group though, but I would not sacrifice the task for fellowship. To a certain point, I used to see fellowship as a waste of time.

I view myself as a task-oriented person who enjoys seeing tasks completed, and one who works well on committees for planning, organizing, and evaluating. The

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

fellowship aspect of the business is secondary. My wife, with her sanguine personality, compensates for my fellowship side that is seriously lacking

Needs and Goals

I believe my first and foremost personal need is to slow down a bit. The tendency to neglect my family is a fact. Now that I have been exposed to the concept of margin, I need to address the intemperance in my life.

Another area of personal need has to do with my temperament. Now that I know myself better, I need to open up and be more outgoing. In addition, I need to address the negative aspects of my temperament such as anger and procrastination. Any defect in my ministry should be addressed and dealt with adequately so as to provide a solution to it. I believe I should aim higher because if I aim low or expect little, I will get what I aim for since God has promised that He will give according to our faith. Moreover, after reading John C. Maxwell's book on the qualities of a leader, I realize that I badly need *communication and relationships*³⁸ to be better equipped as a successful minister. For "credibility precedes great communication,"³⁹ and "the ability to work with people and develop relationships is absolutely indispensable to effective leadership."⁴⁰

I am aware of the fact that I have not been able to develop all my spiritual gifts. In the parable of the talents, believers are not told that some could be ignored and other developed. So, I really need to develop all the talents and gifts entrusted to me. I need

³⁸John C. Maxwell, *The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader: Becoming the Person Others Will Want to Follow* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 23, 103.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 27.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 106.

to grow spiritually for the Lord and for His church in order to represent Him better and attain, by His grace, Christ-likeness. I am reminded that, “He [Jesus] was not willing to be defective, even in the handling of tools. He was perfect as a workman, as He was perfect in character. By His own example, He taught that it is our duty to be industrious, that our work should be performed with exactness and thoroughness, and that such labor is honorable.”⁴¹ However, I am mindful of the fact that in trying to be perfect, I should not fall into perfectionism which is “the theological doctrine that a state of freedom from sin is attainable on earth,”⁴² or “a disposition to regard anything short of perfection as unacceptable.”⁴³ In other words, one should try excelling in the things he/she does or says as Ellen White has put it, “‘Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.’ As our heavenly Father is perfect in his sphere, so also those for whom Christ died are to be perfect in their sphere.”⁴⁴

Theological Understanding of Ministry and the Church

Right Theological Understanding of Ministry⁴⁵

A right theological understanding of ministry can be understood and is

⁴¹White, *Desire of Ages*, 71.

⁴²*Webster's Dictionary* (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1989), s.v. “Perfectionism.”

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴Ellen G. White, “Doubt Not God’s Pardoning Love,” *Signs of the Time*, January 3, 1895, par. 1.

⁴⁵From the Greek *dee-a-ko-nee-ah* meaning *service*. The Latin equivalent is *ministry*: “The ministrations of those who render to others the offices of Christian affection, especially those who help meet needs by collecting or distributing of charities.” It also has to do with “those who execute the command of others (of God in this case) in the proclamation and promotion of the Christian religion among human beings (Acts 6:4; Rom 12:7; 2 Cor 4:1). Finally, Ministry has the dimension of *doo-los* meaning a *servant*, a *slave*, a *bondman* being totally committed to his master” (see *BibleWorks7: Software for Biblical Exegesis and Research*, CD-ROM (Norfolk, VA: BibleWorks, 2006).

exemplified in the life and ministry of Christ Jesus. Ellen White commenting on this says: “What he [Jesus] taught, He lived. . . . Thus in His life, Christ’s words had perfect illustration and support. And more than this, what He taught, He was. His words were the expression, not only of His own life experience, but of His own character. Not only did He teach the truth, but He was the truth. It was this that gave His teaching power.”⁴⁶

That is probably why the Scriptures clearly state that Jesus taught with authority and power. “And they were astonished at His teachings, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Mark 1:22). What a lesson for Jesus’ disciples who took over once their Lord ascended to heaven.

Another aspect of ministry has to do with our way of doing evangelism. Today’s evangelism tends to be a one man show, with a star performer. That is probably why there are lots of baptisms but little retention. The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Office of Statistics and Archives reveals that the church loses about one-fourth of its members every year (see report in appendix G). Jesus’ method of doing evangelism was holistic. Not only was He what He taught, but His approach was quite different from today’s typical approach. Jesus’ method of winning souls was as follows:

Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, “Follow Me.” . . . So it should be with us. Wherever we are, we should watch for opportunities of speaking to others of the Saviour. If we follow Christ’s example in doing good, hearts will open to us as they did to Him.⁴⁷

⁴⁶Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1952), 78, see also *Idem.*, *Ministry of Healing*, 143.

⁴⁷Ellen G. White, *Christian Service* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1952), 119.

Jesus' method could be summarized in seven words which can easily be called, Ellen G. White's seven "Cs" for successful ministry, namely: *contact* (encounter), *conversation* (communication), *concern*, *compassion*, *care*, *confidence*, and *conversion*. Jesus mingled with people. Whenever He met with people, He engaged in conversation with them, raised a concern, showed compassion for them, or ministered to their needs. In so doing He was able to win their confidence. Ultimately those hearts were ready to accept and follow Him (become disciples) and be baptized. Jesus' method can be listed as the seven "Cs" for witnessing/ministry.

1. *Contact* (encounter)—the meeting with the individual or people
2. *Conversation* (communication)—the mingling with them
3. *Concern*—the interacting/fellowshipping
4. *Compassion*—the comforting/counseling
5. *Care*—the healing act
6. *Confidence*—the preaching/teaching
7. *Conversion*—bidding people to follow Him [Jesus]

This was Christ's witnessing approach. Before He ascended to Heaven after His resurrection Jesus said to His disciples that they would be His witnesses (Acts 1:8). They would receive power to do the witnessing. Every aspect of ministry should be embedded in the witnessing as portrayed by the Master/Teacher Himself on a one-on-one basis with missionaries in twos.⁴⁸ It is written that "He called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits" (Mark 6:7). And

⁴⁸This was the method established by the Master of the vineyard Himself. I think it is good to go back to it or strengthen it.

again, “After these things, the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go” (Luke 10:1). There is no need to reinvent Christian mission. There is merely a need to go back to the old paths as the Lord spoke through Jeremiah, “Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths where the good way is, and walk in it” (Jer 6:16). However, this does not exclude public evangelism, for it can and should be carried out as a reaping or harvesting effort. But Christ’s method will retain those newly baptized and all other members as well.

This leads me to my core philosophy of ministry which can be summarized as Servant and Shepherd Ministry (leadership).

Servant Ministry

The word *servant* is more and more used in the milieu of leadership and ministry. Rick Warren attests that “in the Bible, the words *servant* and *minister* are synonymous as *service* and *ministry*,”⁴⁹ even though he makes a distinction between mission and ministry. “God wants you to have both a ministry in the Body of Christ and a mission in the world. Your ministry is your service to *believers*, and your mission is your service to *unbelievers*.”⁵⁰ A quick etymology of these words shows that both servant and minister are synonymous with *service* which means to render service. The word has a Greek

⁴⁹Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 263.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 325. It seems that this is a rather false dichotomy. May I suggest that it is all *mission* (inreach mission and outreach mission), the mission of sharing God’s love that is made manifest in *service/ministry*. For service is love in action for the good of others. And Jesus was on mission to both the believers, the Jews—to ‘the lost sheep of the house of Israel’—(Matt 15:24) and to the Gentiles (non Jews). Both groups benefitted from His service/ministry—the Centurion (Matt 8:5-13); the Canaanite woman (Matt 15:21-28).

origin (*diaconos/doolos*), whereas ministry is of Latin origin (*ministerium*).⁵¹ However, instead of looking at servant ministry as an unnecessary repetition, it can be seen as a stronger emphasis for a concept that is lacking in ministry today.

Here again, the Lord Jesus shows by example. In fact He said that He came not to be served but to serve and give His life a ransom for many (Matt 20:28). “This was the one great object of His life. Everything else was secondary and subservient.”⁵² “The love of Christ, manifested in unselfish ministry, will be more effective in reforming the evildoer than will the sword or the court of justice.”⁵³

So, ministry is serving, not being served, nor serving (helping) oneself. Every minister is to serve God and humanity. Any ministry/service rendered to the Lord through His people, including those involved in dual allegiance, should never be anything less than this. They are to be helped to get out of their unfortunate conditions.

Shepherd Ministry

Along with a servant ministry, I believe that a shepherd ministry is also key. I confess that this is due to my life as a shepherd. I strongly believe that every minister, every leader must be a shepherd. Shepherding is taking care of people as a shepherd cares for the flock, not as a mercenary but as the owner. Did not Jesus introduce Himself as “the good shepherd” (John 10:11, 14)? He called on Peter to feed His sheep/lambs (John

⁵¹See Matt 20:28. That is probably why the King James Version (KJV) and the American Standard Version (ASV) translate this verse as “not to be ministered unto but to minister,” whereas the New King James Version (NKJV) and the New International Version (NIV) use “not to be served, but to serve.” See *Dictionnaire Petit Larousse Illustré* (Paris: Larousse, 1987).

⁵²Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1956), 78.

⁵³White, *Desire of Ages*, 350.

21:15-17). Peter was able to capture that concept, and he equated ministry to shepherding when he identified elders/ministers as under-shepherds and Jesus as the chief shepherd (1 Pet 5:1-5). Every child of God (servant of God) is to capture that concept as well. And seen from this angle, God's servants are called upon to serve or minister even to those involved in dual allegiance, for they are in need of help so that they may be delivered from that type of situation.

Theological Understanding of the Church

The Church of God was established by Jesus Himself. After Peter's confession Jesus revealed that on that rock He would build His Church (Matt 16:18). It is true that before that time God's people existed (in the Old Testament and during the inter-testamental period), but not as a church. From its etymology, church comes from the Greek combination of two words *ek* meaning out of, from and *klesia* meaning gathering, community. This means a "gathering of citizens called out of their home [their environment], an assembly."⁵⁴ In other words, the church is the gathering of those who have come out of the world to constitute the community of those who have left their customs/traditions behind, and they have believed in Christ Jesus and become "members of the household of God" (Eph 2:19), awaiting "the blessed hope" (Titus 2:13).

Church as a Family

The Church is made up of "members of the household of God" (Eph 2:19). As a family, every member of the family is important and needs support. Therefore those in

⁵⁴"Church," *BibleWorks*, CD-ROM, 2006 edition (7-7\init\bw700.swc).

dual allegiance need special attention and care from the rest of the family of God.

Contrary to Cain's attitude (Gen 4:9), we are our brother's keeper.

Church as a Community

If the church is a community then any problem in the community affects the smooth running of the whole community. The well being of the community is at stake. As in Israel of old, when there was a problem in the camp (community) as during Ahab's time (1 Kgs 17, 18), it had to be addressed or else drought would come upon the people. Likewise, if we do not help those struggling in dual allegiance, a spiritual drought will certainly come, and the church will suffer serious famine (syncretism) in the church.

Church as a Human Body

Every organ contributes to the good functioning of the entire body (1 Cor 12). When one part of the human body is sick, the whole body catches fever. This means the well being of the church as far as health and wealth are concerned depends upon the healing of those in dual allegiance. Otherwise, the sickness will permeate the whole body like a cancer when it reaches the metastasis phase.

Church as a Hospital

All are sick and need healing (Rom 3:23). The same ministry of healing is applicable in this context of dual allegiance.

Church as an Embassy

Christ came down to establish His church (Embassy). And Paul says that His followers are His ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20). The key characteristic of the sending country

is the ministry of love and compassion (Matt 22:37-40; John 13:34, 35). Ministering to those suffering from dual allegiance is part of the sharing love.

Church as a Wife

The church is cared for by Christ, her husband (Eph 5:25-33). We are to attend to the needs of those involved in dual allegiance like a husband cares for his wife.

Church as a Flock

Every animal in the flock is precious to the good shepherd (Luke 12:32; John 10). And as a shepherd, I am called upon to feed the flock with good food until the Chief Shepherd comes (1 Pet 5:2-4), and this includes those involved in dual allegiance, so that they may be well fed and leave dual allegiance behind them.

Church as a School

Everyone who comes to church has started the learning process, and that will not be completed overnight. Therefore, the admonition from E. G. White says, “We must educate, educate, educate, pleasantly and intelligently.”⁵⁵ Jesus Himself said disciples should be taught “to observe all things” (Matt 28:20) that He had taught us.

All these various aspects of the church play a very significant role in sacrificing, the healing, educating, attending to the welfare, and the protection of the church of God, including those involved in dual allegiance.

⁵⁵Ellen G. White, *A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1954), 30.

Theology for Dealing with Dual Allegiance

Dual allegiance is becoming more and more challenging in society and in the church. Therefore, there is a need for an adequate biblical hermeneutic for dealing with the issue. The solution to this problem which is a result of the powerful influence of African Traditional Religions (ATR) will be found through right interpretation and application of the Word of God. As church members are taught the power of the Holy Spirit, and as they are led to discover His power as it really is in God's Word, the ignorance and fear that usually leads them to seek other agencies for the resolution of their problems will weaken and eventually fade away.

Among the elements of the ATR worldview that wields a powerful influence upon ministers and laity in the WAD is the belief in a world filled with spirits. These spirits are believed to be responsible for sickness, suffering, and pain, and many believe that they need to be appeased or worshipped. Alongside this cardinal feature of ATR is ancestor worship or veneration. Ancestors are believed to have power to inflict problems or intercede on behalf of their living descendants.

Another factor that often leads to dual allegiance is the socio-economic context in which the African countries find themselves as mentioned earlier in the previous statistics. Hunger, poverty, insecurity, conflicts, and the desire for status are issues which trigger the desire to fall back to ATR or other sources for assistance in fulfilling basic needs or desires.

Since the Bible is the truth (John 17:17) which has the power to set people free (John 8:32) from every form of fear, ignorance, and habit, it is expedient therefore that a biblical theology be developed to respond to the problem of dual allegiance.

There are many reasons why dual allegiance has such a powerful attraction for leaders and members in the WAD. As it has been explained above, the African worldview that presents an understanding of a cosmos replete with evil spirits is one that thrives on fear. People dominated by such a worldview are filled with a dread of evil spirits that can place a curse on a person. This emotion could also be derived from fear of fetishes, charms, or the evil eye. The Bible must be employed faithfully yet authoritatively to resolve these fears and to respond to the question of the spirits of the dead, the problem of evil, and other preoccupations that push believers back into the old ways.

Fear of Magic and Sorcery

Africans believe in the world of the supernatural that influences, and even controls all that happens on the earth below. This worldview is in many ways similar to that of the biblical times. One key passage that demonstrates God's might and protection against charms, fetishes, or spells is found in the experience of the Israelites as they travelled through the land of Moab on their journey to the Promised Land. The key text reads: "For there is no sorcery against Jacob, nor any divination against Israel. It now must be said of Jacob and of Israel, 'Oh, what God has done!'" (Num 23:23).

The word translated as sorcery in Hebrew is *nahas*. It comes from the consonant group *nhs piel*, "prognosticate," and the noun *nahas* "spell."⁵⁶ The verb form of this word, *nahas*, may have the sense of "to cast a spell or to utter a magical curse."⁵⁷ What is

⁵⁶Heinz-Joseph Fabry, "Nahas," *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (TDOT), ed. Helmer Ringgren and Heinz-Joseph Fabry (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 9:356-369.

⁵⁷Roland B. Allen, "Numbers," *The Expositors Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), 2:903.

apparent from this text is that an attempt was made to place a spell or a curse upon the nation of Israel by Balak the Moabite king employing the services of the reprobate prophet Balaam. Interestingly, as the passage demonstrates, several times he opened his mouth to curse the Israelites, however, only blessings came out. Eventually, in resignation, Balaam declares that he could not place a curse on those whom God had blessed. "He [God] has blessed, I cannot reverse it" (v. 20).

The above passage is one which powerfully addresses the fears of those influenced by the African magical worldview for it gives assurance of a greater power that overshadows the camp of the people of God. This is affirmed by the dialogue in the book of Job between God and Satan, where the devil acknowledges that God has placed a hedge about the household and properties of His followers (Job 1:10).

Fear of Suffering

Suffering or evil in the African mindset is a result of breaking a taboo or angering the ancestors, or being under a curse. However, as the book of Job wonderfully demonstrates, suffering has its origin with the devil who can do nothing outside the control of God. Ronald Allen presents a new dynamic to the issue of pain or suffering regarding God's people when he says: "Since there is no possibility of the use of magic either for or against Israel, whatever comes of Israel will truly be regarded as the work of God."⁵⁸ The knowledge that God is in control of all that happens in the life of His followers is one that frees from anxiety and grants comfort and peace even in the midst of a storm (Rom 8:28-34; Isa 26:3).

⁵⁸Ibid., 902.

Fear of the Dead

While it may be true that the fear of death is not peculiar to Africans alone, there is a terror in many of the local cultures about the dead bringing vengeance upon the lives and property of the living. The Scriptures have a vital role to play in bringing deliverance from the bondage the fear of death produces (Heb 2:15). One way that those plagued by dual allegiance can be helped to be free from the fear of the dead and find hope beyond the grave is by sharing the biblical perspective of death.

In the story of Jesus' resurrecting Lazarus, the scriptural concept of death as a sleep is made evident (John 1:11). There are several Greek words used to denote sleep. One such word is *kaimaomai*, which means "sleep" or "fall asleep."⁵⁹ *Kainomao*, derived from *keimai*, has as its basic meaning to lull to sleep, however in its middle or passive form it can be used either of natural sleep or dying.⁶⁰ The verb form used by Jesus in the story of the resurrection of Lazarus is "intended to draw attention to Jesus' victory over the humanly invincible power of death."⁶¹ A notable reason that must be impressed upon the minds of all prone to the temptation of dual allegiance is that Jesus is the only antidote to the fear of death. The answer to the problem of death is the resurrection, of which Jesus holds the keys; therefore, for Christians "to speak of sleeping

⁵⁹L. Coenen, "Pleonexia," *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (TNIDNTT), ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 1:441.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 442.

is to indicate secretly the resurrection from the dead, since they who sleep have the hope of rising again.”⁶²

Fear of Poverty

The craving for riches, status, and power in a region that is overtaken by poverty and suffering is another facet of dual allegiance that those interpreting the Scriptures must address. Christ in the Gospels warned against the danger of greed that leads to the ambition of serving two masters (Matt 6:24; Luke 16:13). Although many Africans live below the poverty line, they are not free from the lure of materialism.⁶³

The Greek word *pleonexia* is translated as “greediness, “insatiableness,” “avarice” or “coveteousness” is made up etymologically of two words *pleon* (more), and *echo* (have).⁶⁴ It is noteworthy that the classical Greek writers did not confine their use of the word merely to the desire for more material possessions; rather the earliest instance of *pleonexia* denoted the immoral lust for power.⁶⁵ F. Selter states, “the man who on longer has his goal and fulfillment in God seeks fulfillment in himself, his possessions, and acquisitiveness. Ultimately he makes himself into an idol that strives to subject everything to itself.”⁶⁶ Again, the role of the Scriptures in tackling this aspect of dual allegiance that leads an individual down the pathway to separation from God and ultimately destruction is vital. This is because at the root of *pleonexia* is “a life which

⁶²R. C. Lenski, *The Interpretations of St John's Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1963), 789.

⁶³Joe Kapolyo, “Matthew,” *Africa Bible Commentary*, ed. Tokunboh Adeyemo (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 1123.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 138.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*

lacks knowledge of God, faith and obedience.”⁶⁷ As Joe Kapolyo has said, “Money should be our servant in the service of God, not a god to which we owe allegiance as slaves.”⁶⁸ A common adage says in the same vein, “Money is a very good servant but a terrible master.”

Revelation

The great revelation regarding dual allegiance is that any allegiance to a deity (including self) other than to YHWH, the God of Abraham, is worthless. Only He created and saves; all others are idols, and idolatry is foolishness as the Psalmist points out:

Their gods are silver and gold, the work of men’s hands.
They have mouths, but they do not speak; eyes they have, but they do not see; They have ears, but they do not hear; noses they have, but they do not smell;
They have hands, but they do not handle; feet they have, but they do not walk; Nor do they mutter through their throat. Those who make them are like them; so is everyone who trusts in them (Ps 115:4-8).⁶⁹

God made it clear to His people that any allegiance to any deity is sin, and the warning is serious.

There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who call up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God. For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the Lord your God has not appointed such for you (Deut 18:10-13).

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid., 1123.

⁶⁹See also in Ps 135:15-18; Isa 44:9-17).

God's people should always remember that they are engaged in power encounters, so they are to behave accordingly (Eph 6:10-12).

Ministry of Compassion, Care, and Hope

The fact that someone is engaged in dual allegiance does not mean that his/her case is hopeless. The Lord Jesus is our model in ministry. Using His way of attending to people's need, those who are involved in dual allegiance should see that the church sympathizes with them, cares for them, and that there is hope for them. "In every human being, however fallen, He beheld a son of God, one who might be restored to the privilege of his divine relationship."⁷⁰

Single Allegiance to God

After people have experienced God's grace and forgiveness the final step is to lead them to discover and appreciate how the Lord is good and sweet. "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him! Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him. The young lions lack and suffer hunger; but those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing" (Ps 34:8-10). There cannot be any single allegiance until one reaches this level of fellowship with God. David experienced this and wrote, "How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Ps 119:103). The indwelling Christ will make His follower cherish His Word and admonitions more than anything else in this world.

⁷⁰White, *Education*, 79.

God requires single allegiance. Ellen White calls it “undivided allegiance.”⁷¹

Elsewhere, she talks of every human being owing his/her Creator “supreme allegiance”⁷² This has been the call of God, the Creator of the universe from the Garden of Eden to the present time no matter what happens.

In the Past

Job: Single allegiance was exemplified in the life of the patriarch Job when he was tried by Satan. In the middle of a deep crisis, he stood firm and even defied death by affirming, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him. He also shall be my salvation” (Job 13:15, 16).

Daniel and his companions: The Hebrew boys also demonstrated single allegiance during their captivity in Babylon. Writing about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, Ellen White said, “Their faith strengthened as they declared that God would be glorified by delivering them, and with triumphant assurance born of implicit trust in God, they added, ‘But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.’”⁷³

Daniel experienced something similar, yet he remained steadfast. “Although he knew fully well the consequences of his fidelity to God, his spirit faltered not. Before those who were plotting his ruin, he would not allow it even to appear that his connection with Heaven was severed. In all cases where the king had a right to command, Daniel

⁷¹Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1923), 502.

⁷²White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 238.

⁷³Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1943), 508.

would obey; but neither the king nor his decree could make him swerve from allegiance to the King of kings.”⁷⁴

The Apostles: After the ascension of Christ Jesus, the Apostles demonstrated “supreme allegiance” to their Master. Even when they were threatened by death, they did not fear. To the Pharisees who had intimidated them, they replied, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:19, 20). On another occasion, “Peter and the other apostles answered and said: ‘We ought to obey God rather than men’” (Acts 5:29). And commenting on this attitude, Ellen White says, “It was an angel from heaven who delivered them from prison and bade them teach in the temple. In following his directions they were obeying the divine command, and this they must continue to do at whatever cost to themselves.”⁷⁵ After the religious leaders had beaten the apostles, “they [the Sanhedrin] commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ” (Acts 5:40-42). Nothing or nobody could prevent them from proclaiming the good news about the wonderful salvation as found in Christ Jesus.

Today

Though the following testimony takes place outside the WAD, its significance

⁷⁴Ibid., 542.

⁷⁵White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 82.

regarding dual allegiance is such that it is worth mentioning. This shows that African traditions are more or less the same throughout the continent. The story is about a medical doctor, Dr. Mwanza Mayombi, in Tanzania, who went through a series of losses. His aunt died of cancer in the hospital where he was working, his cattle were stolen, his house caught fire in his village, his daughter died in a car accident, all within a short period of time. When he was pressured by his family to see the witch, he refused and was able to bear the pain of his losses through the grace of God to the point that his relatives “called him ‘little Job.’”⁷⁶ Whereas many African Christians falter between two opinions there are many who have met the Lord, and He has become their personal Lord and Savior.

The message is clear and unequivocal. God declares: “I am the Lord, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another. Nor My praise to carved images” (Isa 42:8).

Therefore, as a family of God, a hospital, an army, an ambassador, the body of Christ, His church, in using the Master’s above-mentioned methods, is called upon not to condemn or criticize those trapped in dual allegiances, but rather to help them turn away from these evil practices and render “undivided allegiance to God”⁷⁷ in whatever circumstance they may find themselves in.

Summary

The reality of dual allegiance among God’s people as it was during Elijah’s time

⁷⁶Joseph Healey and Donald Sybertz, *Towards an African Narrative Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 297.

⁷⁷White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 502.

is evident. Even though people commonly say “all roads lead to Rome,” the number one duty of ministry consists of helping people by showing that there is only one road that leads to heaven. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). Every ministry should emphasize single loyalty or allegiance to God. For, “no one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon” (Matt 6:24). “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him” (1 Kgs 18:21). That was the mission of Elijah the Prophet. Israel had reached a point of apostasy whereby they were only pretending to be God’s people and performing the rituals in the name of the God of their fathers. Yet they were worshiping Baal and ashtaroths (Judg 2:13; 1 Kgs 16:31-33; 18:21). This same type of dual allegiance has happened throughout history, and God continues to call individuals or groups of people to single worship and single allegiance to Him. In the twenty-first century, there is a great need to help people to turn from idols to serve and worship the “living and true God” (1 Thess 1:9) and Him alone.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND RELIGIOUS CONTEXT

Introduction

Having discovered and understood myself, and having discovered my different spiritual gifts for ministry in the previous chapter, I am ready to understand people and minister to them. In order to do so, an analysis of their culture and religion is very important.

The culture and religions of West and Central Africa are significant not for this region only but also have far reaching cultural and religious implications for other parts of the world due to the slave trade centuries ago. As Tod K. Vogt points, “West Africa was once know[n] as the Slave Coast and provided many of the slaves to Brazil, the Caribbean and the United States. Spiritism of Brazil, Santeria of Cuba, and Voodoo of Haiti find their roots in the traditional religions of West Africa.”¹ Therefore, an analysis of the history, culture, society, and religions of this side of the Atlantic Ocean is useful for the understanding of spiritual elements on both sides of the ocean, particularly the Americas.

There is a popular adage that says, “No one is an island,” in other words, human

¹Tod K. Vogt, “Jesus and the Demons in the Gospel of Mark,” *Journal of Applied Missiology* 7, no. 2 (1996): 212.

beings are social beings. They live within a community, within a cultural setting. They are affected and shaped by that environment. By environment it means the physical (geographical), cultural, and religious surroundings in which people live. A cultural and religious analysis of West and Central Africa is a challenging task because of the diversity of the continent and an oral tradition that has left few written documents.

Another important aspect of this analysis has to do with the way some Africans relate to crises such as death, famine, and other calamities. Jack Partin, in his article, "Christians and Their Ancestors: A Dilemma of African Theology," states that "when face to face with death or famine or infertility, many African Christians resort to traditional rites and beliefs."² This raises a key question with regard to dual allegiance, whether there has ever been any authentic, any genuine engagement or commitment between the gospel of Christ and the cultures of Africa. Another way to state it is, "Can authentic Christian faith flourish in every culture?"³ Can Africa develop an authentic faith that will be without blemish? Will Africa become a modern spiritual "Samaria" whereby the word "syncretism" was used to describe Samaria of old? Concerning the Samaritans, it is said, "When it suited their purpose the Samaritans claimed relationship with the Jews, asserting that their roll of the Pentateuch was the only authentic copy; they were equally ready to deny all connection in times of stress, and even to dedicate their temple to a heathen deity."⁴ These key questions will be discussed in this chapter.

²Jack Partain, "Christians and Their Ancestors: A Dilemma of African Theology," <http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=1078> (accessed June 5, 2007).

³Ibid.

⁴*Smith's Bible Dictionary* (London: Hendrickson Publishers, 1990), s.v. "Samaritans"; *International Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromley, 1995 ed., s.v. "Samaritans."

Contextual Analysis of West-Central Africa

History

Pre-colonial Era

Pre-colonial Africa is difficult to describe because of the lack of written documents. Africa has traditionally been an oral society. The traditions of our fore fathers were orally kept. Perhaps that is why a Senegalese thinker, Hamadou Hampate Ba, said that every time an old person dies in Africa, it was as if a library had caught fire. Nevertheless, the reconstitution of the history of the pre-colonial period by modern scholars shows that Africa had a variety of societies, traditions, customs, and politics.⁵ The African continent was generally ruled by kings and chiefs, and the oldest kingdom was Ghana (c 833 AD). Ghana “was first mentioned by the Arab Historian Kwarizini, and described in great details about two hundred years later when the Almoravids of North Africa captured Aoudaghast, a minor city of Ghana.”⁶

Four additional major blocks of kingdoms within the West-Central Africa territory can be listed as follows:

Western bloc: Ghana: AD 750-1100; Songhay: AD 900-1585; Mali: AD 975-1550; Timbuktu: AD 1650-1800; Fulani: AD 1800-1870.

Southern Bloc: Ashanti: AD 1760-1900; Oyo/Dahomey: AD 1700-1900.

Central Bloc: Hausa: AD 1400-1800; Sokoto: AD 1800-1900; Borno: AD 1500-1900.

⁵Alex Thomson, *An Introduction to African Politics* (New York: Routedledge, 2004), 8.

⁶“Africa,” p. 1, <http://Library.thinkquest.org/C002739/AfricaSite/LMwestghana.htm> (accessed April 20, 2008).

*Eastern Bloc: Wadai: AD 1650-1900.*⁷

Because there were no structured states, one of the characteristics of the above kingdoms was their ethnic grouping, “a community of people who have the conviction that they have a common identity and common fate based on issues of origin, kinship ties, traditions, cultural uniqueness, a shared history and possibly a shared language.”⁸ This concept of an ethnic grouping, which seems peculiar to this continent, has influenced the African culture so that even today, it is very difficult to do anything in Africa without taking into consideration the ethnic group factor as will be shown below.

Colonial Era

The colonization period lasted from 1880 or 1890 to 1960. It was only a short period of time but its impact is felt even today.⁹ West-Central Africa had the presence of four colonial rulers, France, Britain, Portugal, and Spain.¹⁰ A key word that would best describe that period is *Exploitation*.¹¹

Decolonization

Nationalism stirred and grew as Africans sought to liberate themselves from the

⁷Ibid., 9.

⁸Ibid., 60.

⁹Ibid., 17.

¹⁰Ibid. France was present in Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso (Upper Volta then), Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Benin (Dahomey then), Chad, Central African Republic, Congo (Brazzaville), Gabon. Britain colonized Sierra Leone, Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria). Portugal had Cape Verde Islands and Guinea Bissau. Spain was in Equatorial Guinea. Togo and Cameroon that were German were handed over to France and Britain after the First World War in 1919.

¹¹Ibid., 18.

colonial yoke.¹² Ghana received its independence first (in 1957), followed by Guinea in 1958, and, except for the Portuguese colonies that only became independent in the 1970s, the rest of West and Central Africa gained independent in the 1960s.¹³

Geography

The West-Central Africa Division covers the region of West Africa and parts of Central Africa. It stretches from the Sahara Desert in the northern part (southern part of Maghreb area) to the Atlantic Ocean in the West and in the South. The Eastern borders are shared with Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo¹⁴ for a total of twenty-two countries.¹⁵ West Africa alone occupies a territory of more than 6,140,000 square kilometers, which represents about 40.74 percent of the fifty-four countries that are listed on for the continent of Africa.¹⁶ When the six countries from Central Africa are added to this total about one fourth of the continent and a total population that is estimated at 298,142,840 inhabitants are included.¹⁷ Both the geography and the culture show that Africa is a continent of diversity which can easily be viewed as a challenge or an opportunity. The varieties and pluralistic dimensions of Africa can positively be

¹²Ibid., 32.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴“West Africa,” Wikipedia Online, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Africa#Culture_and_religion (accessed June 5, 2007)

¹⁵The twenty-two countries are: Benin Republic, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Cote d’Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea (Conakry), Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

¹⁶See “African countries,” www.google.countries of Africa (accessed April 19, 2007).

¹⁷Compiled from “CIA Files,” 163-165, www.africanamericanyearbook.com/file2007/ (accessed April 19, 2007).

considered as opportunities if well managed. For instance, in the desert there are oil, natural gas, uranium, and other minerals while the forests and grasslands provide feed for livestock, timber, and other building materials. When all these resources are put together, the African continent has the potential to become a giant as far as development is concerned.

Often people tend to believe that Africa is one country or made up of only few countries. Below is a political and administrative map of the continent of Africa with its fifty-four countries while the Western Sahara (currently part of Morocco) and Cabinda land (currently owned by Angola) are still struggling for their independence.

The northern part of this territory is made up of the Sahara desert where living conditions can be very challenging. South of the desert is the Sahel, which consists of semi-desert types of soil, then the savannah, before reaching the forest region in the south around the equator. The weather in the Sahel area of Africa is generally hot because of the heat coming from the desert to the north and heat from the humid forest to the south.

Social Dimension

One of the characteristics of Africa as a whole is its tribal diversity. West-Central Africa enjoys this same reality. The social dimension of this region is characterized by the fact that “the interests of the community had always been put above those of the individual.”¹⁸ This is certainly one of the reasons that created the presence of dual allegiance on the continent. Traditionally, a community was under the influence of African Traditional Religions. When an individual becomes a Christian and goes against

¹⁸Thomson, 32.



Figure 1. Political map of Africa. *Source:* http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.printablemapstore.com/images/big/map_of_continents/maps_of_africa/political_map_of_africa.jpg&imgrefurl= (accessed July 27, 2008).

the community, that person will face the challenge of dual allegiance. The larger community will pressure the person to continue to give allegiance to ATR. It is not allegiance to Jesus that the community opposes, but a lack of allegiance to the old ways. These two systems with their principles and values oppose each other. Even the political parties that will be looked into shortly are mostly ethnocentric groups based on tribal

loyalty. To a great extent, “tribalism has become the most efficient way for individuals to mobilize politically in order to serve their interests within the modern state.”¹⁹

Even though colonization had its very bad side such as exploitation, cultural alienation, and suppression of the rights of individuals, one of the benefits of the colonial period was the unifying factor brought about by the language of the colonial masters. For without the unifying element of the language of the “white man,” I do not know how the countries in West-Central Africa would have been able to unify the various tribes and help the peoples have any sense of belonging to a country. Without a common language there would have been a serious communication problem between the tribes and also with the outside world.

Another social element that is worth mentioning which is also another unifying factor despite the many tribes in this area is *Soccer*. It is enjoyed throughout the region by many, whether as players or spectators. The Terrenga Lions of Senegal, the Elephants of Cote d’Ivoire, the Black Stars of Ghana, the Eagles of Mali, the Super Eagles of Nigeria, the Indomitable Lions of Cameroon are of international reputation and often participate in the World Cup championships.²⁰

Some of the major tribes in West-Central Africa, apart from those mentioned above in Nigeria, include the Ouolofs in Senegal, Mauritania, and The Gambia, the Malinke in Mali and Guinea, the Fulani in Guinea, and in Cameroon where there are

¹⁹Ibid., 64.

²⁰“West African Culture,” www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Africa#Culture_and_religion (accessed April 20, 2008).

other tribes like the Bamileke, the Beti, the Achans in Ghana and in Cote d'Ivoire, the Mossi in Burkina Faso, and so forth.

Political Systems

Long before the colonization period in the 19th Century, West and Central Africa were generally ruled by kings and chiefs. When Africa was decolonized in the 1960s, the first heads of states inherited two patterns of leadership, the chieftaincy way and the colonial system. Both were basically the same, for both were dictatorships that inspired rulers to desire to stay in power for life. When the wind of democracy started blowing in the early 1990s, it was not easy for African leaders to accept those winds of change. Some fought against it tooth and nail. Others, more cleverly, welcomed democracy in such a way that it became diluted in the tribal waters of Africa. For instance, in Cameroon, my home country with 17,340,702 inhabitants,²¹ many political parties were encouraged such as the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM), the Social Democratic Front (SDF), the National Union for Democracy and Progress (NUDP), the National Alliance for Democracy and Progress (NADP), the Union des Peuples Camerounais-Kodock (UPC-K), the Union des Peuples Camerounais-Nlend (UPC-N), and the Cameroonian Democratic Union (CDU), and so forth. But, the ruling party remained the giant that competed with the smaller regional parties.²² Therefore, the ruling party has won the national elections and the current head of state has been in power for

²¹"African American Yearbook," p. 163, www.africanamericanyearbook.com/file2007/ (accessed April 20, 2008).

²²See "Democratization and Ethnic Rivalries in Cameroon," <http://www.sul.stanford.edu/africa/camer.html> (accessed April 20, 2008).

twenty-six years (since 1982). However, the good side of the matter is that Cameroon has been able to enjoy stability unlike many other African countries. There are only two countries in West-Central Africa where democracy has been working more or less efficiently. Those countries are the Benin Republic that has witnessed transfers of power without any trouble or bloodshed and Senegal. "Senegal remains one of the most stable democracies in Africa"²³ with democratic and peaceful transfers of power between heads of the state (from president Senghor to president Diouf, and from Diouf to president Wade). As far as Benin is concerned, it too has grown its democratic institutions.

A succession of military governments ended in 1972 with the rise to power of Mathieu Kerekou and the establishment of government based on Marxist-Leninist principles. A move to representative government began in 1989. Two years later, free elections ushered in former Prime Minister Nicephore Soglo as president, *marking the first successful transfer of power in Africa from a dictatorship to a democracy*. Kerekou was returned to power by elections held in 1996 and 2001, though some irregularities were alleged. Kerekou stepped down at the end of his second term in 2006 and was succeeded by Thomas Yayi Boni, a political outsider and independent. Yayi has begun a high profile fight against corruption and has strongly promoted acceleration of Benin's economic growth (*italics supplied*).²⁴

Socio-Economic Dimension

It is practically impossible to talk about a society without referring to the economy and how people earn their living. How do people live? What is their economy like? The northern part of West-Central Africa is made of semi-arid land known as *Sahel*, that constitutes the transitional zone between the Sahara desert and the savannahs of the western Sudan forests forming a third zone between the savannahs and the southern coast

²³"World Facts," www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sg.html (accessed April 20, 2008).

²⁴*Ibid.*

that is greener and more fertile.²⁵ Countries like the Central African Republic, Chad, Niger, Mali, Mauritania, even Senegal to some degree, because of the aridity of their lands due to the scarcity of rain (three months rain per year, sometimes less), suffer frequent famines with a lot of resulting poverty.

According to Alex Thomson, the “colonial administrators had failed to provide Africa with the basic economic foundations.”²⁶ Some statistics are rather shocking. Among the ten poorest countries in the world, several are from West-Central Africa; they are Burkina Faso, Central Africa Republic, Mali, Niger, Guinea Bissau.²⁷

As if it were not enough, among the fifty poorest countries in the world, sixteen are from West-Central Africa. These are, in addition to those already listed above, Benin, Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Guinea (Conakry), Liberia, Mauritania, Senegal, and Togo.²⁸

This means, out of twenty-two countries only six have escaped a classification of poverty, which really translates to mean misery for large populations of people. This confirms what Alex Thomson said earlier that African leadership was not prepared to provide their people with an adequate economic system since the colonial administrators had failed to provide Africa with the basic economic foundations. Until today, Africa still seems to have no specific strategic plan for the development of the continent. Another aspect of the problem that does not favor development is the dictatorships that can be

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Thomson, 17.

²⁷“Poorest Countries,” www.mediaglobal.org/index.php/the-worlds-10-poorest-countries/ (accessed April 20, 2008).

²⁸“Information,” www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0908763.html (accessed April 20, 2008).

Table 1. Gross National Income per Capita

#	COUNTRY	GROSS NATIONAL INCOME PER CAPITA
01	Benin	\$ 1, 110
02	Burkina Faso	\$ 1, 220
03	Cameroon	\$ 2, 150
04	Cape Verde	\$
05	Central African Republic	\$ 1, 140
06	Chad	\$ 1, 470
07	Congo (Brazzaville)	\$ 810
08	Cote d'Ivoire	\$ 1, 490
09	Equatorial Guinea	\$ 7, 580
10	Gabon	\$ 5, 890
11	Gambia	\$ 1, 920
12	Ghana	\$
13	Guinea	\$ 2, 240
14	Guinea Bissau	\$ 700
15	Liberia	Non available
16	Mali	\$ 1, 000
17	Mauritania	\$ 2, 150
18	Niger	\$ 800
19	Nigeria	\$ 1, 770
20	Senegal	\$ 780
21	Sierra Leone	\$ 780
22	Togo	\$ 1, 550

Source: "Information," www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0908763.html (accessed April 20, 2008).

traced back to the colonial era. "Colonial rulers were highly bureaucratic and authoritarian."²⁹ That is probably why dictatorship is still rampant on the continent.

One can see that poverty in this context is not an empty word or a joke. It carries weight; it is full of meaning; it is a terrible reality; people live on a day to day basis,

²⁹Thomson, 21.

hardly able to take care of their lives, their families, with few belongings if they have anything at all. Paul Kalanda, in his article, vividly states this fact. "The Church in Africa, like the rest of Africa, is poor and arouses pity and calls for the intervention of richer sister Churches from other parts of the world. It is certainly alarming to note that Africa provides only 2% of the world's production. The US provides 35%. Africa's per capita income is only \$150.00 a year; that of US is \$3,500.00 a year."³⁰

Another aspect of the social context that is worth considering has to do with life expectancy and health in the region. The following tables are very revealing when it comes to the idea of health care and healthy living.³¹ The table below shows that Africa has not yet caught up with the rest of the world as far as the concept of globalization is concerned.

Cultural Context of West-Central Africa

Socio-Cultural Dimension

Culture can be defined as the "term for the general way of life of a human society, including ways of thinking, beliefs, customs, language, technology, art, music, literature, and tradition."³²

It is interesting to notice that in spite of the wide variety of cultures in West-Central Africa because of the many tribes, that from the Central African Republic

³⁰Paul Kalanda, "Consolidating Christianity in Africa," *Missiology: An International Review* 4, no. 4 (1976): 395 -404.

³¹CIA files, www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sg.html (accessed April 20, 2008).

³²*Webster's International Encyclopedia*, ed. Bart Drubbal (Utrecht, Netherlands: Trident Press, 2003), s.v. "culture."

Table 2. Classification of Poverty in Africa

#	COUNTRY	LIFE EXPECTANCY		HEALTHY LIFE EXPECTANCY		CLASSIFICATION
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
01	Benin	52	53	44	45	9
02	Burkina Faso	48	49	35	36	17
03	Cameroon	50	51	41	42	10
04	Cape Verde	Not available				
05	Central Afr.	42	42	37	38	13
06	Chad	45	49	Not available		
07	Congo	54	55	45	47	4
08	Cote d'Ivoire	42	47	38	41	12
09	Equat. Guinea	45	47	45	46	5
10	Gabon	54	57	50	53	1
11	Gambia	53	57	48	51	2
12	Ghana	Not available				
13	Guinea	53	55	44	46	6th
14	Guinea Bissau	46	48	40	41	11th
15	Liberia	41	44	34	37	16th
16	Mali	45	47	37	38	14th
17	Mauritania	55	60	43	46	8th
18	Niger	42	41	36	35	15th
19	Nigeria	54	57	47	49	3rd
20	Senegal	37	40	27	30	18th
21	Sierra Leone	37	40	27	30	19th
22	Togo	52	56	44	46	7th

Source: CIA files, "World facts," www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sg.html (accessed April 20, 2008). These are clear indicators of the poor quality of life due to poverty that is prevailing in those various countries.

or Chad through Senegal there are general similarities in geographical setting, in dress, cuisine, music, and other cultural elements that are not shared extensively with groups outside that geographic region.³³ Throughout West and Central Africa there is a typical formal attire worn, the flowing *Boubou* (also known as *Agbada* and *Babariga*), which has its origins in the clothing of the nobility of the various West African empires in the 12th century.³⁴ Added to this particularity, we find the following:

The *Djembe* drum [also called the talking drum], whose origins lie with the *Mandinka* peoples, is now a popularly played drum among many West African ethnic groups. The *Djembe*, along with the highly intricate woven *Kente* cloth of the Akan peoples of Ghana and the distinct Sudano-Sahelian architectural style seen in the many mosques of the region (see Djenne), are the primary symbolic icons of West African culture [even in Central Africa].³⁵

In West-Central Africa, as in other parts of the African continent, family is a very key element of the socio-cultural life and structure.³⁶ Families are usually large with many children in a household. A childless woman will not be well accepted in society as it was also in biblical times.³⁷

Paul Hiebert, a well known Christian anthropologist, describes culture as impacting people at three distinct dimensions or levels. First of all, Hiebert views culture as “A system of ideas.”³⁸ This deals with the cognitive dimension of human life. This

³³West Africa,” Wikipedia Online, www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Africa#Culture_and_religion (accessed April 21, 2008).

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Women in the Bible such as Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Hannah, and Elizabeth were socially miserable because they were barren (Gen 16:1-16; 18:1-15; 30:1-24; 1 Sam 1:1- 2:11; Luke 1:5-25).

³⁸Hiebert, 29.

dimension clusters around four major ideas according to Hiebert.

1. It has to do with all the “concepts by which people carve up their worlds”³⁹. In other words it focuses on the intellectual aspect of human culture and includes ideas and principles that are used in connection with deep thinking.

2. It also includes the “beliefs by which they organize their concepts into rational schemes”⁴⁰ in order to make them reasonable and acceptable to the understanding of the people concerned.

3. A third area includes the “values by which they set their goals and judge their actions.”⁴¹

4. “Culture is a model that provides the people in a society with a description and an explanation of reality.”⁴²

The second dimension of culture according to Hiebert is the affective or emotional dimension which he calls the System of Feelings.⁴³ This dimension helps both the individual and the group to express their emotions and their inner feeling of life, for human beings are definitely emotional beings.

The third and last area according to Hiebert is what he calls the evaluative dimension⁴⁴, whereby the entire idea of right and wrong, good and evil, a society’s

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

discernment, judgment, evaluation, and the moral and ethical aspects of life are performed.

One can see that since human beings are not segmented beings but rather a holistic combination of cognitive, affective, and evaluative, the harmonious management of these three dimensions of one's culture makes for a wise person. This will be seen in analyzing the culture of the people in West and Central Africa. But before that is done, it seems important to briefly look at worldview in general, and only then consider the people on the continent of Africa.

Worldview⁴⁵

Worldview can be defined as the "study [of] different issues that affects a person's view on life and the world."⁴⁶ Hiebert considers worldview as "the most powerful and influential aspect of culture. . . . It is the most difficult to perceive and analyze . . . almost irresistible [and] persuasive, even in the face of contradictory evidence."⁴⁷ Charles Kraft, another well known anthropologist, points out that worldview monitors the cultural changes that people are confronted with, the new ideas, behavior, and products that they are faced with from within their society or from without.⁴⁸ In short, worldview is a key element, a very determining factor for the management of a people's culture both individually and collectively. A situation may be extremely unbelievable or unacceptable

⁴⁵Some scholars like Hiebert talk of *world view* or *world-view*, others write it in one word (*worldview*). In this dissertation, it is the latter that is preferably used unless otherwise used by a specific author, and therefore quoted accordingly.

⁴⁶"Worldview," www.worldview.org+hl=en+rls=com.microsoft (accessed April 15, 2009).

⁴⁷Hiebert, 44, 45.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 48.

in a particular culture but the same concepts may be easily understood, accepted, and explained in another. For instance, as Ruby Mikulencak points out, “one of the greatest hindrances to the improvement of health and living conditions in developing African countries is the conflict between the Western scientific world view and the African’s traditional world view.”⁴⁹ “Scientific medicine believes in the ‘chance theory’ that germs enter people and cause sickness. Westerners are so convinced they are right that they find it difficult to think in the categories and logic of the African’s world view.”⁵⁰

Most Christians in the Geita Area have a firm belief in a mysterious power which can be manipulated by human beings in a beneficial or harmful way. Many Christians visit diviners and healers. Diviners are people who use a mysterious power for finding the cause of a person’s misfortune. Healers use that same power for making curative and protective measures. Many Christians fear and take protective measures against sorcerers and witches who are people believed to use mysterious powers for evil purposes.⁵¹

Religious Context in West-Central Africa

Religion is “a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, esp.[especially] when considered as the creation of a superhuman agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, in the conduct of human affairs.”⁵² Religion is seen as a “belief and reverence for a supernatural power or powers regarded as creator and governor of the universe” or “a set of beliefs, values, and

⁴⁹Ruby Mikulencak, “Science and Magic Collide in African Medicine,” *Evangelical Mission Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (1987): 358-363.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Frans Wijzen, “There Is Only God:” A Social-Scientific and Theological Study of Popular Religion and Evangelization in Sukumaland, Northwest Tanzania (Kampen: Uitgeverij Kok, 1993), in Healey and Sybertz, 293.

⁵²“Religion,” <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/religion> (accessed April 15, 2009).

Table 3. Major Religions in WAD

#	Country	Population	Major Religious Groups		
			Traditional Religions	Christians	Muslims
01	Benin	7,862,944	50%	30%	20%
02	Burkina Faso	13,902,972	40%	10%	50%
03	Cameroon	17,340,702	40%	40%	20%
04	Cape Verde	420,979	Not available	Mainly Catholics	
05	Cent. Afr. Rep.	4,303,356	35%	50%	15%
06	Chad	9,944,201	14%	35%	51%
07	Congo (Brazz)	3,702,314	48%	50%	2%
08	Cote d'Ivoire	17,654,843	34%	26%	40%
09	Equatorial Guinea	540,109	Not available	Mainly Catholics	
10	Gabon	1,424,906	20%	75%	5%
11	Gambia	1,641,564	1%	9%	90%
12	Ghana	22,409,572	21%	63%	16%
13	Guinea (Conakry)	9,690,222	7%	8%	85%
14	Guinea Bissau	1,442,029	50%	5%	45%
15	Liberia	3,042,004	40%	40%	20%
16	Mali	11,716,829	9%	1%	90%
17	Mauritania	3,177,388	0%	0%	100%
18	Niger	12,525,094	20%		80%
19	Nigeria	131,859,731	10%	40%	50%
20	Senegal	11,987,121	1%	5%	94%
21	Sierra Leone	6,005,250	30%	10%	60%
22	Togo	5,548,702	51%	29%	20%

Source: "Religious Groups," p. 163-165, <http://www.africanamericanyearbook.com/file2007/> (accessed April 19, 2007).

practices based on the teachings of a spiritual leader.”⁵³ The religious context within the West and Central parts of Africa, though sensitive, because of the strong Muslim influence, is very rich due to the plurality of the people groups in that region. The table above shows this diversity.

Apart from the various definitions listed above, another interesting point of view that needs peoples’ attention is found in the writings of Milton M. Gordon, who suggests that religion, from the humanistic point of view, can be considered as an “anthropomorphism.”⁵⁴ “Religion is, then, an explanatory system, but one whose basic operations are mostly unconscious. As explanatory systems, religions lend themselves to intellectual systematization, but religious belief may at the same time be ‘felt rather than thought.’”⁵⁵ The religious context in West and Central Africa can be classified under three major groupings: Islam, Christianity, and Traditional Religions.

It is worth mentioning that in addition to ethnicity and tribalism, religion is another determining factor in the life of Africans, especially in politics. “As with ethnicity,” says Alex Thomson, “religion has also long been established as a social cleavage generating political completion within, and between societies.”⁵⁶

One can see that as far as religion is concerned West and Central Africa are very

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Anthropomorphism can refer to the representation of the gods in human form or, more generally, to the attribution of human characteristics to animals or to inanimate objects. In both cases it can be seen as a statement of human superiority—everything else that there is must be just like us—or as an attempt to understand that to which we have no direct cognitive access, by imagining it to behave just like us (cf. “anthropomorphism,” <http://www.answers.com/topic/anthropomorphism> (accessed April 15, 2009).

⁵⁵“Religion,” http://dannyreviews.com/h/Faces_in_the_Clouds.html (accessed April 15, 2009).

⁵⁶Thomson, 67.

diverse. There is a very dominant Muslim presence (about 50 percent), a strong Christian presence (about 30 percent), with a continuing presence of Traditional Religions (about 20 percent). This mixture helps in understanding the various dynamics in the issue of dual allegiance which is a prevailing challenge in the entire region of West and Central Africa. One cannot help emphasizing that even the Seventh-day Adventist Church, in spite of all its efforts at careful teaching has not been left out regarding this issue.

Seventh-day Adventist Presence

The Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA) entered West-Central Africa through Liberia as Professor Koffi Owusu-Mensa points out.⁵⁷

Coincidentally, it was the year of the birth of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1863, that Seventh-day Adventism made its debut in West Africa in the form of literature evangelism. The carrier of the good news on the printed page to West Africa was not even an official SDA missionary. . . . This general Adventist weakness or inability to move fast with the message, however, failed to discourage a determined soldier of Christ to reach out with the message of love and life, and the beneficiary of this courageous and loving spirit was West Africa, evidently the first area in the world to be blessed with the services of an SDA overseas missionary. This pioneer Adventist overseas missionary was Hannah More, an American lady from Massachusetts, who worked for another denomination in Liberia. Hannah More is believed to have accepted SDA doctrines while on furlough in America from Liberia in 1863. She visited Connecticut from her home in Massachusetts. While in Connecticut, she ran into Stephen Haskell, one of the founding fathers of Seventh-day Adventism, who introduced her to Adventist literature. One of the materials she received from Haskell was John Andrews' book, *History of the Sabbath*. She did not only thoroughly digest this new found treasure, Hannah More also entered into a correspondence friendship with Haskell who did not allow the opportunity to slip by, but flooded her with more literature through the mail.⁵⁸

This new-found faith spread throughout West Africa and then moved to Central

⁵⁷Koffi Owusu-Mensa, *Ghana Seventh-day Adventism: A History*, vol. 1 (Accra, Advent Press, 2005), 8.

⁵⁸Ibid.

Africa even though some other source of information indicates that the Seventh-day Adventist message reached the coastal area of Douala (Central Africa) in 1926 through the work of two American travelers, Jones and Anderson, coming from South Africa. Adventist missionary work grew, and at present, the membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the West-Central Africa Division, as of December 31, 2008, stands at 825,169.⁵⁹ The WAD is organized into six sub-regions called Unions, grouping the following countries together:

1. Central Africa Union Mission (CAUM): Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon.
2. Eastern Nigeria Union Mission (ENUM), covering the eastern part of Nigeria.
3. Northern Nigeria Union Mission (NWNLU), covering the rest of Nigeria.
4. Ghana Union Conference (GUC) for the country of Ghana.
5. Sahel Union Mission (SUM) for Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Togo.
6. West Africa Union Mission (WAUM) for Liberia, The Gambia, and Sierra Leone.

The WAD has three universities, Adventist University Cosendai (AUC) in Cameroon, Babcock University (BU) in Nigeria, and Valley View University (VUU) in Ghana. These institutions take care of the youth on the tertiary level. In addition there are many high schools, junior secondary schools, primary schools, and kindergartens. These institutions have contributed to the substantial growth in the membership of the division.

⁵⁹These statistics have been released by the West-Central Africa Division (WAD) Secretariat (see appendix B).

However, in spite of the growth, there is an underlying challenge which gives a sense of unease and discomfort, for many Adventist members continue to wrestle with dual allegiance. Even though the growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is significant, many of the converts continue to falter “between two opinions” (1 Kgs 18:21). And strangely enough, none of the various institutions of learning within WAD has anything in their curriculums to address this issue of dual allegiance.

Since this dissertation deals with this very real issue in the socio-cultural and socio-religious settings of West and Central Africa, the next section will present some case studies that will illustrate the challenge the church faces because of split level Christianity.

Case Studies on Dual Allegiance

An “Adventist” sorcerer⁶⁰

This testimony comes from West Africa. A young man who had joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church through baptism joined the fellowship of the disciples of Christ Jesus and became citizen with the saints and member of the household of God (see Eph 2:19). But his life had some strange elements even after his baptism. After a while he started disturbing the church services. When the Pastor tried to find out what was wrong with him, and why he was disturbing the people of God, he revealed that even though he had been baptized, he was still connected to his old power sources. When he came to church on Sabbath, he would look into the church and if the church is filled with the Holy Spirit, he would leave his power outside. He would then enter and worship.

⁶⁰The pastor who shared this testimony wanted to remain anonymous, however, he is willing to confirm the facts of this story on a one-to-one basis.

After the service, he would pick up his power back and go do his other evil business. However, when the church was not Spirit filled he would enter with his power and start disturbing the service by making the children cry or causing noise inside or making people go to sleep, and so on and so forth. In so doing, the sermon would not be easily received by the people because of the distraction caused by the evil forces. And as if it were not enough, the young man revealed to the pastor and elders that he was having sex with his mother, who also admitted the fact. When he was asked how he could do such a thing since his mother was a Seventh-day Adventist, he replied that his mother was not converted. That is why she could not resist him. Only those who are truly converted can resist the power of the evil one.⁶¹

Sorcerer became a church member
to destroy the church⁶²

This next testimony takes place in Central Africa, deep within the equatorial forest. A young man had joined the church seemingly because of his interest in salvation. Later, it was discovered that his aim was very different. He had come to prevent the church from growing and to seek to destroy it. The young man said he had very powerful seductive spirits given to him by his grandfather. He could have sexual intercourse with women in the church during the worship service, and yet remain unnoticed. When things came to light, his pastor and the church elders prayed for him. The prayer lasted for three hours. Eventually, the evil spirit left him and he was converted. Now he spends his time

⁶¹There are more details regarding this testimony in appendix C.

⁶²The pastor who gave me this testimony has many such stories to tell. I also know of many similar cases, but to add credibility I prefer those from an external source (see appendix C).

giving Bible studies and sharing his testimony. He promised that he would never go back again to that world where there is no forgiveness, but because of his change he lost all his peers in that sorcery group.

An ordained pastor's involvement in dual allegiance⁶³

This testimony was shared by another Seventh-day Adventist pastor who told of an ordained pastor who was working for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but who was also serving another master. All seemed OK from the outside, but deep within, the man was involved in dual allegiance until a visiting pastor came to preach for a revival program in the church. After hearing some of the sermons and attending the prayer sessions, the troubled pastor opened up to his colleague. He confessed that the power that he was serving in secret was given him by his mother when he was a boy. The visiting pastor prayed for him and he was delivered.

Special job offer

A young man needed a job, so as he searched the internet, he got in touch with a lady who was the chief executive officer of a company. When she received his contacts, she offered to employ him. He was to do the voucher posting by internet with a big salary. Then she added that he would be introduced to a super power, a super intelligence that would enable him to achieve his dreams intellectually, materially, and socially. He was told that he was receiving this special offer because she liked the young man, and he was to keep it top secret. The young man approached me to find out whether he could go

⁶³See appendix C.

ahead. I told him not to accept the job, that it was a trap. I hope he was able to follow my advice even though I have since lost contact with him.

From these examples, it is obvious that the Adventist Church in the West-Central Africa Division has a serious challenge with the issue of dual allegiance. The question now is how to positively address this issue so that the issue may become an opportunity for God to manifest His glory in and for His Church in that part of the world.

The case studies suggest that those involved in dual allegiance belong to at least five different groups.

1. There are those who, either by curiosity or out of ignorance, like the young who was offered a job, find themselves trapped in a system. They often do not know how to get out of difficult situations. Some testimonies reveal that whenever they try to leave the system they are threatened by death, so because of fear, they remain trapped and helpless.

2. There are those who, in search for wealth and power, enslave themselves in dual allegiance.

3. There are those who are on mission against the church to harm and destroy the disciples of Christ Jesus by working inside the church.

4. There are those who, because of the presence of the agents of the devil inside and outside the church, try to protect themselves. Their worldview is influenced by their background, and their faith in the Lord Christ Jesus is still too weak to sustain them in times of crisis.

5. Finally, there are those who, because of some cultural consideration like that

of ancestor worship, are deeply involved in dual allegiance. This group needs to be taken separately and analyzed a bit deeply.

Whatever the case, the challenge is great and calls for the attention of the church.

The Issue of Ancestor Worship

One of the issues that is closely connected with dual allegiance is ancestor worship which is widely practiced in African society including by some members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. "Ancestors are believed to help people gain all these [marriage, giving birth, unity and harmony, victory over enemies] when they are obeyed and consulted."⁶⁴ Some scholars liken ancestor worship to the ceremonies that take place in honor of the saints in some churches. Likewise, some say that ancestors should be given special attention. Horst Balz, commenting on this approach, says:

"Honoring" one's father or mother, as in the Fourth Commandment, was never in conflict on the human level with 'worshiping' the one God, a worship prescribed in the First Commandment and known all over Africa at all times. Thus, as J. Kenyatta pointed out, it is not only Catholics who make a distinction between *adoratio*, which is rendered to God alone, and *veneratio*, which is given to the ancestors and to those still alive who merit it, just as the saints are venerated in the West.⁶⁵

He adds, "In practical terms, worship of the ancestors can take place on an individual or a family level or—according to the political order of a particular traditional society—on a village, tribal, or national level. . . . Ancestor veneration is thus, at the very least, a social ideology, a symbolic superstructure of actual relationships based on possessions and

⁶⁴Lois Fuller, *A Missionary Handbook on African Traditional Religion* (Kaduna, Nigeria: Baraka Press & Publishers, 2001).

⁶⁵Horst Balz, "Ancestor Worship in Africa," in *Dictionary of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), cited in *Theology in the Context of Africa*, 177.

power.”⁶⁶ In other words, some scholars do not see any problem in ancestor worship even though the Scriptures have some rather strong statements against such practices. “Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord, and because of these detestable practices the Lord your God will drive out those nations before you” (Deut 18:11 NIV); “And when they say to you, ‘Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter,’ should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? (Isa 8:19).

Dual Allegiance and Adventism

This section will deal mainly with a series of questions in order to rhetorically explore some ideas that will be singled out in more detail in the next chapter.

Demographic Growth and Poverty: It was said earlier that Africa was not prepared and helped to acquire the needed basic economic foundations. In recent years there has been an effort to limit and control the birth rates so that families can support the children they bring into the world. It is hoped that this approach will put less stress on people. But even when one considers the concept of poverty itself, is it really true to say that Africa is poor or would it be better to say that Africa does not use (better still, does not know how to use) the resources at her disposal? If Africa invested enough in working hard, in trying to master the environment as the West did, are we saying that things would not improve? The West did not develop overnight. They started somewhere some time,

⁶⁶Ibid., 178.

and they kept on building on what they had started doing. Africa seems satisfied with the same old ideas, attitudes, and methods of doing things. There seems not to be a desire to change. There seems to be a satisfaction with a begging way of life even in the Adventist Church which is supposed to be the light of the world in order to show the way to other people (Matt 5:14-16). Kalanda challenges that attitude and rightly so. "The father-child attitude must change; the policy making and the decision taking roles have now to be in the hands of the local churches."⁶⁷ "The people in Africa must be taught and educated to assume their responsibility to support and to run their Churches. They must not sit back and wait for help to come from richer sister Churches in Europe and America."⁶⁸ Because of this attitude, Africans have been looked down upon as "lazy people" or at best as "people who do not want to work, and produce, and develop." These types of comment do not make one proud of one's people.

Constant Religious Tension: Another factor that impacts poverty and religion is hunger or under nourishment. There is a popular adage that says, "a hungry man, an angry man," and the French language would literally put it, "a hungry belly does not have ears." Consequently I am wondering whether it is because of the situation of hunger and poverty that allows dual allegiance to be so rampant in Africa. Is it because of hunger that people do not listen to the true gospel as it is in Christ Jesus. In other words, because of this situation of crisis, anything goes provided that one is able to feed one's family.

There is an on-going dualism in many African Christians' religious beliefs. They keep one foot in the beliefs of their African Traditional Religion and one foot in

⁶⁷Kalanda, "Consolidating Christianity in Africa," 125. This attitude is also called "paternalistic attitude," from the "paternalistic philosophy" strongly advocated among the French Africans who used to call the colonial masters "Uncles," and France, "Mere patrie," that is "mother land."

⁶⁸Ibid., 126.

Christianity. . . . 'Most Africans tend to uphold two faiths—they maintain the Christian faith when life is gay and happy, but hold to the indigenous faith when the fundamentals of life are at stake.' . . . Christianity remains for many Africans 'a stranger religion,' there being some part of their very selves and lives that stays outside the gospel. This is the source of a certain double quality in living their beliefs, holding them divided between their faith in Jesus Christ and custom's traditional practices.⁶⁹

Perhaps both ancestor worship and dual allegiance are part of the things Ellen G.

White was referring to when she wrote about African Adventists.

The Lord has permitted Brother John Wessels to go to Africa and Elder Daniells to accompany him. But I have been shown that there is in the hearts of the people of Africa something that will not be easily overcome, something that shows that some are not converted. They are not under the discipline of God. They do not accept God's way of doing them good, but choose rather their own way. They have yet to learn in the school of Christ His meekness and lowliness.⁷⁰

When one looks at the religious aspect of the continent of Africa, is it because people are unwilling to give up some of the practices that makes it difficult to do away with some of the ills such as dual allegiance? Or is it because, as someone has mentioned, "The reason for this split-level living as far as I can see, is that Christianity has not reached the African's religious soul yet"?⁷¹ It seems that Christianity may be scratching Africa where it does not itch or it is scratching only on the surface; it is not scratching deep enough so as to reach the African soul whereby the worldview can be changed. Until this is done, things will remain on the surface, and dual allegiance will keep on growing. The larger problem is that syncretism will corrupt the Adventist message. Even though the Adventist Church is growing fast in Africa it either has to deal with dual allegiance or it will undermine and severely weaken the church.

⁶⁹Healey and Sybertz, 294.

⁷⁰Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Southern Africa* (TSA) (Cape Town, SA: South Africa Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1977), 94.

Is it possible that since sorcerers, witchcraft, wizards, and other evil agents are all around society that their prevalence has an impact on the life of even Christian people by creating an atmosphere of fear that weakens and saps the strength of Christian believers. The fear that evil spirits and forces can attack at any time can be a very powerful weapon against any form of development among the people of Africa. Therefore, since it is a sad reality, some biblical medication must be found, so that in spite of the presence of those evil forces, those who would like to develop may do so successfully by being protected through the power of the One who has called His children from darkness into His marvelous light (Exod 19:6; 1 Pet 2:9). The Lord says, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Christianity in general and the SDA Church in particular seem to have failed in this respect. Christianity is not yet free; it is still in bondage, bondage to fear, poverty, and falsehoods. In West-Central Africa, as far as I know, the Church, not only is poor,⁷² but it is also afraid of the evil practices that take place all around it. It preaches one thing, but does something different or contrary.

Fear of Sorcery: There is a common adage that says, "Fear kills." Because of the presence of sorcery, imagined or real, there is fear all around. Even one's shadow can frighten a person. Therefore, people reach to grasp anything for protection.

Superstition: John Mbiti defines superstition as "a readiness to believe and fear something without proper ground."⁷³ That is what led Voltaire to say in 1764,

⁷¹Healey and Sybertz, 129.

⁷²For the past two consecutive years (2008 and 2009), WAD has not been able to balance her operating budget. The General Conference of SDAs in Washington had to come to her rescue with extra funding apart from the normal regular appropriations WAD receives annually.

⁷³John Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1991), 18.

“Superstition sets the whole world in flames, philosophy quenches them.”⁷⁴ Because of fear many African Christians still suffer from superstition. Everything is given a spiritual interpretation and meaning to the point that the most obvious and simple situations can be understood in a complex manner. For instance when someone gets up in the morning, if his left leg touches the soil first, it means the day will be bad. When you travel, if your right leg hits something, it means the journey will be successful. Unfortunately, until today many Christians still believe these kinds of things. And I am sure this too influences them towards dual allegiance.

Summary

Things seem rather gloomy. However, they are not desperate. There seems to be hope. The testimony of the lady who was deeply involved in dual allegiance, worshipping Christ as a Seventh-day Adventist and being involved in Voodoo practices, and who eventually was delivered, is quite promising (see appendix C).

With so many challenging factors in West and Central Africa infecting and infesting the social environment culturally, economically, and religiously, the main question that springs up is how to positively address and transform all those challenges (at least the majority of them) so that they may not degenerate into problems and socio-religious calamities. How can these very real situations become real opportunities for positive change? This will be the basis of the strategy to be put in place that will be addressed in the next chapter.

⁷⁴See Geoffrey Parrendes, *Dictionary of Religions and Spiritual Quotations* (New York: Routledge, 2000).

CHAPTER 4

A STRATEGY FOR ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF DUAL ALLEGIANCE IN THE WEST-CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION

Introduction

Understanding the various aspects of the twenty-two countries in the West-Central Africa region has been a very important part of this dissertation. It is crucial to discover people's social, cultural, and religious background, and their worldviews. This understanding will inform this study in the formulation and implementation of a strategy to address the issue of dual allegiance in this area of Africa. This chapter will present a strategy to help leaders, scholars, and members respond to the problem of dual allegiance in this part of the world.

In order to reach the expected goal of this dissertation, a Logical Framework Matrix (Logframe Matrix) and a Gantt Chart have been chosen as tools to guide in the strategic planning of this project.

The following sections of this chapter will present in detail the Logframe, the corresponding Gantt Chart, and the various components thereof for the successful implementation of the project on dual allegiance that will end with a final evaluation. The evaluation will inform all parties whether the project was successfully carried out according to the plans and within the allocated time.

General Methodology: Logical Framework and Gantt Chart

Logical Framework Analysis

A Logical Framework Analysis (LFA) is an analytical planning process that helps planners, managers, and other leaders analyze the existing situation during the project conception and preparation. It also helps establish a logical hierarchy of the means by which objectives will be reached, identify some of the potential risks, and establish how outputs and outcomes might best be monitored and evaluated. Moreover, the Logframe presents a summary of the project in a concise format.¹ A strategy is defined by Edward R. Dayton and David A. Fraser as “an overall approach, plan, or way of describing how we will go about reaching our goal or solving our problem. . . . Strategy looks for a range of possible ‘means and methods’ and various ‘operations’ that will best accomplish an objective. Strategy is a way to reach an objective. It looks for a time and place where things will be different from what they are now.”²

Therefore, a Logical Framework Analysis is a working tool for planning, organizing, and managing projects in a detailed, coherent, systematic, and logical way.

The LogFrame prompts you to establish the result chain that drives the relationship between your deliverables and the outcomes you[r] client expects of them. It encourages you to define performance indicators not only for your results, but for the benefits your client expects. In addition, the LogFRAME insists that you clarify the external conditions that must materialize in order to succeed in achieving these benefits. In this way, the LogFrame facilitates the identification of the necessary and the sufficient conditions to achieve benefits or outcomes for clients.³

¹“Logframe,” http://www.bih-cz.net/dwnld/pt_logframe_seminar.pdt (accessed July 7, 2008).

²Dayton and Fraser, *Planning Strategies for World Evangelism*, 13, 14.

³“Logframe,” <http://www.maizemoor.com/pages/2/index.htm> (accessed July 7, 2008).

Though the LogFrame is mostly used in areas of management like business enterprises, business administration, and industry, it can also be used in other fields like ministry. However, it is known that “while LFA has proven to be a useful planning and management tool, it is not a comprehensive tool and does not guarantee project success.”⁴ Success depends on the skills of the manager in terms of being able to be proactive and ready to accommodate changes during implementation of the strategy. “The Logframe should thus not be seen as simply a set of mechanistic procedures, but as an aid to thinking.”⁵ Table 4 illustrates a Logframe Matrix.

Table 4. A Logical Framework Matrix

Narrative Summary (Objectives)	Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVI)	Means of Verification (MOV)	Important Assumptions (IA)
Goal	Measures of goal achievement	Sources of used	Assumptions affecting the Purpose-Goal linkage
Purpose	End of project status	Sources of information Methods used	Assumptions affecting the Output-Purpose linkage
Outputs	Magnitudes of outputs Planned completion date	Sources of information Methods used	Assumptions affecting the Inputs-Outputs linkage
Inputs	Nature and level of resources Necessary cost Planned starting date	Sources of Information	Initial assumptions about the project

⁴European Commission, *Project Cycle Management Training Courses Handbook*, Version 1.1 (Freiburg, Germany: PARTICIP BmbH, 2001), 22.

⁵Ibid.

Objectives

According to the Logframe Matrix⁶, the objectives are classified in four main groups, the overall goal, the purpose, the outputs, and the activities as shown in the first column on the left hand side in table 4 above.

Overall Goal: Besides reaching the specific or particular purpose of the project, the various outputs will also contribute to a much greater goal. There is a possible need for inputs from other supplementary activities to achieve that greater goal (overall goal).

Purpose: Every project that has been properly planned has a purpose. A purpose in a Logframe is “an anticipated outcome [or result] that is intended or that guides your planned actions [project].”⁷ It is the “immediate objective,” “the effect which is expected to be achieved as the result of the project.”⁸ The purpose is constituted of outputs as they are defined below. Clear and good outputs will bring about a clear purpose that will lead to a clear overall goal that will serve a larger good.

Outputs: Outputs are described by the *WordWeb Dictionary* as the “final product, the things produced,” “the quantity of something [as a commodity] that is created [usually within a given period of time].” In other words, the outputs are “the results that the project management should be able to guarantee”⁹ in order to meet the immediate objective or purpose of the project.

Inputs: Inputs have to do with necessary elements that need to be included in the

⁶See an example of a Logframe Matrix on table 4.

⁷*WordWeb Dictionary.*

⁸See Table 4, column 1, row 2.

⁹See Table 4 column 1, row 3.

project that will produce the outputs. *Chambers Dictionary* talks of “amount, material or energy, that is put in” any stimulating information or event or acts to arouse action [output], “a component of production; something that goes into the production of output.”¹⁰

Objectively Verifiable Indicators

The Objectively Verifiable Indicators are elements that help project management to verify the progress of the project in space, time, and quantity. These measures are put in place in order to help management to evaluate and control the progress and development of the project as resources are spent and as time passes by. They are measures (direct or indirect) to verify the extent to which the development of the objective has been fulfilled as shown in table 4. They are therefore specific, measurable, and time-bound.

Means of Verification

These are the “sources of information, methods used, as mentioned in table 4 column 3, to verify the indicators. They help project management to constantly cross-check things as they move forward, hence they are called means of verification.

Important Assumptions

The important assumptions are events, conditions or decisions necessary for sustaining objectives over which the researcher has no control. These are listed in table 4, column 4.

¹⁰*Chambers English Dictionary* (Edinburgh: W. R. Chambers, 1990), s.v. “input.”

Gantt Chart

A Gantt Chart is a graphical representation of the tasks against the progression of time.¹¹ The American Society for Quality (ASQ) adds that, it “is a bar chart that shows the tasks of a project, when each must take place and how long each will take. It is a useful tool for planning and scheduling projects.¹² It is helpful especially when monitoring a project’s progress.¹³ It was invented and developed by Henry Laurence Gantt (1861-1919), a mechanical engineer, management consultant, and industry advisor, in 1917 as a visual tool to show scheduled and actual progress of projects.¹⁴ As a project progresses, bars are shaded to show which tasks have been completed. People assigned to each task also can be represented.¹⁵ ASQ says that the Gantt chart is also called a “milestones chart, project bar chart, activity chart.”¹⁶ With these two tools (Logframe and Gantt Chart) presented, it becomes easier to see and understand since both are visual tools for this purpose. “The figure below shows a Gantt Chart used to plan a benchmarking study [for] twelve weeks . . . There are two milestone events, presentations of plans for the project and the new process developed in the study. The rest of the tasks are activities that stretch over periods of time.”¹⁷ Below is an example of a Gantt Chart

¹¹“Gantt Chart,” <http://www.ganttchart.com/Index.html> (accessed July 7, 2008).

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴“Gantt Chart,” <http://www.ganttchart.com/History.html> (accessed July 7, 2008).

¹⁵“Gantt Chart,” <http://www.asq.org/learn-about-quality/project-planning-tools/overview/gantt-chart.html> (accessed July 8, 2008).

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

showing an eight-month project. The various activities or tasks are listed on the left hand side whereas the corresponding time frame in which those activities are supposed to be carried out are indicated by the shaded boxes.

Table 5. A Gantt Chart

Tasks	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Research		■	■					
Feasibility analysis			■					
Design				■				
Test					■	■		
Implement stage 1							■	
Receive feedback							■	
Revise							■	
Implement stage 2								■
Review								■

Source: Celia Burton and Norma Michael, *A Practical Guide to Project Management* (Pentonville Road, London: Kogan Page, 1993), 65.¹⁸

Implementation Strategy

The mission strategy that I developed for dealing with dual allegiance involves developing materials that will address and meet the needs of the WAD Adventist

¹⁸See another example of the Gantt Chart in <http://www.ganttchart.com/History.html> (accessed July 8, 2008).

Table 6. Example of an Activity Schedule

Activities	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	etc.	PA	TA	etc.
Result: 1. Quality of secondary healthcare service improved									
*Activity: 1.1 Design, implement training									
1.1.1 Conduct staff training needs								L	
1.1.2 Design training modules								L	
1.1.3 Conduct training								L	
*Activity: 1.2 Improve drug procedures									
1.2.1 Conduct management audit							L	S	
1.2.2 Design, test new procedures							L		
1.2.3 Implement new procedures							L		
Milestones	<p>1. TNA completed by end month 1</p> <p>2. Patient care training modules completed by end month 3</p> <p>3. All clinical staff trained in improved patient care by end month 5</p> <p>4. Audit report completed by end month 2</p> <p>5. New procedures finalized by end month 4</p>								
Key	<p>1. PA = Planning Adviser</p> <p>2. TA = Training Adviser</p> <p>3. L = Lead role</p> <p>4. S = Support role</p>								
	<p>*Step 1: List main activities from Logframe</p> <p><i>Step 2: Break activities down into manageable tasks</i></p> <p><i>Step 3: Clarify sequence & dependencies</i></p> <p>Step 4: Estimate start-up, duration & completion of tasks</p> <p>>Step 5: Summarize scheduling of main activities</p> <p>Step 6: Define milestones</p> <p>Step 7: Define expertise required</p> <p>Step 8: Allocate tasks among team</p>								

members so that dual allegiance will no longer remain an issue in the division. This aspect of church life has been put aside, neglected, ignored, and overlooked due to a number of reasons. It may be true that the missionaries who brought the gospel to the West and Central parts of Africa knew nothing about the secret practice of the old ways.

Paul Hiebert has rightly pointed out that many missionaries had an “excluded middle”¹⁹ that kept many of them from understanding the spiritual battle many were fighting. Unfortunately, African Christians (and Adventists) were not ready to talk about the problems associated with the old religions. Therefore, the challenge has persisted to this day.

The issue of dual allegiance is not only real but broad. However, due to some circumstances and constraints (time, space, materials, and other factors) the project will focus on the root causes raised in chapter one. The Logframe will be used to outline, develop, and implement a strategy to address this issue of dual allegiance for the betterment of God’s people in this part of the world.

The implementation of a project is a key element in the strategy process. If it is important to strategize, it is equally important to implement the plans. However, according to Dayton and Fraser, we must strategize “in paradox,”²⁰ which means that no strategic plan, irrespective of its thoroughness and precision, should be done without God, because “strategy is an attempt to anticipate the future,”²¹ which only God knows (Prov 20:1; Dan 2:27, 28).

Implementation is the process of seeing that a strategy is carried out according to the plan. The implementation will therefore be carried out based on various activities that have been prepared and developed as detailed way in the Gantt Chart in appendix E.

¹⁹Paul G. Hiebert, R. Daniel Shaw, Tite Tienou, *Understanding Folk Religion* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 89.

²⁰Dayton and Fraser, 10.

²¹John D. Robb, *Focus! The Power of People Group Thinking* (Monrovia, CA: Mission Advanced Research & Communication Center, 1989), 41.

Application of Logframe Analysis²²

This section will apply the Logframe to describe the strategy to address the issue of dual allegiance in the WAD.

Overall Goal

The overall goal is to provide tools whereby administrators and pastors in the WAD will be more committed and equipped for spiritual leadership that will educate and strengthen the Christian lifestyle of Adventist members in the division. This will require more than one project to achieve this goal. Addressing dual allegiance is therefore one aspect of the overall goal.

Three main measurable indicators will help to determine whether the overall goal has been reached or not. Ninety percent of Adventist churches are to hold a spiritual retreat every January; eighty percent of the WAD pastors are to plan an annual spiritual retreat in their territory; and every pastor will preach nine topics once a year in their churches on dual allegiance with the material provided by the WAD.

To make sure that the project is on track, every conference/mission will have to train at least one pastor on how to deal with life issues on dual allegiance by 2012. It is assumed that the administrators of every conference/mission and union will be willing to participate in this program. It also assumed that all pastors will do likewise as well as that all local churches will support such an initiative. The mechanism for the success of this project can be well designed and put in place, however, if the above listed individuals and entities do not cooperate, nothing successful will happen. That is why the willingness of

²²The Logframe and the Gantt Chart for this project are found in appendix E and F.

the various entities to participate is very crucial. The division needs to promote the initiative so that the expected goal will be achieved to the glory of God and for the betterment of the people.

Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation on dual allegiance is to sensitize and equip pastors and administrators in the WAD on how to face the issues of dual allegiance, such as cultism, sorcery, ancestor worship, the following of horoscopes, and the use of divination. God's people need to know that "occult involvement is one of the enemy's favorite weapons to bring people into spiritual confusion. . . . These practices include Satanism, fortune-telling, séances, mind control, channeling and astrological charts."²³ People should not allow themselves to be trapped by the agents of the evil one who may appear friendly and boastful.

There are many who shrink with horror from the thought of consulting spirit mediums, but who are attracted by more pleasing forms of spiritism, such as the Emmanuel movement. Still others are led astray by the teachings of Christian Science, and by the mysticism of theosophy and other Oriental religions. The apostles of nearly all forms of spiritism claim to have the power to cure the diseased. They attribute their power to electricity, magnetism, the so-called 'sympathetic remedies,' or to latent forces within the mind of man. And there are not a few, even in this Christian age, who go to these healers, instead of trusting in the power of the living God and the skill of well-qualified Christian physicians.²⁴

The Word of God stresses in an unequivocal way that dual allegiance is not acceptable to God because He sees it as idolatry. That is why the purpose of this dissertation can never be emphasized enough.

²³Norma Dearing, *The Healing Touch* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 1995), 79, 151.

²⁴White, *Evangelism*, 606.

The measurable indicators for the project to be achieved will be that 80 percent of pastors and administrators will have attended a spiritual retreat held throughout the WAD by May 2009. A full report will be presented to the WAD office at the Year-end Council in November 2009. It is also expected that pastors, administrators, and their spouses will attend the leadership retreat on dual allegiance scheduled for December 2010. Power point presentations on nine topics dealing with dual allegiance will be prepared for pastors to use in their various churches by December 2010.

Apart from the reports on the May 2009 spiritual retreat, registration lists and the power point presentations will serve as means of verification. It is assumed that the WAD pastors will be cooperative and use the materials that will have been prepared.

Outputs

As was pointed out in the general methodology section above, the outputs include activities that, when performed, will bring the expected results. Three outputs will be expected in order to reach the purpose of this dissertation.

1. Develop a theological response to issues related to dual allegiance as faced by the church members in their daily activities.
2. Spiritual renewal retreats will be held for church administrators, administrators, and church members throughout the division.
3. The WAD will plan and organize a division-wide retreat for administrators and pastors dealing with specific issues related to dual allegiance.

Activities

In general terms, activities are a series of actions undertaken in a project intended

to produce the results that will constitute the outputs of the project so that the expected purpose can be achieved. Activities can be as many as needed in order to make sure that the necessary aspects of the project are covered for good, solid outputs. When activities are well developed and successfully carried out, the purpose will be accomplished and the overall goal will be reached. It is somewhat similar to the building of a house. When the foundation is well laid and solid, the whole structure stands firm and lasts for a long time. Likewise a project will reach its overall goal when from the activities associated with the outputs, the purpose, and the overall goal are accomplished. In appendix B, there is an example of an "Activity Schedule" that will help a person picture on one sheet what the activities are going to look like so as to facilitate the planning as well as the running of this project. A project is worth pursuing when it can be completed within the expected time and yield the expected results.

The various activities of this project will be described under the three main outputs that have been mentioned above.

Develop a Theological Response: The problem of dual allegiance calls for a theological response so that these issues related to dual allegiance as faced by the church members in their daily living can be well addressed. In view of the fact that this issue is very deep and sensitive, the development of an appropriate theology to address it will help the church a lot. A basic question would be, How can a theological response be developed? The first step will consist of reviewing literature related to dual allegiance. The Bible, the Spirit of Prophecy, and other relevant books will be consulted in order to establish the truth about the origin, the nature, and the effect of dual allegiance.

A second step will consist of identifying and interviewing Adventists who are

involved in or connected with dual allegiance. Since it will be very difficult to personally gather the needed information, I will employ the help of key informants. Interviewees will be asked to share their experiences in dual allegiance—What or who led them into it? How do they feel presently? How open are they in their practices of dual allegiance? Are they minors? Are they church officers? Are they new converts? In addition to this information regarding their status in the church, their various social settings will be noted for analysis.

Data will be critically analyzed and a theology developed. Out of the theology, nine key topics will be generated for teaching, sensitizing, and equipping pastors and members to respond appropriately to the issue of dual allegiance. The end product of this exercise will be the production of materials that will be used by the WAD for use division wide. Before the material is approved by the WAD committee, the materials will be subject to the scrutiny of the WAD officers and other experts in dual allegiance especially a few members of the GC BRI for doctrinal guidance. Next, some key informants will help identify nine topics in how to live in a world of dual allegiance. This step will have to be completed by August 2009. Once the topics have been identified and selected, the next step will be to identify and select speakers/writers to prepare presentations on the above mentioned topics so they will be ready with their presentations by December 2009. Each presentation will have to have a power point prepared with it so that pastors and administrators can have the material to use in their own presentations at the local church level. All power point presentations will have to be prepared by March 2010. The draft of each presentation will be reviewed and revised if need be to ensure that there will be quality materials ready to be given to God's people. This process is scheduled to take

place by May 2010. Once this exercise is completed, the power point presentations in turn will have to be translated into the various local languages in the WAD in order to reach a wider range of audience, for the WAD leadership knows that many of the members in Africa in general and in the WAD in particular can be reached best in their local languages. These translations of the power point presentations will have to be ready by September 2010 in order that everything will be very ready for the program to ideally take off without any logistical problem.

Spiritual Renewal Retreats: This output will be implemented in three sessions—a session with the WAD officers, another one with the six unions and the various institutions, and local conferences/missions within WAD, and lastly one session with the pastors and local churches.

There will be a need for a spiritual retreat with my fellow WAD officers during the first month of January 2009 in order to brief them and to make sure they are on board. Since I am dealing with dual allegiance which is a division-wide challenge, getting them on board is crucial, for their input will be of great help.

After I will have met with the WAD officers, it will still be very important to meet with the unions so as to sell the idea to them. Once the idea is bought by the union presidents, it will be passed to the local conferences and then to the local churches, and through this means the entire division will be covered by the program. This meeting with the union presidents will be scheduled during the WAD universities council at Babcock University during the month of February 2009. The plan is to encourage them to accept the concept and organize a week of prayer and fasting within their territory during the month of April 2009.

As far as the local conferences and the local churches are concerned, it is projected that they may organize their week of prayer and fasting during the month of May 2009, the reason being that the members cannot be revived before their leaders experience revival. Even if the members catch the vision it would be possible for the leaders to suppress it since they will be looking at things differently. And since the leaders are in charge, they will dictate to the members whatever they want. That is why wisdom requires that the week of prayer for the leaders be scheduled before that of the members.

Planning and Organizing a Division-Wide Ministerial/Leadership Conference:

After the materials have been prepared as mentioned above, there will need to be a planning and organizing of a division-wide retreat for administrators and pastors dealing with specific issues related to dual allegiance. The venue will be Babcock University because of its capacity for accommodating the delegates and its geographical location. A tentative date has been chosen—December 11-20, 2010. A minimum of 2,500 pastors, administrators, and their spouses will participate in that leadership conference. Every morning, there will be devotionals addressing the issue of dual allegiance (see appendix D). In connection with this, it is expected that participants will make suggestions for guidelines on how to deal with dual allegiance issues at the end of the conference.

Posters and a tentative schedule will need to be developed in order to adequately promote and advertize the program throughout the WAD. The various participants will be officially invited by Babcock University on behalf of the division.

An important aspect of the conference will have to do with the selection of coordinators who will be responsible for (1) group discussion since the entire gathering

will be organized into small groups of tens, fifties, and hundreds, (2) prayer sessions which will consist of three hundred groups of ten people in each prayer group, (3) personal journaling to teach all participants how to write and keep a personal journal, (4) platform coordination including being in charge of planning all activities related to the presentations, (5) a synthesis work committee to collect all the data for processing and making a report to the WAD, and (6) general supervision to make sure things run smoothly, in the right way, and at the right time.

The leaders of these various groups will be trained on how to carry out their duties successfully. This will probably take place during the month of November prior to the event that will begin in December 2010.

There will be a committee set up that will consider the suggestions made and to make recommendations to the WAD Executive Committee for action and implementation. This list of recommendations should be on the February 2011 committee agenda. The WAD committee in turn will issue guidelines to pastors and church members on the issue of dual allegiance after they will have been voted at the WAD mid-year meeting in May 2011. It is expected that 80 percent of the churches will have hosted at least one eight-day retreat on dual allegiance by December 2011. It is also expected that 60 percent of all church members will have attended at least one retreat in their district by December 2011. Moreover, it is expected that by March 2012, 50 percent of all families will be able to hold a community retreat on the issue of dual allegiance.

This is another area where the leaders will depend on reports from the district pastors who, through their local conferences/missions and the unions, will make reports available for crosschecking to communicate those things that are working according to

the plan provided in the Logframe and the Gantt Chart. The list of topics will also help verify the achievement of the activities. Apart from the means of verification listed above, there will also be the written presentations, the power points, and the guidelines that will give a pretty clear idea of what has happened in the various fields. Even the translated materials will be used for verification, as will the list of participants. The group recommendations, the committee list of study groups, even the division guidelines will all give some indication as to the success of the project and will help verify the implementation of the project.

In order for all these activities to take place successfully, it is assumed that there will be members who will volunteer to be used as personnel for this project. Since it has to do with their spiritual welfare, it is understood that there will not be any problem. Moreover, it is hoped that the necessary funds will be available at the right time to carry out every single activity so that the activities will be able to produce the expected outputs in order to reach our expected purpose and overall goal. We also hope and pray that, since this whole project is a spiritual one, that there will not be any sad circumstances such as incapacity or loss (sickness, death) that will jeopardize this project.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are other vital elements needed to ensure a successful project. Too often projects are conceptualized, plans are made, money and personnel is invested, but no time is allocated for monitoring and evaluation.

Importance

Whenever someone is engaged in a project, monitoring and evaluating are two

key aspects of the activities in that project. Monitoring is important to ensure that each step follows the execution of the project plan in order to avoid unnecessary mistakes, and if there are any, corrections can be made immediately because of the day to day monitoring. Without such monitoring, those mistakes can continue or will only be discovered when it is too late to change things.

The importance of an evaluation in a project is like the audit service in a business as well as in the church as done by the General Conference Auditing Service (GCAS). Every evaluation needs to answer the following questions: What happened with the project? Did everything work out according to plan? What were the challenges like? What can we learn from that experience in order to excel if it was good or to improve if there were some mistakes? All these questions should be raised during the evaluation, and answers or attempted answers should be provided.

Evaluation Criteria

Scope of Work

The *WordWeb* defines a scope as “an area in which something acts or operates or has power or control,” “the state of the environment in which a situation exists.” The scope of work in this instance will cover the various expected objectives to see if those have been reached. It will be important to find out whether the outputs have been achieved, and if the listed activities have been performed well and on time. In order to reach the evaluation goal, the measurable indicators will be the measuring tools with the means of verification as the cross-checking tools. When those are in place then the evaluation process can start.

Stakeholders

The stakeholders are the project management, the various entities in the church organizations, including the division, unions, and the local conferences/missions, as well as the institutions and the local churches where the retreats will take place. The method of a “Participatory Evaluation Process” (PEP) as presented by Robb²⁵ will be used in order to look at the issue from different angles and to achieve better results.

Evaluation Team and External Evaluator

Since all the above-mentioned entities were solicited for their support before launching the project, it would seem fair to ask at least one representative per entity—one from a union, one from a conference, and one from an institution—to join the evaluation team so everyone is informed as to how successful the project was. An external evaluator might be needed, particularly someone from the General Conference Biblical Research Institute (BRI) and possibly someone from the Department of the World Mission at Andrews University since the issue of dual allegiance is such a serious spiritual problem that has had such a worldwide impact on God’s people. As far as I am concerned, I view myself as a resource person for guidance, direction, and explanation and to provide information to the team whenever necessary.

Monitoring and Reporting Progress

Systematic, adequate monitoring regarding this project on dual allegiance in WAD needs to be done in order to make sure that all necessary components of the project will progress as scheduled for a successful completion of the project before the final

²⁵Ibid., 65.

evaluation. Many times projects have suffered, stopped, or gone bankrupt for lack of proper monitoring. When project management finally discovers the problem, it is often too late to solve it or correct the mistake that was already out of control. Therefore, systematic monitoring needs to be in place in order to avoid any unnecessary disappointments and embarrassments.

While monitoring the project, another vital component for the success of the project is regular evaluations that need to take place before the final one. It is not an exaggeration to say that for a project to succeed one should monitor it while evaluating and evaluate it while monitoring it. One is not to be done without the other. As the project management monitors the progress of the work so as to know whether things are moving well in the field, the evaluation aspect of project management which can also be called “local evaluation” or “internal evaluation” will need to be done regularly so that project management may know how well things are progressing. Regarding this project on dual allegiance, the project management must make sure that by November 2009 at the WAD Year-end Council the progress of the 2009 project will be on schedule according to the Logframe and the Gantt Chart so as to be ready for the 2010 retreat.

Linkage to the Logframe Matrix

All evaluation will be performed based on the data provided in the Logframe Matrix and the Gantt Chart that will also serve as the budget for this project on dual allegiance. There cannot or should not be any serious evaluation or monitoring of this project without referring to the Logframe and the Gantt Chart since these are the tools that are essential for the running and the success of the project.

Summary

This chapter dealt with a strategy to deal with the issue of dual allegiance. That strategy was expressed using a Logframe and a Gantt Chart in order to efficiently list the processes required by the project. Charles R. Taber points out that “there is no virtue in working haphazardly or ineffectually.”²⁶ After listing a general methodology using a Logframe and Gantt Chart, a strategy to deal with the issue of dual allegiance in the West-Central Africa Division was given, followed by the various activities needed to address the issue of dual allegiance. This chapter ended with a description of how monitoring and the final evaluation of the project would be carried out.

The next chapter will describe the results of the project to date, list the lessons learned, and make recommendations for future similar programs with the hope that this project will help God’s people to be better equipped and ready to face the issue of dual allegiance.

²⁶Charles R. Taber, *To Understand the World to Save the World* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 2000), 44.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

The analysis of the cultures and the religions of the West-Central Africa Division in chapter three was interesting and important because of what it revealed. First of all, the geography of the region supports different types of climate. Second, there is also vast demographic diversity. Third, poverty exists that is aggravated by a culture of begging, in spite of all the potential for economic growth (good weather, the physical strength of the people, natural resources, and land) that is in place. Fourth, there is the influence of “the Western ‘dichotomy between the physical and the spiritual or emotional needs’ of the people.”¹ The interplay of these factors plus others has led to pervasive dual allegiance. In times of crisis, many professing Christians seek solutions from the gods and other powers that the Bible forbids. Many Christians participate in annual festivals connected to these gods or their traditions. Some even justify their activities by saying that all means are good provided they work. They add that it is like going to the hospital. The most important thing is to get well. The rest will be sorted out later.

Jack Partain suggests that “when face to face with death or famine or infertility,

¹Willem Berends, “African Traditional Healing Practices and the Christian Community,” *Missiology: An International Review* 21, no. 3 (1993): 275-288.

many African Christians resort to traditional rites and beliefs.”²

Considering these undeniable realities in the West-Central Africa Division and knowing that it is clearly stated in the Scriptures in many places that the Lord hates the practice of faltering between two opinions (1 Kgs 18:21), or as the Lord Jesus put it, serving two masters (Matt 6:24), and which Hiebert calls “split level Christianity,”³ what can be done to address and tackle this phenomenon so that God’s people in the WAD may be committed to YHWH alone? In answer to this question, a strategy was developed and implemented.

The report on the implementation of the strategy will be presented in this chapter along with the lessons learned, followed by several recommendations.

Report on the Project Implementation

Having collected testimonies from the various unions concerning dual allegiance as shown in appendix C, I next started to develop a strategy to eliminate it. The problem is spiritual so it needs a spiritual solution. Prayer as a solution to many church problems is advocated by Leonard Ravenhill when he says,

Poverty stricken as the church is today in many things, she is most stricken here, in the place of prayer. We have many organizers, but few agonizers, many players and payers, few pray-ers, many singers few clingers, lots of Pastors, few wrestlers, many fears, few tears, much fashion, little passion, many interferers, few intercessors, many writers, but few fighters. Failing here, we fail everywhere.⁴

²Partain, “Christians and Their Ancestors,” [http://www .religion-online.org/showarticle .asp?title=1078](http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=1078) (accessed June 2007).

³Paul Hiebert, Daniel R. Shaw, and Tite Tienou, *Understanding Folk Religion* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2001), 15.

⁴Leonard Ravenhill, *Why Revival Tarries* (Benin City, Nigeria: RHema Publication Ministry, 1972), 19.

When Christians are truly revived spiritually, they become committed to God and dual allegiance is eliminated. Therefore, a three-phase prayer program for spiritual revival was planned and carried out throughout the division. The prayer program was designed to fulfill the four conditions of 2 Chr 7:14 which says, "If My people who are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." Dual allegiance is a spiritual disease which God alone can heal. In praying, members were asked to humble themselves by confessing their sins, asking God to revive them spiritually, seeking God's face by acknowledging that the Holy Spirit alone has the power to renew their hearts, and forsaking their sins. In addition all participants were asked to meditate on this statement by Ellen White.

The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ's parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfillment of the promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit. Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude. Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it? The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children. For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God. Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely. Especially should they pray that God will baptize His chosen ambassadors in mission fields with a rich measure of His Spirit. The presence of the Spirit with God's workers will give the proclamation of truth a power that not all the honor or glory of the world could give.⁵

⁵White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 50.

In each of the three phases of the prayer plan, all concerned were asked to fast for the seven days that the prayer emphasis lasted. The phases were as follows:

Phase 1: All officers and departmental directors at the WAD headquarters and all officers and departmental directors of the six unions in the division fasted and prayed from February 21 to 28, 2009.

Phase 2: All officers and departmental directors of all missions and conferences, and all pastors in the division fasted and prayed for a week chosen by each union.

Phase 3: The final phase involved all members in the Division—from the division president to the local Sabbath School member in the local churches—all fasted and prayed from May 2 to 9, 2009.

Telephone reports from union presidents showed that all three phases were well received in most of the fields. The success of a division-wide satellite evangelism program that took place while this prayer plan was in progress was attributed by many to the prayer program.

The part of the strategy that is yet to be implemented is a ministerial council for all pastors in the division when the issue of how to eliminate dual allegiance from the church will be one of the topics discussed and prayed about. The tentative date for this has been set for December 2010 when all WAD pastors, administrators, and their spouses will meet for nine days for that special conference.

Lessons Learned

1. *Intellectual Humility and Honesty*: One of the great lessons learned on a personal level as a researcher as I started writing this dissertation was the need for an additional dimension of humility and intellectual probity. One never knows it all, and one

never knows enough. Life in general and intellectual life in particular is a life of perpetual learning. One must continually improve in skills, knowledge, and know-how.

2. *Patience, Endurance, and Perseverance*: Another very important lesson has to do with endurance and perseverance. I am a type of person who does not like repeating myself. I spend a lot of time planning things in my head. And when I present an idea I expect action. However, with this dissertation, I have learned to go over a section again and again to polish the language and improve the quality. This calls for endurance and perseverance. Moreover, changing the worldview of a preacher into a worldview of a scholar has not been an easy task at all. I have come out of this experience intellectually more mature.

3. *Dual Allegiance, not Multiple Allegiances*: In the context of the Great Controversy with its opposition between Christ and Satan, allegiance is to be rendered to either one of these two generals in this warfare between good and evil.

Terrible is the struggle that takes place between the forces of good and of evil in important centers where the messengers of truth are called upon to labor. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood," declares Paul, "but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world." Ephesians 6:12. Till the close of time there will be a conflict between the church of God and those who are under the control of evil angels.⁶

Satan is clever, and a liar, and a deceiver (John 8:44). He has been tailoring his mediums in the form of selfishness, materialism, ancestor worship, spirit worship, and so on and so forth, within every culture around the globe.

⁶White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 219.

4. *Strategizing in Paradox:*⁷ Planning should be done as perfectly as possible, yet room should always be left for God's sovereignty. God's people should learn to work, and even live in paradox while waiting for Jesus' return.

We are to wait for the coming of the Lord, and work diligently to prepare the way for him. Waiting alone is not all that is required; we are to wait and watch and pray and work. This combination of waiting, watching, praying, and working constitutes us true Christians. To those who stand in idle expectancy, Christ says, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" "Work while it is called today." "The night cometh, when no man can work."⁸

5. *Addressing Issues:* One of the great discoveries that somewhat surprised and even shocked me was that people liked talking about dual allegiance in private and in secret. However, the moment I asked that we put it on the table for discussion publicly to seek a biblical solution, no one was ready to join publically in the presentations. No one wanted to be, as someone said, "exposed." It seems to me that one of the great problems the church of God faces today is the tendency to avoid facing difficult issues that are weakening the church.

6. *One-sided Gospel:* This section could have been easily been entitled, thinking outside the box. So far the church seems have been thinking mainly inside the box. While that is good, it is not enough. And one of the significant lessons I have learned in studying dual allegiance is that many members' traditional worldview has not been transformed. The deep self has not been surrendered to the Lord God Almighty. Perhaps Christian leaders will have to repackage the whole message to speak powerfully to both those inside and outside the church. God's Word must impact the whole human person

⁷Dayton and Fraser, 10.

⁸Ellen G. White, "Love Not the World," *Review and Herald*, February 2, 1897.

not only the intellect, because as Cyril C. Okorochoa states,

Religious conversion in Africa is best understood in terms of an encounter between two systems of salvation, resulting in a movement on the part of the people in the direction of power or *mana*. . . . Therefore, a new religious system that does not penetrate into all aspects of life or proves itself disinterested in certain aspects of the people's life is soon discarded as irrelevant and unhelpful [useless]. . . . Facts of life are thus always viewed holistically and interpreted religiously. . . . Hardly anyone believes that anybody can make progress in life without some sort of *ogwu* [power] In short, power and justice, holiness or moral rectitude, go together as far as the Igbo [in Nigeria] and other African peoples are concerned.⁹

This is probably why even those who join the church do not stay. They end up leaving, looking for something more meaningful, something more satisfying that could address the needs of the entire human being. An example of this sad situation has to do with those who worship in the Seventh-day Adventist Church on Sabbath, but who go to the Pentecostal churches on Sundays. When asked why they were doing such a thing, they responded that they were worshipping on Sabbath for the sake of truth. On Sundays, they were going to the Pentecostals for the sake of fellowship and power. What a challenge!

7. *Fear of Evil Forces*: Another lesson, no less significant, is that in rural areas, dual allegiance is seen mostly in the form of worship of both God and evil forces (ancestors, spirits, finding protection against sorcerers, wizards, etc.). In towns and cities, there is an added materialistic dimension (making money a god). In urban areas many do not remain loyal to God when trials come. For instance, many go to work or school on Sabbath regardless of the command to keep the Sabbath holy. The Western humanistic worldview that focuses only on the natural world that is quantifiable, measurable, and

⁹Cyril C. Okorochoa, "Religious Conversion in Africa: Its Missiological Implications," *Mission Studies* 9, no. 2 (1992): 168-181, cited in *Theology in the Context of Africa*, 91-94.

verifiable, in short, accessible by the human senses, is influencing many city dwellers.

8. *Strong Social-ATR Ties*: The strong African social ties are sources of inspiration to many people. In this context, one is never alone in facing life and its challenges. However, the fact that these ties are so strong to the point that “the interests of the community [are] always put above those of the individual,”¹⁰ and that “even if they [Africans] are converted to another religion like Christianity or Islam, they do not completely abandon their traditional religion immediately; it remains with them for several generations and sometimes centuries.”¹¹ This fact is a great source of concern as far as dual allegiance is concerned.

9. *Biblical and Theological Functional Substitutes*: The idea of “functional substitutes”¹² (either literal or symbolic) seem helpful in order to address the issue of dual allegiance. For, as Tippet says, “if [true] conversion (like any other major social change) is to be accepted by a communal group [for instance the West-Central African believers], some adequate substitute or substitutes are essential, otherwise a cultural *void* of some kind will most certainly emerge due to the felt but unmet needs.”¹³ However, the substitution should always be biblically and theologically sound and friendly. Otherwise, all kinds of misinterpretation and misrepresentation will take place. That is maybe what is

¹⁰Thomson, 38.

¹¹Mbiti, 15.

¹²Alan R. Tippet, *Introduction to Missiology* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1987), 185.

¹³Ibid.

happening now with regard to dual allegiance which Tippet calls “nativism”¹⁴ which in reality is syncretism.

In order for people to be fully convinced and accept the gospel as a single allegiance there needs to be a substitute that is better, greater, and more powerful than what Africans can get in their ATR or in their social settings. And that is one of the greatest challenges of Christianity today. Christians (and Adventists in particular, the people of the Book) must give the world the *Christianity of Christ Jesus*, a holistic Christianity that has power as well as truth.

10. *Ministry of Love and Compassion*: Applying Christ’s method in ministry as developed in chapter 2, and using the counsel from E. G. White whereby, “We must educate, educate, educate, pleasantly and intelligently,”¹⁵ after the divine model left by Christ. “In every human being, however fallen, He beheld a son [daughter] of God, one who might be restored to the privilege of his [her] divine relationship.”¹⁶

Future Impact

The future impact of this work cannot be underestimated. It covers at least two basic areas: as members see that the power of God is far greater than the power of the lesser gods, they will be more committed to the living God. They will thus be set free

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ellen G. White, *A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1933), 30.

¹⁶White, *Education*, 79.

from the bondage of Satan. Prayer programs and Bible conferences organized for this purpose will hopefully achieve this aim.

The world is fast becoming a global village because of the media (Internet and satellite television). Because of this, the humanistic worldview of the Western world is gradually gaining ground in Africa and humanism is another kind of dual allegiance leading to secularism. The church needs to prepare for this challenge and put in place a serious program of Bible study and prayer for members in order to contain the monster. The WAD is planning, in continuation of this project, the first ever division-wide leadership council for December 2010, where all pastors and their spouses, administrators and their spouses, heads of institutions and their spouses, some retirees and their spouses, will be meeting at Babcock University under the theme, "Sharing the Vision, the Mission, and the Passion," where the issue of dual allegiance will be central in the presentations so as to set people free and empower them for aggressive action in nurturing, witnessing, and evangelism for the finishing of the task entrusted by the Master of the Vineyard to the church. About 2,500 to 3,000 ministers and leaders and their spouses are expected to attend the council and it is hoped that the meeting will mark the beginning of a true revival in the West-Central Africa Division. However, the power to achieve anything comes from the Lord. The planning is ours, but the power to make it happen is His.

Recommendations

Some recommendations with regard to this issue of dual allegiance are as follows:

1. *Tertiary Education Curriculum.* The WAD, through its Universities Council, should revisit the curricula of the universities in its territory (Adventist University Cosendai, Bacock Univeristy, and Valley View University) so as to include courses on

dual allegiance and how to prevent and eliminate it. At the moment it is assumed that it is not an issue but that is a deception. Our pastors, as they come from the seminaries, should be well equipped to deal with it.

2. *Ministerial/Leadership Conference.* The upcoming division ministerial and leadership conference where dual allegiance will be discussed should be given top priority in the WAD's strategic planning session slated for November 2009.

3. *WAD Small Group Initiative.* All local churches in the division should make sure that every inreach and outreach program is done through the small group initiative. This initiative must be culturally sensitive, friendly, and relevant, so that all candidates for baptism can be assisted in developing a living relationship with Christ. All Bible teaching going forward should include clear teaching about dual allegiance and freedom in Jesus.

4. *Educate, Educate, Educate:* Using this phrase from E. G. White, "We must educate, educate, educate, pleasantly and intelligently. Never grow weary; never lose heart.

Conclusion

The issue of dual allegiance appears to be a very old one. Right from the time of the patriarchs and kings of Israel, faltering between two opinions has always been a problem for God's people. It is a problem in the West-Central Africa Division today. Since it is a spiritual problem it can only be solved spiritually. Hence the need to tackle it prayerfully. Even though a survey was not conducted to know how many people have renounced dual allegiance after the prayer part of this strategy, the very fact that we have begun to address the issue is the greatest achievement of this project. Serious efforts

should continue to be planned to diligently and wisely through the power of the Holy Spirit and prayer dialogue in order to address and prevent and eliminate dual allegiance from our ranks. The future of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the West-Central Africa Division will be at stake if this is not done. Since the African continent is one where the Adventist Church is growing the fastest, and since many of those Adventists migrate to Europe and North America for greener pasture, if the issue of dual allegiance is not well taken care of now, sooner or later, the Adventist Church will have to face that problem on a greater scale worldwide. Therefore, dual allegiance is really a challenge for the world Church, and not just a challenge peculiar to Africa.

APPENDIX A

WAD MEMBERSHIP RETENTION SURVEY

(updated) 2007

A – WAD SURVEY PROCEDURES

The survey was carried out throughout the West-Central Africa Division (WAD), comprising of six (6) Unions and three (3) Institutions as well as the WAD office. The survey was carried out with a sample of 750, representing 1/1, 000 members, the WAD membership being about 750, 000 at that time. In other words, for every 1, 000 members, one was chosen for this survey.

The survey was age groups and gender sensitive.

The survey also considered the laity-clergy representation.

B – WAD RESULTS

01 – a) Name of your Division/Institution:.....**WAD**..... b)Your position: **WAD Secretary**

02 - What is the percentage of active members in your church/field?**46 %**

03 – What is the percentage of membership growth in your church/field?**04 %**

04 – What factors contribute to the loss of membership in your church/field?*

- | | |
|---|--|
| a) Pastor to member ratio | b) Lack of decent place of worship |
| c) Lack of Pastoral visitation | d) Inadequate fellowship or little |
| e) Flimsy Evangelistic campaigns | f) Unfriendly attitude of members to converts |
| g) High degree of expectations | h) Lack of involvement in sharing the faith |
| i) No personal Bible study | j) Migration without membership transfer |

05 – What factors contribute to membership retention in your church/field?***

- | | |
|--|--|
| a) Reduction of Pastor-member ratio | b) Decent place of worship |
| c) Regular visitation of members | d) Strong fellowship system |
| e) Small group activities | f) Friendly attitude of members to converts |
| g) Personal Bible study emphasis | h) Greater involvement in sharing the faith |
| i) Evangelism as reaping campaign | j) Involvement in community services |

*Suggested list: - Pastor to member ratio (too many churches per Pastor)

- **See list
- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| - Place of worship | - Involvement in community services |
| - Regular Bible study | - Involvement in sharing one's faith |
| - Other religious groups | - Number of SDA friends in the Church |
| - Public evangelism | - Small groups |
| - Personal Bible study | - High degree of expectations |
| - Any others | |

06 – What is the age group where there is much loss of membership in your field?**15 - 35**

07 – What is the age group where there is much retention of membership?**40 and above**

08 – Which newly baptized members, among the following remain in the SDA Church?(Please, rank them as much as possible – eg: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, ...).

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| a) Catholics..... 1st | b) Baptists..... 6th | g) Anglicans..... 5th |
| c) Methodists..... 4th | d) Presbyterians... 8th | h) Pentecostals..... |
| e) Assembly of God... 9th | f) Lutherans..... 7th | i) Muslim..... 3rd |
| j) Traditional Religions.. 2nd | k) Without religion..... | l) Any other..... |

09 – Which newly baptized, among the following leave the SDA Church most?(Please, rank them as much as possible – e.g., 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, ...).

- | | | |
|-------------------|--|-------------------|
| a) Catholics..... | b) Baptists..... 4th | g) Anglicans..... |
|-------------------|--|-------------------|

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| c) Methodists.....6 th | d) Presbyterians. 2 nd | h) Pentecostals.....1 st |
| e) Assembly of God....5 th | f) Lutherans.....3 rd | i) Muslim..... |
| j) Traditional religions..... | k) Without religion..... | l) Any other..... |
- 10 – Newly baptized members with non-religious background remain in the church /x/T /_/F
 11 – Many newly baptized members remain because of their SDA family connection /x/T /_/F
 12 – Many newly baptized members remain because of years of education in SDA schools /x/T /_/F

NB: Protestants behave more or less the same way. That is why the ranking of one can apply to all of them.

C – INTERPRETATIVE ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

⇒ **The Pastor/churches ratio problem**

There appears a clear call for more Pastors in the fields in order to reduce the ratio of Pastor-Church. Though the training of Pastors is difficult, local Fields should train local Church Elders to back the Pastors up, so that God’s people be well attended to. The flock can never be well taken care of with only one Pastor in charge of so many congregations.

NB: In WAD, the ratio is 1 Pastor per 8 Churches/Companies.

⇒ **More interesting and relevant programs and fellowship in local churches**

Call for more interesting and relevant programs and fellowship in our local Churches, so that the needs of members may be met and that they may feel belonging. This calls for finding a balanced way of running Church business, that is: avoiding the cold traditional(as institutional and churches do) as well as the hyper hot Pentecostal like way. **Are we currently scratching where it does not itch (or where it itches little)?**

⇒ **Problem of Bible Study not top ranking**

The fact that the Bible study, be it personal or collective (corporate) is not listed among the first items on our lists (see questions 4 and 5) as expected is revealing. There seems to be a strong call/challenge reexamining our spiritual lives/priorities, for there seems to be a sort of drifting from the spirit of the Pioneers (the people of the Book). The SDA Church is called upon to leave her lukewarmness and come back her first love (cf Rev. 3:15; 2:4), to truly enrich herself with both the treasure of the Book(the Bible) as well as being interested in the community work and welfare of the neighborhood, as Jesus Himself was doing while He was here on earth as He “went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil...” (Ac. 10: 38).

⇒ **Problem of former Pentecostals and Protestants leaving our churches**

Pentecostals and Protestants have strong fellowship among their congregations. That is probably one of the reasons why they do not stay after they join the SDA Church. This calls for a serious study of those churches, and we can see how we can meet their expectations without syncretizing. Strong fellowship being biblical, if added to the strong doctrines (Truth) we already have, does not harm the Church, rather, it enriches her.

⇒ **Low percentage of active members in the business of the church**

The 46 % of active members shows that the local fields should put a system of motivation, emulation in place, so that we may raise the percentage to at least 60 % (75 % is our target), the ideal being, of course, 100 %. If we do so, even stewardship will be taken care of.

⇒ **Efficiency of small group system in evangelism**

The small group system pointed out in the survey is vital in increasing Evangelistic outreach as well as membership growth and the percentage of active members.

⇒ **The blessing of the SDA system of Education as a key element in Evangelism**

The SDA system of education has always been one of the best way of reaching out to those who do not know the Biblical Truth and of retaining the membership. Here is a call for strengthening the existing system of Education that is secularizing more and more, and this is also a call for increasing this way of evangelizing the world and nurturing the members.

⇒ **Tendency towards congregationalism**

Some SDA members do not want to be transferred when they move to another area. On the other hand, there are some local leaders who do not want their former members to be transferred to another church whenever they leave that congregation. This congregationalist like attitude brings about many problems regarding the management of our membership, and, of course, distorts our statistics because of the migration factor or any other factor.

⇒ **Quality Evangelism, quality baptism, quality retention for quality growth**

- No baptism for figures sake should be carried out or even encouraged;
- No baptism for celebrity;
- Baptism should be performed for the retention of the newly baptized.

But, how to address the issue of setting baptismal goals to Pastors for their performance/salary advancement?

Gilbert Wari,
WAD Executive Secretary

APPENDIX B

WEST-CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION SECRETARY'S STATISTICAL REPORT

Cumulative Summary, 2008

1 Div/Attached Union	2a Churches	2b Companies	3a Membership at Beginning of Year	3b Members Added During Year				5b Members Subtracted During Year					6 Member ship at End of Year
				3b Baptisms	4a Profes- sions of Faith	4b Letters Received	4c Adjust- ments	5a Letters Granted	Deaths	Dropped	5c Missin g	5d Adjust- ments	
CAUM													
Totals Annual	987	626	123,456	6,059	156	181	72	493	649	331	350	1,079	127,022
ENUM													
Totals, Annual	465	539	151,664	7,327	260	395	25	973	772	731	1,310	0	155,885
GUC													
Totals, Annual	1,089	1,576	335,445	16,922	973	1,283	8	3,956	1,127	915	1,800	151	346,682
NWNU													
Totals, Annual	354	635	106,279	4,126	71	183	903	343	107	127	8	157	110,820
SUM													
Totals, Annual	166	404	40,209	1,793	3	112	38	92	48	182	128	111	41,594
WAUM													
Totals, Annual	101	109	41,441	1,717	1	0	64	0	56	0	0	1	43,166
WAD													
Totals, Annual	3,162	3,889	798,494	37,944	1,464	2,154	1,110	5,857	2,759	2,286	3,596	1,499	825,169

APPENDIX C

TESTIMONIES

(1)

A TESTIMONY FROM CENTRAL AFRICA UNION MISSION

“PASTOR, I CAME TO DESTROY”

The guy was at his young manhood, when he felt the necessity to take a big resolution in his life. He was always very jovial, and known as a good guy. Never was he distasteful in the church or arrogant. Yet, underneath these enjoyable characteristics, was a man of great danger wherever he could be. At first, he couldn't confess to the pastor, but to a friend. Then the friend advised him to see the pastor for help. He confessed strange things.

He told me that he was a sorcerer, and had so far belonged to a group of sorcerers whose aim was to eat human beings mystically. He said that all the members of his group had died, except him alone. When asked why he survived, he said that it was because he could pray. Meanwhile, his role in the church was a different one. He said: “Pastor, I came to destroy”. His aim in the church so far, was not to seek for any form of salvation, but rather to prevent the church from growing. How could he achieve his task? The guy said he had powerful seducing spirits given him by his grand- father while he was still an infant. He could have sexual intercourse in the church with women in the church during church service, and still remained unnoticed, and this he did several times. He made no effort to seduce women, but so many girls naturally wanted or almost dreamed to be his girl-friends. You could see him seating somewhere, and you could not know what he was doing with a woman seating a bit far from him. I told him that his problem would be solved by fasting and prayer. During a week of prayer, an appeal was launched to those who knew they had mystical problems and needed help.

The guy responded to the appeal. The elders and I agreed that he would be the last person to pray for. The prayers for other people did not take time and provoked no incident. Yet that of the sorcerer took us more than three consecutive hours of prayer. As he entered the sacristy, he nearly fell down at the entrance. Then he was told to kneel down while the elders and I stood. At the beginning of prayer for deliverance, he immediately collapsed, and was almost unconscious. We prayed, and sang songs like “Quel ami fidèle et tendre,” the French version of “What a Friend We Have in Jesus.” His boyish attitude changed to something different. A voice could be heard saying: “I am the dragon, I am the Devil, I won't come out.” After the long scenario, the guy shouted three times very loudly, and got delivered. A change occurred in him that was observed by many.

He now spends much time telling about his testimony, giving Bible studies, etc. He personally pledged to me that he could never again go back to that world of no forgiveness. He confessed that there were other young people in church with whom they had certain things in common, and even mentioned their names. Time would not permit to give more details about this.

(2)

A TESTIMONY FROM SAHEL UNION MISSION

Description of how the person became an Adventist: She became Adventist after trials. She was looking for a power to protect her children. One day she had a hot discussion with one of her relative that was an Adventist. The night of their discussion, she could not sleep well. She was thinking the way her cousin testified how powerful Jesus is. The following morning, she went to her cousin's house to know more about Jesus. After this meeting, she was invited to our prayer meeting. Little by little she became regular Sabbath School member. And she attended all our programs. But she was not yet baptized.

Religious background: She was born in voodoo. Her father was voodoo thunder's priest. She was supposed to receive that power after her father's death. But as she was looking for more power, she passed through Apostolic Church, and then Celestial Church before she started attending our programs. When her father died, she refused to receive the power. But she was initiated since her childhood. She knew it and she used to practice many voodoo rites. Despite she was among us, she did not stop doing so. As she refused to take her father's title, her junior brother was chosen and he challenged to do evil to her. And one day, about 10 pm, while she, her husband and their five children were sleeping, thunder destroyed their room. The wall and the roof collapsed upon them. They should all have died, but God performed a miracle; they were only wounded. After that, the whole family was baptized.

Current position in the SDA Church: Today she is a faithful deaconess.

Witnessed people involved in dual allegiance: As it was said above, she did not stop her old voodoo practices. For example putting powder into perfume in order to be lucky, putting power underground at her selling place, she had power stick under her bed; in difficulties, she can easily remember and pronounce magic words; she continued avoiding some meal because of voodoo covenant in the pass.

While doing so, her business collapsed, her children were always sick, in school they were not performing at all. Seeing the way she was performing in church programs, she could not understand what is happening in her life. I was so discouraged to go back totally to voodoo but I was afraid. Even she received much money she did not know all disappeared. She lost totally the peace of mind. Her situation became worse.

Then, one day after fasting and prayer, she decided to throw all she had from voodoo as power and she asked church elders to pray for her. While Elders were praying great hit was coming out of her. From that day she could never remember the magic words any longer. She and the Elders burnt magic stick and powders. Today her children are doing well at school, her business is growing.

1. *What lesson to pass to other people?* Never try to combine God with voodoo.

2. *Could you explain further in how dangerous it is?* For me, through trials God helped me to come back to Him. But it is not always like that. You may prosper and healthy. And you may think that God has accepted you as you are; surely god will never work that way. Through prosperity Satan will make you blind and dearth spiritually in such way that you will die in that sin. And some of the people that know your real life will follow your bad example. That is the Satan deceives many believers today.

3. *What advise would you give to anyone who would like to try getting involved in dual allegiance in other to receive power or wealth or bearing children?* I have said it already, but as you ask the same question another way, I will try to answer by saying never try such a thing. You know where you start be you will never know when and how this adventure will finish. To those who are in that situation let me tell them that is the time to repent and confess, if not , it may be too late for you.

(3)

TESTIMONY FROM A WAD SON IN DIASPORA

“Open Your Eyes”

I was invited by a fellow minister at Atlanta, Georgia for a week of prayer. I pleaded in the message of Wednesday night with the people of God to beware of demon activities in these last days. A lady came to me after service praising God for sending me. She confessed that she has been tormented by the evil ones for the last past ten years. She was very active in the church, but she knew in her inner self that something was wrong with her. There again, the Lord delivered her from that bondage through prayer. The sister is a happy Christian today serving faithfully the Lord.

What surprised me in that church was the pastor himself. As we were driving home, he asked me if there was a possibility for demons to enter the life of an ordained minister. I told him that demons have no respect of a person if we are not rooted in Jesus Christ. That night, before getting to bed, the pastor requested a special prayer but he did not tell me anything about him being involved with demons. The next morning, as I was about to leave the house for jogging, he followed me and told me his story:

When he was ten years, he said, in his night sleep, a woman came to him in a kind of dream with her baby girl. She asked him if he could have sex with her. He responded that he was only a child and knew nothing about that. The woman then said, “well, if you have nothing to do with me because I seem to be old, you can manage with my daughter.” In the dream, he felt being on a white blanket with the baby daughter of the woman.

A week later, he dreamt that a huge snake was crawling on him. He woke up suddenly shouting and frightened. From that day, he concluded, he had been having sex in his dream with someone he could not figure out every single night. The night I prayed for him, a lady called him on the phone in his dream and told him that he was lucky to have a prayerful wife. At the end of the week of prayer, the pastor had a serious accident. His car was completely totaled, but he, his wife, and his son were all safe. Jesus Christ delivered that minister and he is serving the Lord with joy.

My experience indicates that Satan oppresses emotionally and spiritually more often than he oppresses physically. Fear, guilt, hatred, anger, jealousy, and depression are common forms of emotional enslavement. Spiritual oppression may range from lethargy and indifference to outright hatred of God and anything associated with Him, including the Bible, prayer, and sacred music. Satan has a special hatred for hymns that speaks of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

The wide sphere in which Satan harasses and oppresses his victims is sexual. This of course, ranges all the way from sexual fantasy to homosexuality (Rom. 1:21 – 28). The truth is that without God's protection, Satan will harass, manipulate, and oppress us in every area of human activity.

For the most part those who have come for help and to whom I have ministered have been professing Christians. They are spiritual brothers and sisters who sit next to us during worship service, but unfortunately, have been caught in Satan's net. Some are leaders and officers in their local churches. Others are musicians whose talents are enjoyed. They come from all walks of life: housewives, day-laborers, professional people such as nurses, dentists, doctors and in a few cases these people who have become victims of Satan's devices have been ministers who are preaching the Word each week.

This fact should make us aware that everyone of us is at war with a common enemy. The great truth is that Jesus Christ is still victorious. He is the Commander in Chief of the armies of heaven. Through Him, we can be freed even at this end of time.

Dr. Elie Weick
Senior Pastor
Southern New England Conference
Boston, Massachusetts

APPENDIX D

DEVOTIONALS

SERMON #1

WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE?

TEXT: James 1:2-4: “My brothers, count *it* all joy when you fall into different kinds of temptations, knowing that the trying of your faith works patience. But let patience have its perfect work, so that you may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing.”

Introduction:

Tragedy can strike so quickly and capriciously. While going about our everyday lives, in a moment, in the blink of an eye, the world can be changed. The event of September 11, 2001, has changed the world from what we used to know. Terrorism has become the bane of the society. Kidnapping is the other of the day. No one is safe anywhere anymore. Thousands killed for no reason by complete strangers, who assumed, somehow in their mind, they were doing some good for this world. The tsunami in Asia in 2006 was an awful end-year gift from the devil, killing a quarter of a million killed by a freak wave from an ocean floor earthquake. About a hundred thousand lives were lost in the earthquakes that hit Haiti in January 2010, devastating lives and properties. In our private lives we have all experienced tragedy. All of us can be divided into three categories: those just coming out of a storm, those in a storm currently, and those headed for a storm.

When disaster strikes, when a child is born handicapped, or a traffic accident leaves a person paralyzed we ask “WHY?” If God is so loving, all-powerful, all-knowing, kind, just, fair, and still in control of this universe, why is suffering so much here? Why does God seem so indifferent to the suffering of poor masses, innocent and

defenseless children, and His own righteous followers, while their godless oppressors continue to triumph? There are no simple answers or satisfactory solutions to these age-long questions that have perplexed many a soul. Scriptures considers human suffering as retributive, disciplinary, educational, probationary, evidential, revelational, redemptive, perfecting, and eschatological.

- I. **Retributive:** as a result of sin, guilt, iniquity, human errors in judgment. The Genesis account of the Fall (Gen 3:14-19); Egyptians plagues (Exod 7-12); Mariam's leprosy (Num 12:1-10); and Israel's punishments through famine, slavery, diseases, pestilence, etc (Lev 26:14-17; Deut 28:13-68; Amos 2:4-16). (See also Luke 13:1-5). Africans traditionally teach that suffering is a retributive reward for bad actions, using stories, proverbs and others means.
- II. **Divine Discipline:** this is closely related to the retributive use of suffering. Suffering is disciplinary, educational, and instructional. People learn through suffering, verbal instruction, and observing a given situation. Jeremiah has a lot to say about God's use of punishment to teach a lesson (Jer 2:19, 30; 5:3; 30:14). God uses problems to CORRECT you. Some lessons we learn only through pain and failure. It's likely that as a child your parents told you not to touch a hot stove. But you probably learned by being burned. Sometimes we only learn the value of something—health, money, a relationship—by losing it.
- III. **Probationary and Evidential:** People's faith and integrity are put to rigid test to determine the real character of their faith while they wait for the disposition of wickedness from this evil world and the ultimate reign of righteousness. God uses problems to INSPECT you. Job's faith and integrity was under siege during his

testing. God wants to boast about you (Job 1:8)! People are like tea bags—if you want to know what’s inside them, just drop them into hot water! Has God tested your faith with a problem? What do your problems reveal about you? (See Hab 1:13; 2:4; Ps 37; 73; Mal 2:17; 3:14-18; Matt 10:23-26; John 15:18-21).

IV. **Revelational:** People often reach their spiritual height until they have gone through the crucible of suffering. It brings them closer to God and they see light in suffering! In Job 42:5-6: “I have heard thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.” God uses problems to DIRECT you. Sometimes God must light a fire under you to get you moving. Problems often point us in a new direction and motivate us to change. Is God trying to get your attention?

V. **Redemptive Suffering:** This refers to suffering taken on behalf of others and leading to victory at the end of it. This idea is perfected in the suffering Messianic Servant of Isa 52-53. (See 1 Pet 3:18). God uses problems to PROTECT you. A problem can be a blessing in disguise if it prevents you from being harmed by something more serious. Last year a friend was fired for refusing to do something unethical that his boss had asked him to do. His unemployment was a problem - but it saved him from being convicted and sent to prison a year later when management's actions were eventually discovered. Even when afflictions come, God is able to make good things come as a result of the bad things happening—Rom 8:28 (what kind of things? See Rom 8:25).

VI. **Perfecting Problem:** It is said of Jesus Christ: “Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected,

He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him” (Heb 5:8-9).

Jesus was “made perfect through suffering” (Heb 2:10). See also Rom 5:3-5. God uses problems to PERFECT you. Problems, when responded to correctly, are character builders. God is far more interested in your character than your comfort. Your relationship to God and your character are the only two things you’re going to take with you into eternity. Trials build character (Jas 1:2-4). Just like muscles require resistance to become stronger, we must endure difficulties to spiritually become better people. God allows some afflictions to make us better and give us proper perspective (1 Cor 12:7-10; Heb 12:11).

- VII. **Eschatological Suffering:** at the end of time, God and the righteous will be vindicated in the eternal punishment and annihilation of sin and sinners (Isa 24-27; Dan 7-12; Rev). The dead in Christ shall resurrect to incorruptibility and immortality and eternal glory. “The righteous shall shine as the stars forever and ever” (Dan 12:2-3). See also Ps 58, 73, 82; Matt 24:13; Rom 8:18. Job’s hope to see his living Redeemer in the last day supersede his suffering in the flesh (Job 19:23-29).
- VIII. **Who is to Blame?** God does not CAUSE tragedy. The Bible states clearly that God does not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men (Lam 3:33). When God made the world, it was perfect (Gen 1:31). But then Adam and Eve sinned and the world became not so perfect as a consequence (Gen 3:17-19). As this world wears down, things like genetic disease become more prevalent. Satan is the one to blame for making bring sin into the world. He rebelled against God and came to earth to cause untold pain and hardships (Rev 12:7-12). We know that it

would not be long before this adversary is decimated and terminated (Rev 21:1-4).

Conclusion:

“Happiness keeps You Sweet,
Trials keep You Strong,
Sorrows keep You Human,
Failures keeps You Humble,
Success keeps You Glowing,
But Only God keeps You Going!”

God uses problems to direct, inspect, correct, protect and perfect us. However, suffering remains a mystery to human. God has a sovereign purpose for humanity and history that often escapes human analysis and comprehension as the story of Job exemplifies. We need faith and hope until all hidden things would be made plain. Until then, we must keep on singing, going, believing, trusting, serving, and rejoicing in hope! No matter what you're going through, Count It All Joy, for Our God is truly an Awesome God. Be Blessed and continue to be a Blessing! “We shall understand things better bye and bye!”

Prayer (by an unknown Confederate soldier)
I asked God for strength, that I might achieve
I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.
I asked for health, that I might do greater things,
I was given infirmity, that I might to better things.
I asked for riches, that I might be happy,
I was given poverty, that I might be wise.
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men,
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life,
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.
I got nothing that I asked for – but everything I had hoped for.
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.
I am, among all men, most richly blessed.

SERMON #2

TRIUMPH OVER TREASURE

TEXT: 2 Cor 9:6-15, But *I say* this, He who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. Each one, as he purposes in his heart, *let him give*; not of grief, or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you, that in everything, always having all self-sufficiency, you may abound to every good work; As it is written, "He scattered; he has given to the poor; his righteousness remains forever." Now He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for eating, may He supply and multiply your seed, and increase the fruits of your righteousness; you being enriched in everything to all generosity, which works out thanksgiving to God through us. For the ministry of this service not only supplies the things lacking of the saints, but also multiplying through many thanksgivings to God, through the proof of this ministry *they* glorify God for your freely expressed submission to the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of the fellowship toward them and toward all, and *in* their prayer for you, who long after you, because of the exceeding grace of God on you. Thanks *be* to God for His unspeakable free gift.

INTRODUCTION:

When my father died on December 12, 2003, in a ghastly motor accident, he had a good amount of money in his pocket. Not a dime of it was recovered and given back to the family. He had his favorite Bible and hymn book with him. They were so marked and annotated that I believe they were a treasure that belonged to the archives! I still wish I could get them. When I had a chance to look through his closet, I found some large amount of money hidden some place and gave it to mum. I can't believe that it's been six years already. All of my dad's stuff have changed hands! No matter how much of the world's goods you have accumulated during your lifetime, you cannot take anything with you when you die! Neither can lifeless hands hold anything! The Egyptian Pharaohs and mummies thought otherwise. They accumulated vast quantities of precious materials and had these placed in their tombs for their use and enjoyment in the future life. However, robbers stole much of this treasure, archaeologists removed what was left and placed it in

museums. It is a divine privilege for you to give while you are alive. Just do it! The United States money still has the inscription: "In God We Trust" yet we put our trust in our money! Indeed: "In GOLD we trust!" WHY?

The Bible Talks So Much About Money. Jesus talked about money in 16 of 38 parables. One out of 10 verses in the Gospels deal with money. The Bible devotes some 500 verses on prayer, less than 500 verses on faith; but over 2000 verses on money and possessions! Jesus said more about money and possessions than about heaven and hell combined. One out of every 10 verses in the gospels deals with money or possessions: 288 verses in the four gospels!

3 Reasons Why God blesses us with material possessions:

- For Personal and Family Support: God know we have the basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter (1 Tim 6). God fills our mouth with good things (Psalm) Our loving father does not want us to "lack in any good thing" (Psalm). "I have been young, now I am old. I have not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." (Ps 37).
- A Test: "We should never forget that we are placed on trial in this world, to determine our fitness for the future life. None can enter heaven whose characters are defiled by the foul blot of selfishness. Therefore, God tests us here, by committing to us temporal possessions, that our use of these may show whether we can be entrusted with eternal riches." *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 22.
"Temporal blessings are given us in trust to prove whether we can be entrusted with eternal riches." *Adventist Home*, p. 367.
- As Heaven's Agents: "When Christians are controlled by the principles of heaven,

they will dispense with one hand while the other gains. This is the only rational and healthy position a Christian can occupy while having and still making money." *Testimonies to the Church*, vol. 2, p. 240.

Enemies of Faithful Stewardship:

Illust: "Just a minute!" 1 million dollars like a dime to God; 1 thousand years like a minute. "Lord can I have a dime, please?" Just a minute.

- Mismanagement—those who live up to their incomes and those who live beyond their incomes.
- Unwillingness to adjust the life-style to the income
- Unwillingness to accept alternative employment because of job preference, or lower pay.
- Indolence – habitual laziness and slothfulness. Indocile – unwilling or indisposed to be taught or disciplined.
- Debt.

Illustration: Grandma's Religion:

In a remote village of china live an old grandma who was so mean to everyone one including children. She had a terrible temper and swore horribly. She attended an evangelistic series and decided to give her life to Christ, to the surprise of everyone. They waited for months before the missionary could come to their village to baptize the new converts. To her joy, the missionary finally arrived and she presented herself for baptism. But before he could baptize her, he needed to examine here, to see if she really understood the details of the doctrines. He began. "Do you know the books of the Bible?" She explained that she could not read. "Who were the 12 apostles?" She shrugged her

shoulders helplessly in ignorance. The church leader begged. "She always returns her tithe, and gives as much as she can in offerings. She walks miles to and from church each time. The whole village can testify to the change in her behavior. So the missionary asked her: "Do you know God? Her face lit up! "I know Him! He is my heavenly grandfather! Oh, I know Him." The missionary continued. "Do you ever talk to Him?" She replied, "Oh, all the time. Oh I know Him." The missionary agreed that she was ready for baptism. She might not know all the fine details of religion and doctrine, but she knew the essential: she knew God!

GOD WANTS ABUNDANCE FOR HIS CHILDREN!

Psalm 23:5-6: "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil. My cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me. All the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." This is a picture of abundance. This is where God wants to take you and me. Abraham's blessings are mine!

The SECRET to abundance is found in GIVING. Proverbs 11:24-25: "There is one who scatters yet increases more. And there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty. The generous soul will be made rich. And he who waters will also be watered himself."

Luke 6:38: "Give and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." Generosity releases God's abundance on you. Verse 8-10: God gives sufficiently so that we can give more! God wants to meet more than just your basic needs. "Blessed to be a blessing."

Systematic Benevolence:

2 Corinthians 9:5-16: Generous church

Verse 2: “willingness”

Verse 3: “be ready”

Verse 4: not unprepared, not ashamed

Verse 5: “prepare your generosity beforehand, which you have previously promised—not grudging obligation”

What blocks God’s abundant blessing in your life:

1. **Stingy giving.** Sow sparingly, reaps sparingly v. 6. Hag 1:6-9: In our materialistic, poverty-stricken, sometimes affluent, dangerous, and terrifying world, those in government are unable to cope with moral corruption, poverty, and crime. There is no stable ground and safe deposits for our money. The problems of this world far surpass human ability to fix them. God calls us to total sacrifice. This is when we willingly relinquish the entire life to God without any reservations. We surrender our time talents, influence, money, and material goods to divine direction and control at all times and under all circumstances. To do otherwise results in what the prophet Haggai describes: “You have sown much, and bring in little; you eat, but you have not enough; you drink, but you are not filled with drink; you clothe yourself, but there is none warm; and he that earns wages earns wages to put into a bag with holes . . . You looked for much, and lo, it came to little; and when you brought it home, I did blow upon it!”

Illustration: A Sunday school teacher asked her eight eager ten-year-olds if they would give \$1,000,000 to the missionaries. “YES!” they all screamed. “Would you give \$1,000?” Again they shouted, “YES!” “How about \$100?” “Oh, YES, we would!” they all agreed. “Would you give just a dollar to the missionaries?” she asked. The boys exclaimed “YES!” just as before, except for Johnnie. “Johnnie,” the teacher said as she

noticed the boy clutching his pocket, "why didn't you say 'YES' this time?" "Well," he stammered, "I HAVE a dollar."

Sometimes it is easier to think about what we would give away if we had it rather than parting with whatever it is we possess. God doesn't ask us to give only if we have money or particular abilities; He asks us to give whatever we have with a willing heart. If you feel you don't have enough time to serve God, money to support God's work, or talent to glorify God, ask Him to reveal to you what unique gift you can give because we all have something to share; and whatever you give, give it with joy.

Whatsoever I thankfully receive as a token of God's love to me, I part with contentedly as a token of my love to Him.

Theophilus Gale

2. **Compulsory giving:** Because the pastor pressures you or out of emotions. You must purpose in your heart. You must not give reluctantly or grudgingly. This should be the happiest part of the service.

Abundant Blessings:

- More money. Abundant health
- Abundant ministry. Work for God. God used me to make a difference for Him.
God trust us with more means, souls because He knows we will take care of them.
Proof of your faith in Christ is obedience to confession of the gospel
- Abundant relationships. Glorifying God for you. More popular. In demand. No more loneliness. More thanksgiving from others helped (v. 11-14)
- More righteousness, growth, character, peace, fulfillment (v. 10). The happiest person in the world is the most righteous!

- More prayers on your behalf
- Abundant Worship. Praise God. Indescribable gift! No more cold dragging spiritual life.

Conclusion:

God is able to make all grace abound towards you! GOD IS ABLE. Faith accelerates God's abundance. All grace.

Illustration: 57 CENTS:

A sobbing little girl stood near a small church from which she had been turned away because it "was too crowded." "I can't go to Sunday School," she sobbed to the pastor as he walked by. Seeing her shabby, unkempt appearance, the pastor guessed the reason and, taking her by the hand, took her inside and found a place for her in the Sunday School class. The child was so happy that they found room for her, that she went to bed that night thinking of the children who have no place to worship Jesus.

Some two years later, this child lay dead in one of the poor tenement buildings and the parents called for the kindhearted pastor, who had befriended their daughter, to handle the final arrangements. As her poor little body was being moved, a worn and crumpled purse was found which seemed to have been rummaged from some trash dump. Inside was found 57 cents and a note scribbled in childish handwriting which read, "This is to help build the little church bigger so more children can go to Sunday School." For two years she had saved for this offering of love. When the pastor tearfully read that note, he knew instantly what he would do. Carrying this note and the cracked, red pocketbook to the pulpit, he told the story of her unselfish love and devotion. He challenged his deacons to get busy and raise enough money for the larger building.

But the story does not end there!

A newspaper learned of the story and published it. It was read by a Realtor who offered them a parcel of land worth many thousands. When told that the church could not pay so much, he offered it for 57 cents. Church members made large donations. Checks came from far and wide. Within five years the little girl's gift had increased to \$250,000.00, a huge sum for that time (near the turn of the last century). Her unselfish love had paid large dividend. When you are in the city of Philadelphia, look up Temple Baptist Church, with a seating capacity of 3,300 and Temple University, where hundreds of students are trained. Have a look, too, at the Good Samaritan Hospital and at a Sunday School building which houses hundreds of Sunday Schoolers, so that no child in the area will ever need to be left outside during Sunday school time.

In one of the rooms of this building may be seen the picture of the sweet face of the little girl whose 57 cents, so sacrificially saved, made such remarkable history. Alongside of it is a portrait of her kind pastor, Dr. Russel H. Conwell, author of the book, *Acres of Diamonds*, a true story, which goes to show WHAT GOD, CAN DO WITH 57 cents.

SERMON #3

CHRIST AS OUR ANCESTOR:

TEXT: Colossians 1:15-19: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the First-born of all creation. For all things were created in Him, the things in the heavens, and the things on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the Head of the body, the church, who is the Beginning, the First-born from the dead, that He may be pre-eminent in all things. For it pleased the Father that in Him all fullness should dwell."

INTRODUCTION:

Ancestor Worship, also known as **Ancestor Veneration** or veneration of the dead or **Ancestorism**, is a religious practice based on the belief that deceased family members have a continued existence, take an interest in the affairs of the world, and possess the ability to influence the fortune of the living. All cultures attach ritual significance to the passing of loved ones, but this is not equivalent to ancestor worship. The goal of ancestor worship is to ensure the ancestors' continued well-being and positive disposition towards the living and sometimes to ask for special favours or assistance. The social or non-religious function of ancestor worship is to cultivate kinship values like filial piety, family loyalty, and continuity of the family lineage.

The word "worship" usually refers to the reverent love and devotion accorded a deity or divine being. However, in other cultures, this act of "worship" does not confer any belief that the departed ancestors have become some kind of deity. Rather the act is a way to respect, honor and look after ancestors in their afterlives as well as possibly seek their guidance for their living descendants. In this regard, many cultures and religions have similar practices. Some may visit the grave of his parents or other ancestors, leave flowers and pray to them in order to honor and remember them while also asking their

deceased ancestors to continue to look after them. However he would not consider himself as “worshipping” them.

These ancestors may include all our known and unknown departed relations from all the previous generations and relatives from all the previous generations from the father’s and mother’s side. If the daughter is the only child in the family, the daughter might make a brief visit to the ancestral shrine. The eldest son and his family will usually be the ones who initiate the visit to an ancestral shrine. Ancestor veneration in Africa is often augmented by a belief in a supreme being, but prayers and/or sacrifices are usually offered to the ancestors who may ascend to becoming minor deities themselves. Ancestor veneration remains among many indigenous Africans despite the adoption of Christianity (as in Nigeria among the Igala) and Islam (among the different Mandé peoples and the Bamum) in much of the continent. The ancient Egyptian pyramids are the most famous historical monuments devoted to the dead. Egyptian religion posited the survival of the soul in connection with the survival of a physical receptacle for the soul - hence mummification and portraiture flourished.

Some faith communities, in particular the Catholic Church, venerate saints as intercessors with God. **All Saints’ Day** or **Solemnity of All Saints** or **All Hallows** or **Hallowmas** or **All Saints**, is a solemnity celebrated on 1 November in Western Christianity, and on the first Sunday after Pentecost in Eastern Christianity, in honor of all the saints, known and unknown. This has become a national holiday in many historically Catholic countries.

THE FIRST LIE: The veneration of the dead is the perpetration of the first lie told by the serpent in Gen 3:4 that human beings never really die when they die;

contradicting God's injunction in Gen 2:17. "The dead know nothing" (Eccl 9:5), "his thoughts perish" (Ps 146:4). "His sons come to honor, and he knows it not; and they are brought low, but he does not perceive it of them" (Job 14:21). Moreover, it is unbiblical to worship any other than God in heaven and no replacement or representation should be worship in His stead (Exod 20:4-6). When we worship our ancestors, we are actually worshipping the devil and his fallen evil angels (2 Cor 11:13-15). The deception is of immense proportion and it is a slippery slope like what ancient King Saul got himself into, leading to his destruction (1 Sam 28:6-7).

However, the African mind is not traditionally wrapped around this truth. The lie dies hard even in the mind of African Christian converts. I have heard elders and other lay leaders mention this lie during funerals many a time. In order to get to the root of this seeming confusion or syncretism, I suggest a representation of the biblical teachings to Africans especially on this matter of death. This should be done from the African perspective, approaching them from their cultural bias.

AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE:

When Christianity got to Africa through Europe, it was packaged and baggage and "tainted" with European mindset and worldview, thus making it tough for African to sift the "pure gospel" from its European packaging. The western mind sees a distinction between the sacred and the profane, the material and the spiritual, and between religion and science. For the African mind, just like the Jews, everything seen is controlled by the more powerful unseen! The spiritual realities pervade the physical and material world. Christianity needs to return to the Bible and come out directly from the Bible back to Africa and the Africans; devoid of Western limitations. Christ should be preached to the

Africans, drawing analogies from the African traditions, stories, mindset and worldview. By so doing, Christ would make more sense to them and His message would be more acceptable and relevant to Africa much more than it has been to date.

There are more cultural and tradition overlaps between Africans and the Judaic connection of Christianity as seen especially in the Old Testament and even the New. More should be done to appeal to these in the mission field. Take the importance of names, respect for elders, revering of history or genealogy or ancestral lineage, extended family connection, to mention but a few.

The African beliefs and practices associated with the ancestors are primarily because of their need for perpetuation of life after death. They believe that their dead relatives are in constant touch with them and so revere or venerate them as a mark of remembrance and respect. They want to perpetuate the good work they began to do in their life time. The living family members look to their dead ancestors for protection, guidance and providence who they believe to now possess enhanced powers and influence. They are believed to be closer to the Supreme Being and the divinities, and can act as intermediaries between those divine beings and their living family members. They believe that they are now able to constantly warn their descendants of impending disasters and teach them how to attract the most favorable fortunes. They are thought of as “guardians of social morality” who can punish evil doers and reward good doers with good luck.

CHRIST OUR ANCESTOR:

God used the history of the ancestors continually to warn and guide His people. God used living prophets in the OT and apostles in the NT to carry His messages (e.g.,

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel). History is always evidence that what has been prophesied by these prophets, did in fact happen. There are many examples in the Bible where God has made use of ordinary people to convey messages (e.g., Samuel to Eli in 1 Sam 3; Nathan to David in 2 Sam 12). There are instances where God made use of angels to appear to certain people, yet angels are heavenly beings that were created by God at the beginning of times, and can therefore not be considered as ancestors (Num 22:21–35, 38; 1 Kgs 13:18; 2 Kgs 1:3–4; 2 Kgs 1:15; 1 Chr 21:18; Dan 8:16; 9:21–22; 10:5–6, 10–11; Zech 1:9; 2:3; 4:1).

However, Jesus Christ is above all human beings and angels! As our spiritual Ancestor, Jesus Christ is “the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation . . . He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence” (Col 1:15-18). He is the “Beginning of the creation of God” (Rev 3:14). He is the “Firstborn from the dead, and the Ruler over the kings of the earth” (Rev 1:5).

Africans are preoccupied with concern for the afterlife. The promise of eternal life is found in Christianity. “He who believes in the Son has eternal life” (John 3:36). Christ promised a place in the eternal home for His followers when He comes again (John 14:1-4). The only thing is that the Bible emphasizes that immortality will not be given to humanity at death but at the resurrection. However, African believers have no benefit in looking to dead ancestors for protection, they have surer connection with Christ who has become to them “The Way, the Truth and the Life” (John 14:6). Christ triumphed over death for them and indeed all humanity and “did not see corruption” (Acts 2:3).

Strong belief in and relationship with Christ are marks of high spirituality and religiosity. Christ, as it were, is now our Prime Ancestor! "I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered. And they gather and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done to you" (John 15:5-7).

Christ is playing the role of mediator between human beings and God through His redemptive work. "For God is one, and there is one Mediator of God and of men, the Man Christ Jesus" 1 Tim 2:5). "But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by so much He is also the Mediator of a better covenant, which was built upon better promises" (Heb 8:6). Jesus Christ is the "Mediator of the new Covenant" (Heb 9:15; 12:24). You no longer need to look to a dead relative to mediate for you, Christ has adequately covered that for you!

There is no other mediator than Christ (Heb 9:15). Christ is the only one exalted to the right hand of God (Heb 1:13). Christ offered Himself so that there can be communion, communication and identification with the ordinary person again (Heb 8). No more offering can convince God- it has been made in the death of Christ (Heb 9). Christ is the ultimate, there is no need to look for anything else (Heb 10:11-14).

Christ is advocating for us and pleading our cases before God as our supreme Ancestor already sitting in the heavenly "ancestral bliss." Christ pleads for human's reconciliation with our estranged Creator. "And all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

whereas God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and putting the word of reconciliation in us” (2 Cor 5:18-19).

There is no longer any need to pour libation to ancestors in any shrine to reenact the common ritual or ontological bond between the ancestors and their devotees. The blood of Jesus avails for us! In the celebration of the communion service, followers of Christ demonstrate and reenact their perpetual bond by eating the bread, signifying his broken body, and drinking the wine, signifying his shed blood (John 6:48-58; Matt 26:26-28; 1 Cor 11:23-26).

We need not look to ancestors to direct and guide us but now we are “looking up to Jesus, the Pioneer and Perfecter of our faith” (Heb 12:2). “For He Himself has said, “Not at all will I leave you, not at all will I forsake you, never!” (Heb 13:5). He gives us the moral code and helps us to obey them, forgiving us when we err (Acts 13:38-39). The words of Jesus and indeed the whole scriptures are like the proverbs and wise sayings of our African elders which given is wisdom and guide us to moral rectitude. Moreover, Jesus has given us the Holy Spirit as our perpetual Companion, Comforter (John 14:16), Helper, Teacher and Prompter (John 14:26), Sanctifier (John 16:8-11) and Guide into all truth (John 14:17). He lives in us!

Remembering and Honoring our dead loved ones:

Christian can rest assured that their believing loved ones who have died are resting in their graves (John 5:28). Death is a sleep (1 Thess 4:13; Dan 12:2) from which people would resurrect to either eternal life or eternal death also called the second death (Rev 20:14). There are some functional alternatives that are safe to adopt cautiously. A **moment of silence** is the expression for a period of silent contemplation, prayer,

reflection, or meditation. Similar to flying a flag at half-mast, a moment of silence is often a gesture of respect, particularly in mourning for those who have recently died or as part of a commemoration ceremony of a tragic historical event.

A **posthumous recognition** is a ceremonial award given after the recipient has died, usually in honor of an action associated with his or her death. Awards are normally given while the recipient is alive, but when awarded after death, the award is referred to as having been "made posthumously". Some awards are given *only* after the death of the recipient, and thus are by definition a posthumous recognition.

Furthermore, it may be harmless for surviving loved ones to visit the grave of their departed one with flowers occasionally as long as it does not become an obsession or veneration. Gifts can be given to charitable organizations in honor or memory of the dead one especially in areas that that departed person showed interest in during their lifetime. Memorial scholarship will perpetrate people's legacy long after they are dead and gone. Similar things may be considered only as they are consistent with biblical principles and teaching.

CONCLUSION:

There is no need to hold on to our dead ancestors with fear and trepidation if when you have Christ as our ever living Ancestor. He is all you need and He is sufficient for every situation. Christ is the Firstborn of all creation. He is our Redeemer and Mediator representing us in heaven and watching over us like a "hen gathers her chicks under her wings" (Matt 23:37). We are inscribed in the palm of his hands, His remembrance of each one of us is matchless, and we are not forgotten (Isa 49:14-16). "His eyes are upon the sparrow and He watches over us." Nothing can separate us from

His love. Not death nor sad parting. Not sword, tribulation, famine or persecution. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 8:38-39). He is our Source of eternal life. He is our forever companion. He is the unchanging changer. He will destroy the destroyer.

SERMON #4

WHERE ARE MY DEAD LOVED ONES?

TEXT: Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then the dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it."

INTRODUCTION:

Several main False Views about what happens when a man dies:

RESTORATIONISM: This is the belief that in a future life all men will be given a second chance to make the choice for God that they did not make during this life.

MATERIALISM: This is the belief that man, upon death, forever ceases to exist, and quietly rots into nothingness.

ANNIHILATIONISM: This theory, espoused by many Jehovah's Witnesses, teaches that all the ungodly will someday be "uncreated" or annihilated by God.

PURGATORY: This is the belief of the Roman Catholic based on 2 Maccabees 12:39-45, a book in the Apocrypha, that all those who die at peace with the Church but are not perfect must undergo penal and purifying sufferings. However, this is only for those who die in venial (lesser) sin, for all dying in mortal sin are forever condemned to hell. Roman doctrine teaches that a person's stay in purgatory may be shortened by the gifts or services rendered by living people in behalf of the beloved dead on through the Roman Catholic Church.

REINCARNATION: The belief in the transmigration or rebirth of the soul that had been fundamental to most religions and philosophies of India. This also reflects the traditional African perspective. As one sows in the present life, so one shall reap in the next, good deeds resulting in a good state of rebirth, bad deeds resulting in a bad state of rebirth.

Thus a man's state of life is seen not as something meaningless, but as working out, for good or ill, the effects of a previous existence and the predetermining of a future state. If this is all there is then we ought to live it up. Eat, Drink by Merry for tomorrow you may die. Go for all the gusto, You only go around once! Is that all there is to life? Let us look and see what the Bible says.

MAN'S CREATION AND NATURE:

Man is by nature mortal, that is, "subject to death!" (Job 4:17). God formed human beings from the dust of the earth (Gen 2:7). When God breathed into his nostril, he became a "living soul" (Gen 2:7). That breath of life is the spirit in all living creatures whether human, animal, or bird (Gen 7:21-22; Job 27:3). The "living soul" is synonymous to "living creature" and animals, birds, and humans are also referred to (Rev 16:3). Adam Clarke describe the living soul: "A general term to express all creatures endued with animal life, in any of its infinitely varied gradations, from the half-reasoning elephant down to the stupid potto, or lower still, to the polype, which seems equally to share the vegetable and animal life."

The living soul was not put into man; but rather man equals a living soul. The creation equation for human beings is: DUST (Flesh/body) + BREATH (Spirit) = LIVING SOUL (Creature). Human beings do not *have a soul!* Human beings *are souls!* Made of breath and flesh. The human soul is the *whole* individual person who is a *living, conscious, thinking being*. The word used for "living soul" in Gen 2:7 is nephesh in the original Hebrew language and is equally rendered as "living creature" in Gen 1:24. The word occurs 755 times in the Old Testament and never refers to some mysterious part of a human or animal or bird that is capable of escaping the body at death! It describes an

individual rather than a constituent part of an individual. Whenever we see or use the expressions “my soul,” “your soul,” “his soul,” or such like, these can only be idiomatic expressions meaning “myself,” “yourself,” “himself,” and so on.

At death, the living creature, be it human, animal, or bird, ceases to exist as a living conscious being. The breath or spirit God put in/lent to the living creature by which life is possible, at death, goes back to God, the Author of life, who gave it in the first place! “Then the dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it” (Eccl 12:7). Man is mortal. Only God has “deathlessness,” immortality and original life implicit and inherent in Himself (1 Tim 6:15-16). Human must wait to receive immortality and incorruption from God at the Second coming of Jesus Christ when they are resurrected into newness of life in Christ (Rom 2:7; 6:23; John 5:26; 6:27; 10:10, 27, 28; 1 John 5:11).

WHAT IS DEATH LIKE?

The Bible likens and describes death as SLEEP. In sound sleep one is totally lost to consciousness; time goes by unmeasured; and mental activity is suspended for the time being! “But I would not have you ignorant, brothers, concerning those who are *asleep*, that you be not grieved, even as others who have no hope” (1 Thess 4:13). They are asleep “in the dust of the earth” (Dan 12:2). See 1 Cor 15:18, 20; John 11:11-14; Eccl 3:20; 9:10.

One who is dead is totally ignorant of the condition of his surviving family members: “His sons come to honour, and he knoweth *it* not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth *it* not of them” Job 14:21. Human thoughts total perish at death (Ps 146:4). The dead are completely oblivious of all happening on earth or anywhere for that

matter. They take absolutely no part in any earthly things. All attributes of life or mind like love, hatred, envy, and others, are lost at death. "For the living know that they shall die; but the dead do not know anything, nor do they have any more a reward; for their memory is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; nor do they any longer have a part forever in all that is done under the sun" Eccl 9:5-6. Those who teach that the dead immediately go to heaven or hell upon death are wrong too! If the dead go to either place at death, what then is the need of a future judgment, or of resurrection, or of the second coming of Christ? If human beings go to their reward at death, before the judgment takes place, then their rewards precede their awards!

Moreover, if they are in heaven at death what is their occupation seeing that "in death there is *no remembrance*" of God (Psalm 6:5). Furthermore, waking Lazarus from death to life was really robbing him of the bliss of heaven (John 11:11)! Obviously, the righteous dead have not yet ascended to heaven (Acts 2:34). "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (Ps 115:17).

I WILL WAIT FOR MY CHANGE IS COMING:

Soon "the earth shall cast out the dead!" (Isa 26:19). Soon the trumpet of the Lord shall sound and time shall be no more! I shall soon awake with His likeness (Ps 17:15). If there is no resurrection, then our faith has been in vain (1 Cor 15:16-18). "For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess 4:16). "If a man die, shall he live *again*? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come" (Job 14:14)

My change is coming! I will put on immortality

My change is coming! God will make all things new again.

My change is coming! I will triumph over sin and woe

No more dying, no more! No more sad parting, no more! No more cancer, no more! No more tribalism and nepotism, no more! No more wars or terror attack, no more! No more earthquakes or tsunamis, no more! My change is coming!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

SERMON #5

POWER ENCOUNTER: The Great Controversy

TEXT: Revelation 12:7-12: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

INTRODUCTION:

"Things fall apart. The center cannot hold. Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world"—Chinua Achebe. There is global warming and scary weather changes in the globe. Terror attack and counter-attack and school bombing has brought a reign of terror upon the earth. No place is left out. No place is safe anymore. Men's hearts are failing them for fear of what is happening in the world (Luke 21). Moral decadence has left a gaping hole in our hearts. Corrupt governance and selfish politician have looted our treasuries. What do we do! There must be an explanation!

Scripture portrays a cosmic battle between good and evil, light and darkness, God and Satan. All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law, and His sovereignty over the universe. Mystery of mysteries, the conflict between good and evil began in heaven when a created being, endowed with freedom of choice, in self-exaltation became Satan, God's adversary. He led into rebellion a portion of the angels. He introduced the spirit of rebellion into this

world when he led Adam and Eve into sin. This human sin resulted in the distortion of the image of God in humanity, the disordering of the created world, and its eventual devastation at the time of the worldwide flood. Observed by the whole creation, this world became the arena of the universal conflict, out of which the God of love will ultimately be vindicated. (See Rev 12:4-9; Isa 14:12-14; Ezek 28:12-18; Gen 3; Rom 1:19-32; 5:12-21; 8:19-22; Gen 6-8; 2 Pet 3:6; 1 Cor 4:9; Heb 1:14.).

The Origin of the Controversy:

Lucifer was Satan's pre-fall name when he was "son of the morning," and "the anointed covering cherub" residing in the presence of God (Isa 14:12; Ezek 28:14). Scripture says Lucifer was "the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty" and "perfect" in all his ways till sin was found in him (Ezek 28:12, 15). Lucifer's pride: "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor" (Ezek 28:17). Lucifer refused to be content with the exalted position his Creator had given him. In selfishness he coveted equality with God Himself: "You have said in your heart; 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God . . . I will be like the Most High'" (Isa 14:12-14). But though he desired God's position, he did not want His character. He grasped for God's authority but not His love. Lucifer's rebellion against God's government was the first step in his transformation into Satan, "the adversary."

Lucifer's covert actions blinded many angels to God's love. The resulting discontent and disloyalty to God's government grew until one third of the angelic host joined him in rebellion (Rev 12:4). The tranquility of God's kingdom was shattered and

“war broke out in heaven” (Rev 12:7) and the devil was “cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Rev 12:9).

How Did Human Beings Become Involved?

Upon his expulsion from heaven, Satan spread his rebellion to our earth. Disguised as a speaking serpent and using the same arguments that had led to his own downfall, he effectively undermined Adam and Eve's trust in their Creator (Gen 3:5). Satan aroused in Eve discontent regarding her assigned position. Infatuated by the prospect of equality with God, she believed the tempter's word—and doubted God's. Disobeying God's command, she ate the fruit and influenced her husband to do the same. In believing the serpent's word over that of their Creator they betrayed their trust in and loyalty to God. Tragically, the seeds of the controversy that had begun in heaven took root in Planet Earth (see Gen 3).

In seducing our first parents to sin, Satan ingeniously wrested from them their dominion over the earth. Now claiming to be the “prince of this world,” Satan challenged God, His government, and the peace of the whole universe from his new headquarters, Planet Earth.

The Impact on the Human Race:

The effects of the struggle between Christ and Satan soon became apparent as the sin distorted the image of God in humanity. Though God offered His covenant of grace to the human race through Adam and Eve (Gen 3:15), their first child, Cain, murdered his brother (Gen 4:8). Wickedness continued to multiply until in sorrow God had to say of man “that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Gen 6:5).

God used a great flood to cleanse the world of its unrepentant inhabitants and give the human race a new start (Gen 7:17-20). But before long the descendants of faithful Noah departed from God's covenant. Although God had promised never again to destroy the entire earth with a flood, they blatantly concretized their distrust of Him by erecting the tower of Babel in an attempt to reach heaven and thus have a means of escape from any ensuing flood. This time God quashed man's rebellion by confounding his universal language (Gen 9:1, 11; 11).

Earth, the Theater of the Universe:

The account in the book of Job of a cosmic convocation involving representatives from various parts of the universe gives additional insight into the great controversy. The account begins, "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. And the Lord said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' So Satan answered the Lord and said, 'From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it'" (Job 1:6, 7; see Job 2:1-7).

The cosmic perspective the book of Job affords provides powerful proof of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. This planet is the stage on which this dramatic struggle between right and wrong is being played out. As Scripture states, "We have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men" (1 Cor 4:9). Sin severed the relationship between God and man, and "whatever is not from faith is sin" (Rom 14:23). The breaking of God's commandments, or laws, is the immediate result of a lack of faith, the evidence of a ruptured relationship. In turn, by the plan of salvation God intends to restore the trust in the Creator that leads to a loving relationship manifested by obedience. As Christ noted, love leads to obedience (John 14:15).

In our lawless age absolutes are neutralized, dishonesty is praised, bribery is a way of life, adultery is rampant, and agreements, both international and personal, lie shattered. It is our privilege to look beyond our desperate world to a caring, omnipotent God. This larger view reveals to us the importance of our Savior's atonement, which is bringing this universal controversy to an end.

The Cosmic Issue:

What are the pivotal issues in this life and death struggle? They involve *God's Government, Law and Scriptures*. God's moral law is just as essential to the existence of His universe as are the physical laws that hold it together and keep it functioning. Sin is "the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4, KJV), or "lawlessness" as the Greek word *anomia* indicates. Lawlessness issues from a rejection of God and His government. Rather than admitting responsibility for the lawlessness in the world, Satan lays the blame on God. He says God's law, which he alleges is arbitrary, infringes on individual freedom. Furthermore, he charges, since it is impossible to obey it, that law works against the best interests of created beings. Through this constant and insidious undermining of the law, Satan attempts to overthrow God's government and even God Himself. A growing number of Christians, including theologians, no longer view the Scriptures as the Word of God, the infallible revelation of His will. Consequently, they have come to question the Biblical view of the person of Jesus Christ; His nature, virgin birth, miracles, and resurrection are widely debated.

Showdown at Calvary:

This cosmic controversy comes into its clearest focus at Calvary. Satan intensified his efforts to abort Jesus' mission as the time approached for it to close. Satan was especially

successful in using the religious leaders of the time, whose jealousy over Christ's popularity caused such trouble that He had to end His public ministry (John 11:45-54). The cosmic controversy came to its climax at the cross. The love and faithful obedience Christ demonstrated there in the face of Satan's cruelty undermined Prince Satan's position, assuring his ultimate downfall.

CONCLUSION:

Just like Job had to make a decision to hold on to his integrity in the face of impossible situations, so must each one of us. Every decision shows on whose side of the divide we are. In the warfare that is raging for the truth and for the right. When the conflict fierce is raging, would the Lord depend on you? Loyalty is needed. Faithfulness in little things is a must. Can God count on you? Are you ready for the ultimate well done from God or are you a men-pleaser? Be careful, God is watching! Make God proud today.

SERMON #6

TRUE ANGELS AND DEMONS

TEXT: Hebrews 1:14: “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

INTRODUCTION:

Story: John Paton was a missionary in the New Hebrides Islands. One night hostile natives surrounded the mission station, intent on burning out the Patons and killing them. Paton and his wife prayed during that terror-filled night that God would deliver them. When daylight came they were amazed to see their attackers leave. A year later, the chief of the tribe was converted to Christ. Remembering what had happened, Paton asked the chief what had kept him from burning down the house and killing them. The chief replied in surprise, “Who were all those men with you there?” Paton knew no men were present—but the chief said he was afraid to attack because he had seen hundreds of big men in shining garments with drawn swords circling the mission station.

We are not alone! There are unseen forces present in the air; princes of the air; principalities and powers. Angels live here too. There are good ones as well as bad ones. They battle for human allegiance. They follow the bidding of higher powers either of God or the villain. Men have long been fascinated by angels. There is a bit of mystery involved because not much is written about them.

Who are angels? The words for angel in both Hebrew and Greek simply mean “messenger.” First, and foremost, angels are God’s messengers (Heb 2:2) and their number is beyond counting. The Bible refers to an innumerable company (Heb 12:22-24) out of which only two names are mentioned; namely Michael (Jude 9) and Gabriel (Luke

1:19). Michael is referred to as an archangel, that is, chief or captain of angels (Jude 9; Dan 10:13). Some simply refuse to identify themselves, as it distracts from the message (Gen 32:29; Judg 13:17-18).

Angels are spiritual beings of a higher order than human beings (Heb 1:14; Ps 8:4-5) though they are not to be worshipped (Rev 19:10). They are not always seen (2 Kgs 6:13-18). They are limited in their might since they do not know everything (Matt 24:36) and some of their delivered messages may not be fully known (1 Pet 1:12). They were a part of the creation (Col 1:16-17), created with the rest of the world (Ps 148:2-5). Unlike human beings, angels do not marry (Matt 22:30). Just like human beings, angels are created with free-will, capable of sinning (2 Pet 2:4).

There seems to be two types of angels: Seraphim, meaning: "burning" (Isa 6:1-3; Ps 104:4), and Cherubim, meaning: "holding fast" (Ezek 10:5). They fly and move fast/rapidly (Rev 8:13). This can be concluded from their possession of wings as follows: Cherubim with two wings (1 Kgs 8:6-7), Cherubim with four wings (Ezek 10:19-21), and Seraphim with six wings (Isa 6:2). They have the ability to appear as a man (Dan 8:15) so closely that they are not immediately recognized (Heb 13:2). Some appeared as soldiers with drawn swords (Josh 5:13-15), some shining (Luke 24:4; Dan 3:24-25; 10:5-6), some terrifying (Judg 13:6; Luke 2:9; Matt 28:2-4), and others just plain hard to imagine (Ezek 1:5-9).

Angels deliver messages as in the cases of Hagar (Gen 16:7) and Paul (Acts 27:23-24). God sent angels to feed Elijah in the wilderness (1 Kgs 19:5-6), protect Dan from lions (Dan 6:22), deliver Hezekiah from the Assyrians (Isa 37:36), and free Peter from prison (Acts 12:7-10). They care about God's people including children (Matt

18:10), encamping around them (Ps 34:7) and protecting them (Ps 91:11-12). Angels are busy working for our salvation and rejoice when it comes (Luke 15:10). Angels were involved in getting preachers to people as in the conversion of Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26) and Cornelius (Acts 10:2-6). They carry out God's judgment as done in the garden of Eden (Gen 3:24), Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:12-15), Jerusalem plague (I Chr 21:15-16), and in the future separation of the righteous from the wicked (Matt 13:30, 39). They roam and watch (Zech 1:8-11; Dan 12:1) and explain visions (Dan 8:16-17; 9:21-22). They also get involved in politics (Dan 10:12-14).

The angels that rebelled in support of Satan may number about one-third of the angelic host that God created (Rev 12:1-4). These are the evil angels cast down to earth with Satan who cause havoc (Eph 2:2; 3:10; 6:12; Isa 14:12). They are responsible for all temptations and troubles that human beings face. Their goal is to confuse human beings about God and paint a hellish picture of a good God. They deceive people and can transform themselves into angels of light for the unsuspecting (2 Cor 11:13-15).

These evil angels are the demons which possess, harass and torture people (Mark 5). They can appear and mimic dead relatives and known personalities in order to deceive (1 Sam 28). They use medium or impersonations to deceive as was perfected in Eden (Gen 3:1-15). Satan is described as the "ruler of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30); the "god of this age" (2 Cor 4:4); and a "roaring lion" (1 Peter 5:8). A pseudo-name used to describe Satan in the Old Testament is "Prince of Persia" (Dan 10:13, 17-19).

It is important to note that good angels outnumber the evil ones by a ratio of 2:1. We have the majority of unseen help. If God were to open our eyes like He did for Elisha's servant, we would see the innumerable company of angels that watch over us

night and day (2 Kgs 6:15-18). There are more with us than with them (2 Kgs 6:16; 2 Chr 32:7). Greater is He that is with us than he that is with them (1 John 4:4)! He that watches over you neither sleeps nor slumbers (Ps 121:4). "He shall give His angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways" (Ps 91:11). Fear not. You are surrounded! Satan and his evil angels and demons cannot harm you unless as will bring God ultimate glory and ensure your eternal salvation. Fear not he who can only kill the body but He who can kill both body, soul, and spirit (Matt 10:28). You are covered with the blood of Jesus!

At the name of Jesus, every knee must bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord; whether of in heaven, on earth, or under the earth (Phil 2:9-11)! In Christ name, we can "cast out demons!" (Mark 16:17) just like Jesus did numerous times during His earthly ministry (Mark 1:23-26, 32-34; 5:1-16; 16:9; Matt 8:28-34; 9:32-33; 12:22-23; 15:22-28; 17:14-21). "No weapon fashioned against you can ever prosper" (Isa 54:17). Jesus proclaimed that He "saw Satan fall as lightning from heaven!" (Luke 10:18). "Behold I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you." (Luke 10:19). "There is no enchantment against Jacob, there is no divination against Israel. It now must be said of Jacob and of Israel, 'Oh what God has done!'" (Num 23:23). "When the enemy comes in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord will raise a standard against him" (Isa 59:19).

APPENDIX E

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS

OBJECTIVES	MEASURABLE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	IMPORTANT ASSUMPTIONS
<p>GOAL: Administrators and pastors will be more committed and equipped for spiritual leadership that will educate and strengthen the Christian lifestyle of the Adventists members in WAD</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 80% of pastors hold an annual spiritual retreat 2. 90% of Adventist churches hold retreat every Jan. 3. Every pastor will preach 9 topics on DA once a year in all their churches 	<p>Each conference/mission has trained at least one pastor in how to deal with life issues on DA by 2012</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness of administrators to participate • Willingness of pastors to participate • Willingness of church members to participate
<p>PURPOSE: Pastors and Administrators sensitized and equipped on how to deal with dual allegiance in WAD</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 80% of pastors & admin. attend spiritual retreat 2. 80% of pastors, administrators and their spouses attend leadership retreat on DA by Dec 2010 3. Power Point presentations (9 topics) and guidelines prepared for pastors on DA by Dec 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports from Division and Union meetings • Registration Lists • Power Points 	<p>Willingness to use the materials</p>
<p>OUTPUTS: 1. Spiritual renewal retreats held for church administrators, pastors and church members throughout the WAD</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 3-day retreat for division officers held by Jan 2009 1.2 8-day retreat for div. and union administrators held by Feb 2009 1.3 An 8-day retreat for union and conf. adm. held by April 2009 1.4 8-day retreat for churches held by May 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports from union leadership • Reports from district pastors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness of administrators to participate • Willingness of pastors to participate

OBJECTIVES	MEASURABLE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	IMPORTANT ASSUMPTIONS
<p>2. Develop a theological response to issues related to "dual allegiance" as faced by the church members in their daily living</p>	<p>2.1 9 topics/issues identified in how to live in a world of DA by Aug 2009</p> <p>2.2 9 presentations prepared on the issues dealing with DA by Dec 2009</p> <p>2.3 Power point presentations and guidelines on 9 topics on DA prepared by March 2010</p> <p>2.4 Power point presentations translated into local languages by Sept 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of topics • Written presentations • Power points/ guidelines • Translated power points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness of church members to participate • Personnel available • Funds available
<p>3. Plan and organize a division-wide retreat for administrators and pastors dealing with specific issues related to DA</p>	<p>3.1 A minimum of 2000 pastors, administrators and their spouses participate in the retreat in Dec 2010</p> <p>3.2 Participants will suggest guidelines on how to deal with issues of DA by Dec 2010</p> <p>3.3 Set up study group to make guidelines and recommendations to division committee by Feb 2011</p> <p>3.4 Division committee will issue guidelines to pastors and church members in May 2011</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant list • Group recommendations • Committee list of study group • Study group recommendations • Division guidelines 	

OBJECTIVES	MEASURABLE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	IMPORTANT ASSUMPTIONS
<p>4. Plan and organize retreats for churches and families dealing with specific issues related to DA</p>	<p>4.1 80% of churches have hosted at least one 8-day retreat on DA by Dec 2011</p> <p>4.2 60% of all church members attend at least one retreat in their district by Dec 2011</p> <p>4.3 50% of all families hold a community retreat by March 2012</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union Reports <p>District Reports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power point presentations available in local languages • Pastors willing to cooperate in holding retreats on DA
<p>ACTIVITIES:</p> <p>1. Spiritual Renewal Retreats</p> <p>1.1 Discover need for spiritual renewal</p> <p>1.2 Division officers model spiritual renewal</p> <p>1.3 Division and union officers unite in spiritual retreat</p> <p>1.4 Union leaders join with conference leaders in joint spiritual retreat</p> <p>1.5 Conference leaders/pastors join in spiritual retreat with congregations</p> <p>2. Develop theology</p> <p>2.1 Identify topics on issues significant on DA</p> <p>2.2 Identify speakers/writers on identified topics</p> <p>2.3 Distribute assignments to speakers</p>			

OBJECTIVES	MEASURABLE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	IMPORTANT ASSUMPTIONS
2.4 Review/revise papers produced 2.5 Produce power point presentations 2.6 Translate into various languages			
3. Division-wide retreat 3.1 Arrange retreat with BU administration 3.1.1 Identify local retreat director 3.1.2 Settle retreat dates 3.1.3 Arrangement for transport 3.2 Identify and invite retreat speakers 3.3 Dev. posters and retreat programs 3.4 Announce and invite participants 3.5 Train retreat coordinators 3.5.1 Lead out in group discussion (100 people each) [30 people] 3.5.2 Instruct in prayer sessions (10 people in each)[300 people] 3.6 Identify person(s) guiding personal journaling 3.7 Identify and appoint a working group that collects and synthesizes suggestions to draft recom.to WAD			

APPENDIX F—GANTT CHART

Activities 2009	Quarter 1	January				February				March			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Output 1: Develop Theology													
Activity 1.1. Discover need for spirit. Renewal													
1.2. Div. Off. Model spir. Renew.													
1.3. Div. & union spir. retreat													
1.4. Union & conf. spir. retreat													
1.5. Conf. & past. spir. retreat													
Output 2: Spiritual Renewal Retreats													
Activity 2.1. Identify topics on DA													
2.2. Identify speakers & writers													
2.3. Distribute assignments													
2.4. Review topic papers													
2.5. Produce power point present.													
2.6. Translate materials into lang.													
Output 3: Develop-impl. Div. retreat													
Activity 3.1. Arrange retreat with BU													
3.1.1. Identify retreat director													
3.1.2. Settle retreat date													
3.2. Identify-invite retreat speak.													
3.3. Develop posters & programs													
3.4. Announce & invite particip.													
3.5. Train retreat coordinators													
3.5.1. Lead out in group discuss.													
3.5.2. Instruct in prayer session													
3.6. Identify persons pers. Journ.													
3.7. Synthesis Working group													

Activities 2009	Quarter 2	April				May				June			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Output 1: Spiritual Renewal Retreats													
Activity 1.1. Discover need spir. Renewal													
1.2. Div. Off. Model spir. Renew.													
1.3. Div. & union spir. retreat													
1.4. Union & conf. spir. retreat													
1.5. Conf. & past. spir. retreat													
Output 2: Develop Theology													
Activity 2.1. Identify topics on DA													
2.2. Identify speakers & writers													
2.3. Distribute assignments													
2.4. Review topic papers													
2.5. Produce power point present.													
2.6. Translate materials into lang.													
Output 3: Develop-impl. Div. retreat													
Activity 3.1. Arrange retreat with BU													
3.1.1. Identify retreat director													
3.1.2. Settle retreat date													
3.2. Identify-invite retreat speak.													
3.3. Develop posters & programs													
3.4. Announce & invite particip.													
3.5. Train retreat coordinators													
3.5.1. Lead out in group discuss.													
3.5.2. Instruct in prayer session													
3.6. Identify persons pers. Journ.													
3.7. Synthesis Working group													

Activities 2009	Quarter 3	July				August				September			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Output 1: Spiritual Renewal Retreats													
Activity 1.1. Discover need spir. Renewal													
1.2. Div. Off. Model spir. Renew.													
1.3. Div. & union spir. retreat													
1.4. Union & conf. spir. retreat													
1.5. Conf. & past. spir. retreat													
Output 2: Develop Theology													
Activity 2.1. Identify topics on DA													
2.2. Identify speakers & writers													
2.3. Distribute assignments													
2.4. Review topic papers													
2.5. Produce power point present.													
2.6. Translate materials into lang.													
Output 3: Develop-impl. Div. retreat													
Activity 3.1. Arrange retreat with BU													
3.1.1. Identify retreat director													
3.1.2. Settle retreat date													
3.2. Identify-invite retreat speak.													
3.3. Develop posters & programs													
3.4. Announce & invite particip.													
3.5. Train retreat coordinators													
3.5.1. Lead out in group discuss.													
3.5.2. Instruct in prayer session													
3.6. Identify persons pers. Journ.													
3.7. Synthesis Working group													

Activities 2009	Quarter 4	October				November				December			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Output 1: Spiritual Renewal Retreats													
Activity 1.1. Discover need spir. Renewal													
1.2. Div. Off. Model spir. Renew.													
1.3. Div. & union spir. retreat													
1.4. Union & conf. spir. retreat													
1.5. Conf. & past. spir. retreat													
Output 2: Develop Theology													
Activity 2.1. Identify topics on DA													
2.2. Identify speakers & writers													
2.3. Distribute assignments													
2.4. Review topic papers													
2.5. Produce power point present.													
2.6. Translate materials into lang.													
Output 3: Develop-impl. Div. retreat													
Activity 3.1. Arrange retreat with BU													
3.1.1. Identify retreat director													
3.1.2. Settle retreat date													
3.2. Identify-invite retreat speak.													
3.3. Develop posters & programs													
3.4. Announce & invite particip.													
3.5. Train retreat coordinators													
3.5.1. Lead out in group discuss.													
3.5.2. Instruct in prayer session													
3.6. Identify persons pers. Journ.													
3.7. Synthesis Working group													

Activities 2010	Quarter 1	January				February				March			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Output 1: Spiritual Renewal Retreats													
Activity 1.1. Discover need spir. Renewal													
1.2. Div. Off. Model spir. Renew.													
1.3. Div. & union spir. retreat													
1.4. Union & conf. spir. retreat													
1.5. Conf. & past. spir. retreat													
Output 2: Develop Theology													
Activity 2.1. Identify topics on DA													
2.2. Identify speakers & writers													
2.3. Distribute assignments													
2.4. Review topic papers													
2.5. Produce power point present.													
2.6. Translate materials into lang.													
Output 3: Develop-impl. Div. retreat													
Activity 3.1. Arrange retreat with BU													
3.1.1. Identify retreat director													
3.1.2. Settle retreat date													
3.2. Identify-invite retreat speak.													
3.3. Develop posters & programs													
3.4. Announce & invite particip.													
3.5. Train retreat coordinators													
3.5.1. Lead out in group discuss.													
3.5.2. Instruct in prayer session													
3.6. Identify persons pers. Journ.													
3.7. Synthesis Working group													

Activities 2010	Quarter 2	April				May				June			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Output 1: Spiritual Renewal Retreats													
Activity 1.1. Discover need spir. Renewal													
1.2. Div. Off. Model spir. Renew.													
1.3. Div. & union spir. retreat													
1.4. Union & conf. spir. retreat													
1.5. Conf. & past. spir. retreat													
Output 2: Develop Theology													
Activity 2.1. Identify topics on DA													
2.2. Identify speakers & writers													
2.3. Distribute assignments													
2.4. Review topic papers													
2.5. Produce power point present.													
2.6. Translate materials into lang.													
Output 3: Develop-impl. Div. retreat													
Activity 3.1. Arrange retreat with BU													
3.1.1. Identify retreat director													
3.1.2. Settle retreat date													
3.2. Identify-invite retreat speak.													
3.3. Develop posters & programs													
3.4. Announce & invite particip.													
3.5. Train retreat coordinators													
3.5.1. Lead out in group discuss.													
3.5.2. Instruct in prayer session													
3.6. Identify persons pers. Journ.													
3.7. Synthesis Working group													

Activities 2010	Quarter 3	July				August				September			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Output 1: Spiritual Renewal Retreats													
Activity 1.1. Discover need spir. Renewal													
1.2. Div. Off. Model spir. Renew.													
1.3. Div. & union spir. retreat													
1.4. Union & conf. spir. retreat													
1.5. Conf. & past. spir. retreat													
Output 2: Develop Theology													
Activity 2.1. Identify topics on DA													
2.2. Identify speakers & writers													
2.3. Distribute assignments													
2.4. Review topic papers													
2.5. Produce power point present.													
2.6. Translate materials into lang.													
Output 3: Develop-impl. Div. retreat													
Activity 3.1. Arrange retreat with BU													
3.1.1. Identify retreat director													
3.1.2. Settle retreat date													
3.2. Identify-invite retreat speak.													
3.3. Develop posters & programs													
3.4. Announce & invite particip.													
3.5. Train retreat coordinators													
3.5.1. Lead out in group discuss.													
3.5.2. Instruct in prayer session													
3.6. Identify persons pers. Journ.													
3.7. Synthesis Working group													

Activities 2010	Quarter 4	October				November				December			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Output 1: Spiritual Renewal Retreats													
Activity 1.1. Discover need spir. Renewal													
1.2. Div. Off. Model spir. Renew.													
1.3. Div. & union spir. retreat													
1.4. Union & conf. spir. retreat													
1.5. Conf. & past. spir. retreat													
Output 2: Develop Theology													
Activity 2.1. Identify topics on DA													
2.2. Identify speakers & writers													
2.3. Distribute assignments													
2.4. Review topic papers													
2.5. Produce power point present.													
2.6. Translate materials into lang.													
Output 3: Develop-impl. Div. retreat													
Activity 3.1. Arrange retreat with BU													
3.1.1. Identify retreat director													
3.1.2. Settle retreat date													
3.2. Identify-invite retreat speak.													
3.3. Develop posters & programs													
3.4. Announce & invite particip.													
3.5. Train retreat coordinators													
3.5.1. Lead out in group discuss.													
3.5.2. Instruct in prayer session													
3.6. Identify persons pers. Journ.													
3.7. Synthesis Working group													

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