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ABSTRACT

NEW APPROACHES FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
EVANGELISM IN SWAZILAND

by

Stephen Jacobs Masuku

Adviser: Bruce L. Bauer

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: NEW APPROACHES FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST EVANGELISM
IN SWAZILAND

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Problem

The Seventh-day Adventist church in Swaziland experienced slow growth from the time of its inception. Starting from 1920, when the first Adventist missionary arrived in Swaziland, to 1994 membership was 2075. This means that the Adventist church in Swaziland was the slowest growing church in the former Southern Union and among the Christian churches in Swaziland.

Method

This dissertation analyzes: Swazi traditional history, Swazi traditional religious beliefs, the introduction of Christianity in Swaziland, how the SDA church was planted in

Swaziland, and the evangelistic methods utilized by the Adventist church and other Christian churches. This approach helped in the development of suggested new approaches for Adventist evangelism in Swaziland.

Results

The results of the study indicated that the Adventist church did not take culture and contextualization into consideration in their attempt to evangelize the Swazi. These results call for a contextual, culture sensitive approach to reach the Swazi with the gospel as preached by the Adventists.

Conclusion

This study concludes that effective evangelization of the Swazi by the Adventists must be anchored in the Bible and a contextual, culture sensitive approach, without watering down the message of the gospel.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

NEW APPROACHES FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
EVANGELISM IN SWAZILAND

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

by
Stephen Jacobs Masuku

April 1996

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To my late grandmother, Agness Kaunda,
a prayer warrior who prayed me into
the gospel ministry, whose
lifestyle influenced and won
many to the Christian faith

To my father,
who believes that I can climb
any academic mountain

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAGR	Average Annual Growth Rate
AGR	Annual Growth Rate
AIC	African Independent Churches
DGR	Decadal Growth Rates
SDA	Seventh-day Adventist
SF	Swaziland Field
SAGM	South Africa General Mission
SAM	Scandinavian Alliance Mission
SIC	Swaziland Independent Churches
SIC	Swaziland Indigenous Churches

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to formulate context-sensitive new approaches for Seventh-day Adventist evangelism in Swaziland. Traditionally, the Seventh-day Adventist evangelistic methods lacked cultural sensitivity; the stance of the church was either to ignore or condemn culture. Lately we have considered culture. I therefore aimed at developing approaches that are culture sensitive. These new approaches will affirm the Swazi that, although their culture is not perfect, they do not have to abandon it and adopt Western cultures in order to be Seventh-day Adventist Christians. Special attention will be paid to the winning of avowed traditionalists by being sensitive to their cultural context.

This study aims at equipping both pastors and laity with the necessary tools for effective evangelism of the Swazi. These tools will include the utilization of Swazi cultural forms for the communication of the gospel. Don Richardson calls this "the principle of redemptive analogy--

the application to local custom of spiritual truth."¹ I would consider Richardson's use of these analogies, which he calls "stepping stones, the secret entryway by which the gospel could reach the [Swazi] culture and start a spiritual revolution."²

The last goal of these new approaches is to increase numerical growth of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Swaziland.

Justification of the Study

First and foremost, Jesus gave a specific mission that encompasses the overall task of the church in Matt 28:19, 20 (NASB): "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." This command of Jesus is given to all churches including the church in Swaziland.

The second justification is that the Swazi are deeply rooted in their tradition and customs. The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church has not been able to make a significant impact among the Swazi. Despite the fact that the SDA Church was introduced and established seventy-five years ago, membership still stands at 2075.

¹Don Richardson, Peace Child (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1982), 10.

²Ibid.

To date, contextualization has not been taken into consideration for much of evangelism among the Swazi. This study sought to contextualize the gospel to the Swazi, because contextualization suggests the placing of the gospel in total context of a culture at a particular moment, a moment that is shaped by the past and looks to the future.¹

I personally ministered in Swaziland for 12 years and conducted quite a few evangelistic meetings without significant success. The best of evangelists from the United States of America and Australia held well-financed evangelistic campaigns, but left Swaziland without making any notable change in regard to numerical growth.

The last justification of this study is based on the painful truth that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the slowest growing church among the Christian churches in Swaziland. Using a more effective and culturally sensitive approach to reach and assimilate the Swazi will improve the growth of the SDA church.

Description of the Study

The research for this study is based on sources from the James White Library and Interlibrary Loan Service, the returned surveys that were sent to Swaziland, telephone interviews, and my experience of twelve years in Swaziland.

¹Lesslie Newbigin, Foolishness to the Greeks (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), 2.

After the introduction, chapter 2 deals with the historical and cultural setting of the Swazi nation, focusing in particular on the Swazi traditional history. The Swazi religious beliefs are dealt with in a rather extensive fashion, because they are a prerequisite to knowing and understanding the religious setting of the Swazi. It is only then that the gospel can be meaningfully communicated to the Swazi.

Chapter 3 gives a brief history of the coming of Christianity to Swaziland. This chapter focuses on the early Christian missionaries to Swaziland, the evangelistic strategies they employed, and the success or failure of those strategies.

Chapter 4 deals with the dynamics of Adventist church growth and non-growth in Swaziland. Church growth is analyzed based on statistical reports from the General Conference in Washington, DC. The principal growth factors are discussed, and the questionnaire results undergo assessment.

Chapter 5 studies biblical, Spirit of Prophecy, and church-growth principles in view of the evangelization of the Swazi. All three sources present evangelism and contextualization. The last part of the chapter deals with contextualization in other Christian churches in Swaziland.

Chapter 6 ventures into the most sensitive and arduous task of this dissertation: The actual new approaches for

the SDA evangelization of Swaziland. This chapter endeavors to put across the truth that the medium and the message are very important for fruitful evangelization of any people group. In essence, this chapter delves into practical issues and principles that must be taken into consideration if numerical growth is to be achieved in Swaziland.

The dissertation ends with the conclusion and recommendations of this study, summarizing the steps that should be taken to evangelize the Swazi effectively.

Limitations

I believe that contextualization with a high view of the Bible and a high view of culture is the answer to the Swaziland Field's sluggish and unhealthy growth. I do not suggest that this strategy is the panacea for numerical growth of the SDA church in Swaziland. It has been correctly said that

no method or strategy of church growth is absolute. Against the background of human weakness, the church can only make limited and sometimes ineffective contributions to God's work of grace. The church must recognize the priority of discernment in the adoption and implementation of principles and methods that will promote holistic church growth in Southern Africa. Finally, the church must affirm the primary place of the sovereignty of God and the power of the Holy Spirit in advancement of mission, ministry, and the Kingdom of God.¹

¹Gabriel M. Setiloane and Ivan. H. M. Peden, eds., Pangs of Growth (Braamfontein, South Africa: Skotaville Publishers, 1988), 229.

I submit that even these new approaches will have to be updated and improved to meet the needs of the dynamic culture of the Swazi nation. Because like any other culture, Swazi culture is not static, hence the need for further research.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORY AND CULTURAL SETTING

OF THE SWAZI

This chapter presents a brief history and the cultural setting of the Swazi, including their religious beliefs and cultural characteristics. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a better understanding of Swazi culture, since such an understanding is a prerequisite if one is to evangelize the Swazi effectively.

Swazi History

The Swazi are a Bantu-speaking¹ people inhabiting a small country in southeastern Africa. According to Professor Alan R. Booth, a former professor at the University College of Swaziland, Swazis are predominantly Nguni in language and culture, although their early admixture with the Sotho, who now inhabit mainly the Transvaal and Orange Free State, and to a lesser extent, the

¹Bantu, literally "people," is a linguistic label derived from the root ntu "person," and the plural prefix ba. There are over 400 Bantu languages and many dialects, but their structure is sufficiently characteristic and distinctive to postulate a common origin. Collier's Encyclopedia, 1975 ed., s.v. "Swaziland."

Tsonga, whose home is now Mozambique, has left the Swazi with cultural traces of these people.¹

Dr. Hilda Kuper, who has written extensively about Swaziland, states that groups of Bantu-speaking people migrated into southeastern Africa in the late fifteenth century. Leading one of the groups was Dlamini, a man of Embo Nguni stock who founded the royal clan of the Swazi. He led his followers eastwards along the Komati River towards the coast.² "The size of his tribe is unknown; the nucleus of the people were his patrilineal kinsmen, the rest were married women and a few men of other clans."³

Other Nguni speakers akin to the Swazi, notably the Xhosa and the Zulu, migrated further south, the Zulu settling neighboring areas of what is now central Natal. But the Swazi, led by Dlamini's descendants, remained for over two hundred years in what is now southern Mozambique in the region of Maputo.⁴

Dr. Kuper has written that Dlamini and his followers built scattered patriarchal homesteads, pastured their cattle, and tilled the soil. Sometimes segments hived off

¹Alan R. Booth, Swaziland: Traditional Change in a Southern African Kingdom (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983), 7.

²Hilda Kuper, An African Aristocracy: Rank Among the Swazi (London: Oxford University Press, 1980), 12.

³Ibid.

⁴Booth, 7.

through the ambition of brothers or sons or to facilitate marriages that were otherwise prohibited. The new group thus formed adopted a new name and became politically independent.¹

It is fitting to mention some of those who seceded from the main line of the first Dlamini: these are people such as Mkhize, Hlubi, Bhele, and Natal Dlamini.²

The true Dlamini established peaceful and intimate contact with at least one other Bantu group, the Tembe, a people highly skilled in agriculture and industry. Modern Swazi claim, "We are one with the Tembe; their King, like ours, marries his sisters." Swazi traditional history as rendered by Dr. Kuper has it that intermarriage between the ruling Tembe and Dlamini was prohibited until, in the reign of the Dlamini King Mbandzeni, the Swazi sent Princess Dzambile, classificatory sister of Mbandzeni, to be the wife of the Tembe ruler. Thus, a bond of marriage was substituted for the unity of blood.³

The order of Dlamini's direct descendants is confused until the appearance of Ngwane II, who inaugurates a new stage of Swazi history. From the names of ancient kings it

¹Kuper, 12.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

seems that approximately seventeen generations elapsed between Dlamini and Ngwane II.¹

For reasons best known to King Ngwane II, "he and a small group of kinsmen and retainers left their home on the east coast and moved inland across the mountains, an achievement recorded in the royal song of praise."² They finally settled in what is now southeastern Swaziland known to the Swazi as the "Place of Burning," a name that some informants say refers to signs of previous habitation.³

In essence, this is the area the Swazi consider the birthplace of their nation. In siSwati or Swazi language the "Place of Burning" is called Eshiselweni, a name descriptive of ruthless methods of conquest. Stories are still told of the tyranny of Ngwane's son, Ndungunye, and grandson, Sobhuza I. They laid waste the homes of those who dared to flout their commands.⁴

Most of the migrants were Dlamini relatives, as noted above. However, it should be noted that there were also forerunners of many clans who are important at the present time such as Matsebula, Hlope, Thwala, and others with

¹Ibid.

²Hilda Kuper, The Swazi (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), 7.

³Ibid.

⁴Kuper, An African Aristocracy, 12.

genealogies extending beyond their amalgamation at Eshiselweni.¹

In spite of the fact that they were not all of Embo Nguni stock, their differences were merged in loyalty to the Dlamini leader. They are acknowledged as the true original Swazi, the bomdzabu (those who originated at Shiselweni).²

As already mentioned, the "true Swazi" are persons who were with the first group led by King Ngwane II and settled at Eshiselweni (the place of burning). However, I would be remiss in my research if I ignored those who had already occupied the country.

The "true Swazi" entered a country already occupied by alien groups of Nguni and Sotho stock from whom Sobhuza demanded allegiance. Those groups that submitted humbly, implicitly acknowledged their inferior strength. They gave occasional tribute in food and service, and were permitted, as long as they remained loyal, to retain their hereditary chiefs and limited autonomy. Those who resisted were defeated and plundered; the men were usually slain and the women and children were assimilated by marriage and adoption into the nation.³

One small group, the Mapoko (Ndzundza), simply moved out of immediate range of conquest--an insult remembered and

¹Ibid., 13.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

later revenged. The prior inhabitants who formed the second group in the growing nation were labelled Emakhandzambili ("Those found ahead"), when this group proved their loyalty to the Dlaminis and were classed as "true Swazi."¹

King Sobhuza I eventually established himself in the region of the Mdzimba hills, central Swaziland, still the district in which most royal villages are situated. He built his homestead, Elangeni ("in the sun"), and stabilized his position. When Sobhuza I died, he left to his successor a strong kingdom, respected and feared by the neighboring Bantu. The boundaries of his domain extended roughly as far as Barberton in the north, Carolina in the west, the Pongola in the south, and the Ubombo in the east.²

It is indeed unmistakable that the Swazi are a proud people, deeply rooted in their culture, customs, and traditions. They are proud of their past and present kings who built the nation to what it is today.

Dr. Kuper's observation is fitting in this regard: "The people whom we speak of as Swazi usually refer to themselves as Bantu baka Ngwane 'People of Ngwane,'"³ apparently because of his courageous move through the mountains to the land that they now enjoy and love.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 12.

Notwithstanding their history of conquering and plundering, Swaziland is essentially a peaceful and conservative country whose people, for all their proud military tradition, for the most part quietly pursue the good life. A major theme of Swazi history is the effort of the government and the citizenry to deal peaceably and wisely with the facts of their geographic position and abundance of resources and the greed that those resources have excited in others.¹

The next section briefly presents the geography of Swaziland.

Geography

The geographic information rendered in this section is gleaned mostly from the Swaziland Tourist Guide² unless otherwise stated.

Swaziland is the smallest country in the southern hemisphere. It has a maximum length of 179 km from the south to the north, and 144 km from the east to the west. With an area of 17,364 square km it is slightly smaller than New Jersey. (See figure 1.)

The Kingdom of Swaziland is almost completely surrounded by the two provinces of the Republic of South Africa, the Transvaal covering the northwestern part and

¹Booth, 1-2.

²Swaziland Tourist Guide (Mbabane: Swaziland Government Tourist Office, 1994), 1.

Natal on the southern part. The remainder is covered by Mozambique. The distance from Johannesburg by road is 368 km, while from the port of Maputo it is less than 160 km.

Swaziland falls into four complete geographical regions that run like a parallelogram from the north to the south. The first three are almost equal in size: the Highveld, the Middleveld, and the Lowveld, the last being Lubombo, which is the smallest.

Dr. Hilda Kuper says that of great importance to the Swazi is the abundant supply of water. Rain comes with the beginning of spring, in August or September, and falls in heavy showers, saturating the land and filling four large rivers and many tributaries.¹

Temperatures in this beautiful country are varied: in the highveld they range from 60° to 71° F and in the lowveld from 60° to 84° F.

Professor Booth's observation in this connection would make any Swazi overjoyed: "In truth Swaziland is an extraordinarily rich and beautiful country. Parts of it are lush and well watered and beneath the ground lies a wealth of certain minerals,"² such as gold and asbestos.

I would like to think that Dr. Kuper makes a wild assertion when she says that "throughout southern Africa the

¹Kuper, The Swazi, 2.

²Booth, 2.

Map of Swaziland

This map shows the more important towns and other features.

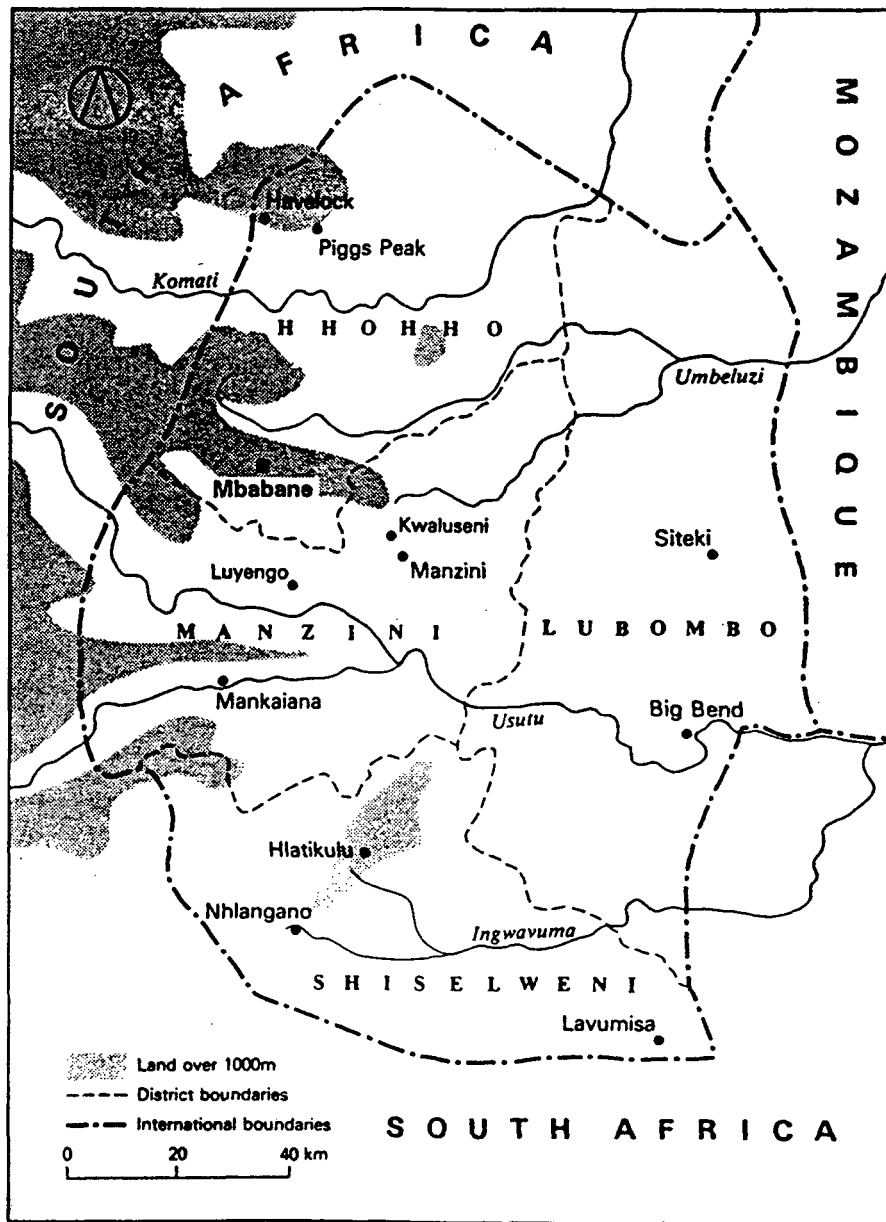


Fig. 1. Swaziland. Source: Balam Nyeko, Swaziland, p. 242.

Swazi queen mother is famed for her rain medicine."¹ However, she is on the right track when she says that the Swazi do not consider floods and droughts acts of God or nature, but signs of royal displeasure or punishment from royal ancestral spirits.² Indeed, the Swazi are a religious people who are generally more affective than cognitive in their approach to religion. The next section deals with Swazi religious beliefs.

Swazi Religious Beliefs

This section ventures into a brief presentation of Swazi religious beliefs. My goal is to identify areas of commonality to be utilized as points of contact and to possibly find redemptive analogies. These religious beliefs are closely examined later in order to lay some grounds for contextualization and the communication of the gospel to the Swazi.

The Supreme Being--God

The fact that the Swazi are dedicated and committed to ancestral cult does not necessarily mean that they are ignorant of God who created heaven and earth. Dr. Nxumalo, a Swazi scholar, has asserted that it is believed by the Swazi that there is One God (Mkhuluncande), the creator who

¹Kuper, The Swazi, 2.

²Ibid.

sent Mlentengamunye (the one legged) to redeem the world.¹ Dr. Kuper argues that "no Swazi will deny the existence of God, translated Unkulunkulu (which means 'The Great Great One') but regard him as a remote First Ancestor."² Dr. Kuper believes that the Christian faith overlaps at certain points with the ancestral cult, such as the case above.

Angelo Natale Ciccone, a graduate of the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, explains Swazi belief or rather a knowledge of God among the Swazi in the following manner:³ The Swazi have long known God as Mvelincandi, Mkhuluncande, and Mlentengamunye. He cites Byaruhanga-Akiki, who asserts that the first name, Mvelincandi, refers to Him as the one who brought Himself to life.⁴

This is enough to make us understand that God is understood to be omnipotent among these people. In order for him to have used his power correctly he must be omniscient, all knowing as well. He brought life and existence about. He is the beginner, the source of existence, the Creator. Implicitly he is the King of Creation. He runs it or He made it to run the way it does.⁵

¹Sishayi Nxumalo, Our Swazi Way of Life (Mbabane, Swaziland: Swaziland Printing and Publishing Company Limited, n.d.), 10.

²Hilda Kuper, The Uniform of Colour (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 115.

³Angelo Natale Ciccone, "The Church as Servant Community in Swazi Culture" (M.A. thesis, Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, 1975), 46.

⁴Byaruhanga-Akiki, cited in Ibid.

⁵Ciccone, 46.

The proportions were so perfect that he has never needed to repair any part of His creation, He is infallible. The Swazi are not bothered as to how He went about the mechanism of creation; they have no story of creation.

The second name, Mkhuluncande, refers to Him anthropomorphically as grandfather whose posterity is the whole humanity of people who are dead or alive.¹ There is a belief that Mkhuluncande is all powerful. In this light, He is seen as not being limited in His relationship with any of His creatures.

The third name, Mlentengamunye (one legged), is an attempt at describing His physical appearance. It confirms the assumption that man has a resemblance to God and that God is not all spirit. However, Ciccone says that there is a controversy about whether Mlentengamunye is the same as Mvelincandi.²

Dudley Barker observed that the Swazi acknowledge a single creator of the earth, named Mkhuluncande. But they held that He has remained aloof from the world ever since He created it, although now and then He sends a messenger, Mlentengamunye.³ Barker adds that, apart from sending this messenger on a rare visit, the creator ceased to take any

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., 47.

³Dudley Barker, Swaziland (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1965), 84.

part in the affairs of mankind.¹ In essence, He has withdrawn Himself to a hazy sphere where He is unapproachable by human beings.

The Swazi interpretation of God, the supreme being, was that He lives in the heavens and does not bother with the work or affairs of individuals, wrote Fiona Louise Armitage.² Armitage further says that the Swazi God is not a personal God such as the God of the Christian churches. Rather, the Swazi God is a family or national God. "He looks after the affairs of a whole people or a homestead group. There is no one man's religion or sacrifice."³

This explains the reason why the Swazi cling to their ancestors the way they do. According to Dr. Nxumalo, the Swazi regard their ancestors as "guardian angels." These "guardian angels" are closer to God and they intercede on behalf of their individual families.⁴ The ancestors are interested primarily in their own kinsmen, while God is claimed as the God of all humanity, wrote Kuper.⁵

¹Ibid.

²Fiona Louise Armitage, "Abakamoya: People of the Spirit" (Master of Letters thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1976), 246.

³Ibid.

⁴Nxumalo, 10.

⁵Kuper, The Uniform of Colour, 115.

The ancestors are treated as human beings with human emotions, while God is described as a Divine Power.¹ Benjamin C. Ray suggests that God is usually remote from daily religious life, and the many lesser gods and spirits are constantly involved in everyday religious experience.² However, under the influence of Christianity this vague image of the Creator has changed dramatically, as He is now worshipped by many people and regarded as involved actively in human destiny.³

Aside from calling God Unkulunkulu (the Great Great One), the Swazi view God as Inkosi yama Khosi, meaning "Lord of Lords" or "King of Kings." I hasten to mention that, in Swazi culture, kings are highly respected and almost revered by their subjects. It stands to reason that the one called King of Kings commands more than ordinary respect--hence, the need for intermediaries in the form of lesser gods, who are closer to people than the King of Kings.

In Swazi culture it is taken for granted that the deceased live with God and His Son, therefore they are in a favorable position to plead with God on behalf of the

¹Ibid.

²Benjamin C. Ray, African Religious Symbols, Rituals, and Community (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1976), 50.

³J. S. Malan, Swazi Culture (Pretoria, South Africa: Africa Institute of South Africa, 1985), 9.

living.¹ There are times when people gather together to plead with the Great Great One when something goes amiss with the seasons of the year. In effect, they begin to consult the lesser gods and when the lesser gods fail, only then do they plead with the supreme God through their ancestors.

The idea of revelation, salvation, and judgment does not exist in Swazi Traditional Religion. Salvation, if it does exist, is attributed to ancestors and not God.

The next section deals with the lesser gods within the Swazi context. It must, however, be made clear that religion is all-pervasive in the African society, as it is in Swazi society. "Religion plays an important part in the lives of African peoples and exerts a great influence upon the thinking of the people. Since religion permeates his whole being, he cannot be a one-day Christian."²

The Lesser Gods

Beside the supreme God, ancestors also have a prominent place or role in Swazi Traditional Religion (STR). They are recognized as lesser gods. The importance of ancestors cannot be understood without familiarity with death and its relationship to the cult.

¹Nxumalo, 10.

²John Reinhold and Mary Reinhold, "Swaziland" (Paper written for Institute of World Missions, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI, 1981), 4.

Death. In Swazi culture, death constitutes a disturbance in both worlds, an entrance into one and an exit from the other. It marks the most extreme rites of separation by Swazi.¹ Dr. Kuper has noted that the Swazi also believe in a soul that survives death, and in supernatural spirits.² Barker concluded that the Swazi are a people with a firm belief in life after death.³

Barker has also noted that the cult of ancestor is based on the belief that every man is composed of two parts, "flesh" and "breath," the latter living on after the former dies.⁴

Dr. Kuper records a Swazi myth that explains the origin of death and the role played by God in this process.⁵

I find it interesting and intriguing the way Barker has explained the life cycle of Swazi society:

¹D. Kidd, The Essential Kaffir, Black (London: n.p., 1925), 249.

²Kuper, The Uniform of Colour, 115.

³Barker, 84.

⁴Ibid.

⁵In a myth widespread throughout the southern tribes, death was imposed by the arbitrary and inconsistent nature of the "Great Great One," "The First Being," a vaguely conceived "Great ancestor." He sent the chameleon to mankind with a message of eternal life, then changed His mind and sent the lizard with a message of death. The lizard arrived before the chameleon, who had stopped to eat of tasty berries growing by the wayside. When the chameleon arrived and delivered his message, he was driven away--death had already become part of life. The Great Great One apparently did not again intervene in the affairs of men.

The Swazi think of life as falling into eight successive stages--babyhood, infancy, childhood, adolescence, puberty, adult life, old age, and then the extreme age of "almost an ancestor." With increasing age comes increasing authority and respect, especially for women. With death and the passage to full ancestor the individual's importance to his family increases yet further, although it is held that a person's status after death continues to be much the same as that of his lifetime, and the more important a man was when living, the greater will be his power as spirit.¹

While each specific death is interpreted as an act of witchcraft, death is also recognized as universal and inevitable,² explains Kuper. With the influence of Christianity in Swazi society, the dead are believed to live with these two (Father and Son) and are thus in a position to plead with God on behalf of the living. Prior to the advent of Christianity in Swaziland, according to Dr. Nxumalo, when the aged Swazi succumbed to death they were elevated to the company of God and ancestors.³

Death, more than any other situation in Swazi culture, exposes the social personality of man, woman, and child in the fullest context of kinship.⁴ In the event of death of husbands, the widows shave their heads and remain in "darkness" for three years before they are given the duty of

¹Barker, 85.

²Kuper, The Swazi, 59.

³Nxumalo, 10.

⁴Hilda Kuper, The Swazi: A South African Kingdom (New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winston, 1963), 59.

continuing the lineage of the deceased through the levirate.¹

A wife is more expendable; the deceased woman is buried on the outskirts of her husband's home, and the mourning imposed on him is less conspicuous, less rigorous, and of shorter duration. The social order regulated overt demonstrations of grief, irrespective of the depth of personal emotions.²

Death is believed to weaken those associated with the dead and all who can must attend the burial and be purified; relatives who are far away must be informed so that they also can be doctored.³

J. S. Malan has written that a special ukubuyisa (ritual) is conducted to bring the spirit of the deceased back to his village. This occurs sometime after the burial during full moon, when the ancestor is requested to come home and care for his living kin (londolota).⁴

According to Ciccone, the ancestors are vaguely localized at the grave or the kraal, or in some subterranean abode ("those who are below" abaphantsi or umhlaba).⁵

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Kuper, The Swazi, 51.

⁴Malan, 13.

⁵Ciccone, 49

Ancestors and Their Role in Swazi
Traditional Religion

According to Malan, when a person dies, his soul, intellect, personality, and will-power form a permanent combination with his spirit, and finally departs from his physical body as lidloti (ancestral spirit). He then goes to the spirit world, which is below the ground and, like the living society, also organized according to kinship groups.¹

In Swaziland, according to Ciccone, all the deceased infants, adults, married or unmarried, become ancestors, but the ceremony of "ukubuyisa" must be made on their behalf.²

The ancestors command a lot of respect from the living in Swazi society.

The ancestors are considered as the "founding fathers" who have laid down the tone and safe path for each community or family to tread. They were the first who founded that family and who decided the family community's religious, moral and social rules. If these are kept, then the ancestors are regarded as powerful aids to a secure and prosperous life; if ignored or insulted, they become dangerous to enemies, the family and community.³

The powers of ancestors are believed to be extensive. They do not cause death, but in extreme cases (murder or kinsman for instance), they can bar the guilty from access to the spirit world.⁴ Dr. Kuper has written that ancestors

¹Malan, 13.

²Ciccone, 49.

³Ibid.

⁴Booth, 48.

have greater wisdom, foresight, and power than the rest of mankind, but no spirit of a deceased ever reaches complete deification or is regarded as omnipotent.¹

Dr. Kuper submits that illness and other misfortunes are frequently attributed to the ancestors, but Swazi believe emadloti (ancestors) do not inflict sufferings through malice or wanton cruelty.² However, ancestors punish, they do not kill; death is the act of evil doers (batsakatsi) who are interested in destroying, not in perpetuating, the lineage or the State.³

It is believed that the ancestors' influence on the living involves lesser inflictions: bad dreams, sickness, deprivation. There is a hierarchy of spirits, an extension of the rank and prestige of the lineage of the living. Hence, the ancestors of the King are regarded as the most powerful of all spirits.⁴

It is common knowledge that Swazi are a smart people; they do not ask their ancestors to provide them with things that their ancestors did not approve when they were alive. The ancestors simply sanction the desires of their descendants.

¹Kuper, The Swazi: A South African Kingdom, 60.

²Ibid., 58.

³Ibid., 59.

⁴Ibid., 58.

There is a common belief that at the moment when a person dies, the fluid in the end of his spinal column turns into a snake. At first it has a white appearance, but it becomes pale green when it reaches the surface. Malan learned that these snakes are harmless and are allowed to move around undisturbed in the villages. They are also called emadloti. The spirit of an old woman may appear in the form of a lizard (gheketana), while the royal ancestors of the Nkosi Dlamini clan appear in the shape of mambas.¹

The Swazi believe and recognize the ancestor as an intelligent being with his own desires. The lidloti (ancestor) takes the necessary action to assist or to discipline his relatives, thereby ensuring an orderly society. Malan has written that a highly functional relationship exists between the living and dead members of a patrilineage and forms the basis of Swazi religion.²

Swazi Traditional Religion

Swazi Traditional Religion (STR) revolves around the ancestral cult. The spirits of one's ancestors aid the living in coping with the hazards of life--illness, unfaithfulness, crop failure--facilitated by an elaborate

¹Malan, 15.

²Ibid.

system of magic.¹ Magic provides the techniques for the achievements of these desires.²

STR regulates Swazi life in general. It is a mechanism that allays the anxieties created by their inability to predict and understand events that do not conform to the natural laws. According to Akiki, "Swazi Religion is based on general revelation which refers to God's self-disclosure in the external universe and in the personality of man."³

Dr. Kuper has written that ancestors have greater wisdom, foresight, and power than the rest of mankind, but no spirit of the deceased ever reaches complete deification or is regarded as omnipotent.⁴ Professor Booth agrees with Dr. Kuper that the powers of ancestors are believed to be extensive. They do not cause death, but in extreme cases of murder of kinsman, for instance, they can bar the guilty from access to the spirit world.⁵

There is a hierarchy of spirits, an extension of the rank and prestige of the lineage of the living. Hence, the ancestors of the King are regarded as the most powerful of all spirits. Booth has noted that there is also a sex differentiation among the living carried to the spirit

¹Booth, 48.

²Kuper, The Swazi, 58.

³Byaruhanga-Akiki, quoted in Ciccone, 45.

⁴Kuper, The Swazi: A South African Kingdom, 60.

⁵Booth, 48.

world. Male ancestors stress legal and moral obligations of the living; female spirits guard against harm befalling their kin.¹

Swazi usually say that the emadloti live below the ground in kinship groups, but are not limited by space. For a while the lidloti hovers near its own grave, then, when brought into the homestead, it is at the same time in the company of dead kinsmen whose graves are scattered over the country.² "The ancestors," says Kuper, "in fact are everywhere at the same time, and hear and see everything that is said and done. Their most active period is between sunset and sunrise, the correct time for important burials and for appealing to the dead."³

D. Kidd brings forward the fact that "among the Swazi, sacrifice is made only to ghosts of the dead; Swazi do not sacrifice to God or other high spirits."⁴ We must be reminded that ancestral spirits are thought of most when comforts are few and troubles are many.⁵

In cases of absence of rain occasioning royal intervention, the cause is commonly laid to the anger of royal ancestors over popular disobedience, to the breach of

¹Ibid.

²Kuper, An African Aristocracy, 186-187.

³Ibid.

⁴Kidd, 388.

⁵Kuper, The Swazi: A South African Kingdom, 60.

taboos, or to other transgressions.¹ It is in cases like these when propitiation to ancestors takes place, which is usually accompanied by an offering of beer and meat--on significant occasions, the slaughtering of an ox.² Dudley Barker agreed with Booth when he wrote that the Swazi propitiate their ancestor with small gifts, and expect their help in their own lives on earth.³

Interestingly, these sacrifices that are offered are all consumed by the living on behalf of the dead.⁴ In Swazi society it is common knowledge that the "living eat on behalf of the dead." We can therefore say that the Swazi know that the dead can neither eat nor drink.

Each family propitiates its own ancestors during the life cycle events of birth, marriage, death, and when building and moving huts. In addition, the royal ancestors periodically receive public recognition.⁵ According to Booth, there is no class of priests ordained to deal with ancestral spirits; that duty normally rests with the head of the family. Spirits are appealed to at each significant domestic event.⁶

¹Booth, 50.

²Ibid., 49.

³Barker, 84.

⁴Nxumalo, 10.

⁵Kuper, The Swazi: A South African Kingdom, 60.

⁶Booth, 49.

The King plays a very important role in the religious system of the nation in that he is answerable to God for the deeds of his people just as the head of the family is answerable for the deeds of those who live in his home. This does not mean, however, that the individual is in any way exonerated.¹ I think Anders Fogelquist is right when he says the King,

as the head of the family, representing the nation, sacrifices to the royal ancestors. He is in a sense "the father of the tribe," and as such he leads the agricultural rites at seed-time and at harvest. These rituals also provide occasion to affirm the unity of the tribe in the person of the King. During these ceremonies, the King acts as an intermediary between the tribe and his shades who are believed to be present.²

One wonders how the Swazi know when the ancestors demand a sacrifice. According to Kuper, there are two main kinds of ritual specialists, the herbalist, inyanga yemitsi, and the diviner, isangoma. The herbalist uses medicines, imitsi, in his work. The respected herbalist works together with his ancestors. His relation with them is that they had agreed to his becoming a herbalist.³ Nxumalo asserts that Swazi medicine men are supposed to be in a position to inform the living as to what is in fact required by the

¹Nxumalo, 10.

²Anders Fogelquist, "The Red-Dressed Zionists" (Doctoral dissertation, Uppsala University, Sweden, 1986), 44.

³Kuper, An African Aristocracy, 167.

dead.¹ I recognize that Dr. Nxumalo has made a blanket statement in this regard because only the diviners are supposed to interpret and respond to the devices of the spirit world, whereas the tinyanga provide medicine to cure various maladies as revealed by diviners.

Professor Booth has written that each diviner has his own methods to aid in the diagnosis (bones, rattles, cards, wands) and to indicate the cure that sometimes involves sacrifices to ancestors, treatment by tinyanga, or in extreme cases, the destruction of the witch or sorcerer identified as the source of the trouble.² However, witch hunting and smelling out is forbidden by the law.

While both medicine men (tinyanga) and diviners (tangoma) are greatly respected, diviners are the more powerful and respected of the specialists. They are regarded with awe, since they are considered to have been selected by ancestral spirits for their work. In spite of that, Swazi consult medicine men in all situations requiring "deep" (esoteric) knowledge, whether they be herbalists (tinyanga) or diviners (tangoma).³ The question is, Do Swazi worship their ancestors? The section that follows presents a brief answer to the question.

¹Nxumalo, 10.

²Booth, 49.

³Kuper, The Swazi: A South African Kingdom, 62.

Ancestor worship. In response to this question, Barker has already adduced the idea that Swazi do not worship their ancestors. How do we explain the propitiation of ancestors that is usually accompanied by an offering of beer and meat--and on especially significant occasions, the slaughtering of an ox?¹

Dr. Kuper, who lived among the Swazi for two years, stresses that ancestors are not worshipped. Swazi address them in much the same way as they speak to the living. Their prayers are spontaneous and conversational; they frequently contain rebukes and seldom express gratitude or extreme humility.²

John S. Mbiti, one of the most respected African theologians, asserts: "Africans do not worship their departed ones. It is completely wrong to call African Religion as ancestor worship."³ He further argues that to remember them is not to deify them.⁴

Mbiti insists that the phenomenon that Westerners call "ancestor worship" is not worship at all. The acts of giving food and drink to ancestral spirits are symbols of

¹Booth, 49.

²Kuper, The Swazi, 43.

³John S. Mbiti, Introduction to Religion, 2d ed. (Oxford: Heinemann International Literature and Textbooks, 1991), 18.

⁴Ibid.

communion, fellowship, and remembrance. He reiterates: To remember them is not to deify them.¹

Having studied extensively and conducted research in this connection, Mbiti submits that Africans themselves know very well that they are not worshipping the departed members of their family. It is almost blasphemous, therefore, to describe these acts of family relationship as worship.²

I do not intend to belabor this issue, but the truth remains that Africans, including the Swazi, do not worship their ancestors. However, they honor and almost revere their parents beyond the grave. Kuper brings forward a Swazi proverb in this regard, "People die, their work goes on."³ In effect, it is the memory of what the ancestors did when they were alive that matters most, but that cannot be easily separated from the ancestors themselves.

Barker strongly asserts that the Swazi do not exactly worship them, but take it for granted that the ancestors continue after death to play an increasing part in the fortunes and well being of the family.

¹Ibid., 11.

²Ibid.

³Barker, 84.

Cultural Characteristics

It is necessary to look at the cultural characteristics because we have to know Swazi culture before cultural-sensitive approaches can be developed.

Homestead

The principal Swazi social unit is the homestead (family unit). Its structure continues much according to tradition. Men dominate, whether as headmen of large, multi-unit homesteads or as fathers of single (perhaps polygamous) families.¹ Ciccone emphasizes this point thus: "In Swazi society the family is the fundamental unit upon which is based the entire social organization."²

As opposed to the nuclear family, the extended (lineal) family consists of a large number of people related by descent in one line from a living, or recently dead, common ancestor. Ciccone points out that where the group is separated by more than one generation from a common ancestor, the family or lineage group tends to split into two or more groups. The extended family is seen both in space and in time. Ideally it continues forever.³

The extended family is not limited to the explanation given above. The family also includes the departed

¹Booth, 34.

²Ciccone, 18.

³Ibid., 19.

relatives. They are, in the memories of their surviving families, the "living dead," and are thought to be still interested in the affairs of the family to which they once belonged in their physical life.¹

Blood and blood relationships extend far beyond the biological family (established by marriage) that is the heart of each homestead. The blood group embraces the classificatory kinship system, coursing through both maternal and paternal groups, the largest extension of which is the patrilineal clan.² "No Swazi can throw away his blood," the Swazi say; no man "refuses his blood"--abandons a kinsman in trouble--without expecting serious consequences. Within clans are smaller groups tracing patrilineal lineages back to common ancestors, sometimes for more than ten generations. Clans and lineages are exogamous, except for the ruling Nkosi Dlamini.³

Often a large homestead will embrace more than a single biological family. Kinsmen of various sorts, divorcees, widows or widowers returned to the family, and children of full-time city workers are also likely to be occupants. Heads of homesteads in a particular region are also often related by blood or marriage.⁴

¹Ibid., 20.

²Booth, 39.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., 35.

It is important to mention the position of the kraal on the homestead. Central to the traditional homestead is the cattle byre, a circular area enclosed by substantial logs interspersed with branches. The cattle byre has great ritual as well as practical significance stemming from the importance of cattle as a store of wealth and symbol of prestige.¹

The functions of this local family group divide themselves up easily into those functions that are economic, educational, ceremonial, and legal.

According to Brian Allan Marwick, the unit centers around the wife, who has her own household, her own fields, and cattle allotted for the use of her household. By dint of her own industry and some assistance from her husband, she produces crops to provide food for the unit.²

In this patrilineal society, wives are responsible for the provision of food and education to her household. However, "if her supplies are inadequate for her demands, it is the duty of her husband to make up the deficiency, which may be from his own resources, or by borrowing from another such unit. The husband often has fields of his own, distinct from those of his various wives."³

¹Ibid.

²Brian Allan Marwick, The Swazi (London: Cambridge University Press, 1940), 44.

³Ibid.

The wife is the central figure in the education of the children of the family group. The children are taught to speak, to behave according to traditional rules, to perform domestic tasks, and generally to fit themselves for life in Swazi society.¹ Understandably the mother is the fountain head of their learning, but the boys learn more from the father. "They learn as much by observation as by deliberate instruction."²

Modern conditions give children the opportunity of attending schools run on Western lines where education assumes a different and more specialized character. It is not uncommon for rural and traditional Swazi girls to obtain more schooling opportunities than boys. The reason for this sex difference is that boys have to be groomed to manhood by their fathers such that they learn to rear and look after the domestic livestock--the common concealed wealth of rural Swazi--and they must learn how to run the household.

Marwick has said that "the family is the workshop of culture."³ In regard to ceremonial functions, each family is responsible; the husband leads out in such occasions. This would also include any legal functions of the family.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., 44, 45.

³Ibid., 44.

Marriage

Swazi marriage is essentially a linking of two families rather than of two persons, and the bearing of children is the essential consummation of wifhood. Swazi marriage is of so enduring a nature that, should the man himself die, the woman is inherited through the custom of the levirate by one of the male relatives of the deceased to raise children in his name.¹ Marriage negotiations are conducted between the parents of the bride and the groom, and they also agree on the number of cattle or cash equivalent of the marriage goods (lobola), says Malan.²

There are two basic types of marriage in Swaziland: the civil marriage and the customary marriage. Currently, I dare say, both are accepted on equal basis. However, it has not always been like that. Dr. Thandabantu Nhlapo, a professor of law at the University of Cape Town, explains thus:

For years, marriage certificates were only issued for the civil marriage and when proof of marital status was required this was the marriage with the advantage. Many Swazis were compelled to marry a second time under the Act simply to obtain evidence of status so as to take up employment entitlements such as housing or visitation rights. Since the 1st January 1983 customary law marriages have been registered in accordance with the terms of Birth, Marriages, and

¹Kuper, The Swazi: A South African Kingdom, 22.

²Malan, 39.

Deaths Registration Act of 1983, with certificates issued.¹

I cannot speak for other churches, but the Seventh-day Adventist church looks askance at the customary marriage. The church does not possess power to stop the members from opting for customary marriage. Civil marriage is always recommended by church leaders. The fear is that customary marriage may influence or encourage church members to add many more wives, owing to the fact that customary marriage permits men to have as many wives as they can afford.

Another reason for the church's negative attitude could be the laws governing customary marriage. Dr. Nhlapo summarizes them thus:

1. A man, married or single, commits adultery only if he has sexual intercourse with a married woman.

2. A married woman commits adultery regardless of the marital status of her male partner.

3. An unmarried woman's sexual activities never amount to adultery regardless of the marital status of her partner.

4. Adultery as a ground for divorce is available only to the husband, not the wife.²

¹Thandabantu Nhlapo, Marriage and Divorce in Swazi Law and Custom (Mbabane, Swaziland: Websters (Pty), 1992), 35.

²Ibid., 79.

Polygamy

Competent missionaries throughout the ages have tended to take a higher view of culture than the average trader, conqueror, or traveler; but a high view of culture should now characterize all missionaries. With the insights of anthropology now available, a high view is easy to obtain. The low view can be readily recognized and ruled out.¹

I think the great men and women of God who pioneered the SDA work in Swaziland were ill-equipped to face head on the issue of polygamy because of their low view of culture.

According to Ciccone, the Swazi view polygamy in the following manner:

Polygamy is regarded as a social ideal rather than a sexual extravagance. It fits well into the social structure of traditional life, and into the thinking of people, serving many useful purposes. It is completely wrong to imagine that male lust or male selfishness is the principal motive behind polygamy. Men could satisfy their lust through adulterous unions and concubines. Polygamy serves the prosperity and growth of the extended family and provides status and support for women in societies where they have no vocation other than marriage and bearing of children to their husband's lineage.²

By preference, the Swazi is a polygamist, since it is the cherished aspiration of everyone to rear as large a family as possible to keep his name alive. In addition,

¹Donald McGavran, The Clash Between Christianity and Cultures (Washington, DC: Canon Press, 1974), 67.

²Ciccone, 20-21.

polygamy confers added status to the man in the eyes of his fellows, says Marwick.¹

Cicccone suggests that polygamy is the kindest solution in the case of the first wife's infertility. She would prefer to remain a first wife, rather than be divorced and be faced with the impossible task of finding another husband.²

The payment of lobola (bride price or bride wealth) has affected the acquisition of multiple wives among the Swazi. "Only the aristocrats and wealthy (and often elderly) commoners are able to achieve many wives."³

Lobola

Lobola is a controversial issue in modern Africa. Uninformed administrators and missionaries regarded it initially as "the buying and selling of women" and attempted to abolish it by law in spite of the fact that Africans, including Christians, have retained the custom.⁴

Dr. Kuper, an authority in Swazi culture, says

Lobola is generally translated as "brideprice," but it is clear that a woman is not regarded as a commodity by the people involved. On the contrary, she is a valued member of the community, and her past status and future security are symbolized in the transaction. By giving lobola, her children are made legitimate and become

¹Marwick, 38.

²Cicccone, 21.

³Kuper, The Swazi: A South African Kingdom, 18-19.

⁴Ibid., 23.

entitled to the benefits of the father's lineage; by accepting lobola, her people are compensated for the loss of her services. Their emotional ties and ritual obligations towards her do not cease, and should she be ill-treated or find herself and her children destitute, she may appeal to the recipients of the cattle, who will be legally, as well as morally, obliged to assist her. The husband does not acquire a chattel, but a wife for himself and a mother for his children, and he and his kin owe her definite obligations of support and protection.¹

Having lived in Swaziland for eleven years, I learned that lobola is not given as a flat rate for all women. I had a rude awakening when I found out that the status of the women played an important role in determination of lobola. My wife is a Swazi and I did not escape this custom. Malan's observation cannot be ignored in this regard:

Lobola ranges from ten head of cattle for commoners to more than fifty for the daughters of chiefs. Apart from the basic number of lobola cattle, two more head, referred to as the lugege and msulanyembeti, must be added. The lugege is slaughtered by a member of the bride's family and divided into equal portions between the groups, thereby signifying mutual acceptance of the marriage. It is a festive occasion whereby the marriage ceremony which lasts several days, is concluded. The msulanyembeti (the wiper-away of tears) is not killed, but given to the bride's mother personally. This is done in recognition for all the trouble she had in bringing up the girl, and also to console her on the occasion of parting.²

Lobola's primary use has changed with time, according to Mark A. Grey, who has written:

Lobola is no longer used primarily as a form of compensation for the loss of the bride's service within her home. Instead, lobola is used primarily as a compensation for the expense of the girl's education.

¹Ibid.

²Malan, 39.

The more years of education the potential bride has, the higher the price of lobola asked for her head.¹

It ought to be understood that high lobola is a symbol, not a cause, of the permanence of marriage. It is true that lobola is unpopular in some quarters, but both rural and urban women seem to be in favor of it. Dr. Kuper observed that "even many educated urban women are not prepared to be married without the passing of token lobola in addition to Christian and civil marriage rites."²

The next section briefly discusses the levirate and sororate.

Levirate

According to the ancient custom of the levirate (kungena), literally meaning "to enter," a man is publicly given the main duty of looking after the wives and children of the deceased, and the women would bear children in the name of their deceased husband.³ This custom of the levirate (the giving of a widow in marriage to her deceased husband's brother) is objected to as dehumanizing by many young women.⁴

¹Mark A. Grey, "Conflicting Values and Expectations and Rural Swazi Secondary Schools" (A thesis at Eastern New Mexico University, 1985), 24.

²Kuper, The Swazi: A South African Kingdom, 23.

³Hilda Kuper, Sobhuza II, Ngwenyama and King of Swaziland: The Story of an Hereditary Ruler and His Country (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1978), 35.

⁴Booth, 43.

this instance, there is no marriage ceremony and the children of a kungena union are called transplanted tobacco plants (ligwayi lekumbelwa), and cannot become heir to the deceased, although regarded as his legitimate son.

The Sororate

The sororate (the giving of a younger sister in place of a deceased wife) is also objected to as dehumanizing.¹ However, Marwick discusses another aspect of the sororate, the idea that when a man pays full lobola for the first wife (that is, in the customary marriage) he is entitled to be provided with an additional woman from the same family.² This additional woman is inhlanti (subsidiary wife) and becomes a servant (ludzibi) to the senior wife, that is to her sister. Her children will be regarded as the children of the senior wife. She is given as inhlanti because she was "put into the cattle" (wafakwa etinkomemi) when her sister's lobola, that is, full lobola was paid.³

This woman is indicated by the father or his representative, tying on her arm a gall bladder when lugege beast is slaughtered. If there is no sister of the newly married woman either by the same mother or by an inhlanti of her mother, then the brother of the bride must put on the

¹Marwick, 140.

²Ibid., 137.

³Ibid.

beast is slaughtered. If there is no sister of the newly married women either by the same mother or by an inhlanti of her mother, then the brother of the bride must put on the bladder since one of his children will have to become inhlanti to his sister.¹

In effect, a wife may be replaced by her fertile sister. In this way divorce is minimized.² Marwick emphatically argues, "Divorce is extremely difficult to obtain among the Swazi--it is difficult to separate from a wife."³

The Swazi society's belief in a permanent status of marriage is reinforced by the symbol of lobola and the levirate and sororate practices. The barren and lazy may have their place taken by the fertile and industrious.

Swazi Traditional Ceremonies

This portion of the chapter presents four Swazi national traditional ceremonies. Without presenting these ceremonies I would be guilty of gross omission. The first to be presented is the umcwasho.

Umcwasho

According to Dr. Kuper, the umcwasho is mainly a celebration to honor an important young lady, and is spoken

¹Ibid., 138.

²Nhlapo, 76.

³Marwick, 133.

of as siko labantwana (a custom of children) or kubakhulisa (to make them grow up).¹ Kuper once attended one of these umcwasho ceremonies, hence the report of that occasion.

The movement is inaugurated by a group of girls living in the same principality who choose from among themselves a daughter of the local chief to be their inkosatana (princess). Permission is sought from her father and his women-folk to hold the ceremony.² However, the main responsibility is in the hands of the girls, who "carry umcwasho"--that is, who wear the umcwasho uniform. The princess is assisted by an indvuna and by a select few who form the libandla (council).³ This council becomes subordinate to the staff at the capital where the girls converge from different parts of the country.⁴

Dr. Kuper, an authority in this issue, gives the following account:

The ceremony was inaugurated by tribute labor. Very early in the morning the girls collected in their age locality groups, paraded, and went to gather wood. On their return they flung down their bundles with a flourish and danced before the inhabitants of the capital. On the following day they were given the "laws of umcwasho" regulating clothing, food, language, morals, and general behavior. The organizers distinguished between the young and immature, and those of age to take lovers. The junior group had its own colors, food abstentions, and passwords. Having

¹Kuper, An African Aristocracy, 131.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

received the laws, the girls sang, danced, feasted, and then returned to their homes.¹

Throughout the period of the umcwasho no physical contact whatever was permitted between sexes, and a fine of one head of cattle was inflicted on a man, even a King, who made love to an umcwasho girl. The shame of breaking the law was heightened by a lofty ritual of mockery.²

The missionaries appealed to the administration to prohibit it on the ground that "it was a reversal to heathendom, the costume was immodest, and that the ceremony would certainly end in a saturnalia."³

The King defended his action. He pointed out that it did not contradict anything written in the Bible, that only girls without blemish could carry the umcwasho and that a ceremony that enforced restraint could hardly be termed immoral. In fact, the whole idea of umcwasho was to impose a period of chastity and to emphasize the need for sexual restraint. The umcwasho symbolized their dedication to premarital restraint.⁴

It is apparent that the missionaries used their Western worldview to look at modesty and immodesty in a Swazi context; that is where they faulted.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 109.

⁴Ibid., 108.

Umhlanga (Reed Dance)

The Umhlanga (Reed Dance) ceremony, although not as ancient or consecrated as the incwala, is nevertheless an important celebration in honor of the queen mother (Indlovukazi) and of feminine beauty and virtue.¹

Booth points out that each July and August, unmarried girls nationwide gather to collect reeds to repair windbreaks around the queen mother's residence. This task is followed by a mass dance in which the girls, dressed only in brief beaded aprons and adornments, show off their beauty and grace to the King and queen mother and to all who come to see.²

It is a festive and joyous annual occasion that reminds the nation of reverence for the ndlovukazi and the importance of women in general.

However, the winds of change are blowing gently and yet persistently. Booth makes this concluding observation:

The status of women, as reflected in the custom of lobola and the umhlanga ceremony, is but one aspect of Swazi life in which traditionalism is coming under great challenge. But as in other areas, change will be too modest and come too slowly to suit some modern sensibilities, for the forces of conservatism and traditionalism in Swaziland are very strong.³

¹Booth, 43.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

Incwala Ceremony

It is common knowledge in Swazi society that "when there is no King, there is no Incwala."¹ Booth echoes this in his book Swaziland.

Therefore, the first part of this section begins with the King and his administration and only then deals with Incwala.

Royal administration. By tradition, Swaziland is a dual monarchy. The King (Ngwenyama, "the lion") and the queen mother (Ndlovukazi, "the cow-elephant") together embody all power--legislative, executive, administrative, and religious.² Practically speaking, their power was never absolute, for the national council with its membership of venerable figures provided guidance and at times exerted strong influence. Since independence the parliament has often served to moderate authoritarian action.³ There is no dispute as to where the ultimate power lies.

Kuper writes, "Swazi political power radiates primarily from the King." His male relatives, particularly uncles and senior half-brothers, wield great influence. The senior

¹Ibid., 47.

²Ibid., 44.

³Ibid., 44.

princes are consulted on all important issues; they among all councillors are also his most forthright critics.¹

A careless reader may conclude that commoners in Swazi society have no role to play in the governance of the Kingdom. Booth points out that

commoners are by no means excluded from governance. Councillors (tindvuna) of royal villages placed strategically throughout the country are always commoners, and they exercise a strong influence. They preside over local courts, organize tribute labor, mobilize people for rituals, and act as eyes and ears of the King. The administrative structure therefore maintains a careful balance between nobility and commoners in matters of governance.²

This setting of administration takes care of a variety of problems before they actually occur. Booth puts it this way: "The main motives are first the King's case not to delegate too much power to kinsmen. And second the need to utilize the best administrative talent available, irrespective of rank."³

Incwala (The annual rite of kingship). This annual rite is conducted to purify and strengthen the King, and is also celebrated as the feast of first fruits.⁴ Beidelman sees the Incwala as a rite of passage whose initial purpose is to separate the weakened King from his kingdom so that he

¹Kuper, An African Aristocracy, 56.

²Booth, 45.

³Ibid.

⁴Malan, 72.

may be ritually "intensified" with renewed supernatural power.¹

According to Professor Hilda Kuper, who witnessed this rite, one of the purposes of Incwala was to show the balance of power between the King, his mother, the princes, and commoners. It separated, renewed, and reincorporated the King into a revitalized cosmic and political order. As such, it was an occasion of national solidarity: "We see we are all Swazi; we are joined against outside foe."²

Of equal practical importance is the Incwala's role in reinforcing the legitimacy of the monarchy. This most hallowed ritual, the richest in Swazi symbolism, is the King's alone. He is central to its every facet; when there is no King, there is no Incwala. For anyone else to perform the Incwala is treason.³

Incwala is organized in such a way that everyone in attendance is involved. Those who do not have specific assignments are, in effect, participant observers. Booth explains this phenomenon in this fashion:

It is also a ceremony that sweeps up virtually every significant element in society into performing a specific role in the King's ritualization. Queen Mother, queens, princes, councillors, blood brothers, age regiments, ritual specialists, and commoners. All

¹T. O. Beidelman, quoted in Ray, 125.

²Ray, 122.

³Booth, 47.

have specified duties in the Incwala and receive appropriate recognition.¹

Peter Becker writes that the reason for this age-old ritual is that the King and his subjects must be spiritually cleansed before they may eat of the ripening crops.² However, Booth points out, nowadays only the strictest traditionalists seem to adhere to this.³

There is a small Incwala that precedes the big incwala, which commences as close as possible to the mid-summer day when the moon is dark. Dr. Kuper says that on the first day the King spits powerful medicine to the east and west, and receives a rousing acclamation from all present. The Swazi would say, "Our Bull had produced the desired effect: he had triumphed and was strengthening the earth. He has broken off the old year and is preparing for the new year."⁴

This ritual is repeated the following day, marking the end of the little incwala. The people repair to their homes until the moon is full, when the six days of the big incwala commence.

Malan gives the following account, from the first day of the big Incwala to the fourth day:

¹Ibid.

²Peter Becker, Trails and Tribes: In Southern Africa (London: Hart-Davis, MacGibbon, 1975), 115.

³Booth, 47.

⁴Kuper, The Swazi: A South African Kingdom, 69.

On the evening of the first day, just as the full moon rises, the members of a special regiment cut the branches of a magical tree, and on the second day they enclose the King's sanctuary with it. Behind this enclosure the powers of the King will symbolically be reborn.

On the third day a black bull is killed. Parts of its carcass are used for royal medicine, while the rest is sacrificed to the ancestral spirits. This will strengthen the King for the important fourth day when he will bite (luma) specially prepared green foods of the new year. The King's mother and other members of the royal family will follow his example. Later in the day everybody present will participate in the dancing and singing of the Incwala in full ceremonial dress. That evening the King throws a green gourd on a shield, thereby symbolically discarding the old year and introducing the new one.¹

On the fifth and sixth days a transitional rite is conducted when the Dlamini rulers are separated from the old year and introduced to the new one. As Dr. Kuper explains:

The whole of the (sixth) day the rulers are secluded and unapproachable, their faces painted dark with medicines, their bodies anointed with fat from the sacred herd. Subjects are placed in a condition ritual identification and prohibited from many normal physical activities. . . . On the last day, the ointments of darkness are washed off the rulers, who are then bathed with foamy potions to make them shine anew. Objects used throughout the ceremony, and which represent the old year, are burned on a ritual fire.²

Of great interest to me in the Incwala ritual are the bulls that are part of the ceremony. The one that is killed is called "the sacrificial ox."³ This reminds me of the sanctuary service in the Bible. In Swazi society the

¹Malan, 72.

²Kuper, The Swazi: A South African Kingdom, 71.

³T. O. Beidelman, "Swazi Royal Ritual," African Studies 36, no. 4 (1966):396.

Incwala ceremony has an important part where, according to Beidelman, "the King himself assumes the filth of the nation, and though endangered by this, gains power."¹

The question is, How does the King assume the filth of the nation? Beidelman explains that the Incwala is preceded by the collection of fines representing "dirt" from the people.² He further points out that when the Swazi see the pyre ablaze, with the remains of the sacrificial bull, portions of crops, as well as the King's sleeping mats, regalia, and other items used by him in the "inhlambelo enclosure,"³ they say: "The filth of the King and all the people lies here on the fire."⁴

Then came the moment for the King and his queens to eat of the ripening crops, the first fruits of the season, releasing the nation from the taboo it had so far been forced to observe.

Most Christian missions prohibited their converts from dancing the Incwala, and those Christians who attend are usually and mainly members of the African Independent Churches (AIC), which Kuper chooses to call Separatist churches.⁵

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 252; Becker, 120.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Kuper, The Swazi: A South African Kingdom, 72.

Implications for Evangelism

Now that we have looked at religious beliefs and cultural characteristics of the Swazi, a question is posed: Could we utilize some of them as entering wedges in the evangelization of the Swazi? The resounding answer is in the affirmative. Wayne T. Dye has aptly said, "Every culture has some standard of right and wrong."¹ I am persuaded that this is the case with Swazi culture.

I will present a few Swazi religious beliefs that are in commonality with Old Testament culture. First I bring forward C. C. Watts, who says:

A belief in God, the great One, has come down to them, and a vague code of laws which has His authority. Certain crimes are not permitted by the great One. Those of the same name are not allowed to marry, and women are only allowed to bear children at intervals of three years.²

From this chapter we have seen that the Swazi had a clear idea about God called Mkhulunchanti. His attributes are still clear in our minds. God is recognized as powerful, creative, and omniscient.

Their belief that God is King of kings is another good point of entry. The Swazi society believes in royalty.

The Incwala ceremony may be used as a bridge to explain the sanctuary service. In both we find sacrifices,

¹Wayne T. Dye, "Toward a Cross-Cultural Definition of Sin," Missiology 4 (1976): 27.

²C. C. Watts, Dawn in Swaziland (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1922), 50.

"scapegoat," the inhlambelo (sacred sanctuary) where only the assigned priests and King enter. The first fruit element in the Incwala could be used to make the Swazi love the Bible and know that their culture is not all wrong and irrelevant.

Watts's observation in this regard cannot be ignored. He argues that there are many traces of Semitic customs among the Swazi and Zulus. The levirate marriage is practiced among the Swazi, and the incident described in Gen 38, as well as the mental attitude of the actors in the scene, has been reproduced in Swaziland exactly in recent years. Circumcision is practiced, though not universally.¹

It is sad that missionaries totally disregard Swazi culture. Michael C. Kirwen makes a bold statement when he says, "Christians intentionally opposed and broke traditional laws."² Because of that, Kirwen points out, "Christianity remained an alien body in the society."³

The next chapter presents the coming of Christianity to Swaziland.

¹Ibid., 49.

²Michael C. Kirwen, African Windows (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), 143.

³Ibid.

CHAPTER III

THE COMING OF CHRISTIANITY

In this chapter I briefly present the coming of early Christian missionaries to Swaziland. As the historical account unfolds, attention focuses on the evangelistic strategies they employed and the resultant success or failure of those strategies. This is approached with the spirit of learning from their mistakes and building on their success.

The Main Churches

This portion briefly presents the origin of Christianity in Swaziland and the main Christian churches that are functioning in Swaziland.

Methodist Church

According to the Swazi historian J. S. M. Matsebula, Christianity in Swaziland appeared under the reign of Mswati in 1844. Sobhuza I had advised his people to accept the teaching of the umculu (Bible). His people heeded the warning. Apparently then they heard that there were White

people (missionaries) who were preaching the word of Mvelinchanti (King of kings).¹

This culminated in the sending of two men to South Africa. These men were Mnkonkoni Kunene and Majuba Mndzebele, whose mission was to fetch the missionaries to bring the umculu to his country.²

In 1844 a Wesleyan missionary conference, held at Grahamtown, accepted Mswati's request and decided to send missionaries to Swaziland.³

Eventually the Rev. James Allison and Rev. Richard Giddy, with two Basotho evangelists, arrived in Swaziland from a Wesleyan Mission Station at Mparani near the Caledon River, in what today is called the Orange Free State. It is said that the two missionaries returned to Mparani and left the two evangelists behind.⁴ However, the following year Rev. James Allison and his wife, the Rev. Johan Bertram, and twelve more evangelists returned to Swaziland.⁵

The missionaries were placed at Mahamba where they started converting the Swazi to Christianity. The King had

¹J. S. M. Matsebula, Matsebula, J. (Cape Town: Longman, 1972), 16.

²J. F. Scutt, The Story of Swaziland (Mbabane: Webster's, 1983), 21.

³Matsebula, 16.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

a long chat with these missionaries and expressed his desire to keep the scroll with him at his residence.¹

The missionaries made their first blunder. They wanted the King to leave his palace and reside with them with an intention to baptize him. He declined their offer; nevertheless "he granted them permission to spread their faith, but warned them not to try to change the people's customs and way of life."²

Unfortunately, this pioneer missionary enterprise came to grief in 1846. The missionaries had to flee because they had disobeyed the King's injunction and were compelling their converts to change many of their customs and Swazi ways of life on the grounds that their practices were heathen.³ However, the Methodists bounced back. "Today they form the largest of the Swazi Protestant churches."⁴ They are second only to the Church of the Nazarene with 18,000 affiliates.⁵

¹Ciccone, 57.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴David Barret, ed., World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Study of Churches and Religions in the Modern World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 645.

⁵Patrick J. Johnstone, Operation World: A Handbook for World Intercession (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993), 516.

Anglican Church

The Church of the Province of South Africa (Anglican) had for some time been interested in spreading its work to Swaziland and in 1871 the Bishop of Zululand, in whose diocese Swaziland was at the time, visited the country. In the next year (1872), the Rev. Joel Jackson started work at Amsterdam Farm on the Transvaal border, and soon Usutu, Mahamba, Endlesana, and other stations followed.

When Swaziland achieved her independence, so did the Anglican Church in Swaziland under the leadership of Rt. Rev. Anthony Hunter, their first bishop.¹

South Africa General Mission (S.A.G.M.)

In 1890, Dudley Kidd of the S.A.G.M. visited Swaziland and got such an enthusiastic welcome that he decided to stay. He and Rev. John Baillie started the station at Bethany near the Lusushwanu River. This was followed by Hebron and stations in other parts of Swaziland.² This S.A.G.M. work is now incorporated into the Africa Evangelical Church.³

Scandinavian Alliance Mission (S.A.M.)

In 1894 the arrival of Rev. William Dawson of the S.A.M. was heralded, and he began his work at Shiselweni.

¹Ciccone, 59.

²Ibid.

³Barret, 645.

This station was followed by Bethel in 1896, the Transon Memorial Bible School in 1921, Sinceni in 1924/5, and a number of other places thereafter.¹

Lutheran Church

As early as 1860, Lutheran missionaries had held talks with King Mswati but had gone on to Vendaland. It was not until 1901 that other Lutheran missionaries, Rev. O. Prozensky and Rev. J. Melinaso from the Ermelo and Gege districts of South Africa respectively, started work at Mbekelweni. A mission station was built at Motjane in 1910 and from there Lutheranism spread to Zandondo (Crydon), Ekutsimlei, Mpaka, Siphocosini, Ntondozi, and Sidwala.²

The Roman Catholic Church

David Barret³ gives the account that follows about the Catholic Church in Swaziland.

In spite of a slow beginning, considerable progress has been made by Catholics over the past fifty years. The first missionaries of the Order of the Servants of Mary (OSM) arrived in 1913. The original mission was attached to the vicarate of Natal, but within ten years (1923) a prefecture for Swaziland was created. Barret says that by 1939 this was elevated to vicarate and became a suffragan diocese of

¹Cicccone, 60.

²Ibid.

³Barret, 645.

Pretoria in 1961. The major growth of the church has come since World War II. In fact, for reasons that are enumerated later, the Catholic Church has increased its enrollment more than any other White-controlled church.

Nazarene Mission

The Nazarene Mission today is one of the largest Protestant churches in Swaziland. Its humble beginnings do not tell the whole story.

It is said that Brother L. Schelezenback of the Nazarene Mission arrived in the Mankayane area in October 1910, and after looking for a suitable place, started his missionary work at Peniel near Pigg's Peak in December of that year. From there the work spread rapidly to Mbabane, Manzini, and other parts of the country.¹

Seventh-day Adventist Church

The SDA Encyclopedia² is the main source for the history of SDA work in Swaziland. However, it is not the only source. Angelo Natale Ciccone, who spent eighteen years in Swaziland writing his M.A. thesis, indicates extensive personal research in connection with the beginnings of the SDA work in Swaziland. Ciccone's knowledge of the SDA history is rendered in this fashion.

¹Ciccone, 60.

²SDA Encyclopedia, 1976 ed., s.v., "Swaziland."

The Seventh-day Adventist church also took an interest in Swaziland. In 1920 J. C. Rogers arrived on horseback from Nyasaland (now Malawi) to ask for land from the Queen Regent Labotsibeni for the erection of a church. Due to some law that forbade the alienation of land to foreign missionaries, he did not get the land.¹

Rogers did not entertain a defeatist attitude, according to the SDA Encyclopedia. He urged a lay member, Joseph N. Hlubi, a Swazi and a former organizer for the National African Congress in Eastern Transvaal and Swaziland, who lived in Ermelo in the Transvaal and had become a Seventh-day Adventist in 1918, to undertake to establish the work in his native country. He returned to Swaziland in September 1920 and settled in a village called Mahamba.²

Later Hlubi got a piece of land from chief Makhahleleka and built a mission school that he called Mbukwane (show-piece).³

It is worth mentioning that Hlubi procured the land after giving the chief the assurance that "no alienation was intended and that the school property would remain under the chief's control."⁴

¹Ciccone, 61.

²SDA Encyclopedia, s.v., "Swaziland."

³Ciccone, 61.

⁴SDA Encyclopedia, s.v., "Swaziland."

Through the years, Hlubi held Bible studies and conducted evangelistic meetings in surrounding villages. The first convert was a woman whose husband bitterly opposed and persecuted her, but who later became an SDA.¹

The first SDA church was organized on the school site, which continues to be a beacon of dedicated service among the Swazi.

The Main Independent Churches

The Methodists, who were the first to plant a church and establish a mission in Swaziland, were also the first to fall victim to dissention, which resulted in two new separatist groups.

One of these, the African Methodist Episcopal church, erected its first church at Makhosini in 1904. Two years later a new development transpired. The dynamic Methodist pastor at Mahamba, Joel Msimang, formed the Independent Methodist Church. He is the founder of Swazi Independent Churches.²

The largest of some forty groups presently at work are the Christian Catholic Apostolic Holy Spirit Church in Zion and the Swazi Christian Church in Zion.³

¹Ibid.

²Cicccone, 62.

³Barret, 645.

Missionary Attitude

The early Christian missionaries in Swaziland saw themselves as agents of change and nothing more. Dr. Nxumalo observes that, aside from the attack they mounted on STR, they were bound to be a force for change.¹

Some Swazi intellectuals noted that the missionaries brought more than the gospel to their country. Dr. Sishayi-Nxumalo wrote:

In addition to their religious beliefs the missionaries brought their own cultural traditions and frequently failed to differentiate between these and the religious principles taught. Both in their teaching tended to be backed by the glory and the wrath of God.²

Nxumalo added:

It is probably fair to state that these cultural traditions exerted a greater pressure for change than the actual substance of their religious beliefs.³

Maybe that is what sparked this reaction from King Sobhuza II, who reigned from 1921-1982, to admonish his subjects:

Choose the good from the customs of others and join it with the good which is in our own traditions. Only in that way can we go forward as a self respecting nation. In order to do this you must know your own customs and start out from them.⁴

King Sobhuza came face to face with the missionary superiority complex syndrome. However, being a man endowed

¹Nxumalo, 19.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

with great wisdom, as Dr. Kuper has written, "he exercised restraint in the way he handled the different reactions, including the insults and attitudes of moral superiority adopted by many whites towards his people and their customs."¹

This attitude of moral superiority, as manifested by the missionaries, was imitated by the Swazi converts, who began to think that their own culture was sinful and who began to despise the non-Christians and labelled them as emahedeni (heathens).

Having once accepted Christianity, there is an inevitable assumption of superiority. Many Christians, says Dr. Kuper, are on intimate terms with pagans, but laugh at their customs and refuse to take part in many of their rituals and pleasures.²

Such an attitude is well illustrated by Dr. Kuper's personal observation of an attitude of a certain Christian:

A young Christian from Mahamba came to observe the Incwala one year and remarked loftily, "Fancy still dressing in skins and feathers. These people are quite uncivilized."³

Missionaries, especially in the early years, insisted that converts wear Western garb. However, it is now

¹Kuper, Sobhuza II, 105.

²Kuper, Uniform of Colour, 121.

³Ibid.

recognized by some churches that clothes do not make a convert.

The ethnocentrism of missionaries did not escape the astute observation of King Sobhuza II. It actually helped to build King Sobhuza's own ethnocentric response, which was, in essence, no better than the Europeans. In a conversation with Dr. Kuper, the King said:

European culture is not all good. Ours is often better. We must be able to choose how to live, and for that we must see how others live. I do not want my people to be imitation Europeans, but to be respected for their own laws and customs.¹

The attitude of missionaries leaves much to be desired in this connection. Their idea was that civilization must precede evangelization, that their Western lifestyle is civilization and that their culture is a superior culture.

However, it must be understood that there is also enough evidence to show that missionaries made some positive contributions in Swaziland. Missionaries established schools, medical institutions, and gave social assistance, which proved to be the most valid means for spreading Christianity.

SDA Church Planting and Evangelism Strategy

It was already mentioned that the SDA church traces its beginnings from an elementary school that was started by Hlubi. The pupils were taught, among other things, Bible

¹Kuper, An African Aristocracy, 1.

lessons. The Hlubis learned that the parents of the children appreciated the Bible lessons the children related at home.¹

The school system did well, but the problem was that children were not decision makers in Swazi society. Therefore, even those who were baptized at a tender age left the church at the conclusion of their elementary studies. However, a small percentage, far less than 25 percent, remained with the church--with most of the present increase in membership a result of biological growth.

The evangelistic strategies that worked effectively, to a certain extent, were Bible studies and public evangelistic meetings. Pastor Hlubi worked arduously to lead people to Christ but utilized the negative approach, which he learned from the Western missionaries. For instance, people were told how sinful they were, and that their culture was corrupt. The Swazi had to be a Christian or was hell bound. If they did not keep the commandments, God would not love them. In short, it was a gospel of doing, not of believing. Sermons and Bible studies aroused guilt rather than hope.

Having worked in Swaziland for eleven years, I found the pastors at variance with their own culture. The pastors did not attend or allow their family members, even church members, to attend traditional ceremonies because they were considered heathen and evil. They could not dream of

¹SDA Encyclopedia, s.v., "Swaziland."

wearing Swazi traditional attire, lest they identify themselves with the ungodly. In effect, culture had no place in the life of an SDA Christian. The text¹ that was used ran something like this: "And be ye separate, saith the Lord," which was interpreted as abandonment of Swazi culture and all it entails. One could not be a Swazi and a member of the SDA church. The attack on culture and an onslaught on STR did not help SDA numerical growth.

In spite of an aggressive program of Bible studies and public evangelism, the attitude and methodology utilized militated against them. I call this approach the old paradigm. Such a strategy works against itself.

The Need for a Paradigm Shift

I am persuaded that there is a need for an aggressive paradigm shift. The SDA church in Swaziland must heed the words of wisdom from Rene Padilla, who said, "God's word reaches man in terms of his own culture, or it does not reach him at all."² There is no culture that is totally evil. These independent churches enjoy a healthy numerical growth. The reasons for their success are the subject of chapter 5.

¹1 Cor 6:17, KJV.

²Rene Padilla, "The Contextualization of the Gospel," Readings in Dynamic Indigeneity, ed. C. H. Craft (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1979), 290.

Summary

This chapter stated that the Adventist church in Swaziland did not find the Kingdom void of Christianity. In fact, among the main Christian mission churches, the Adventists were the last. I find it interesting how God laid a foundation for Christianity in Swaziland: King Mswati actually requested the Methodist Church in the Republic of South Africa to come and introduce Christianity in Swaziland: the dream of King Sobhuza I that prompted him to advise his subjects to accept the teaching of the Umeulu (Bible).

There is a very interesting trend that I notice as churches establish themselves in Swaziland. Within a five-year period or less they planted five or more churches in different locations. The main Christian churches have established schools, medical institutions, and gave social assistance that were means for spreading Christianity.

However, the Adventist church in Swaziland planted 11 churches in 74 years. Could this be a part of an explanation why the SDA church has had stunted growth? The attitude of missionaries was discussed and its role in alienating Christians from the Swazi. From this chapter we have learned the strengths and weaknesses of their church planting and missionary attitude.

Lastly, this chapter pointed out that pastors and evangelists should adopt a high view of both the Bible and

culture to effectively reach out to the Swazi.

CHAPTER IV

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH GROWTH IN SWAZILAND 1968-1994

This chapter presents the dynamics of church growth and non-growth in Swaziland. I trace the church growth trends from 1968 to 1994, in order to fairly assess growth trends.

I deliberately chose to begin from the year 1968 because this is the year the Swaziland Mission Field (SF) was organized. The Seventh-day Adventist church was introduced in 1920. Prior to 1968 the Swazi church was part of the then Natal-Swaziland Mission Field with headquarters in Natal. From 1920 to 1967 I could find only combined records and statistics for Natal and Swaziland. Separate statistics for Swaziland were not kept until 1968 when Swaziland Field was organized.

Adventist Church Growth 1968-95

This section presents church growth and non-growth of Swaziland Field (SF). I have observed with interest the relevant statistics pertaining to Swaziland and found that in forty-eight years (from 1920 to 1968) the SDA church had grown to only 280 members. Moreover, 14 of the 280 were

dropped from church records because of apostasy; therefore, membership was reduced to 266 at the end of 1968.

The statistics¹ indicate that there was some measure of growth from 1968 to 1973; 262 people were baptized. However, 66 were disfellowshipped. There seems to be a trend in SF that when a certain number of people are baptized, another is disfellowshipped, either for apostasy or is simply missing. For instance, in 1977, 107 members were added to the SF church family, but 160 were dropped from church records. In fact, from 1968 to 1978, 874 people were baptized, but 337, or 38.55 percent, were removed from church records. It is disheartening to observe that this is the undesirable motif that transpires year after year. The years 1979 to 1981 follow this pattern: 275 were gained and 60 lost.

Table 1 displays an overview of church growth trends from 1968 to 1995. In that period 2,424 baptisms were achieved, but 609 members were dropped from church books, representing a loss rate of 25 percent. The most impressive fact is that in twenty-eight years the SF had only two years of negative growth.

When analyzing the growth trends of the SF, I use two powerful tools: the decadal growth rate (DGR) and the annual growth rate (AGR). The DGRs are used for

¹See General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Annual Statistical Reports (Washington, DC: 1968-1994) regarding Swaziland.

Table 1.--Summary Data for SDA church growth in
the Swaziland Field, 1968-95

SDA Church Growth in SWAZILAND 1968-95						
Year	Churches	Recorded Members	Baptisms	Reported Losses	Annual Growth Rate	Decadal Growth Rate
1968	3	266	1	14		
1969	7	327	54	1	22.93%	
1970	7	348	21	0	6.42%	283%
1971	8	401	54	24	15.23%	
1972	8	465	95	2	15.96%	
1973	8	477	37	25	2.58%	
1974	7	572	104	7	19.92%	
1975	7	563	0	9	-1.57%	
1976	7	572	27	14	1.60%	
1977	7	529	107	160	-7.52%	
1978	7	608	98	17	14.93%	
1979	7	649	78	38	6.74%	
1980	7	723	95	12	11.40%	108%
1981	7	811	102	10	12.17%	
1982	8	895	107	3	10.36%	
1983	8	1023	130	1	14.30%	
1984	8	1054	140	115	3.03%	
1985	8	1185	131	6	12.43%	
1986	8	1264	49	7	6.67%	
1987	10	1311	77	23	3.72%	
1988	10	1532	244	29	16.86%	
1989	10	1602	90	10	4.57%	
1990	10	1614	43	26	0.75%	123%
1991	11	1635	71	50	1.30%	
1992	11	1771	133	2	8.32%	
1993	11	1837	70	0	3.73%	
1994	11	2075	248	3	12.96%	
1995	11	2179	18	1	5.01%	82%
TOTALS			2424	609		
Averages			87	22	8.33%	112%

AGR = Annual Growth Rates; DGR = Decadal Growth Rates.

determining the rates of growth across a period of more than one year. The DGR is a standard measurement that can be used not only for ten years (a decade, thus "decadal") but for two, five, or any number of given years.¹ The AGR is used to compare the growth of the church from one successive year to another. These tools answer the most important question: Exactly how much did the church grow in a certain year? Annual and decadal growth rates are expressed as percentages and can be either positive or negative.²

It is intriguing to note (table 1) that from 1968 to 1995 there has been positive growth with the exception of two years, which are 1975 and 1977. The AGRs achieved those years were -1.57 percent and -7.52 percent respectively. I think that this positive picture might deceive many casual observers.

A question may be posed, With all the positive growth of the Swaziland Field, why is membership still at 2,179 as of December 1995? The answer lies in the AGR which fluctuates from the low of 0.75 percent to a high of 22.93 percent. Notice the total Average Annual Growth Rate (AAGR) of 3.25 percent. Besides the low AAGR that must be improved, there should be a way of stopping apostacies that have claimed 609 members in twenty-eight years from 1968 to

¹Bob Waymire and C. Peter Wagner, The Church Growth Survey Handbook, 3d ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: Global Church Growth, 1984), 16.

²Ibid., 15.

1995. The DGR of 82 percent looks somewhat impressive but may be deceiving.

Figure 1 reflects an unstable and fluctuating SF membership from 1968 to 1995. Baptisms per annum are quite telling in this regard. They range from a low of zero in 1975 and 1 in 1968, to a high of 244 and 248 in 1988 and 1994 respectively. In 1968 lay persons were not mobilized for outreach, plans were still being made for evangelism, because the 266-member constituency was still excited after being organized as a mission field. 1975 characterizes years of administrative crisis and moving of pastors to new districts. This is also reflected in chapter 5 where a concern is shown about pastoral and presidential tenures. Other than reasons stated above, membership fluctuation may be a result of emphasis of evangelism in one year and an attitude of taking it easy the following year or years.

Figures 2 and 3 display church growth results and rates in Swaziland Field in the period 1985-1995. Numerical growth acquired in these ten years was a result of an evangelistic campaign conducted by an American evangelist, resulting in 244 new members. In 1994 the president and his pastoral staff held their own three-week campaigns that yielded 248 members. Also notice that there were fewer apostacies during this year. Most of the members were dropped between 1968 and 1984. The noteworthy years in this

regard are 1977 and 1984, when 275 members were dropped from membership--because they were missing.

The AGRs in figure 3 reveal the weakness in the growth patterns of the Adventist church in Swaziland. What happened in 1988 and 1994 can happen annually as reasons and circumstances surrounding church growth in these years are implemented together with new approaches.

Having looked at the Swaziland Field DGR and AGR, my focus turns to faith membership projection for Swaziland from 1995 to 2000. Figure 4 projects a future decadal growth rate of 116 percent for this period. I base this projection on the DGR for 1990 to 1995. During this period the Swazi church grew 82 percent (Fig. 4). I think the Swaziland Field can have an 8.00 percent average AGR in the period 1996-2000 because as recently as 1994 an AGR of 12.96 percent was reached. With an average AGR of 8.00 percent for five years, a DGR of 116 percent is projected. This will be good to begin with as the Swaziland Field mobilizes for more church growth in the future.

Church Planting

I believe that church planting and evangelism should be tied together; one should not be preferred against or over the other, because separation of the two may produce adverse effects on church growth. The SF has not consciously used church planting for outreach or evangelism. But churches such as the Church of the Nazarene and the Methodist Church

Membership Growth in Swaziland: 1985-95

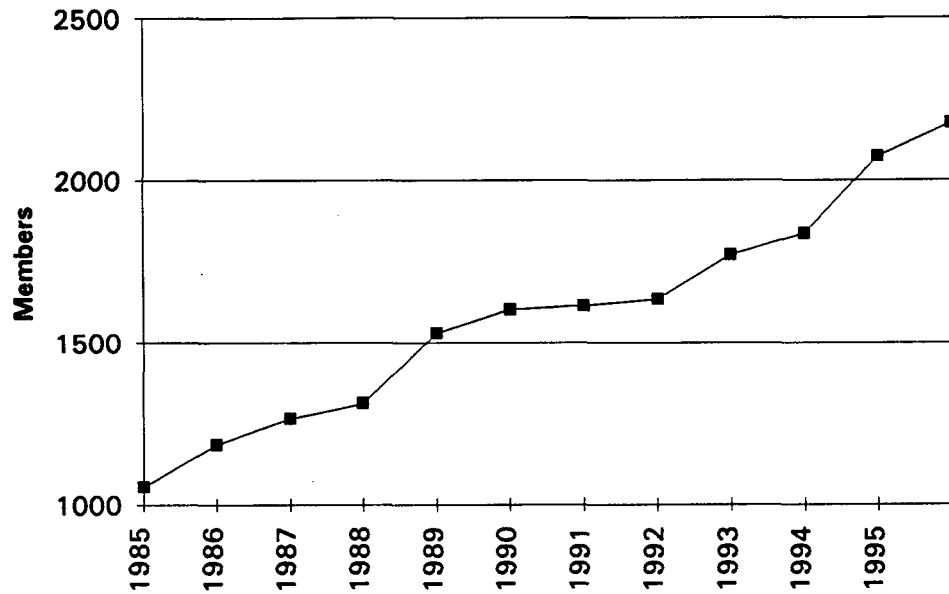


Fig. 2. SDA membership growth in Swaziland Field, 1985-95.

Annual Growth Rates: 1985-95

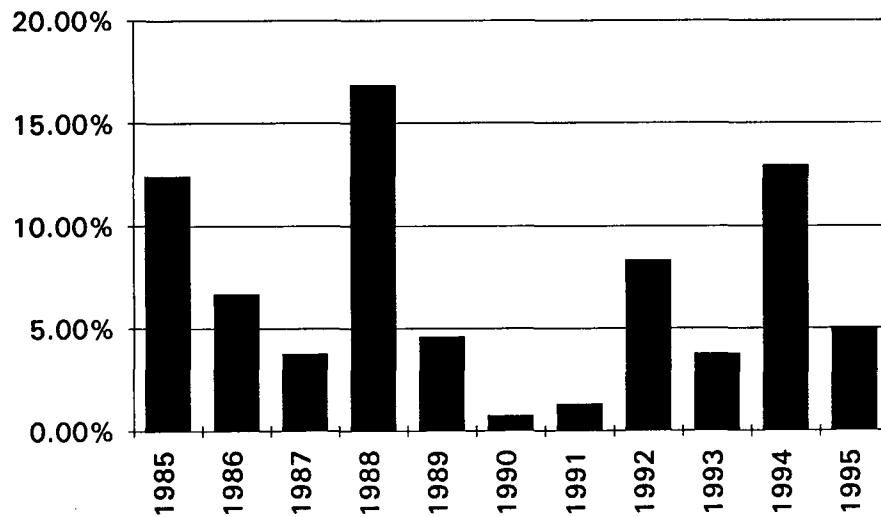


Fig. 3. Annual growth rates for the Swaziland Field, 1985-95.

Growth Projection for Swaziland Field: 1990-2000

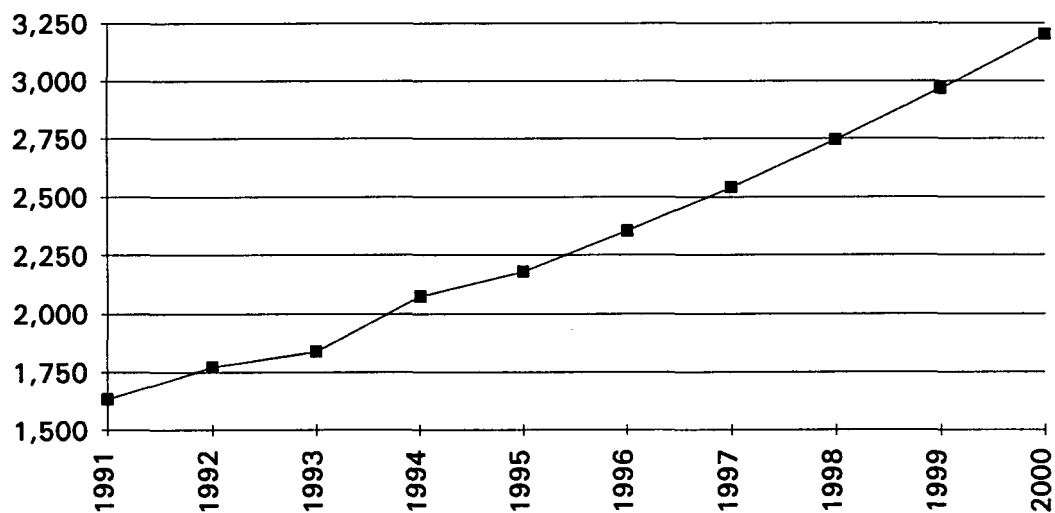


Fig. 4. Faith projection for the Swaziland Field for 1996-2000. The growth projection is based on growth data for 1990-95.

Projected and Current Growth Rates

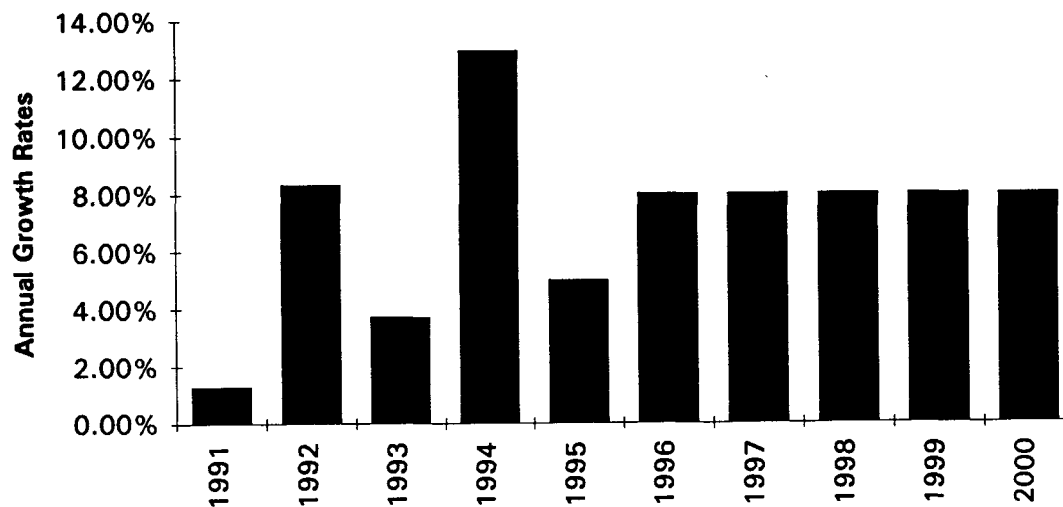


Fig. 5. Projected and current growth rates for the Swaziland Field, 1991-2000.

have successfully used church planting to become the leaders in numerical church growth. It is for this reason that C. Peter Wagner has declared:

Without exception, the growing denominations have been those that stress church planting as a central key to their growth, so not only do they also believe it. They go to great pains to communicate the challenge of church-planting throughout their constituency. They are successful in keeping church planting high on the agendas of their people across the board.¹

The message must be laid bare before the SF that, in any given geographical area, the Christian community will grow or decline according to the degree of effort given to planting new churches.² Wagner is emphatic in his assertion, declaring that: "The single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches."³ Why is church planting so effective?

The Advantages of Church Planting

The first advantage of church planting is that new churches grow faster than older established churches. This pattern is brought about because

new congregations are organized around evangelism and reaching people not actively involved in the life of any worshipping community. By contrast, powerful internal institutional pressures tend to encourage

¹C. Peter Wagner, Church Planting for a Greater Harvest (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 12.

²Ibid., 11.

³Ibid.

long-established churches to allocate most of their resources to the care of members.¹

Newly planted churches have not yet lost their "first love" (Rev 2:4), therefore they are "burning" to tell the lost about Christ.

Despite cultural bonding in Swaziland, there are still people with varied degrees of social gradations that need to be reached. Planting new churches will cater to all the Swazi regardless of their social background. Peter Wagner has written:

New churches provide more options for the unchurched. Unbelievers come in such a wide variety that a corresponding wide variety of church options is needed to win them. Fortunately, no two churches are just alike and new churches are different from others even in their same denomination.²

In the context of Swaziland, the SF will have to plant two kinds of churches. The first is the Western-influenced, traditional church that will minister to the needs of the middle and upper classes, including the highly educated. These people will be happy to remain in the current Westernized churches and witness to the people in the same social strata. The second kind of church will endeavor to reach out to the uneducated and the not so rich. This is where a new liturgy will be implemented that takes into account the Swazi cultural forms.

¹Lyle E. Schaller, 44 Questions for Church Planters (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992), 22-23.

²Wagner, 33-34.

The third advantage of church planting is that the people who are attracted come into a new situation in which they are open to jettisoning much of their old "baggage."

Malphurs points out:

No one is attempting to sew a new patch on an old wineskin; rather new wine is being poured into new skins. The result is that not only are those involved extremely excited about the new church which, in turn, attracts other people, but they are open to change and are willing to try new and innovative ideas.¹

The fourth reason for planting new churches is to reach those venturesome personalities who enjoy helping pioneer the new. Often these people are church shoppers who feel rejected or unwanted or bored or superfluous when they go to the long-established congregation that places a premium on tradition, tenure, routine, kinship ties, experience, legalisms, and the past, and disdains creativity, innovations, risk, and a strong future orientation. This also can be a powerful attraction to some self-identified Christians who "dropped out" of church years earlier and thus are often classified as "unchurched."² There are many other advantages for church planting, but for the purpose of this dissertation this will suffice. However, we need to explore church-planting methodology that was used in the past.

¹Aubrey Malphurs, Planning Growing Churches (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1993), 45.

²Schaller, 29.

A question may be posed, How do these reasons stated above apply to the suggested approaches to evangelize the Swazi? I have personally observed that the new churches have grown faster than old churches in Swaziland. For instance, Mbukwane, the first SDA church in Swaziland, has 140 members, while Manzini church has 518 members.

Church Planting Methodology

The common methodology that was utilized in Swaziland in connection with church planting was what is termed "church-planting crusades." I think this is the way SDAs all over the world reach out to multiply their membership. Wagner has keenly observed that the SDAs have been conducting church-planting crusades for years.¹

The other method that is used in the SF is raising daughter churches that eventually get organized as churches. The leaders of the new church are drawn from the members of the mother church. This is close to what is called hiving off, which means that the members of a local congregation are challenged to form a nucleus, and at a predetermined time, these people will move out under the leadership of a church planter and become the charter members of a new congregation. This usually assumes that the new church will be in the same general geographical area so that the nucleus

¹Wagner, 105.

think this kind of church planting can be implemented in any church that has many talented people with leadership skills. I know churches like that in the SF.

Analysis of Organized Churches
in the SF

Table 2 shows that church planting has not been a strategy for the Swazi church. When it organized to a mission field in 1968 there were 226 members and three churches; the following year there were seven churches. The number of churches remained the same in 1970. Another church was organized in 1972 that remained the same until 1973. In 1974 a church was disbanded, reducing the number of churches back to seven. The status quo was maintained until 1986. In 1987 two churches were organized. The SF maintained ten churches until 1990. The year 1991 saw another church organized, but that was all until 1994. In fact, up to 1996, the number of churches was still eleven. Table 2 shows how many churches were planted in a ten-year period. This table is not meant to embarrass anybody, but to challenge Swazi SDA readers to do better than this.

¹Ibid., 60-61.

Table 2: SDA Congregations in Swaziland 1982-1995

Year	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Chs	8	8	8	8	8	10	10	10	10	11	11
New	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0

Analysis of Principal Growth Factors

This section considers principal growth factors of the SF. These growth factors are: national contextual factors, local contextual factors, national institutional factors, and local institutional factors. "Church growth research has shown that a complex interplay of these four sets of factors largely determine growth or nongrowth."¹

National Contextual Factors

In this particular section I present the national contextual factors. When talking about national contextual factors, I refer to the environment (or context) in which the church or churches find themselves. They include sociological, anthropological, demographic, and other factors. In most cases the contextual factors are beyond the control of the church or denomination.²

Political conditions. The government of Swaziland has a positive attitude toward Christianity. It is no secret

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

that the constitution of February 1968 guarantees freedom of religion. Actually, many years ago the King gave the Christian church land near Lobamba to build a cathedral. At Easter time members of different churches gather at the King's home at Lobamba for preaching and prayer services and the King himself traditionally attends the Easter Monday meeting.

I know that an Assemblies of God Church regularly uses one of the government's buildings for their Sunday church worship. I know because I preached in that church two times. The Seventh-day Adventists regularly have their services at Lozitha in a government building. Most members of these churches are queens, princes, princesses, and their children.

Political conditions in Swaziland do not affect the church negatively. Churches safely stay away from politics and therefore remain unscathed from any political upheaval. In essence, political conditions are favorable for a speedy or healthy church-growth pattern.

Migrations. Migrations affect the Swazi church enormously. Many young men from Swaziland go to South Africa as migrant workers in the mines. In actuality, 15-20,000 Swazis work there in mines, industries, and farms.¹

¹Anita M. Stockman, ed., Swaziland (Washington, DC: United States Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs --Office of Public Communication, 1993).

Among these men are Christians who stay away from their home church for long periods of time. Some transfer their membership to the South African churches. Therefore SF loses members in that manner.

Due to economic hardships in Zambia, Zaire, Ghana, and other countries like Nigeria, there is an influx of these people to South Africa. Some spill over to Swaziland. Most of these are teachers who teach in our church school and others in government schools. These people give a wrong impression of healthy growth. On the whole, however, migrations affect the church both negatively and positively in regard to church growth.

Local Contextual Factors

Local contextual factors refer to the city, town, neighborhood, or district in which a particular church is located. They include ethnicity, changing neighborhoods, urbanization, industrialization, population growth or decline, caste or tribal conditions, languages, etc. How have these affected Swazi growth patterns?¹

Change of neighborhoods. Change of neighborhoods in the context of this study means the moving of people, as families or individuals, from one part of the country to another. Sometimes this happens because of a search for better pastures for livestock, or simply a different

¹Ibid.

geographic area; at other times it is the job seekers who go wherever there are job openings within the Kingdom of Swaziland.

The phenomenon of changing neighborhoods and its implication to church-growth patterns has great possibilities for the future. At present there are two SDA church companies that were formed because of church members who moved to other neighborhoods. However, not all church members represent Christ and the church aright, therefore, the influence exerted by those who change their neighborhoods has been both positive and negative.

Urbanization. According to the Swaziland Central Statistical Office, 70 percent of Swazis live in rural areas, whereas urbanization stands at 26 percent.¹ Every year there is an influx of high-school graduates to the cities. Some are absorbed by the university and colleges, which are almost all situated in urban areas. Other high-school graduates and college dropouts enter the job-seekers' ranks in the cities. Some youth when they move to the cities drop out of the church and adopt a different lifestyle. The faithful ones transfer their membership to city churches and strengthen them, while at the same time their village church is weakened.

¹Swaziland Government, Annual Statistical Bulletin (Mbabane: Central Statistical Office, 1994), 10.

city churches and strengthen them, while at the same time their village church is weakened.

Urbanization has not effected any countrywide membership lists, but it has surely taken the "cream" of the country people and transplanted them in the cities where the learned reside. These are employed in industries and government offices.

Languages. Swaziland has several ethnic groups: Swazi, 84 percent; Zulu, 10 percent; Tsonga, 3 percent; and other, 3 percent. There are two official languages, Swazi and English, with Swazi being spoken by 91 percent of the total population, Zulu by 2 percent, and English only spoken by less than 1 percent.¹

The churches that utilize siSwati in their services reach more people effectively than those who use the language of the minority. Nevertheless, English has been used as the medium of communication by too many of the city churches to accommodate the 1 percent who make no effort to learn the language spoken by 91 percent of the population. The use of English has alienated the traditionalists who feel that the SDA church is for the educated. The independent churches have taken advantage of this handicap of most mission churches.

¹PC Globe, Tempe, AZ, 1992.

National Institutional Factors

In the context of this dissertation, institutional factors refer to conditions within the Swaziland Field. National institutional factors include decisions and policies made by the denomination or district or mission, priorities for evangelism and church planting, church-mission relationships, policies affecting indiginity, Bible translation, and openness to new ideas.

Polygamy. The Seventh-day Adventist General Conference working policy for a long time prohibited the baptism of polygamous husbands, unless and until they abandoned their wives except for the first one. In fact, the 1990-91 working policy conveys this same message in this fashion:

1. A man found living in a state of polygamy when the gospel reaches him shall upon conversion be required to change his status by putting away all his wives save one before he shall be considered eligible for baptism and church membership.

2. Men thus putting away their wives shall be expected to make proper provision for their future support, and for that of their children, as far as it is within their power to do so.¹

This has indeed contributed to the sluggish growth patterns. There is a need to redress this issue. One

¹Working Policy (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1990-91), 73.

particular man, who shall remain nameless, has had three baptisms because he abandoned his younger wife as instructed by the church but later he impregnated her so the church rebaptized him only to have him, once again, get his wife pregnant, warranting another baptism. I find an element of humor in this whole episode, but it does point out a huge problem area for the church in Swaziland.

General etiquette. There are some rules and regulations that are not legislated but are understood to be as binding as if they were. The wearing of traditional garb and attending cultural, traditional ceremonial rituals is one such rule in Swaziland. I have lived and worked in Swaziland for twelve years and not once did I see a Swazi pastor clad in Swazi traditional dress. It does not take a genius to conclude that the traditional attire is associated with paganism. This makes it hard for traditionalists and their families to be members of the SDA church. These policies, written and otherwise, have dealt the church a blow in regard to church growth.

Bible translation. The SDA church was represented by a layman in the siSwati Bible translation team. In the late 80s a New Testament was produced and in 1994 the whole Bible was completed. It can be said that the SDA church believes that the Holy Bible should be made available to people in their own language; that is why they are involved and

represented in siSwati Bible translation. We hope that this will boost church growth when the Swazi read the Bible in their own language.

Openness to new ideas. When it comes to openness to new ideas, the SDA church in Swaziland is rather slow and reluctant. At present the Western mentality prevails where anything from the West is accepted and anything from the local culture is looked down on. Western culture is classified as superior, and is not distinguished from the gospel message. The SF should learn to be culturally sensitive and open to new ideas that are not at variance with the Bible.

Evangelism barriers. In my telephone interview with the president of SF, Elder D. Q. Donga, I learned that they have plans for evangelism, but he did not say how many evangelistic campaigns and how much was budgeted for the venture and its aftermath. In the past, public evangelism yielded good results, but a minimum of 60 percent of persons won to Christ never made it to the church door because of poor follow-up work and lack of nurture by the church.¹

Elder Donga is convinced that the following are hindrances for church growth in SF:

1. A thorough pre-campaign program is lacking.

¹Elder D. Q. Donga, president of SF, telephone interview by author, January 15, 1994.

2. Follow-up after public campaigns is lacking.
3. Those baptized in tent campaigns are not shown the church building where weekly services continue.
4. Most of the newcomers are strangers, and church members are not very friendly to them.¹

All the above are growth-retarding factors in the SF.

Presidential and pastoral tenure. The record of presidential tenure in the SF is quite revealing. No president has lasted more than four years. I believe that this short tenure has contributed much to the sluggish growth of the SF. In twenty-seven years, from 1968-1995, the SF has had eight presidents. Two of the presidents occupied the office for three years; one spent only one year, another one was a president for less than six months, and three of them served the longest terms--four years each.²

Again, I suggest that the brief presidential tenures are partially responsible for the unhealthy growth of SF. Most of the time administrative change results in the reshuffling of the whole work force. In fact, the pastors are moved from pillar to post much more than is necessary.

¹Elder D. Q. Donga, president of SF, letter, June 14, 1994.

²Elder D. Q. Donga, president of SF, letter, June 1995.

Those who spend more than two or three years in one district are counted fortunate.

It is imperative to find a solution to these short tenures for both pastors and presidents, in order to extricate the SF from growth-retarding factors. I am convinced that short-term pastorates must be discouraged.

As Lyle E. Schaller puts it:

To keep people from joining the church is to change ministers every two or three or four years. This is one of the most effective means of preventing church growth. Countless studies have demonstrated very clearly pastoral leadership is a critical factor in church growth. . . . One of the means of reducing the positive impact of pastoral leadership is to change ministers every few years. Why is it true? First, there is overwhelmingly persuasive evidence that from a long-term congregational perspective, the most productive years of a pastorate seldom begin before the fourth or fifth or sixth year of a minister's tenure in that congregation. Thus by changing pastors every two or three years a congregation has an excellent chance of avoiding those most productive years.¹

Without any reasonable doubt the SF has lost those most productive years of their pastors because of the short pastorates and short presidential tenures. This may account for the low motivation of the SF pastor. I believe that the SF should train their pastors to be able to handle long tenures, but presently there is a need to make the best use of those in harness right now.

¹Lyle E. Schaller, Assimilating New Members (Nashville, TN: Parthenon Press, 1978), 53.

Local Institutional Factors

Local institutional factors are conditions that exist among the leadership and membership of the local church.¹ Bob Waymire and C. Peter Wagner explain that local institutional factors refer to the "motivation of pastor and people for growth, evangelistic methodology, small group dynamics, openness to newcomers, facilities, spiritual level of the people, etc."²

Attitude towards visitors. How open is the SDA church in Swaziland to newcomers? That is an easy question to answer. I reiterate the words of the current president of the SF. Sixty percent of the persons who were baptized from public evangelistic crusades backslid. The reasons given were that no one bothered to find out where the new members live, most of the newcomers were treated like strangers by the church members who were not very friendly to them, and no one showed the new interests where the church building was and where services would continue.³

It can be inferred from the president's letter that the SF is not open to newcomers. This characteristic of a

¹C. Peter Wagner, Your Church Can Be Healthy (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979), 78.

²Bob Waymire and C. Peter Wagner, The Church Growth Survey Handbook, 24.

³Elder Donga, letter, Jan. 23, 1994.

church is called koinonitis. C. Peter Wagner explains

koinonitis thus:

Everyone needs a certain amount of thyroid to maintain good physical health. But when something happens to the thyroid gland, other bodily systems are thrown off, and health is in jeopardy. Koinonia can easily be overdone until it becomes not just good Christian fellowship, but fellowship inflammation. The whole organism suffers. Fellowship, by definition, involves interpersonal relationships. It happens when Christian believers get to know one another, to enjoy one another, and to care for one another. But as the disease develops, and koinonia becomes koinonitis, these interpersonal relationships become so deep and so mutually absorbing, they can provide the focal point for almost all church activity and involvement. Church activities and relationships become centripetal.¹

The SDAs in SF call each other brothers and sisters; the "outsider," as the non-SDAs are labeled, does not enjoy that privilege. Adventists in Swaziland are a culture within a culture. It is not easy to penetrate this fellowship circle of the church. This "fellowship inflammation" binds and bonds the SDAs, while it polarizes and separates from the community at large.

The motivation of pastors and church members. Attempts have been made to motivate and encourage pastors and church members to evangelize. But the principles of church growth and evangelism are hardly known. The evangelistic methodology used leaves much to be desired, but the SF must be commended for using the faulty methodology to the best of their knowledge, because that is all they knew.

¹Wagner, Your Church Can Be Healthy, 78.

1. Guilt. The pastors frequently rebuke church people, inducing feelings of strong guilt for who they are not and for what they are not doing. Such an appeal can increase some activity for a while, long enough to reduce the guilt feelings to a tolerable level, but it is not an effective long-term strategy.¹

Lyle E. Schaller contends that

perhaps the most effective means of creating passivity in a congregation is to use guilt as the basic motivating force. While this may enable the congregation to achieve ambitious goals and it often produces a large amount of surface activity, eventually it takes its toll. The Christian church is based on the love of God for His children and the use of guilt as a motivating tool runs counter to that basic thread. In some congregations it may take a generation for the full sequence to become visible, but guilt usually leads first to agitated activity followed next by hostility and finally by passivity.²

Such is the situation in Swaziland. Guilt is used together with the appeal to the people's sense of duty, exhorting them to evangelize. McGavran and Hunter say, "This is an impotent appeal; people agree but do not act."³

2. Stars on the crown. Another traditional approach to motivate pastors and church people in Swaziland was: If you do not win people to God your crown will be dark, but

¹Donald McGavran and George G. Hunter III, Church Growth: Strategies That Work (Nashville: Pantheon Press, 1981), 45.

²Lyle E. Schaller, quoted McGavran and Hunter, Church Growth: Strategies That Work, 45.

³Ibid.

the more people you win, the more stars you will have on your crown. "This motive appeal, while it may be 'successful' for some, is unworthy of Christian evangelism. We are called to evangelize because we want the best for other persons, not because we want something more for ourselves."¹

3. Love--A better approach. Invariably, this type of motivation for evangelism cannot and will not help growth patterns. I have always believed that a spiritually well-fed congregation will be eager to tell others about the Jesus who has turned their lives and lifestyle around. Getting involved in any type of outreach must be a response of gratitude for the love that God has for us--the love that led Jesus to die for us even while we were yet sinning.

Spiritual Factors

One problem that needs to be addressed by an adequate evangelistic strategy is the different levels of spiritual maturity among members. Spiritual maturity affects a member's ability to be an effective witness and leader.

The Swaziland Field has endeavored to recognize all levels of spiritual maturity to a certain extent. The children and new members are appropriately fed milk. "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Pet 2:2). Those who are prepared for

¹Ibid., 46.

baptism have their own baptismal class. In this class, age is not taken into consideration, but the level of Christian maturity is. The babes grow and they are weaned from milk and they begin to eat solid food.

In the first epistle of John (1 John 2:12-14, KJV) we learn about spiritual levels of maturity. Neighbour suggests that the new members in normal circumstances must move from the category of "Children" to "Young Men" to "Fathers."¹ Neighbour based his model on John's epistle. Vs 14 declares that those who are at the highest level of spiritual maturity are represented by the designation Fathers. John says about this group, you have known him that is from the beginning--suggesting maturity, as opposed to the young men, who are strong, have God's word abiding in them, and have overcome the wicked one.

When assigning tasks to the church members, the spiritually mature take up tasks commensurate to their maturity. In addition, they nurture the less experienced young men to maturity. The maturing young men are assigned tasks equal to their level of spiritual maturity. "The extent of a person's spiritual maturity is the extent of the commitment he or she has to Kingdom activity."²

¹Ralph W. Neighbour, Jr., The Shepherd's Guidebook (Houston, TX: Touch Publications, 1992), 35.

²Ibid., 37.

In Swaziland, the spiritual maturity level was not taken into consideration when assigning tasks--due to the willingness and interest new members have in outreach programs.

In conclusion to this portion, I think SF will do better in the equipping of the flock for ministry once they learn and put the principles of spiritual maturity level into practice.

To summarize the positive and negative factors for growth in the SF, the Adventist church in Swaziland should take advantage of the freedom of religion that exists in the Kingdom of Swaziland. The positive attitude of the government toward Christianity provides a climate conducive to a positive church-growth pattern. Even political conditions are favorable to all religions, including Christianity. We can therefore conclude that the Adventist church cannot blame the government or political conditions for non-growth. Instead, we need to enjoy these positive factors to win more people to Christ.

The growth barriers that need to be overcome are: poor follow-up work after evangelistic campaigns, lack of a thorough pre-campaign program, church members' lack of friendliness to newcomers, the use of a negative approach in motivation of pastors and members, and the attitude of the SDA church to polygamy and Swazi cultural economies.

Growth Plans and Projections

This particular section presents faith projections for numerical growth in the SF. However, prior to that I discuss present growth plans of the SF, as received from the SF president.¹

Present Growth Plans

1. Community services will be conducted by the community service department.

2. Members will be equipped for service.

3. Lay persons will be trained in how to conduct public crusades.

4. People will be enrolled in Voice of Prophecy lessons.

5. City crusades will be conducted by the pastoral staff.

6. Family Life seminars will be conducted.

7. Revelation seminars will be conducted.

Spiritual Renewal

Many years ago such a growth plan would have excited me. However, now I see a problem with the plan in its entirety. First of all, the SF has had all these plans except Revelation seminars. The question that ought to be posed is, What difference will these plans make? Why were

¹Elder D. Q. Donga, letter, April 20, 1995.

these plans a failure in the past? Here is my analysis of the situation.

The first thing that seems to be missing on the list of plans for growth is internal growth or conceptual growth. Hesselgrave calls this qualitative growth, which has to do with the level of understanding, Christian life, and dedication demonstrated by church members.¹ McGavran uses the term spiritual renewal and elucidates:

Until the existing Christians become much more biblically sound and spirit-filled than they now are, we must be concerned not with winning others but with reviving the saints. Believing this firmly in many places, renewal limits itself to existing Christians. This process is understandable. Existing congregations must become sounder, must know more of the Bible, must live more ardently Christian lives.²

If the Swaziland Field desires meaningful church growth it must consider spiritual renewal, because

men and women who are biblically sound and spiritually renewed will certainly live genuinely Christian lives. They will also demonstrate that the genuine Christian life is always concerned with and works at bringing God's lost children back to their Father's house. The dual nature of biblical soundness and spiritual renewal guarantees that vital Christians will not focus on themselves and nominal Christians only. They seek to be biblically sound in regard to bringing in the sheaves and spiritually renewed in regard to multiplying churches.³

¹David J. Hesselgrave, Planting Churches Cross-Culturally (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1980), 118.

²Donald A. McGavran, Effective Evangelism (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1988), 36.

³Ibid., 37.

Planning Processes

It is common knowledge that pastors and administration plan and set goals for churches, but this process of setting goals from the top down has a telling effect on both numerical and spiritual growth. Successful plans and goals must originate from the grassroots, because it makes the local churches accountable. After all, that is where action is, but the plans and goals in SF are the brainchild of the administration.

Charles Van Engen was right when he said:

When the people of God set goals with vision, by faith, and with serious considerations for achieving those goals, they translate the statements of faith about the church into statements of purpose which point toward the church's becoming what it is confessed to be. Goal-setting bridges the gap between the "from below" and "from above" perspectives of the church, and we begin to express the vision, desire, and purpose of being a missionary church. Goal-setting places us in the middle ground between confession and action, between the uniqueness of the Church as people chosen, gathered, maintained, and sent by God and the ordinariness of the church as a group of humans who gather in love around a common faith and shared hope.¹

This project does not suggest that the pastor and the administration must be passive and simply take the decisions and plans made by the members of the church. All I am expressing is the truth that the local churches themselves with little interference from the higher body must plan and set goals. This will render them accountable.

¹Charles Van Engen, God's Missionary People (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1993), 134.

Faith Growth Projections

This section presents faith projections in regard to numerical growth as it pertains to membership and the number of organized churches.

The Swaziland Field must forget about the slow church growth that occurred these past seventy-four years. They must emulate the apostle Paul who said, "One thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:13, 14).

It does not help to brood over the past because it cannot be corrected. But the future can be molded. Swaziland will acquire healthy church growth when spiritual renewal occurs and correct evangelistic approaches are implemented.

Membership Projections

In order to make a reasonable projection I decided to look at the DGR from 1990 to 1995, then make a faith projection for the next five years from 1996 to 2000.

Figure 4 projects a future decadal growth rate of 116 percent for this period. I base this projection on the DGR for 1990 to 1995. During this period the Swazi SDA church grew 82 percent (Fig. 4). I think the Swaziland Field can have an 8.00 percent average AGR in the period 1996-2000 because as recently as 1994 an AGR of 12.96 percent was

reached. With an average AGR of 8.00 percent for five years, a DGR of 116 percent is projected. This will be good to begin with as Swaziland Field mobilizes for more church growth in the future.

The SF has the potential to be the fastest growing mission field in the Southern Africa Union Conference. Figure 4 indicates that SF possesses the ability to win 100 to 200 people yearly without too much trouble. In 1992 and 1994 there was a gain during those years ranging from 133 to 248 new members. In actuality, in those two years the average per annum increase was 190 members. Even with the loss of 24 members in 1991 the DGR for the five years was still 27 percent.

I believe that if the SF managed to gain an average of 190 members in two years, it can do it every year. In fact, I think the SF is capable of gaining a minimum of 200 members each year. The DGR for the next five years could be 48 percent, which would give a year-end membership of 3,200 by December 31, 2000. Figure 4 portrays that optimistic projected growth. Figure indicates a growth of 1600 new members in five years. This may sound too optimistic for some people, but it could come to fruition through the implementation of a new paradigm in connection with new evangelistic approaches, which included concepts of contextualization that emphasized a high regard for the Bible as well as the culture of the Swazi.

Church-Planting Projections

If there is a need for improvement in the SF it is in the area of organizing churches. Over the last seventh-four years only eleven churches were organized. I think the SF is partly responsible for this poor showing since churches are organized where there is an increasing membership. Over the past five years, only one new church has been planted.

I believe with faith and church planting much more can be accomplished. If my faith membership projection is reached, the SF will be baptizing at least 200 people annually. Therefore, the SF should be able to organize at least two churches each year. In reality, the SF could even organize up to four churches per year. This means that in the five years from 1995 to 1999 ten new churches could be planted. It will take hard work, commitment, and dedication for the SF to reach this goal, but I believe it is possible.

Survey: Results and Analysis

This section presents the survey questionnaire results from the Swaziland Field's current and former presidents, and from current and former church elders. The survey questionnaires were designed to establish the rate of cultural sensitivity of both presidents and church elders, including their attitude toward evangelism and church growth. These results will offer some guidelines in the formulation of a strategy to evangelize the Swazi in Swaziland.

Survey Results

The survey questions were designed in such a way that those who respond to them will have their cultural sensitivity measured, whether they possess a high or a low view of culture. The first questionnaire (see appendix A) sought to learn the attitude of the church leaders who are the former presidents of SF. The second questionnaire (see appendix B) sought answers to evaluate the church elders' cultural sensitivity and their opinions in connection with church-growth factors and methods used in the past ten years to evangelize the Swazi. In short, both questionnaires sought answers related to past evangelistic methodology, attitude of the SF constituency to evangelism, their spirituality, motivation, and how socio-political situations have impacted SDA church growth.

The results indicated that the SF constituency and leadership need to be more culturally sensitive to have any meaningful impact among the Swazi. Further, the SF membership and pastors should undergo some education in regard to a high view of the Bible and high view of culture.

The presidents are without doubt experienced pastors and administrators who have a vested interest in numerical growth. That is why they were targeted for this survey. The church elders are men and women of integrity. The group that responded to the survey questionnaire has an average of

19.5 years' experience as SDAs. Therefore, they know what they are saying.

Culture. It is interesting to note that all four presidents (past and present) did not recognize any good elements in the Swazi culture that could be used positively in evangelism to help win the Swazi. Church leaders seemed to desire to be positive to the Swazi culture when they said that culture should not be ignored in the evangelization of the Swazi. These presidents embraced a high view of the Bible and a low view of culture. The position of the church elders is not very different, with 73 percent believing that the Bible demands culture abandonment. Such an attitude places the church in a very negative position in Swaziland.

Causes of slow growth. The presidents unanimously responded that Swazis would rather remain Swazis than be SDAs. In the eyes of the community, Adventism means bidding farewell to Swazi culture and ostracism from their own people. Evidently, this runs counter to the African philosophy of life which is expressed thus by Githumbi: "The strongest element in the African church is its sense of community. It is in such community--lived out both within the church and before the world--that the African proverb is

most realized, 'I am because you are; If you are not, I cannot be.'"¹

Three presidents were convinced that ancestral practices and the Western atmosphere in the SDA church were the most important factors in lack of church growth. Sixty percent of the church elders agreed that ancestral practices were a factor causing unhealthy growth. All the presidents suggested that the use of English as a means of communication in both Sabbath School and divine service repels many Swazi. There is only a 4 percent difference between the presidents' and church elders' observation in the way they view the role of polygamy on church growth. Fifty percent of the presidents and 46 percent of the church elders strongly believe that the SDA position concerning polygamy discourages quite a few people to even think of listening to SDA preachers.

One of the problems is that men attend community meetings on Saturday. Seventh-three percent of elders are of the opinion that this is definitely one of the barriers to church growth, and 50 percent of the presidents concur with the church elders, because men may lose their integrity in the society should they be converted and stop attending these Saturday community meetings.

¹Stephen Githumbi, "I Am Because You Are; If You Are Not, I Cannot Be," Theology, News and Notes, June 1991, 7-8.

Both the presidents and the church elders agreed that the issue of Sabbath employment cripples some of the strong members of the church. All presidents and most of the church elders estimated that 40 percent of the members are affected by the challenge of Sabbath employment. When I pastored in the southern region of Swaziland, some members were disciplined because of Sabbath employment.

Government's attitude. All the presidents were in one accord in their response to the matter of the government's attitude toward Christianity. They aptly submitted that the government is favorable to Christianity, with the inclusion of the SDA church. There are no laws that militate against Christianity or against the SDA church.

Openness to new ideas. All of the presidents felt that the SF is open to new ideas. They supported their affirmative answers by saying things such as women's ministry is well accepted by the SF constituency, polygamous offspring are baptized, and at times polygamous husbands. They felt that both the leadership and the SF constituency at large are eager to learn and implement any strategy that would change the status quo.

Pastoral staff motivation. In regard to the motivation of pastors, 100 percent of the presidents candidly and equivocally said that the pastoral staff is not at all motivated. The Swazis have a very high respect for their

leaders, yet 73 percent of the church elders said that the pastors do not do their work. This is a telling message to the SF administration. Why are the pastors lacking in motivation?

Laity. All the presidents were unanimous in their response to the survey that the laity were not fully involved in evangelism and other church programs. Fifty percent of the presidents blamed the reluctant involvement of the church members on the spirituality of the SF constituency, which is described as fair--meaning that, although members attended church regularly, they were not involved in church programs. However, the other 50 percent saw active members who participated in church work. This explains the acquired minimal numerical growth. In response to the survey, 73 percent of the church elders indicated that they did not receive adequate training in evangelism and other outreach methods or strategy to make any reasonable impact in regard to numerical growth.

Public evangelism and poor results. There is no question that unmotivated pastors cannot be effective in evangelism of any kind; they are satisfied with mediocre results. It is shocking that 93 percent of the church elders declared that poor retention and poor results of new members were due to a lack of follow-up. They also indicated that lack of funding was a factor in following up

interests. A quarter of the church elders also thought that lack of cooperation between pastors and laity contributed to poor growth.

Past approaches. In the last five years the outreach methods used included Bible studies, public evangelism, Family Enrichment Seminars, Revelation Seminars, and special programs on Father's Day. The most prominent methods used were public evangelism and Bible studies.

Suggestions from the church elders and the presidents. The following suggestions for effectively reaching the Swazi are culled from the questionnaire responses.

1. Meet the people's felt needs.
2. Build hospitals or clinics.
3. Meet spiritual and material needs of the people.
4. Develop Swazi evangelists.
5. Endeavor to meet all social classes.
6. Use friendship evangelism.
7. Involve laity in all planning.

Further Issues

The results of the questionnaire are quite revealing. In the present situation and with the attitudes of both laity and clergy, it would be very difficult to effectively improve the numerical and spiritual growth of the SF. The SF has to find out why the pastoral staff is lacking in motivation. Seventy-five percent of the presidents claimed

that the lack of trained pastors contributes to the unhealthy growth of the Swaziland Field. Could it be that the pastors are lacking in motivation because they are poorly trained to reach the people in Swaziland?

Another follow-up issue also needs to be sorted out immediately: There is no need of launching an evangelistic meeting if there are no follow-up work and financial backing for proper and lengthy aftercare.

Summary

According to the survey results, there are several positive growth factors of the SF:

1. Culture should not be ignored in the evangelization of the Swazi.
2. Government is favorable to Christianity.
3. There are no laws that militate against Christianity or against the SDA church.
4. Openness to new ideas in the church.
5. There is willingness to learn and implement any strategy that would help win more people.

The survey results indicate that there are more barriers to church growth than positive factors. The following is a list of barriers to be overcome:

1. A high view of the Bible and a low view of culture
2. The belief that the Bible demands culture abandonment
3. The Western atmosphere in the SDA church

4. The position of the SDA church on polygamy
5. Sabbath employment
6. The negligible motivation of pastors
7. The partial involvement of the laity
8. The inadequate training of church elders for evangelism
9. The lack of cooperation between pastors and laity.

The question may be asked, How do these barriers to growth impact future growth strategy? First, the barriers must be overcome through renewal, then education in the whole matter of culture, followed by contextualized evangelism, which is the concern of chapter 5.

CHAPTER V

CONTEXTUALIZATION AND EVANGELISM

Introduction

This chapter seeks to establish biblical, Spirit of Prophecy, and church-growth principles for the evangelization of the Swazi. Evangelism in this context means "communicating the gospel of Jesus Christ with the immediate intent of converting the hearer to faith in Christ, and with the ultimate intent of instructing the convert in the Word of God so that he can become a mature believer."¹ The role of contextualization from these three aspects is also discussed. The last portion of this chapter delves into contextualization as practiced in other Christian churches in Swaziland.

I feel constrained to take on such a task because Adventist evangelism as we know it has not effectively worked in Swaziland. A. C. Archibald was right when he said: "Without an evangelism that works, Christianity is doomed."² If Archibald had lived in Swaziland he would say,

¹G. Michael Cocoris, Evangelism: A Biblical Approach (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 14.

²Arthur C. Archibald, New Testament Evangelism: How It Works Today (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1946), 13.

without effective SDA evangelism, the SF is doomed, and he would have been perfectly correct.

Biblical Principles

Biblical principles for the evangelization of the whole world are rooted in the Great Commission as found in the book of Matt 28:19, 20 (NASB): "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

The Great Commission is the Magna Charta of evangelism. It is the marching orders of the supreme Commander. It is the proclamation of the King of kings to all His kingdom's citizens. It is Christ's imperative for all who name His name, said Roland Q. Leavell.¹

Jesus' concept of evangelism as stated in the Great Commission is all-encompassing. The principles for the evangelization of the world are found in His very mission to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). It is interesting that Jesus' commission to His disciples was simply a reiteration of the commission that He Himself received from His Father, "As my father has sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21).

¹Roland Q. Leavell, Evangelism: Christ's Imperative Commission (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1951), 3.

When Jesus stood on the Mount of Olives before His ascension, His last command regarded the Christian's duty to witness to lost men and women. "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Delos Miles sees Acts 1:8 as another form of the Great Commission.¹ That verse uses the word "witness" instead of the word "disciple" to describe the work of the disciples: "and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."

Miles asserts, "I seriously doubt that one can arrive at a solid biblical foundation for understanding the meaning of evangelism apart from discipleship."²

I believe that the Bible includes Swaziland when it says, "You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth." However, since the old paradigm of evangelism has failed to produce permanent fruit, a new paradigm must be introduced. Contextualization must be taken into consideration.

Biblical Contextualization

Contextualization has been defined in varied ways by many missiologists and theologians, but I have opted to

¹Delos Miles, Introduction to Evangelism (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1983), 22.

²Ibid.

utilize definitions as brought forward by two scholars:

George W. Peters asserts that

contextualization properly applied means to discover the legitimate implications of the gospel in a given situation. It goes deeper than application. Application I can make or need not make without doing injustice to the text. Implication is demanded by a proper exegesis of the text.¹

Bruce J. Nicholls sees contextualization as "the translation of the unchanging content of the Gospel of the Kingdom into verbal form meaningful to the peoples in their separate culture and within their particular existential situations."²

"The Scriptures are contextual from beginning to end," said Orlando E. Costas.³ I agree with Costas in this assertion: The plan of salvation was made contextual to be effective. This is clearly stated in John 1:14 (KJV), "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth."

God took the form of a human being to reach out to humanity. He left His throne in heaven and came down to

¹George W. Peters, "Issues Confronting Evangelical Missions," in Evangelical Missions Tomorrow, ed. Wade T. Coggins and E. L. Frizen, Jr. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1977), 169.

²Bruce J. Nicholls, "Theological Education and Evangelization," in Let the Earth Hear His Voice, ed. J. D. Douglas (Minneapolis, MN: World Wide, 1975), 647.

³Orlando E. Costas, "Contextualization and Incarnation," Journal of Theology for Southern Africa 29 (1979): 23-30.

this planet Earth, suffered privation, and lived as we live in order to have our experience. Heb 2:9 declares "that he by the grace of God should taste death for everyman." He had to stoop down--to be made flesh, in order to die for everyone.

Miles submits that God accommodated Himself in Scripture to the languages that humans could understand. For example, the New Testament was written in Koine Greek, the language of the common person in the first century. If we model our evangelism after that of divine revelation and inspiration through the Bible, we too shall accommodate our good news to the languages that people can understand.¹

The apostle Paul was a specialist in what I call practical contextualization. In 1 Cor 9:19-23 the principles of identification are clearly laid down:

¹⁹For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

²⁰And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews: to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

²¹To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ) that I might gain them that are without law.

²²To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

²³And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

It is no wonder that Paul was an effective and successful evangelist--he respected his audience and was

¹Miles, 19.

cognizant of the respondent cultures. "He became all things to all men" (vs. 22). Pastors and missionaries who work in Swaziland should emulate Paul, they must become Swazis when they labor for the Swazi. They must respect the Swazi and their culture that they might win the Swazi. Join the traditionalists and agree with positive things that interest them and the people are likely to listen to you. Like the apostle Paul, let us minister to the Swazi within their cultural context.

This is the kind of evangelist we need in Swaziland. In the past, methods have not been contextualized by pastors and evangelists.

Spirit of Prophecy Principles

In the writings of Ellen G. White evangelism seems to be the motif that runs through them. This is well expressed by Uriah Smith: "Go to all the world, work for all the world, is the exhortation running through all the writings of Mrs. White."¹

Ellen G. White's writings give prominence to the responsibility of the church in both home and foreign mission service. She admonishes every member of the body to be the light in the world, a blessing to those with whom he may associate. And the church in Christian lands must put

¹Ellen G. White, Life Sketches (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1915), 474.

forth its highest endeavors to evangelize those who are groping in the darkness and superstition of heathen lands.¹

She had a broad view of evangelism which I think was global in nature.

The gospel invitation is to be given to all the world, --"to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." The last message of warning and mercy is to lighten the whole earth with its glory. As surely as this message shall be proclaimed in all the earth, so surely shall be fulfilled the prophecy given to Malachi: "From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, said the Lord of hosts."²

Since Ellen G. White's principles of evangelism are unmistakably global, invariably Swaziland is not excluded. The following section deals with contextualization principles as viewed by Ellen G. White.

Ellen G. White's Contextualization Principles

Mrs. White briefly addresses the principles of contextualization. My observation is that she does not separate these principles from evangelism. Ellen G. White did not believe in evangelism by proxy, hence her admonition: "Every method by which access may be gained to

¹Ibid., 473-474.

²Ellen G. White, "Message to the Church," The Southern Watchman, January 1905, 10.

the homes of the people must be tried; for the messenger must become acquainted with the people."¹

In her counsel to a Southern African-bound missionary couple, she said:

God would have you be as lambs among wolves, as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. . . . You must modify your method of labor. You need not feel that all truth is to be spoken to unbelievers on any and every occasion. This is not practising deception; it is working as Paul worked.²

True to the principles of contextualization, Ellen G. White noted that the apostle Paul varied his manner of labor, always shaping his method to the circumstances under which he was placed. She went on to suggest that the laborer for God is to study carefully the best method, so that he may not raise prejudices or stir up combativeness.³

Ellen G. White reiterates her previous admonition in a rather different manner to ministers and evangelists of all generations:

All can communicate, if they will, the grand yet simple truths regarding the mission and work of Christ. If they will understand how to meet the people as Christ met them, adapting the instruction to their varied circumstances and understanding. The spiritual lessons regarding the Kingdom of God, they should illustrate by the natural things with which their hearers are familiar. Then, as these natural objects are seen, day

¹Ellen G. White, "Preach in 'Regions Beyond,'" The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald March 1902,

²Ellen G. White, Testimonies to Southern Africa (Kenilworth, Cape Town: Sentinel Publishing Association, 1977), 16.

³Ibid.

by day, the lesson of truth will be repeated to the mind.¹

Mrs. White was mindful of the worldview of the respondent cultures. She may not have used the modern terminology, but she knew and understood the principles of contextualization well. It is now a marvel to me to read the following masterpiece from her writings:

The servants of Christ should accommodate themselves to the varied conditions of the people. They cannot carry out exact rules if they meet the cases of all. Labor will have to be varied to meet the people where they are. "Of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."²

Ellen G. White took evangelism and contextualization seriously. In fact, she respected the respondent cultures and met people where they were. This approach is a needed dimension in the evangelization of the Swazi. Could it be that evangelism that is not sensitive to the cultural context of the Swazi may not produce satisfactory results?

Church-Growth Principles

It is an indisputable fact that the church-growth movement is inveterate on the Great Commission. Donald McGavran and George G. Hunter III have written that "the Great Commission to go . . . make disciples among all peoples is the banner pointing the way for the expansion of

¹Ellen G. White, "The Voice in Speech and Song," Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, October 1898, 4.

²Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, vol. 2 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), 673.

his Body and its ministry and mission."¹ They believed that "the church exists as Christ's body, extending his mission to all lost, hurting, oppressed peoples."²

Church-growth people are confident that the growth of Christ's church among His peoples of the earth is the will of God, and He is present to empower her outreach and expansion.³

They believe that the foundation of their movement is theological. They insist that church growth is

based on a biblical judgment that men and women without Jesus Christ are truly lost and God wants them found. So, church growth is faithfulness to God. When God sends harvesters into ripe fields, he wants them to come out bearing sheaves. God wants his lost children found, and there are millions of them.⁴

God wants the Swazi to be harvested into His fold. Thousands of the Swazi are lost; harvesters are needed who will come out bearing fruit. God is pleased with effective evangelism.

Evangelism that is limited to an introduction to the Christian faith, which enables the candidate to make a quick decision for Christ without becoming a responsible disciple, is not enough. Mortimer Arias asserts that "the [church-growth] movement has stimulated the personal work of

¹McGavran and Hunter, 47.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 26.

⁴Ibid., 19.

'discipling' instead of an excessive dependence on mass evangelization."¹

However, says Arias, "The church does not bid for people for its own sake. Church growth is never the aim of the church, but the fruit of its witness to the Kingdom, the outcome of the ministry to the world, the Lord's free blessing."²

Peter Wagner equates church growth with the experience of the church in the book of Acts. He views church growth as fulfilling these functions in terms of growth:

In the book of Acts church growth meant first, to grow up. To grow up into Christ (Acts 2:42). To mature in the faith. That is one part of church growth.

Second, in Acts it means to grow together. To grow in love and concern for each other. Daily they attended the temple together and broke bread in their homes (Acts 2:46).

Third, church growth in Acts meant to grow out. To reach out to all who were in need (2:45). But finally, church growth meant for them to grow in numbers (Acts 2:49).³

Like the missionary movement, the church-growth movement is focused on carrying out the Great Commission, is based solidly on the ancient conviction that the gospel is for all people, regardless of race, religion, tribe, or

¹Mortimer Arias, Announcing the Reign of God (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 101.

²Ibid., 105.

³Peter Wagner, "Must a Health Church Be a Growing Church?" Leadership, Winter 1981, 128.

nationality.¹ But the church-growth movement involves much more than evangelization.

In church growth thought, the objective of evangelization is to "make disciples," actual followers of Jesus Christ, biblically rooted, and incorporated into the Body of Christ. The motive for making new disciples is not self aggrandizement, but faithfulness to God.²

This is the kind of evangelism we need for Swaziland: Making disciples who will, in turn, be disciple makers.

Church-Growth Contextualization Principles

If there are no Christians in a particular social unit or subculture, a movement to Christ can begin among them only when cross-cultural communication of the gospel reaches out from some other culture or subculture and communicates the great news in a form that is indigenous to the receiving people.³

Charles Van Engen lays down the following principles for contextualization:

The church administrator should be concerned with fitting the congregation's life to its context. . . . Decisions should in some way contribute to developing a more indigenous dynamically-equivalent church.⁴

¹McGavran and Hunter, 15.

²Ibid., 25.

³Ibid., 31.

⁴Van Engen, 187.

Van Engen suggests that missionary congregations are incarnational--that is, they reflect the presence of Jesus Christ and embody the Holy Spirit within their communities.¹

Missiologists like Dr. Jon Dybdahl take contextualization seriously. He declares that to reach the world in a global mission, missionaries must meet people where they are. The unreached cannot be won unless the gospel comes to them in harmony with their own thought patterns.²

Miles poses questions in this regard: "Is there an element of cultural accommodation in your evangelism? Do you adapt yourself, your message, and your style to the cultural modes and mores of the persons whom you seek to convert?"

In response to Miles's questions, I refer to the results of the survey. One reason why Adventists have been rather slow to accommodate the evangelistic message and style to the cultural modes and mores of the Swazis was the ethnocentric approach of the missionaries who condemned all cultural aspects as contrary to the gospel. The survey indicated that Adventist leaders still hesitate to see any good elements in Swazi culture. This finding underlines why

¹Ibid.

²Jon Dybdahl, "Cross-cultural Adaptation," Ministry, November 1992, 14.

it is important to understand how contextualization could make our attempt to evangelize the Swazi more effective.

Many of the church-growth movement's principles of contextualization are universal and apply also to Swaziland. Here are some issues that must be contextualized: music, preaching style, ancestral practices, Incwala ceremony (as presented in chapter 2), liturgy, and the very atmosphere that is so Western in the Swazi SDA church.

Contextualization in Other Christian Churches

Introduction

In this section I show how other Christian churches in Swaziland have dealt with the issue of contextualization. It seems that the Catholic church was more aggressive, whereas the Protestant churches approached contextualization cautiously. The Swaziland Independent Churches (SIC) are very accommodating. These three groups of Christendom in Swaziland represent three different models that deal with the issue of contextualization.

The Catholic Church

It has already been mentioned that the Catholic church has increased its membership more than any other White-controlled church. I believe they owe their tremendous growth to contextualization. The Catholic foreign priests and nuns strive to learn the Swazi language. They may speak a broken siSwati, but the Swazi love them for trying. This

endears the Catholic missionaries to the Swazi community wherever the church is planted.

The Catholic church in Swaziland, according to Dr. Kuper, "showed respect for Swazi religion and supported Swazi customs (e.g., lobola, bride wealth) and never insisted--as did most of the Protestants--on Swazi wearing Western dress.¹ It also is quite tolerant towards ancestral practices.²

The Catholic approach favored "accommodation" of ritual practices, but with a new belief structure in keeping with Christian doctrine. Furthermore, the Catholic church permitted smoking and moderate drinking. Therefore, some Swazi (in contact with the Adventist church) who could not stop smoking or drinking joined the Catholic church in order to avoid condemnation by the Evangelical church of their family.³

It is interesting that the Catholic church studied and keenly observed Swazi culture. That is why

Europeans and Swazi priests have worked to adapt the standard funerary practices to the Swazi customs of mourning, recognizing how important the post-mortem state is in traditional religion and the extent of Swazi concern that the proper rituals are performed at the time of death.⁴

¹Kuper, Sobhuza II, 156.

²Kuper, The Uniform of Color, 126-127.

³Cicccone, 188.

⁴Ibid., 189.

It is common knowledge that when a Catholic Father is appointed who is particularly sympathetic to Swazi customs, the church gains headway.¹

Evangelical Churches

"Evangelicals did relatively little work in the symbolic reconciliation of Christianity and traditional religion."² "Evangelical conversion required a clear break from the culture and community ties to traditional religion, and a transition into a new Christian community and culture, with few consciously constructed bridges."³

Cicccone submits that

the post colonial Evangelical missionary was tolerant of "innocent customs" which had been criticized by his colonial predecessors, examples of which include traditional dress, an enthusiastic form of worship and non-ritual dances.⁴

Evangelicals contextualized music, dress code, the style of preaching to a celebration-like form of worship, and some kind of dance derived from the rhythm of the songs. The Methodists are well known for their indigenous compositions. Their contextualized hymns attract many Africans because they are informed by their cultural heritage.

¹Kuper, The Uniform of Color, 111.

²Cicccone, 189.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., 188.

An example of a rather limited attempt to contextualize is the Church of the Nazarene, which uses contemporary songs that conform to the modern generation. Their foreign Western missionaries speak the Swazi language pretty well. A good example is Dr. Samuel Hynde. His surgery is always packed with patients from all over Swaziland because they feel that he understands them well since he speaks their own language. The growth of the Church of the Nazarene is, however, not solely dependent on contextualization as such. Their strength is linked to the institutions they have built: thirty-one elementary schools, three high schools in major cities of the Kingdom, fifteen clinics, one Bible college, one teacher training college, and a nursing college. Wherever there is a clinic there is a church; wherever there is a school there is a church. The Church of the Nazarene boasts of one hundred and twelve organized churches.¹

Independent Churches

Swazi Zionism was developed after the pattern of Western Pentecostalism. Like Pentecostals, the Swazi Zionists focused on healing powers, enthusiasm, and

¹Church of the Nazarene in Swaziland by Elder Elliot Sibanyoni, secretary-treasurer of Swaziland Field, interview by author, January 21, 1996.

paranormal gifts of discernment. Ministers with a reputation for healing attracted followers.¹

I believe the Swazi Zionists were more perceptive than the missionary churches. They utilized functional substitutes. Ciccone observed:

Zionism represented the most assimilating of the Christian groups studied. Zionist acceptance of traditional culture was qualified by their relationship to mission churches or by their competitors with traditional forms of healing.²

In effect, they substituted traditional healing with divine healing. They lay hands on people and pray for them, almost like the Pentecostals do.

Kuper noted that in the late 1930s the nativistic African Separatist Movement boomed on an upsurge of nationalism, flexibility of dogma, and great tolerance of customs.³ She goes on to say: "Certain missions prohibited their converts from dancing the Incwala and those Swazi Christians who attend are mainly members of Separatist churches."⁴

Zionism is down-to-earth; it meets people where they are. Jericho Church is one of the churches within Swazi Zionism. Most of its members claim that they were attracted

¹Ciccone, 188.

²Ibid., 190.

³Kuper, The Swazi: South African Kingdom, 68.

⁴Ibid., 72.

to the Jericho Church "because it kept to Swazi tradition."¹
That is contextualization.

Another aspect that attracts the Swazi to the Jericho Church, as gathered from interviews of its members, is the one that follows:

A high proportion of those interviewed had also joined the Jericho Church because of its image as a church with power. "I joined because I like the spirit that the ema Jericho have. I was not well. I went to them and I was healed in Jericho. Now I am well."²

Swazi Zion leaders substituted the witch doctor consultation with their own gift of discernment and prophecy.

They tread softly in matters dealing with polygamy. They do not overtly condemn it; neither do they openly accept it. But they do tolerate it because they do not censure those who are in polygamous relationships.

Evaluation of Three Models

The model used by the SIC is very accommodating, as has already been described. What has attracted half of the Swazi population to the SIC? The answer rests in their model for contextualization. I believe that they studied the culture of their target group in which they themselves belong. They knew the felt needs of their people and the type of sermon presentation the Swazi audience appreciates.

¹Fogelquist, 119.

²Ibid., 123.

Their acceptance of traditional culture tended not to be critical accommodation. I believe that, for the most part, the SIC have built their contextualization on the firm ground of "scratching where it itches." The SIC take care of the spiritual, fears, health and cultural needs of their members.

The Catholics are well known in Swaziland for their accommodation. Being a mission church in Swaziland, the Catholic church requires its foreign missionaries to learn the Swazi language. That alone seems to bond them to the community. While other mission churches rejected Swazi culture and Swazi religion, the Catholic church showed respect for both. It also accepted ancestral practices which they associated with saints as understood by Catholics. The Catholic church may have increased its ranks by tolerating smoking and drinking. This does not sound like contextualization but laxity of Christian lifestyle.

Evangelicals in general required a complete and clear break from the culture and traditional religion. However, there was some semblance of contextualization in: music, dress code, the style of preaching and religious dancing. The Methodists, for example, compose their songs in their own idiom and with an attendant rhythm. Some evangelical missionaries, to their credit, learn the Swazi language.

The Adventist church in Swaziland has taken a conservative stance in connection with contextualization.

Contextualization is viewed with suspicion. Contemporary songs are not acceptable, especially during the divine service. The principles of contextualization, as shown in this chapter, from 1 Cor 9:19-23, are not taken into account. In the same chapter John 1:14 is quoted, depicting Jesus, who chose to come down as a human being and dwell among us. In other words, He identified with us. The Adventist church can learn a lot from all three models. The Adventists must go between Catholics and Protestants. Figure 5 presents a continuum that may clarify these models.

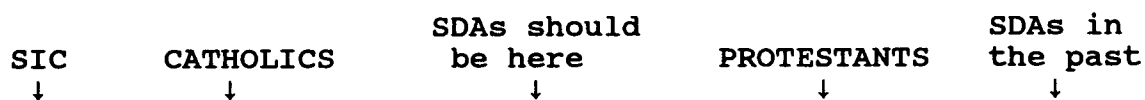


Figure 5. Continuum of culture sensitivity.

Summary

This chapter has established biblical, Spirit of Prophecy, and church-growth principles for a culturally sensitive approach to the evangelization of the world, which includes Swaziland. It has been equally established that evangelism without contextualization could be disastrous in terms of meaningful results. Therefore, it is imperative to have contextualized evangelism for successful results with regard to church growth.

CHAPTER VI

NEW APPROACHES FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST EVANGELISM IN SWAZILAND

Introduction

In view of the previous chapters, new approaches will be formulated that are context and culture sensitive. Some of the important issues from chapters 1-5 are: religious beliefs, cultural characteristics of the Swazi, questionnaire results, the methods used by early missionaries in Swaziland and how they failed to make a positive contribution to numerical growth.

With such a background I have been forced to think about new approaches. These new approaches are anchored in the Bible and a culture-sensitive approach to evangelism. This chapter focuses on issues that the pastors and evangelists must consider in order to be credible in reaching the Swazi. I have identified thirteen areas where new approaches should be used in SDA evangelism in Swaziland.

Areas Where New Approaches Are Needed

The Integrity of the Communicator

The medium. I am convinced that the SF needs pastors and missionaries who believe that Swazis are worth saving--men and women who love the Swazi and are committed to the effective evangelization of Swaziland. Gaines S. Dobbins provides the following idea in this respect:

The first and most important issue to be faced and settled by the disciple winner is that of his attitude toward those whom he would seek to win. Is this person, whoever he or she may be, of infinite worth? If the conscious or unconscious attitude is that of condescension, or if there is an admitted or unadmitted feeling that the person being dealt with is of no great consequence, or if the individual's decision for Christ is being sought for the benefit of the church or for the evangelist, that indefinable something called rapport is lost, and the results are bound to be disappointing. The most revolutionary aspect of Jesus' attitude and approach was his view of human personality. To him, every person is a potential child of God, over whom the Father yearns with infinite longing, no matter who he is or what his condition. To him a person is not just a rational soul in a physical body, nor a set of mental properties reacting to stimuli and responding with muscular activity, nor a socialized super animal produced by an indefinitely long biological and educational process; rather, he views a person as a universe of unlimited possibilities which have the beginning of their unfoldment in time but the fulfillment of their incompletions for eternity.¹

The presence of a missionary in Swaziland and elsewhere should create an environment conducive to spiritual and numerical growth. Donald McGavran has suggested that the missionary brings with him and creates around him the

¹Gaines S. Dobbins, Evangelism According to Christ (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1949), 196.

atmosphere, the climate, in which the church is to grow. This depends directly on the theology he lives; on his own "godliness." We communicate our faith or look of faith, and nurture our converts with our own spiritual vitality.¹

James D. Berkeley is right when he says: "The man who speaks wisely and eloquently but lives wickedly may instruct many who are anxious to learn (though he is 'unprofitable to himself'). They would do good to many if they lived as they preached."²

John T. Seamands says that

the missionary himself is part of the message. Effective communication is more than mere verbal enunciation of the truth with good words; it is always a vital demonstration of the truth with good works.³

The medium is important but is it more important than content? Without content, communication is simply an exercise in manipulating people. But the medium (including context and style) is correctly considered a part of the message. It is much more than a neutral vehicle for the content.⁴

¹Donald McGavran, ed., Church Growth and Christian Mission (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1965), 28.

²James D. Berkeley, Preaching to Convince (Waco, TX: Word Books Publisher, 1986), 76.

³John T. Seamands, Tell It Well: Communicating the Gospel Across Cultures (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1981), 108.

⁴Donald K. Smith, Creating Understanding (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 103.

I think Smith makes a vital point when he expresses himself in this fashion:

A message that we try to give to others is very much like water. The message content is fixed. We are not trying to say new things, but simply to make the existing message understandable to someone else. We have mastered the content we intend to deliver. We understandably assume that the content will remain the same, regardless of our personality, character, or social involvements. But all these things are like the different places where water is held or the different ways in which it is carried from one place to another. The communicator is the container, and the container inevitably shapes the message. To understand the message, we often need to understand the messenger.¹

The medium should be able to reiterate Paul's words, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."²

Seamands' observation in this regard is worth noting:

"There are many people around the world who will never seriously give attention to the Christian message until they witness a demonstration of it in everyday living. They must not only hear the message but see it as well."³

Identify with Target Group

The success of the SF to reach out to the Swazi with the gospel of Christ will depend much on whether the transmitters of the gospel identify themselves with the Swazi. Seamands has aptly said:

¹Ibid., 104.

²1 Cor 11:1. See also 1 Cor 4:16; Phil 3:17. In Phil 4:9 the apostle admonishes his audience to do what ever they see him do or say. The modern medium must emulate the apostle of old if its preaching is to be effective.

³Seamands, 111.

The effective communicator of the Gospel must identify himself with the people to whom he ministers. He must become one of them, so that he might be aware of their ideas, understand their viewpoints, and be genuinely sympathetic with their struggles for self-expression, even though he may not condone its forms. . . . The receptor must be convinced that the messenger understands his--the receptor's--background and has respect for his views even though he may not agree with them.¹

Jesus, the great exemplar, was not afraid to identify with human beings. The Bible clearly states that:

For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, for in that he himself has suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.²

May I hasten to explain that identification is more than ordinary sympathy. Sympathy can be just an expression of a kind of paternalistic superiority. Seamands has written that

true identification goes beyond sympathy to empathy, where we put ourselves in the place of the other person and try to discover his thoughts and feelings. Empathy is the capacity to enter understandingly and sympathetically into the lives of people, so that they cease to be mere audiences or classes to be helped, and we begin to value them as individuals.³

Identifying with the Swazi cannot be achieved by proxy.

It must be developed and cultivated through actual participation in shared experiences. By mingling with people, visiting in their homes, making their

¹Ibid., 94.

²Heb 2:16-18.

³Seamands, 95.

friendship, learning their language, and being "One with them" in heart and mind, the missionary may achieve identification to a large degree.¹

Communication

The well-meaning early missionaries brought the gospel to Swaziland and were determined to rid the Kingdom of heathenism. They were convinced that the Swazi had to be like them to be truly Christian. The way they communicated the gospel was faulty owing to its irrelevancy. David Filbeck provides this admonition to missionaries and potential missionaries:

The missionary enters a new culture with a message, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Two questions immediately present themselves. Will his message be relevant to the new cultural context? If it is not, then how may his message become relevant so it will not be rejected? Without answering these questions first, the missionary may end up asking and answering questions which do not exist in that culture. To discover how the Gospel is relevant in a new culture, a missionary must first interpret a new culture, i.e., understand the reasons why people do and say certain things.²

These questions were not asked and answered by missionaries who evangelized Swaziland, hence the rejection of the messenger and message by many Swazis.

Dr. Bauer states:

The first step in effective communication is to find out what the hearer considers productive of personal happiness. Even before telling him what I think, he

¹Ibid.

²David Filbeck, Social Context and Proclamation (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1985), 17.

needs to hear and know, I must speak to his desires, I must speak to his interests.¹

In other words, Dr. Bauer is speaking about contextualization, making the gospel meaningful to the cultural context of the respondent culture. Swaziland is in dire need of missionaries who will endeavor to make the gospel relevant and understandable to them.

Worldview

I think Ronald H. Nash and David J. Hesselgrave define the word "worldview" satisfactorily. Nash puts it this way: "A worldview is a set of beliefs about the most important issues in life."² Whereas Hesselgrave says, "A worldview is the way people see or perceive the world, the way they know it to be."³

It is only by active, loving engagement with the local people, thinking in their thought patterns, understanding their worldview, listening to their questions, and feeling their burdens that the whole believing community (of which

¹Bruce L. Bauer, "Communicating the Gospel Across Cultural Lines in English School Bible Classes" (M.A. thesis, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI 1974), 17.

²Ronald H. Nash, Worldviews in Conflict: Choosing Christianity in a World of Ideas (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 16.

³Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, eds., Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1981), 401.

the missionary is a part) will be able to respond to their need.¹

Felt Needs

"People respond more wholeheartedly to the gospel of Jesus Christ if they experience it as related to their particular needs."² By seeking to serve people, it is possible to move from their felt needs to their deeper need concerning their relationship with God.³ "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour 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.'"⁴

We are duty bound to emulate our Lord Jesus Christ because anything less will amount to failure. We must meet the felt needs of the Swazi. Ronald L. Preast emphatically declares: "This is the only known way to open closed minds. Gearing your message to the felt needs of any audience is the key to unlocking closed filters. In fact, extensive

¹Jonathan Lewis, ed., World Mission: An Analysis of the World Christian Movement (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1987), 150.

²Gottfried Oosterwal, quoted in H. M. Rasi and Fritz Guy, eds., Meeting the Secular Mind (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981-85), 59.

³Lausanne Occasional Committee, Consultation on the Relationship Between Evangelism and Social Responsibility, no. 21, 1982, 57.

⁴Ellen G. White, The Ministry of Healing (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1941), 143.

research and documentation confirm that 'people will not listen to the gospel message and respond unless it speaks to felt-needs.'¹

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Swaziland must meet the felt needs of the Swazi to succeed in their evangelization of the Swazi. Churches like the Church of the Nazarene have played their role in meeting the felt needs of the Swazi. Their success in winning Swazis speaks for itself. They have 18,752 affiliated members.² The Church of the Nazarene has, to a certain degree, met both the educational and health needs of the Swazi. (See chapter 5 for a list of their health and educational institutions.)

It is imperative for the SF to meet the felt needs of the Swazi. Here are some possible felt needs: Stop Smoking clinics, Alcoholism clinics, Marriage Enrichment Seminars, community health education,³ schools in rural areas, clinics in remote areas, and a program like Meals on Wheels.

Aside from meeting felt needs in the community, there should be a structure that meets the needs within the

¹Dick Innes, quoted in Ronald L. Preast, "Targeting Your Audience," Ministry, December 1995, 30.

²Patrick J. Johnstone, Operation World: The Day-to-Day Guide to Praying for the World (5th ed., 1993), 516.

³Community health education will include maternal health, nutrition, building toilets, protecting wells and such other health problems as they arise. The need for such a program is in the rural areas.

church. These need-meeting ministries, according to Win Arn and Charles Arn, provide

another effective incorporation strategy for new members centers on the unique needs which these people bring to the church . . . personal, spiritual, mental, occupational, relational. Life is full of problems. Becoming a Christian and member of a church does not mean all problems go away. But the Christian faith does provide a deep pool of strength from which to draw in coping with problems. A church concerned with seeing people grow and mature in the Christian life should have ministries that directly respond to the needs of its members, particularly its new members. Starting new groups is an excellent way to provide such support. Groups or classes may be topically oriented and deal with certain areas of concern to members.¹

In this connection, grief recovery programs, divorce support groups, coping with stress groups and counseling sessions should be started by volunteers from the church family, who are professionals in their particular areas. Resource persons from the Union Conference could also be invited to assist in their areas of expertise.

Culture

During the missionary expansion of the early part of the nineteenth century, it was generally assumed that churches "on the mission field" would be modelled on churches "at home." The tendency was to produce almost exact replicas.²

¹Win Arn and Charles Arn, The Master Plan for Making Disciples (Pasadena, CA: Church Growth Press, 1982), 149.

²Winter and Hawthorne, 527.

These older traditional approaches were regarded highly by the respondent cultures as if they were heaven-sent.

It should be added that these patterns were also eagerly adopted by the new Christians, determined not to be at any point behind their western friends, whose habits and ways of worship they had been attentively watching. But all this was based on the false assumptions that the Bible gave specific instructions about such matters and that the home churches' pattern of government, worship, ministry, and life were themselves exemplary.¹

Such has been the case in Swaziland: almost nothing was done to adapt and relate the Christian tenets to the Swazi way of life and culture. Mokgethi Motlhabi adduces this evidence to substantiate my contention:

Christianity was from the beginning brought to the black man wrapped in Western culture and Western values, and no distinction was drawn between Christianity and Western culture. Thus any black man wishing to become Christian had to renounce his entire background as paganism and superstition.²

E. Bolaji Idowu related a story that explains the egocentrism of many individuals who think that their culture is inherently superior, and that other cultures must bow down to theirs. In his own words he says:

We may call to mind here the popular story about the Englishman who went to place a wreath on the tomb of a deceased relative at the same time that a Chinese was putting rice on the tomb of his own deceased relative: the Englishman characteristically asked the Chinese, "My friend, when is your relative going to eat the rice that you are offering?" To which the Chinese promptly replied, "When yours is smelling your flowers." In my

¹Ibid.

²Mokgethi Motlhabi, "Black Theology: A Personal View" in Black Theology: The South African Voice, ed. Basil Moore (London: C. Hurst and Co., 1973), 79.

judgment the two men from different cultural backgrounds were doing the same thing with different forms.¹

The suggested new approaches to evangelize the Swazi are culturally sensitive and hold the "high view of both the Bible and culture, it demonstrates a concern for both faithfulness to Scripture and fitfulness to culture."² In effect, the Swazi must be informed that the clash between Christianity and cultures "is not between Christianity and culture as such but between Christianity and the components of specific cultures."³

We can now see the exact locus of the clash. As Christianity flows into the many cultures of mankind, there is no clash with 95 percent of their components which Christianity welcomes and those it improves. Clash is confined to 1 or 2 percent of the components.⁴

Pope Pius XII was definitely right when he said:

Let not the Gospel on being introduced into any new land destroy or extinguish whatever a people possess that is naturally good, just or beautiful. For the church when she calls people to a higher culture and a better way of life, under the inspiration of the Christian religion, does not act like one who recklessly cuts down and uproots a thriving forest.

¹E. Bolaji Idowu, African Traditional Religion (London: SCM Press, 1973), 179.

²David J. Hesselgrave, Scripture and Strategy: The Use of the Bible in Postmodern Church and Mission (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1994), 73.

³McGavran, The Clash Between Christianity and Cultures, 54.

⁴Ibid., 41.

No, she grafts a good scion upon the wild stock that it may bear a crop of more delicious fruit.¹

We must be cognizant of the fact that "there are features of every culture which are not incompatible with the Lordship of Christ, and which therefore need not be threatened nor discarded but rather preserved and transformed."²

The gospel must become recognized as belonging to or in the culture where it is being proclaimed. The gospel must be 'incarnated' in each culture, as God Himself became incarnated through Jesus Christ in a specific sociocultural context, the Jewish society during the time of the Roman Empire.³

It is important to remember that Jesus was fully incarnate in Jewish culture and life, yet without sin.⁴ It is apparent that a missionary to Swaziland must be incarnate in Swazi culture to be a productive and successful soul-winner. There must be an understanding that God has always been incarnate in human cultures. For "at various times in the past, and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets, but in our own time, the last days he has spoken to us through his son" (Heb 1:1-2).

¹Pope Pius XII, quoted in Kwesi A. Dickson and Paul Ellingworth, Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs (London: Lutterworth Press, 1972), 33.

²Nicholls, 9.

³Filbeck, 17.

⁴G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K. Mayers, Ministering Cross-Culturally (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1986), 122.

The Swazi must see the Word of God, Christ incarnated in Swazi culture.

Divine revelation reached its climax in Christ. Thus, historically, Christ the Word of God was incarnated in the Judeo-Hellenic culture, and He illuminated, judged, and elevated it.¹ And since the gospel does not come as a disembodied message, but as the message of a community's life, it must be so ordered that it "makes sense" to those who are so invited. It must, as we say, "Come alive." Those to whom it is addressed must be able to say, "Yes, I see. This is true for me, for my situation."²

Lesslie Newbigin suggests that "God accepts human culture and also God judges human culture."³ Whereas Hesselgrave says, "If anything at all is apparent in our world, it is that God has ordained culture but does not order man's cultures."⁴ However, the gospel message must remain the focal point of every missionary activity and must be presented in its full splendor and not weakened in any way but rather adorned, enriched and made more intelligent

¹Emefie Ikenga-Metuh, "Contextualization: A Missiological Imperative for the Church in Africa in the Third Millennium," Mission Studies 6, no. 2 (1989): 5, 7, 11-12.

²Lesslie Newbigin, The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1989), 141.

³Ibid., 187.

⁴David J. Hesselgrave, ed., Theology and Mission (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1978), 98-99.

and attractive by the use of whatever is good, just, and beautiful that is found in the cultural heritage of a people.¹

The Lausanne Covenant rightly says:

Culture must always be tested and judged by Scripture (Mark 7:8, 9, 13). Because man is God's creature, some of his culture is rich in beauty and goodness (Matt. 7:11; Gen. 4:21, 22). Because he is fallen, all of it is tainted with sin and some of it is demonic. The gospel does not presuppose the superiority of any culture to another, but evaluates all cultures according to its own criteria of truth and righteousness, and insists on moral absolutes in every culture.²

It must be realized that each culture has a potential for revelation of God's truth and for its concealment or mutilation.³

Pastors and Evangelists Must Come as Learners

As early as 1950, Daniel Johnson Fleming, professor of missions at Union Theological Seminary in New York, identified a prerequisite for the new approach: "Cross-cultural missionaries must begin as learners rather than teachers, as servants rather than masters, with the goal of

¹Dickson and Ellingworth, 34.

²J. D. Douglas, ed., Let the Earth Hear His Voice (Minneapolis: Lausanne Covenant, World Wide Publication, 1975), 6-7.

³Hesselgrave, Theology and Mission, 115.

empathy with those whom they wish to help."¹ Hesselgrave also emphatically admonishes missionaries to Swaziland and all over the world to "sit at the feet of the culture, so to speak, and patiently learn as much as possible about it before trying any formal evangelism."²

Needless to say, missionaries to Swaziland should take this counsel seriously. The Swazi will not entertain abuse of their culture, but they will be delighted to answer questions relating to their culture. Nicholls noted that many have resisted the gospel owing to the perception that it threatened their culture, especially the fabric of their society, their national and tribal solidarity.³

It is only when missionaries in Swaziland have learned, experientially, the dynamics of Swazi culture that they will be in a position to evangelize Swazis intelligently and successfully. The next section discusses the implementation of the suggested strategy to evangelize the Swazi in Swaziland.

Power Encounter

All over Africa there are common felt needs, which include protection against witchcraft and against evil

¹Normal E. Thomas, ed., "Mission As Inculturation," Classic Texts in Mission and World Christianity (New York: Orbis Books, 1995), 206.

²Hesselgrave, Theology and Mission, 102.

³Nicholls, 9.

spirits. Swaziland is no exception, as we have already learned. Western missionaries should understand that: "It is a part of the African heritage to believe that both positive and negative aspects of the supernatural are real and present in the world."¹ To the contrary, the Western worldview asserts that "the entire knowable world consists of . . . the limited space-time, energy-mass world."² The supernatural world is unknowable by definition and thus is discounted. The real consists only of that which can be objectively observed. Theologically, this means that miracles are rejected because God is no longer able to enter into the created world or violate the natural laws of creation. In practical terms, this means that many Western Christians have lost faith that God's power is actually available to people today in a real supernatural way.³

Missionaries from the West carried with them this kind of worldview and imposed it upon the target cultures. Even in Swaziland, "missionaries had a wrong approach to spirit powers. Denial of such powers is scientific and Western,

¹Joel B. Kailing, "In Relationship with African Independent Churches," International Review of Mission, January 1988, 43.

²Morton T. Kelsey, Christianity as Psychology: The Healing Power of the Christian Message (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1986), 51.

³Kailing, 43.

but not specifically Christian."¹ Paul G. Hiebert, an experienced missionary himself, points out that "one of the weaknesses of the Christian mission, is that it has failed to answer questions about Spirit possession, curses, witchcraft, and magic--things that are so real in the experience of people."²

Roger E. Hedlund, a Westerner, makes a point that I consider interesting.

The conflict of the gospel is with hidden spiritual forces in the world. Paul in several of his epistles speaks of these forces opposing the gospel. "For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12). What are these principalities, powers, and world rulers? Evangelical Christians have tended to equate these references with demons. Western theology has largely ignored the subject of demonology. It is only recently that Western theologians have taken a serious interest in the powers.³

Wagner observes that this biblical practice needs to be in operation along with the gift of discernment. Exorcism (Acts 16:18; cf. Mark 3:15; 6:7, 13; Luke 10:17-19) is closely related to the gift of healing. "Christ's commission to the church included not simply the command to preach but also to heal and . . . to cast out demons." A

¹P. G. Neefjes, "The Impact of Christianity in Ghana with Special Reference to the Roman Catholic Church," The Ghana Bulletin of Theology 4 (December 1971): 45.

²Paul G. Hiebert, "The Flaw of the Excluded Middle," Missiology 10 (January 1982): 39.

³Roger G. Hedlund, The Mission of the Church in the World (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991), 227.

ministry of deliverance has a powerful attraction in contemporary Asia among people of many religions and social backgrounds who are in search of release from oppressive spiritual forces.¹

The situation is the same in Swaziland; masses are in search of release from oppressive spiritual forces. Dr. Jon Dybdahl has written that "one of the reasons we have seen fewer conversions than expected in many Third World situations is that Western evangelists have failed to grasp this two-fold thrust of evangelism."² "Christian messages and even demonstrations concerning faith, love, forgiveness and most of other truths of Christianity are not likely to have nearly the impact on such peoples as messages concerning and demonstrations of spiritual power."³

I find it strange that the Western missionary would like to make the Christians believe that there are no witches. When I read the Bible, it makes no apologies about the existence of witches. In Exod 22:18 we read, "Thou shall not suffer a witch to live." In Deut 18:10 the presence of a witch in the midst of God's children was

¹Peter C. Wagner, quoted in *ibid.*, 248.

²Jon Dybdahl, "Faith and Healing," an unpublished article written for the Institute of World Mission (SDA Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, 1993), 1.

³Charles H. Kraft, "Allegiance, Truth and Power Encounters in Christian Witness" in The Power Encounter and Dual Allegiance (Pasadena, CA: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1991), 3.

forbidden. 1 Sam 28 is another case in point--the witch of Endor. We cannot dismiss witchcraft in a simplistic manner. Our task as pastors is to help people find release from these spiritual forces.

Donald Senior looks at the Great Commission as more than proclaiming the gospel. He explains:

I believe that much of the commissioning language within the mission instruction passages of the synoptics is not simply a commission to proclaim or to teach, but an injunction to heal. In Mark 6:7, after Jesus' return from his mission to Gerasa and other healings on the Jewish side of the lake, the twelve are sent out with the authority to expel unclean spirits. Mark describes their mission a few verses later as one of proclaiming repentance, driving out demons, and anointing with oil and healing those who are sick (6:13). Similar formulations are found in the parallel passages of Matthew and Luke (see Matthew 10:8; Luke 9:1). Thus healing was an intrinsic part of the early Christian understanding of mission.¹

A situation like this within the context of Swaziland calls for an understanding that healing is part and parcel of the Great Commission as presented above.

Healing

Those in the West who reject all aspects of the supernatural may feel freed from anxiety about these sorts of problems. The cost is high, however, for they lose the possibility of God intervening in any area of life.

¹Donald Senior, "Correlating Images of Church and Images of Mission in the New Testament," Missiology 23 (January 1995): 13.

Independent African Christianity does not deny the existence of the demonic but demonstrates God's power over it.¹

A close scrutiny of the diagnosis and therapy of prophetic healers reveals both parallels with and deviations from traditional divination and healing practices. It is at this level, so crucially important to both healer and patient, that there is continual dialogue between contextualized Christianity, and traditional African theology takes shape. Here, too, AIC pneumatology finds its existentially most meaningful expression.²

When it comes to therapy, Daneel observed:

After the diagnosis of illness, the similarity between nganga and prophetic activity ceases. Both trace the origin of disease to a disturbed society. Both recognize the disruptive effect of evil powers unleashed in interhuman relations. But they ward off these powers differently. While the nganga seeks a solution that accedes to the conditions of the spirit, prophetic therapy is based on belief in the liberating power of the Christian God, particularly the Holy Spirit, which surpasses all other powers and is consequently capable of offering protection against them.³

Appiah-Kubi has identified healings as the most important single reason why people join the indigenous

¹Kofi A. Opoku, "Changes Within Christianity: The Case of the Musama Disco Christo Church" in Christianity in Independent Africa, ed. Edward Fashole-Luke, Richard Gray, Adrian Hastings, and Godwin Tasie (Indiana University Press, 1978), 120.

²M. L. Daneel, "Pneumatology and the Salvation of All Creation," International Review of Mission 82 (April 1993): 150.

³Ibid.

African Christian churches.¹ But the main reason thousands are attracted to them, according to Oosthuizen, is that they take the African worldview seriously. These churches do not deny the belief in personal causes for misfortune such as witchcraft, sorcery, and spiritual possession. The prophet healers acknowledge these realities, and they also believe that sickness and disturbed social relationships are bound together. They offer both physical healing and the Spirit's protection against evil spirits.²

The Bible's context of healing, according to Jas 5, involves calling for the elders of the church to pray and anoint the sick person with oil.

Illness is a community affair, the family, tribe or both. Illness is a community matter because sickness in animism is traced back to the ancestral or tribal spirits of the sick person. Through the ancestral/tribal spirits the illness of the individual becomes related to every other member of the community.³

Communicating, along with the context of the gospel that illness and healing are similarly community affairs in Christianity, speaks to the tribal context. The church is the community of God in tribal society. Those in the church

¹Kofi Appiah-Kubi, "Indigenous African Christian Churches: Signs of Authenticity" in African Theology en Route, ed. Kofi Appiah-Kubi and Sergio Torres (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), 121.

²Gerhardus C. Oosthuizen, "Indigenous Healing Within the Context of the African Independent Churches" in African Christian Religion and Healing in Southern Africa (Lewis, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, n.d.), 71-90.

³Filbeck, 103.

who are elders and know how to pray to God are to be called in to pray and anoint with oil. The use of oil in healing in New Testament times deserves special comment here. David Filbeck offers this explanation:

Traditionally, the church has considered oil in James 5 as belonging to the way society of New Testament times was organized for healing; it did not belong to the content of the Gospel. As a detail New Testament social organization used in healing, oil may be compared (in the communication process) with what is used today in healing.¹

Swaziland Indigenous Churches are far ahead of mission churches in realizing that the use of oil in healing did not belong to the content of the gospel. The SIC chose to use water instead of oil for healing. I think it is imperative for the SDA Swazi Church to include the healing ministry in evangelism. Jesus our Lord used methods we would call weird today. For example, in John 9:6, 7 we read,

When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came saying.

I am convinced that the SDA Church in Swaziland would do well to be innovative and improvise acceptable forms and methods of healing like Jesus did. While waiting and thinking about new forms of healing, why not use water and laying on of hands like the SIC, and swallow our pride? Once we do that, coupled with disseminating of the gospel,

¹Ibid.

the Swazi will have recourse in a balanced church that meets both the spiritual and physical needs of the community.

Liturgy

Liturgy is one of the sensitive issues that has to be addressed by the SDA church in Swaziland. The preaching is mostly in the cognitive domain, at the expense of the affective domain. The liturgical music is Western and is not informed by Swazi cultural needs and spiritual temperament. An African theologian, E. Bolaji Idowu, submits the ground on which liturgies were developed:

In the history of liturgies, it is quite clear that each one of them took its origin as well as its development according to the two motives of cultic needs and spiritual temperament of the people to whom it is designed. This is why in Christian worship we find cultic elements the history of which are older than Christianity. As the church came into being and developed its worship, the liturgy naturally came to take on a distinctive character which was dictated, not by a ruling Missionary Board or a mother church who cannot afford the luxury of seeing her child grow in such a way as to develop spiritually along her own natural lines, but by the very need of the people to whom the growing church ministers.¹

E. Bolaji Idowu's definition of liturgy is well expressed and it is the working definition for this dissertation:

In simple terms, what do we mean by liturgy? Liturgy is a people's way of approaching God in worship; a means of expressing themselves, especially in a congregational setting, before God and of assuring themselves of communion with Him. It is a means by

¹E. Bolaji Idowu, Towards an Indigenous Church (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 29-30.

which human souls find a link with the Living Spirit who is God.¹

The weakest element in the liturgies of the Swazi SDA Church is in her hymnody. The Swazi church is forced to replicate the American Church, where the church was founded. Therefore the hymnody used at regular worship is American. In fact, the SDA church hymnal has been translated into Zulu, Xhosa, and many other African languages. The Swazi sing from mainly the Zulu hymnal. The problem is that the Western idiom is poles apart from the African idiom; this causes a discord where the African words do not fit the notes prepared with the Western idiom in mind.

My own experience in the SDA church in Southern Africa and Swaziland in particular is rather a sad one. Some missionaries walked out when African songs were sung. The question must be asked, What is wrong with Swazi music or any African music that it cannot be used in regular worship in the SDA church in Swaziland or elsewhere in Africa? What makes Western music more spiritual than African music? Swazi music is as good as any other for worship and adoration--it is the only music that truly speaks to the worldview and needs of the Swazi. The missionary should always understand that "music constitutes 40 percent of the service of worship."² It therefore stands to reason that it

¹Ibid., 26-27.

²Kennon L. Callahan, Twelve Keys to an Effective Church (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1983), 27.

must make sense to the target group--the Swazi, not necessarily the missionary.

Vida Chenoweth warns about the dangers of rejecting local music.

First, there is the danger of interrupting the transmission of all local singing so that the baby goes out with the bath water and the entire tradition faces extinction. Second, rejection alienates composers from the church and, as we are discovering in Africa, it also can alienate the mission from people.¹

Corporate Worship

In the worshipping community in Africa, the relationship between the church and followers often reaches deep into the "collective personality" of the group.²

Bengt Sundkler, who has written widely in this context, says:

Corporate religious life and fellowship express themselves in song and rhythm. The new and radical group Expressions founded by Separatist Churches in the South and in the West are indications of the fact that the really indigenous African Church in the future will orientate itself away from Western intellectualism and show a sense for the rich and generous orchestration of African emotional life.³

Again, Sundkler's observation is worth noting:

The obviously foreign tunes made the singing of the former heavy and hesitant, while the "Separatists" apparently found much joy and satisfaction in their lively worship. The African Church comes to life and

¹Vida Chenoweth, "Spare Them Western Music," Evangelical Missions Quarterly 20 (January 1984): 33.

²Bengt Sundkler, The Christian Ministry in Africa (London: SCM Press, 1962), 120.

³Ibid., 121.

realizes its special charisma at the level of music and song and rhythm.¹

"African music is characterized by joy. Coming from a people who can be happy even in dire want, who are born in a land of sunshine and love to look on the sunny side of everything, the music reflects that joyful attitude."² Dr. Gruber, who has travelled the world and studied the musics of most cultures, is fascinated by this African rhythm. Here, he admits, he has come to learn a great deal about the riches of rhythm, which no other music can offer half so well.³

G. Riordan and O. Hirmer have observed that

in songs, for instance, occurs the miracle of rhythmical synchronization between the a) text-rhythm, b) melody-rhythm, c) clapping rhythm. We have to keep in mind that this rhythmical synchronization is mastered by one and the same person. A real "wonder" of African music. Nevertheless, the use of African rhythm in our churches does NOT imply the excesses so often associated with free rhythm. Rather does it mean the controlled use of rhythm. Stylization is one way of keeping rhythm under control, e.g., the triple rhythm (of text, melody and clapping) mentioned above could be converted into triple contrast in the choral singing.⁴

The Swazi are a deeply traditional people who have a long history that was passed on orally from generation to

¹Ibid.

²G. Riordan and O. Hirmer, "For a Genuine African Liturgical Music," African Ecclesiastical Review 8 (April 1966): 130.

³Ibid., 131.

⁴Ibid.

generation. With the background of oral tradition, songs had to be short and to the point, repetition was imperative to make the songs memorable. The SIC capitalize on this repetition in their singing and preaching and the people love it.

Howard S. Olson has the following comment to make in this connection:

For a hymn tune to be memorable it must have a balance of repetition and variety. The repetition develops a feeling of familiarity, and the variety obviates anesthetizing monotony. Traditional African music has an infinite capacity for variety and repetition through the devices of antiphony and refrain. The leader introduces variety in the recitative, the response retains the repetition, and the refrain merges the leader and congregation in a satisfying unison. One of the difficulties for the composer is the fact that the same tune must serve different stanzas adequately. While the same words are not repeated, to bear repetition it must be sufficiently interesting.¹

The independent churches arose out of the desire of the African to indigenize Christianity. The formal worship of the mission churches was unappealing to the African whose traditional worship is vigorous and often spontaneous.

E. A. Obeng notes that

the independent churches, on coming into being, aimed at giving Christianity an African imprint so that the African's emotions, his intense yearning to see God through African-based forms and formularies, would be realized. This would elicit the best of his spiritual nature and resourcefulness. Thus a deliberate attempt was made to include elements of African ways of life

¹Howard S. Olson, "Singing Our Theology," Africa Theological Journal 15 (1986):

into the worship and practises of the Independent Churches.¹

Further,

The independent churches have incorporated many features of African culture into their mode of worship. Local musical instruments are used during worship. Hymns are composed to local tunes and they are accompanied by dancing and clapping of hands. The vernacular is used in worship.²

Their dancing and use of musical instruments are rooted in the Bible. Ps 150:1-6 comes to the fore time and time again, especially vss. 3-5, where the Psalter encourages worshippers to use trumpets, psaltery, harp, cymbals, timbrel, and stringed instruments and organs. In vs. 4 the Psalter says, "Praise him with the timbrel and dance." I am pleasantly mystified by the fact that the Scripture actually says: "Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals" (Ps 150:5, emphasis supplied). The African Independent Churches also use drums because they are familiar with them and are readily available. These people know how to contextualize.

The independent churches are looked at with suspicion by many mission churches because they represent something of a threat as they grow larger and larger.

They are considered strange, if not bizarre, for their worship services are colorful, noisy, and pragmatic. Rarely do these qualities show up in the mission-type

¹E. A. Obeng, "Inroads of African Religion Into Christianity: The Case of the Spiritual Churches," African Theological Journal 16 (1987): 113.

²Ibid.

churches. While these features are considered objectionable to Western-type orthodox Christian churches in Africa, they tap into something that is very real. The transparency of this African practice communicates a dynamic to be feared among the "real churches" who worry that these groups will get the upper hand.¹

Swazis, like all true Africans who have not yet been Westernized, enjoy a worship service that is colorful, warm, and pragmatic. They would rather have a sermon given in siSwati than English, but most times they have to put up with translated sermons from English to siSwati. This stems from the paucity of individuals who are willing to translate from siSwati to English. Interpreters (99.9 percent) are not comfortable to interpret from siSwati to English.

But it is at this point that we should observe a certain uncalled for habit of conducting services in English in places where everybody, or almost everybody, can speak and understand the local language, and where very few understand English at all or properly. In such a place, it is unnecessary to use such a foreign language.²

I am fully persuaded that the way to go for the SDA Church in Swaziland, to improve numerical growth, is to devise Swazi liturgical music that is relevant and meets the cultic needs of the Swazi. As much as possible, services must be conducted in siSwati, the language of the people. The use of local musical instruments should not be discouraged, neither should the dancing and clapping. The

¹Dean S. Gilliland, "How 'Christian' Are African Independent Churches?" Missiology 14 (July 1986): 264.

²Idowu, Towards An Indigenous Church, 21.

Swazi are intelligent, they know the difference between holy and secular dance. In order to win the Swazi it is imperative to make the formal worship appealing to the Swazi--make it lively, vigorous, and spontaneous. In this way the Swazi will worship with understanding. I suggest that the new approaches be preceded by renewal, which is very important for creating an environment conducive to spiritual growth, acceptance, and assimilation of new members.

Renewal

I personally believe that any church contemplating evangelism must begin with internal growth.

This refers to an improvement in the quality of a church. Christians grow in their worship, study of the Word of God, caring for each other, fruits of the Spirit, prayer lives, and in many other ways. E-O is included as a part of internal growth, because when unconverted church members are born again, the quality of the church improves.¹

Until existing Christians become much more biblically sound and Spirit-filled than they now are, we must be concerned not with winning others but with reviving the saints. Therefore, renewal limits itself to existing Christians. This process is understandable. Existing congregations must become sounder, must know more of the Bible, must live more ardently Christian lives.² In

¹Wagner, 116.

²McGavran, Effective Evangelism, 36.

essence, "every scriptural type of evangelism must be used to bring the revival which we need today."¹

Revival drives men and women to proclaim the gospel.

McGavran asserts:

Revival implants Christ's Spirit in men and forthwith they, like their Master, make bringing salvation to men a chief purpose of their lives. A holy anxiety that their neighbours and loved ones share the redeeming power of the Gospel seizes the revived. Like those indwelt at Pentecost, they go everywhere preaching the word. They seek to win men to Christ. The good life they now enjoy they ardently wish others to experience.²

I fully agree with McGavran who is convinced that

men and women who are biblically sound and spiritually renewed will certainly live genuinely Christian lives. They will also demonstrate that the genuinely Christian life is always concerned with and works at bringing God's lost children back to their Father's house. The dual nature of biblical soundness and spiritual renewal guarantees that vital Christians will not focus on themselves and nominal Christians only. They seek to be biblically sound in regard to bringing in the sheaves and spiritually renewed in regard to multiplying churches.³

How do we achieve renewal in Swaziland? I think a month of spiritual renewal should be organized and set aside. Fasting and soul searching must be part and parcel of the month of prayer. The disciples of Christ made preparation for the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. The Scriptures clearly indicate that "when the day of Pentecost

¹Leavell, Evangelism, 20.

²Donald McGavran, Understanding Church Growth (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 169.

³McGavran, Effective Evangelism, 37.

was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place."¹ This apostolic renewal resulted in the multiplication of members: "And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41).

Obviously, renewal prepares the church to reach out to the lost souls and to warmly welcome them into the church. Therefore, it is important to do "less talking and more sincere, earnest prayer."² "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas 5:16). It seems clear to me that there can be no renewal without ridding ourselves of hatred, grudges, and any other interpersonal conflicts. Hence the admonition, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb 12:14).

It is an undisputable truth that spiritual renewal creates an environment conducive to spiritual and numerical growth. In effect, spiritual renewal is a prerequisite to the strategy of evangelizing the Swazi. In the past years, weeks of revival were organized, the constituency was spiritually rejuvenated, but the strategy was the pitfall in regard to numerical growth. I believe that to a large

¹Acts 2:1. See also Acts 1:14 where it is stated that "these all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication."

²E. G. White, Evangelism (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1974), 112.

extent the cultural insensitivity of the SDA transmitters of the gospel alienated their Swazi audiences, hence the poor growth of the SDA Church in Swaziland.

Bible and Culture Seminars

I will make a concerted effort to win the SF administration to understand the importance of culture in the evangelistic endeavor. The culture seminars will be held in public halls and conference offices in certain central parts of the country, for easy accessibility to all members.

All church office holders, from the SF headquarters to the local church, will be invited to attend the seminar, which will be a weekend long for four weeks. The purpose of the culture seminar will be to educate the leadership of the church about the significance and importance of Swazi culture. In order to avoid confusion and conflict with the expected influx of new members who will respond to the new evangelistic paradigm that uses culture extensively, these leaders, in turn, will conduct mini-culture seminars in local churches. Here are some topics that will be discussed in culture seminars:

1. Bible and Culture
2. The Apostle Paul and Culture
3. Do not bury me in Egypt, but when I rest with my fathers, carry me out of Egypt and bury me where they are buried: Mortuary Rites and Ancestor Reverence in Israel

4. Jesus and Culture
5. Ancestral Practices and Filial Piety
6. Incwala Traditional Ceremony and the Sanctuary
7. To Veil is Swazi Culture: Should Christians

Discourage It?

8. Memorial Services the Swazi Way: Do They Violate Biblical Principles?

9. The First-Fruits and the Incwala Traditional Ceremony

10. Swazi Liturgical Music.

I will personally lead out in these seminars, with the help of missiologists from other churches and the University of Swaziland. The spiritual atmosphere will be maintained during the cultural seminars. Each cultural seminar session will have thirty minutes or so of presentation and the rest will be a question-and-answer session, with Bible-based answers. Bible-centered and other illustrations will be appreciated by the Swazi audience to clarify certain points. My approach to contextualization must be recognized as

critical contextualization, whereby old beliefs and customs are neither rejected nor accepted without examination. They are first studied with regard to the meaning and places they have within their cultural setting and then evaluated in the light of biblical norms.¹

¹Paul G. Hiebert, Anthropological Insights for Missionaries (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985), 186.

These seminars will provide the attendees with the skills and tools of reaching out to non-Christians without threatening their culture. In essence, the attendees will be equipped and deployed to the front line of evangelism. It should be recognized and understood that the culture seminars are intended first to educate the church members of the SDA Swazi Church and second to create an awareness in the community about the SDA Church's stance on culture. This is meant to prepare the church and community for public evangelism.

Oikos Evangelism

The new approach for evangelism in Swaziland will include oikos evangelism. What is oikos evangelism?

The Greek work oikos is translated family, kindred, household (including servants), or own. Many in the New Testament who were brought to Christ were the oikos of a new convert. Hence, oikos evangelism is when a new convert reaches friends and relatives for Christ. The Greek word oikos is associated with the outreach of New Testament personalities after they were saved: Lydia, the Philippian jailer, Matthew the tax collector, Zacchaeus, and Cornelius. Hence, the first evangelistic priority of a person after being saved is reaching relatives and friends.¹

Oikos evangelism is also called web evangelism. When applied to a church, it is the principle of the new convert reaching those closest to him or her. By working through web relationships, a church can evangelize its extended

¹C. Peter Wagner, Win Arn, and Elmer Towns, eds., Church Growth State of the Art (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1986), 54.

congregation (those who are responsive people) and guarantee a small dropout percentage of new converts and transfer members.¹ Oikos evangelism is most effective in a communal society like Swaziland. The extended family system that is prevalent in Swazi society makes it a fertile ground for oikos evangelism.

Members of a family normally follow the religious persuasion of the decision makers--the fathers or in particular cases, mothers.

McGavran and Hunter have written that

The faith spread most naturally and contagiously along the lines of the social network of living Christians, especially new Christians. Receptive undisciplined men and women usually receive the possibility when the invitation is extended to them from credible Christian friends, relatives, neighbours, and fellow workers from within their social web.²

I like oikos evangelism because it can be used in various outreach situations. When friends give Bible studies to their friends, the church does not spend a cent. The new members brought into the church through the oikos evangelism already have spiritual guardians, therefore it is easier for them to be strongly rooted in the church, as compared to the individuals brought in through public evangelism.

Below are eight important reasons why identifying and using natural networks of relationships (oikos evangelism),

¹Ibid.

²McGavran and Hunter, 30.

should be the foundation for the outreach strategy of every church:

1. It is the natural way churches grow.
2. It is the most cost-effective way to reach new people.
3. It is the most fruitful way to win new people.
4. It provides a constantly enlarging source of new converts.
5. It brings the greatest satisfaction to participating members.
6. It results in the most effective assimilation of new members.
7. It tends to win entire families.
8. It uses existing relationships.¹

Involve Laity

The laity cannot be involved in the oikos evangelism without being trained; therefore, training will be provided to every member of the SDA church in the SF.

The goal that we must place steadily before us is to train men and women, boys and girls to evangelize so that people do believe on Jesus Christ, are baptized, do become responsible members of his church, do go out to win others to Christ, and do multiply cells of the redeemed units of peace and righteousness. Our training scheme must intend to achieve all five of these ends. Leading people to believe on Jesus Christ is a temporary goal unless they become members of his body and remain in obedient relationship to the Head.²

¹Arn and Arn, 59-60.

²McGavran and Hunter, 75.

Further:

The church must also teach its members to reach out through their already existing friendship ties. What presently happens spontaneously to produce some church growth will produce much more when the principle is used as a conscious strategy of the congregation.¹

In Swaziland we would be wise to use the existing traditional extended family ties. Each member of the Church will be requested to bring a list of their extended family members who are in the local community. The list should have three columns--Christians of other persuasions, nominal or active members of other churches, and non-Christian family members. Thereafter there will be another list of family friends, personal friends, and workmates. The non-Christians will be targeted first and later the nominal Christians.

Every week a group of prayer warriors will pray for the individual names while Bible studies are going on through the oikos evangelism. Another way oikos evangelism could be utilized is the invitation of these friends, near and distant relatives to evangelistic meetings, and the development of leadership in oikos small groups.

Public Evangelism

The principles and prerequisites for evangelizing the Swazi in Swaziland have been laid down. I consider spiritual renewal and culture seminars phases of public

¹Ibid., 35.

evangelism and one-to-one Bible studies. My public evangelism and personal Bible studies will be Bible centered and culturally sensitive.

Positive Approach

The Swazi know that they are sinners; all they need is a solution to their predicament. In our attempt to evangelize them "we should carefully avoid a negative presentation of the gospel. Instead, we should emphasize the magnificent affirmations and promises of our Lord. This is the 'good news' we must proclaim."¹ In our evangelistic preaching our message must "be Christocentric--it is not what emphasis, but the who emphasis that is basic; not precepts, but a person; not what we believe, but whom we trust."²

We should manifest "gentleness with the meek; severity with the strong--These are the marks of a sensitive evangelist."³

Evangelistic Preaching

Without any shadow of doubt, the evangelistic message must be Christocentric. The preacher need not waste time on archaeology and some historical lectures to prove the

¹Seamands, 102.

²Ibid., 105.

³Delos Miles, How Jesus Won Persons (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1982), 10.

validity of the Bible. The Swazi nation accepts the Bible as the word of God due to this factor: "King Somhlolo's legendary prophecy foretelling his people about the coming of the whites to his country helped to prepare for their acceptance when they arrived. He had warned the Swazis they should accept the book, 'Umculu.'"¹ That is the Bible.

In my evangelistic meetings I will mention King Somhlolo's prophecy as a starting point. Hesselgrave says that "if missionaries are to have any influence at all, they will touch upon culture every time they speak and wherever they work. For better or worse (it depends on the viewpoint of the evaluator and the cultural sensitivity of the missionary)."²

Illustrations for public evangelism will be drawn from real-life situations within the context of Swaziland. For example, Swazi history states that "the Swazi having never been subdued by force of arms, remained a nation, and are intensely proud and conscious of that fact."³ The Swazi believe that they enjoyed this protection because

¹Anderson Mbawula Nxumalo, "The Indigenous Education of the Swazi and Its Implications for Curriculum Development in Swaziland" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1987), 28.

²David J. Hesselgrave, Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally 2d ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 1991), 115.

³N. J. Van Warmelo, quoted in Mbawula Nxumalo, 28.

Mvelingandi was with them. It is not wise to use foreign illustrations when Swaziland has so many of her own.

Do Not Quarrel

Having lived in Swaziland for a little more than a decade, I found Swazis to be humble, kind, and tolerant, but that must not be mistaken for anything less than this. In our outreach in Swaziland we must remember that "a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all" (2 Tim 2:24). God's servant is not to quibble or quarrel. He must not be irritable, intolerant, sarcastic, or scornful. Rather, he is to be kind, gentle, and gracious. If a haughty and hostile attitude provokes a debate, we may win the argument and lose the convert. So do not argue.¹

"Many mistakenly view the sinner as a soul that must be overcome and conquered at all costs. If he resists, he is stupid and stubborn and must be persuaded. That attitude can lead to a raised voice, a strained neck, even a clenched fist. Tempers flare."² The suggested strategy recommends a relational contextualized approach to evangelism. As someone has said, "More sugar and less lemon is needed in evangelism."³ The Swazi will respond positively to such an approach.

¹Cocoris, 116.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 119.

Summary

This chapter has presented suggested new approaches for SDA evangelism in Swaziland. These suggested new approaches are built on chapters 2-5 that provided a foundation for chapter 6, the actual suggested new context-sensitive approaches. Thirteen new approaches have been dealt with: the medium, communication, worldview, power encounter, liturgy, culture, corporate worship, renewal, oikos evangelism, Bible and culture seminars, and public evangelism and all its implications. It is my hope that this context-sensitive approach will increase numerical growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Swaziland. Through prayer, fasting, and correct approaches, the Swazi people will accept Jesus Christ in increasing numbers.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This dissertation commenced with an introduction that undertook the task of elucidating the purpose and justification of this study. The purpose was described as a development of new approaches for SDA evangelism in Swaziland. Then, limitations of this study were dealt with.

Since the Swazi are deeply rooted in their culture, it is imperative to study their background, which informs their belief system if we are to reach them with the gospel. Chapter 2 surveyed the Swazi traditional history, their religious beliefs, and their cultural characteristics. Some Swazi cultural components were highlighted as possible bridges in the transmission of the gospel to the Swazi.

Chapter 3 presented the coming of Christian missionaries to Swaziland. Their evangelistic strategies were discussed and their success and failure scrutinized. The Independent churches were noted for their appeal to the Swazi and their successful numerical growth. More than 50 percent of the population today are members of these African Independent churches. In contrast, the SDA church-planting and evangelism strategy over the last seventy-four years has

resulted only in slow growth, virtual isolation from the population, and a total membership of 1803.

To understand this situation, in chapter 4 SDA church-growth trends and strategies of the past were analyzed carefully.

The concern of this dissertation is contextualized evangelism. To lay a theological and missiological foundation for contextualized evangelism, chapter 5 focused first on sound principles for contextualization in the Bible, in E. G. White's writings, and in church-growth literature. I addressed evangelism and contextualization as a global task that should be a decided and planned effort to touch and win the Swazi with the gospel of Christ. A survey of contextualization practices of other Christian churches in Swaziland revealed several models from which we must learn critically in order to glean good things from them and shun syncretic tendencies.

Chapter 6 finally outlined thirteen new approaches for successful Adventist evangelism in Swaziland. This chapter asserted evangelism must be culture sensitive, it admonished local and foreign missionaries to meet felt needs within the people's cultures, and to use African liturgical music that the Swazi can relate to. I also showed that oikos evangelism should be used side by side with contextualized public evangelism.

Although this dissertation focuses on the Swazi in Swaziland, the principles are far-reaching. Evangelists who are curious about reaching the tribal peoples of the world may successfully utilize the principles of the new approaches.

My recommendations to all dedicated evangelists who have love and commitment for the evangelization of the Swazi are:

1. The Swaziland Field should set aside budget money for Bible and culture seminars. The seminars will lay the ground for more effective public and personal evangelism.

2. The Swaziland Field should add Bible and culture seminars to the responsibilities of the Ministerial Secretary.

3. Church growth must be taught to the Swaziland Field personnel, from the local church pastors to the administrative leaders of the Field. I see this as a key to unlock the growth potential of the SDA Church in Swaziland.

4. Short-term pastorates must be discouraged.

5. Oikos evangelism should be a conscious part of the outreach program.

6. A survey should be conducted to identify reasons for the low motivation of pastors and find ways to improve the situation. This survey will include: job satisfaction, pastoral remunerations, their health and spirituality.

7. The Swaziland Field administration should have a clearly stated plan for incorporating young Christians into local churches. "If converts are not guided into a church, chances are strong that they will fall by the wayside, or be stunted in their growth."¹

8. Relationship-based ministry ought to be added to any workable leadership form because relationship-based ministry:

- a. Helps people move from dependency toward development
- b. Empowers people to use their spiritual gifts in community
- c. Groups people by affinity-based relationships more than by alphabetization of last name, zip code of residence, or age
- d. Motivates by example more than by shame, guilt, or "oughts."²

9. Swazi liturgical music should be accepted and utilized in SDA churches or utilized in new churches where it will cater to the new converts who have not yet imbibed music that is driven by foreign idiom.

¹Gordon R. Mullenix, "Is Your Evangelism Program Any Good?" Evangelical Missions Quarterly 20, April 1984, 130-135.

²Carl George with Warren Bird, The Coming Church Revolution (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 1994), 53.

I recommend that the SF plant one or two churches within the same geographic area of the established SDA traditional churches with an intention to reach people at all social levels through culturally sensitive ministry.

10. The SF constituency should not look askance at healing and casting out of demons as done by the Independent Churches, but study how to do it in a way that is biblically acceptable.

The implementation and success of these new approaches will depend much on the cooperation of the Swaziland Field constituency with the administration. In the process of implementing new approaches, we always should be reminded that "the message of the gospel is constant, but the methods may and must adapt to changing situations."¹

¹Larsen, 149.

APPENDIX A
PRESIDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX A

PRESIDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name of President _____
2. How many years in presidential office in Swaziland? _____
3. What was membership at:
 - (a) the beginning of your tenure? _____
 - (b) the end of your tenure? _____
4. How many churches at:
 - (a) the beginning of your tenure? _____
 - (b) the end of your tenure? _____
5. Aside from traditional public evangelism, did you have a specific strategy to reach and win the Swazi?
 - (a) Yes
 - (b) No
6. What ways were used to evangelize the Swazis during your tenure? _____

7. Did the pastors receive any training in regards to church growth strategies?
 - (a) Three-day seminar
 - (b) One-week seminar
 - (c) More than a week
 - (d) None
8. What do you consider good elements in Swazi culture?

9. What elements of Swazi culture could help us win Swazis? _____

10. The Gospel of Christ, like a double-edged sword, brings about change in people's lives, therefore culture must be ignored in the evangelization of Swazis.

- (a) Agree
- (b) Disagree
- (c) Uncertain

11. How many lay evangelistic efforts were conducted during your tenure? _____

12. How many pastoral evangelistic efforts? _____

13. What do you think are reasons for a slow and unhealthy growth in Swaziland?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
(a) The Swazis don't respond to the Gospel	1	2	3
(b) Swazis would rather have their culture than be SDAs	1	2	3
(c) The problem is ancestor worship	1	2	3
(d) The lack of trained pastoral staff	1	2	3

(e) Other: _____

14. Suggested ways to improve numerical growth in Swaziland:

15. Generally, there are more women in SDA churches than men. What do you think are the reasons for this phenomenon?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
(a) The acceptability of polygamous marriages in society	1	2	3
(b) The rejection of polygamy by SDA church	1	2	3
(c) Women are more receptive to the Gospel of Christ	1	2	3
(d) The loss of status and integrity in the society	1	2	3

16. Men are decision makers in Swaziland. How can the SDA church reach them with the Gospel?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
(a) Family Enrichment Seminar	1	2	3
(b) Gospel and Culture Seminar	1	2	3
(c) Father's Day Sabbath every quarter	1	2	3
(d) Other: _____			

17. Why does the church attract the schooled and some middle class people?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
(a) The SDA church projects itself as a middle class church	1	2	3
(b) The services are conducted in English	1	2	3
(c) The low class are repelled by the Western atmosphere	1	2	3
(d) The SDA church looks askance at Swazi traditional garb commonly used by the low class group	1	2	3
(e) Other: _____			

18. What is the government's attitude toward Christianity?

- (a) Favourable
- (b) Tolerant
- (c) Unfavourable
- (d) Restrictive

19. Does the government have laws affecting the church negatively?

- (a) Yes
 - (b) No
 - (c) Explain: _____
-
-

20. Do you know of any political or economic condition that affects the SDA church positively or negatively?

21. From time to time people change their neighbourhoods. How has that affected SDA church growth? _____

22. Has migration impacted SDA church growth positively or negatively? _____

23. In your opinion, is the SDA church in Swaziland open to new ideas?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

Please explain: _____

24. Openness to new ideas means:

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
(a) Rethink and re-evaluate our approach to evangelism	1	2	3
(b) Examine our liturgy, music and preaching style	1	2	3
(c) Study the felt needs of Swazis	1	2	3
(d) Consider culture in the evangelization of Swazis	1	2	3

(e) Other: _____

25. The SDA church in Swaziland is openly against ancestral practices. Do you think this is one of the hindrances to church growth? Explain: _____

26. Do you consider the pastoral staff highly motivated?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

Please explain: _____

27. How much is the laity involved in evangelism?

- (a) A little
- (b) Very much
- (c) Not at all

28. How would you describe the spiritual level of the Swazi church? Choose one of the following:

- (a) High (people committed, attend church regularly, live as Christians)
- (b) Low (nominal, attend church sometimes)
- (c) Fair (attend church most of the time)
- (d) Excellent (committed and participate in church activities)

(e) Other: _____

29. Many companies and firms require their employees to work on Saturday. How does this affect church growth?

30. What are ways that could be used to communicate the Gospel to

- (a) Swazi men: _____
- (b) Swazi women: _____
- (c) Swazi children: _____

31. What are the major barriers keeping Swazis from accepting the Gospel and becoming Christians?

APPENDIX B
CHURCH ELDER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX B

CHURCH ELDER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name of Elder _____
2. How long have you been a member of the SDA church? _____
3. When were you ordained? 19_____
4. How were you brought into the Adventist Church?

- (a) Public evangelism
- (b) Stop Smoking program
- (c) Family Enrichment Seminar
- (d) Home Bible study
- (e) Second generation SDA
- (f) Other: _____

5. What outreach ways were used in the last five years in Swaziland Field? _____

6. Membership in Swaziland Field still stands at 1803 as of December 1994. What do you think are reasons for this slow growth?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
(a) Swazis are difficult people	1	2	3
(b) Swazis are deeply rooted in their culture	1	2	3
(c) Pastors don't do their work	1	2	3
(d) SDA church rejects Swazi culture	1	2	3
(e) Bible demands abandonment of culture and tradition	1	2	3
(f) Swazis worship their ancestors	1	2	3
(g) Other: _____ _____ _____			

7. Why doesn't public evangelism yield permanent results in Swaziland?

- (a) No proper follow-up
- (b) Members don't cooperate with pastors
- (c) Pastors don't care
- (d) Lack of money for a thorough follow-up work
- (e) Other: _____

8. Are church elders involved and trained for evangelism?

- (a) Very little
- (b) For the most part
- (c) Very adequately

9. Suggest ways that can be used to reach Swazis effectively:

10. To the best of your knowledge, what do you think are barriers to church growth in Swaziland?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
(a) Sabbath employment	1	2	3
(b) Polygamy	1	2	3
(c) Community assemblies on Sabbath	1	2	3

(d) Other: _____

11. Surely there must be approaches to break through these barriers. What are your suggestions?

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