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### Formulating an Effective Means of Bringing More Adult Males into Active Participation in the Church

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## CHAPTER ONE

### THE PROJECT INTRODUCED

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. (Acts 2:46–47 NIV)

The Book of Acts presents the church as a distinct community of faith in which the believers, husbands and their families, met together not only to eat, but also to learn the Word of God, pray, and partake of the Lord's Supper. There are benefits<sup>1</sup> when men, women, and children regularly gather for worship. The role of men is unique both in the family and in the church. At creation the man was given the prerogative to name all that God created. Adam was thereby placed in a unique position in all of creation. As the male, therefore, the husband and father has specific roles both in the home and in the church. Roy B. Zuck and Gene A. Getz<sup>2</sup> identified eight reasons why the active participation of men is needed in the church. Husbands are taught to instruct and lead their wives and families in accordance with Biblical teaching. Men are to set good examples through both their words and their actions, attributes that bring glory to God and value to their families. The fruit of a husband faithfully fulfilling his biblically-based role is a strong, confident, and spiritually mature wife and children. When the Christian man fails to fulfill the biblical roles of a husband, the family unit is more vulnerable to the difficulties

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<sup>1</sup> Holly Catterton Allen and Christine Lawton Ross. *Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 45, note, "Frequent and regular cross-generational opportunities for worship, learning, outreach, service and fellowship offer distinctive spiritual benefits and blessing."

<sup>2</sup> Roy B. Zuck and Gene A. Getz. *Adult Education in the Church* (Chicago: Moody, 1976), 89–93, note that men are the heads of our families now and in the coming generations; Men are the leaders of our communities; They are leaders of our churches; Men provide the greatest source of finances for church programs; they can provide models for young people to follow; they are the spiritual leaders of the church; they provide the most basic potential for lasting church growth and rapid expansion; and Men are souls, genuine people who must be won to Christ.

caused by sin and spiritual distortion.

The church needs men who are “spiritual fathers who are walking with God and leading men by example to maturity in Christ.”<sup>3</sup> David Murrow in his book *Why Men Hate Going to Church*, stated that Jesus and Paul both teach that spiritual fathering is one God-pleasing way to bring believers to maturity in Christ.<sup>4</sup> It is God’s intention that fathers become the spiritual leaders in the home and church. Dr. Martin Luther makes the same point when he introduced the teachings in the Luther’s Small Catechism, saying “As the head of the family should teach them in a simple way to his household.”<sup>5</sup> In the Table of Duties<sup>6</sup>, Luther exhorts fathers and husbands from 1 Peter 3:7:

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

In the same manner, fathers have an on-going relationship with their children through their teaching and example. In the church, the role of male elders is paramount in fathering the congregation as the family of God. Arthur J. Clement has titled his book, *The Shepherd’s Assistants*, in which he describes the role of elders in the church. Elders are also seen as ministers of Christ and assistants to the pastor.<sup>7</sup> As an example, a large Lutheran Church in the United States of America, Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Collinsville, Illinois because of the numerous visits the pastor has to make, two Elders have been commissioned to visit the sick and provide them the Lord’s Supper. George Hunter, in his book *Church for the Unchurched*,

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<sup>3</sup> David Murrow, *Why Men Hate Going to Church* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 215.

<sup>4</sup> Murrow, *Why Men Hate Going to Church*, 215.

<sup>5</sup> *Luther’s Small Catechism: With Explanation* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1991), 9

<sup>6</sup> *Luther’s Small Catechism*, 38.

<sup>7</sup> Arthur J. Clement, *The Shepherd’s Assistants: A Handbook for Church Elders or Deacons* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1989), v-vii.

discusses how male lay ministry helps the Church reach the unchurched,

Lay people did virtually all the ministry that took place in, and out from, every Methodist society. There were class leaders, and band leaders, and other kinds of small group leaders, as well as local preachers and those so-called ‘assistants’ who took de facto charge of societies and circuits—all laypersons. Other laymen visited sick and hospitalized people, others worked with children and their families; others visited poor people, widows, and single parent families; still others engaged in conversations with un-disciplined people and started new classes for seekers. In Wesley’s Methodism, those who ministered also evangelized, and the movement grew.<sup>8</sup>

Since parents are responsible for the formation and shaping of faith and life in their children, the church has a responsibility to train and encourage parents to fulfill their God-given roles as assigned to them at creation. The parents’ task of raising children includes providing children thorough Christian education in the ways of the Lord (Genesis 18:19; Ephesians 6:1, 4). Christian parents are responsible for the care of their children’s needs. This includes their physical needs, such as food, clothing, and medical care, as well as their emotional needs for love and security. The need for love and security is most fully provided in a home where the parents love each other and live in harmony. Since the non-Christian family views females as inferior, men do not treat their wives and children with the love they require. God provides for people in many different ways. Because he knows people’s deepest emotional needs, he has made a general provision to meet those needs through marriage and family. “God is love (1 John 4:8) and he has given people the gift of love, companionship and emotional security in marriage.”<sup>9</sup> The church then serves as the partner with the home in the process of raising the children in the way they should grow (Proverbs 22:6). Parents are to raise godly children who will be the next generation of those who love the Lord with all their hearts (Ephesians 6:4).

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<sup>8</sup> George. G. Hunter. *Church for the Unchurched* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1996), 122.

<sup>9</sup> Wilbur O’Donovan Jr. *Biblical Christianity in African Perspective* (Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria: Paternoster, 2000), 56

The physical family is the most important building block to human society, therefore, family should be nurtured and protected. But more important than that is the new creation that God is making in Christ, which is comprised of a spiritual family, the Church, made up of all people who call upon the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. The defining characteristic of this spiritual family is love for God and love for one another.

The family has the mission to guard, reveal, and communicate love. This is a living reflection of who they are in Christ. Husbands are called to love their wives as Christ loved the Church (Ephesians 5:25) and to play a positive role in their children's education. The absence or oppressive presence of a father causes psychological problems, moral imbalance, and difficulties in family relationships. Parents are the primary educators of their children, teaching them how effectively to live a fully human life. Parental love is the most fundamental element within this educational task. The Christian family, like the Church, is both teacher and mother. Parents are the first heralds of the Gospel for their children. The family is the first school where children learn to follow Christ, and are introduced to the mystery of salvation and the life of the Church. The father is the head teacher of the "family school."

The Bible stresses that the primary place of education and instruction<sup>10</sup> is the family. The home has the primary and divinely given responsibility for teaching the child and is the greatest single influence in a child's life.<sup>11</sup> According to the OT, it was incumbent primarily upon every father to impart instruction to his children. Deuteronomy 6:6–7 emphasizes the father's role as the head of the household for the education and instruction of children. The father has unique responsibilities for spiritual leadership and education within the family, including their church involvement, personal Bible studies, family devotions, and personal integrity. Failure to

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<sup>10</sup> Proverbs 22:6

<sup>11</sup> Arthur C. Repp. *Confirmation in the Lutheran Church* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1964), 205

catechize when they are young is to make our children vulnerable to all the worldly temptations and secular influence of the day. To help fathers teach the family, Luther summarizes, “As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household”<sup>12</sup> (Luther’ Small Catechism) on the six chief parts of the Christian doctrine. Steven B. Borst in his book, *Men in the Church*, further explains the father’s role in their family:

Instructing our daughters and sons about the Lord means telling them about the forgiveness that Jesus has won for them on the cross. It means showing them their new identity by virtue of their baptism into Jesus, that they are not just our children, but more important, God’s children.<sup>13</sup>

The theological training I received at Jonathan Ekong’s Memorial Theological Seminary, Nigeria, combined with my Bachelor of Arts degree, helped me a great deal to understand, approach, and assist other men in the Kusasi area not only to teach their families but also to proclaim the Gospel of Christ to fellow tribesmen. In this proclamation process,<sup>14</sup> the Ziako Lutheran Church that was established in 1985 helped to start Kpalugu Lutheran Church and later twenty-three more churches were established with nearly 3,000 members. However, looking at the membership of every congregation, one can easily count the low number of men in the congregation. During our evangelism and outreach programs, the men and especially the household head at each home we visited told us, “the women and children are all yours, but I will join you the next time.” This is the unfortunate situation in our church body, since every church needs men to fulfill their roles in the faith life of the church. This Major Applied Project (MAP) is aimed at formulating ways and means of getting more men into the church who would play

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<sup>12</sup> *Luther’s Small Catechism*. (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2005), 11

<sup>13</sup> B. Borst, *Men in the Church* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia 1998), 25.

<sup>14</sup> My main duties include: nurturing Kusasi Lutheran Christians to continue reaching out to their non-Christian communities with the Word of God; training more church leaders through the leadership training class; establishing new churches in the over 300 communities that have no churches; teaching the members how to read and write; translating Lutheran materials from English into Kusaal language; assisting in social issues such as lining of wells and provision of goats to needy members.

active roles in the faith life of the church.

### **The Problem Identified**

The continuous decline of male adult membership in the Lutheran Church of Ghana has caused a serious problem of faith for the church in its proclamation of the gospel. To confirm my assertion that there are very few men in St. Luke Lutheran Church, Bugzunde<sup>15</sup>, I visited eight of the fourteen Lutheran churches to gather information on church membership. An analysis of male membership showed that out of a total of 785 members in the eight churches, there were only seventy-five adult males. Kpaliga, one of the eight congregations, is an exception in that 28% of the membership is male, a significant deviation from the others, which range from 2.5% to 11%. Upon further investigation, I discovered that all but one of the adult males in the Kpaliga congregation were converts from Islam. This observation led to the hypothesis that when Muslims are converted to Christianity they become quite active members and remain in the church. This is consistent with my own experience as a convert from Islam. I have seen the love God has for me and the freedom I have to serve him and other people. The sacrifice that Christ made for all humankind and the resulting freedom that the Christian has in serving God must be effectively and powerfully taught to all members, especially to men who as heads of their households are responsible for protecting their families.

Further statistics on Bible studies, prayer meeting, and other church activities also showed very low participation of the few men who are members of the churches. This dismal situation is not only peculiar to the churches that I serve but is also present in many of the Lutheran churches in all parts of Northern Ghana.

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<sup>15</sup> There are twelve Lutheran Churches that were established in the Kusasi area in the Upper East region of Ghana. Among these congregations are Bugzunde, which is one of the biggest congregations, Ziako and Kpaliga. These are names of the villages where the churches are located. However, the names of these congregations are St. Luke, Immanuel and St. Matthew Lutheran Churches respectively.

The need to have more men in the church stems from the fact that they are the leaders not only in the church but also in the home. It is the responsibility of the father to educate and, in particular, teach his children the catechism, as Dr. Martin Luther states at the beginning of each chief part of the Small Catechism.

The few men in St. Luke Lutheran Church, Bugzunde are not actively participating in the faith life of the church programs, especially worship on Sundays. Besides this, these men are not actively involved in Bible studies, evangelism or any Christian fellowship programs.

In most of our evangelism programs, the remark made by most traditional worshippers and Muslims is that “Christianity is a White man’s religion” and therefore a foreign religion that the White man is forcing on the Kusasi people. They argue that Kusasis are born into their traditional religion but the White man who brought Christianity is asking the Kusasi man to abandon all his wives except the first.

The problem of how to deal with ancestor worship has posed a great hindrance for Kusasi male adults, first in conversion, and then in their active participation in the Christian life of the church. For the indigenous Kusasi people, the goal of ancestor worship is not salvation and eternal life, but rather the enrichment of life in this world, manifested in material blessings and a comfortable life. Almost every Kusasi man believes in the existence of divinities, spirits, and the power of witchcraft. They believe that these spiritual powers can cause calamity when they are ignored, but when people do what is expected, they receive blessings.

Christianity is not a “White man’s religion.” Christianity is a universal religion set up by God. There is a great need to teach the truth of the Gospel for all nations and to fully explain why Christianity teaches against polygamy, idol worship, and witchcraft. Through the power of the Holy Spirit the Kusasi men, upon hearing the Word, may embrace Christianity, remain in the

church, and actively participate in the faith life of the church.

### **The Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this Major Applied Project (MAP) is to interview active Lutheran male adults to discover why men perceive Christianity as a “White man’s religion” and further discuss how to effectively teach people about what Christ has done for all mankind. This study, I strongly hope, will provide resources to teach Kusasi men why they should stop their worship of idols or ancestors, fear witchcraft, and also accept monogamy as the God pleasing design of marriage.

This research will aid in the development of Bible studies, men’s retreats, and men’s literacy classes. The insights gained will also improve the evangelism and outreach programs, especially in the area of reaching adult males. In the end, I believe that more men in the Bugzunde Lutheran Church of Ghana, and other churches, will regularly and actively participate in all church programs and activities, and will willingly invite non-Christians to the church. By the grace of God, at the end of the project, the following outcomes will be achieved.

### **Anticipated Outcomes**

1. To integrate the needs of adults, especially men, for relating faith to daily life in a meaningful way (with an impact on decision-making and worldview) in Kusasi culture, into the teaching material in the ongoing adult literacy class for men.
2. To organize St. Luke Lutheran Church, Bugzunde men’s fellowship group that would meet regularly for Bible studies to learn about worshipping the one true God and also about God-pleasing marriage such that monogamy would be seen as the only God-pleasing marriage.



3. To use the research findings during evangelism and outreach programs organized by the evangelism committees.
4. To plan an intergenerational retreat once a year where men can appreciate and see the need of communal worship. Advantages of intergenerational activities will be discussed later in the Major Applied Project (MAP).
5. To share this research with all the leaders of the Lutheran congregations so that they can use it effectively in the churches.
6. To share the same information with Lutheran Churches in other parts of Ghana, and most importantly churches in Northern Ghana who share almost the same culture and traditions as the Kusasis.

### **The Process**

A crucial part of the research for this project consists of an in-depth interview conducted with ten active adult males in different congregations of the Lutheran Churches in the Kusasi area of Ghana. Since these men are actively participating in various church programs, the discussions focused on issues that led them to the church and the motivations that have enabled them to remain and actively participate in the faith life of the church.

After a thorough interview with each of the ten men, all of them were brought together in the form of a focus group discussion on the main points learned during the interviews. The main items were: 1. Christianity is a White man's religion. 2. Kusasi men cannot abolish polygamy because it is part of the culture. 3. Ancestor worship is also part of the culture and should be maintained. 4. Witchcraft is not an illusion but real, and their fear of the effect of witchcraft makes Kusasis seek to protect themselves.

From this focus group discussion we brainstormed on each of the items listed and pointed

out ways of dealing with them. The team was asked to discuss the reasons why these items are important to the Kusasi men. In our discussion, we attempted to find out which of the items listed above was the most important topic that may cut across the other items. Christianity being viewed as a Whiteman's religion was considered the item that embraced the other topics.

Since I am the area pastor of the Kusasi Lutheran Churches, I visited two churches every week. During these visits I mentioned the main items for discussion during Bible study time and gathered valuable notes and insights. My visit to the University of Ghana and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, USA libraries produced a lot of input on these items. The final product of the MAP will be an in-depth understanding of why Christianity is not a White man's religion, but one that should be embraced by all Kusasi men, women and children, and even all of humanity, because God sent his Son Jesus Christ to save all mankind.

### **Presuppositions**

This MAP is aimed at discovering the main topics that need to be effectively taught for men in the Kusasi Lutheran Church. There have been some topics which the missionaries did not consider very critical to the Ghanaian culture and therefore did not teach thoroughly. These issues are, however, crucial in the Kusasi man's life and culture. These topics will be addressed through this MAP.

Some of the presuppositions that are understood which I did not ask questions about include:

1. Men and women have different views of the world and of what is valuable in life.

This is important because it will help define specific outreach methods for men that are different than that which make sense for women or appeal to their way of ordering the world.

2. Outreach programs have not discriminated against men; men are welcome and needed as worshippers and especially in leadership roles.
3. It is always God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, who establishes His Church.
4. Numerical growth is an outcome brought about by God who actively convicts, regenerates and sanctifies believers (John 3:6–8; John 16:8–11).
5. Belief in witchcraft is real among most Ghanaians. This project will not prove whether witchcraft is real or not but will accept the majority view that witches exist.<sup>16</sup> However, the Christian should not be afraid of the witches because God has asked us to call upon him and he will answer our prayers.
6. “There are also theological assumptions<sup>17</sup> which I made that are in force and are not up for debate in this MAP.”<sup>18</sup>

### **The Content of Upcoming Chapters**

In Chapter Two, I will discuss the Biblical and theological foundations of my MAP. The primary theological foundation is that God’s mission (*missio Dei*) is to lead all human beings and all nations to the worship of the one true God YHWH through Jesus Christ.

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<sup>16</sup> When people are bitten by snake it is believed that is the work of a witch. When a Christian is bitten by a snake or scorpion, he should pray for healing from God and from there go to the hospital for treatment. The Christian believes that God is the source of all power has given wisdom and knowledge to doctors through their training to be able to treat sicknesses and diseases.

<sup>17</sup> There is only One God— the Triune God who has revealed himself in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Bible is God’s Word and does not merely contain God’s Word. Thus, the authority of Scripture is unquestioned and is the sole source of all Christian doctrine. The Lutheran Confessions, as contained in the Book of Concord (1580), are a true and correct exposition of Scripture because they are in agreement with Scripture in their teachings. There is no salvation outside the Church. That doesn’t mean a specific local congregation or a specific denomination, but the Church universal made up of true believers in Jesus Christ whose faith is ultimately known only by God.

<sup>18</sup> Rev. Michael R. Bingenheimer. *Autonomy or Multi-Site?: A Policy Capturing Study of Two Models of Church Planting for the Guidance of Future Site Planting at Ascension Lutheran Church, Wichita, Kansas*. A Major Applied Project Submitted to the Faculty of Concordia Seminary in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Ministry. Department of Practical Theology, 11.

In Chapter Three, I will discuss the African traditional religion and its belief in a Supreme Being, divinities, ancestors, and witchcraft.

In Chapter Four, I will explain in detail why Kusasi men believe in and worship ancestors, practice polygamy, and believe in witchcraft's power to harm people.

In Chapter Five, I will explain in detail why the Scriptures forbid human beings to worship ancestors and practice polygamy.

In the final Chapter, Chapter Six, I will summarize how my study, in Concordia Seminary for both the Master of Divinity and the Doctor of Ministry, has helped me to grow and become a better pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana. It is my conviction that pastors and laymen in Ghana can use my MAP, by God's grace, to bring more men to actively participate in the faith life of the Church.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE PROJECT IN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

#### Introduction

Scholars identify Africans as “notoriously or incurably” religious people. They are always looking for a religion that can handle all their needs (including social, economic and health). My parents were traditional religion practitioners and as such worshipped and sacrificed chicken, sheep, goats, donkeys and even cows to “divinities” such as rivers, trees, hills, lakes, and our ancestors trusting that by satisfying these “deities” they would in turn receive protection and blessings. When my father realized that his fortune was getting exhausted because of the persistent sacrifices he made using his livestock, he abandoned his traditional religion and converted to Islam. The whole family had to become Muslims because the religion of the father, the head of the household, is the religion of the family. This is a strong belief among Kusasis because a father is believed to always do what is the best for his family.

When I compared traditional religion to Islam, I realized that Islamic practices were far more difficult to follow because I was compelled to memorize Qu’ranic verses and passages and perform *sala*, that is pray five times each day, even though I never understood the Arabic content. I also had to fast during the *Ramadan* month each year from dawn to dusk. It was not easy for me to be a Muslim, but if I were not, I would have received severe beatings and even would have been ostracized by my father and family. Even though I had heard the name “Jesus”, I knew him as one of the prophets who did a lot of miracles. Throughout my life, including that time, I did not know that there is a loving God who has sent his only Son to do what I am unable

to do: save me.

After my high school education, I went to the new port city of Tema in southern Ghana, six hundred miles away, to look for a job. While in Tema, through my Kusasi tribesman, I met a Lutheran Church Missouri Synod's pastor, Rev. Walther Schmidt, who established a personal relationship with me, told me about Jesus, and eventually invited me to church. Initially, I was hesitant to go to the church, but one day, the Holy Spirit moved me to go to the church for a Bible class. For me, this was a transformational moment. I came to understand that God in his eternal love had already redeemed me and called me to be his child, and that it was not anything that I do that made me a "Christian." Rather, it was completely the reconciliation brought forth by the grace<sup>19</sup> of God. This good news is unknown to the non-Christian until one is told about it. I was baptized and eventually confirmed as a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana.

After working for seven years in the city, I went back to my hometown where there were no Christians. The people there consist of a few Muslims, with the majority practicing traditional religion. I started a small Bible class in my house and eventually, by the grace of God, a church was started in my community (Ziako). Our first baptism service where one hundred and forty-three people were baptized was performed by Rev. Phil Sipes and Rev. Dan Kunkel. Rev. Dr. Allan Buckman, the then Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Executive Director of World Missions was also in attendance. A video entitled, "Salifu's Harvest" was made of the service by the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) of the LCMS in 1987.

The first Lutheran Church had been started in the Upper East Region of Ghana. When I looked for adult males to help lead the congregation and assist in worship services, there was no

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<sup>19</sup> Ephesians 2:8–9.

one ready. By this time, I was encouraged by the missionaries to think about Pastoral Ministry. After much prayer and deliberation with family and Christian friends, I went to study at the Jonathan Ekong Memorial Lutheran Seminary in Obot Idim in Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria, in 1991. I completed the evangelist training in 1993. Then in 2003, I gained admission to study Religions and Sociology at the University of Ghana. The theological training I had received helped me a great deal to approach and proclaim the gospel of Christ to my fellow Kusasimen. Each house that I visited during our evangelism and outreach programs, the men and especially the household heads would tell us, “the women and the children are all yours, but I will join you next time.” These men either came to the church but soon stopped coming or they never entered the church. The church needs men, but how could we get them into church and remain faithfully serving the Lord?

There is hope! I believe that my knowledge in translation skills acquired from Wycliffe Bible Translators, alongside the exegetical, systematic, historical and practical courses that I had taken in both the Master of Divinity (M. Div) and now the Doctor of Ministry (D. Min) programs at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, USA, will adequately aid me to formulate effective ways and means of reaching Kusasi adult males to come to the church and participate actively in the activities of the church. Even though pastors are called to administer Word and Sacrament, it is equally necessary that a pastor takes up the task of leading the church in mission of “making disciples of all nations.” (Matt 28:19. See also Mark 16:16; Luke 24:47; John 20:21; Acts 1:8) Trusting God who is the one who does the work in missions, it is my greatest desire to help unbelievers to come to know, believe, and trust in the one true God.

The one true God is not a God located in one place, but is the only creator of the universe and the one who has universal ownership of all creation (Deut 32:6; Psalm 24:1–2; 89:12; Isaiah

40:26, 28). He is not the God of one tribe or people but “all nations,” tribes, people, and languages. The one true God is a loving God who forgives all people their sins and bestows upon them blessings without those people making sacrifices or any good works. It is this God who comes to us and gives us the Holy Spirit and gifts that will empower us share the gospel with other people, especially, for this study, adult males. This project seeks to examine three doctrines/theologies, namely *Missio Dei*, Theology of the Means of Grace, and the Doctrine of Vocation particularly the role and responsibilities of adult males.

### Missio Dei

Since the fall of Adam and God’s righteous judgment, all human beings are born in sin. This sin, known as original sin is defined by Dr. Martin Luther as doubt of the Word of the Lord and defiance of his Lordship, which then leads to pride, disobedience and rebellion. Yet in spite of the rebellion of men, God sent his Son to save sinful and rebellious people he has created but who have lost the image of God.

In 1934, Karl Hartenstein, a German missiologist coined the term *Missio Dei* concerning God sending his Son to save humankind. Georg Vicedom, a Lutheran theologian, developed the term theologically. *Missio Dei* is a Latin theological phrase which means “mission” of God or the “sending” of God.<sup>20</sup> *Missio Dei*, that is, the mission of God, is to save souls and reconcile humankind to himself. Georg Vicedom, in his book, *Missio Dei*, emphasized that this mission is God’s work from beginning to end.<sup>21</sup> Through the history of divine love for humanity, “The Father and the Spirit send the Son to redeem the world; the Father and the Son send the Spirit to regenerate the world; and the Son and the Spirit offer the Father so that the world might be

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<sup>20</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/mission\\_Dei](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/mission_Dei) (accessed October 25, 2015).

<sup>21</sup> Georg F. Vicedom. *The Mission of God: An Introduction to a Theology of Mission* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1965), 5.



reconciled to God.”<sup>22</sup> The term *missio Dei* signifies a theological shift from the common perception of mission as substantially a human endeavor to a theocentric approach. “God is the source and initiator of mission.”<sup>23</sup> God the Holy Spirit protects the people who are sent forth in mission in the world to love, serve, preach, teach, heal, and liberate people from the hands of the devil.<sup>24</sup> Regin Prenter’s book, *Spiritus Creator*, translated by John M. Jensen, throws more light on the work of the Spirit, the third Person of the Triune God.<sup>25</sup>

Therefore the work of the Spirit cannot be isolated from the work of the Father and the Son. The work of the Trinity is outwardly indivisible. The Triune God has really only one work to accomplish just as he himself is only one true God. That is his eternally life-creating and life-saving work. And this is the one work into which he as the creative spirit draws us, away from the destruction of sin, death, and hell. The Holy Spirit is given the work of the sanctifying love of God to preserve and sustain his whole creation.

“The *missio Dei* is God’s activity which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church may be privileged to participate.”<sup>26</sup> The church, guided and directed by the Holy Spirit, participates in the *missio Dei*. The church is the mission outpost that equips and sends people into the community to be God’s instruments who join him in the *missio Dei*. The church is sent by God to take up a dwelling in and around the community.<sup>27</sup> David Bosch explains what was expected of missionaries in the nineteenth-century (that they were responsible to proclaim the gospel to all people) and Craig Van Gelder<sup>28</sup> has rightly noted that the church

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<sup>22</sup> William Lazareth Rasolondraibe. *Lutheran Identity and Mission: Evangelical and Evangelistic?* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 119.

<sup>23</sup> Klaus Detlev Schulz: *Mission from the Cross: The Lutheran Theology of Mission* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2009), 88.

<sup>24</sup> David Bosch. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992).

<sup>25</sup> Regin Prenter. *Spiritus Creator* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1953), 192.

<sup>26</sup> Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 391.

<sup>27</sup> [www.lifeandleadership.com/ministry\\_resources/missional-perspectives](http://www.lifeandleadership.com/ministry_resources/missional-perspectives) (accessed October 25, 2015)

<sup>28</sup> Van Craig Gelder, *The Missional Church and Leadership Formation: Helping Congregations Develop Leadership Capacity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 155.

serves in the sending mission of the Trinitarian God. It is this God who fulfills the sending character by coming in Jesus and then entrusting the Holy Spirit to humankind. Through His church, God sends people forth in mission to participate in the service of God's mission of saving and reconciling the world to himself in Christ Jesus (2 Cor 5:19).

The church, therefore, is sent into the world to call people and nations to repentance, to announce forgiveness of sin (Luke 24:47), and a new beginning in relationship with God and other people through Jesus Christ. God's work of the salvation of mankind began in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve separated themselves from God (Gen 3:15), and continued through the patriarchs beginning with Abraham. It is God's mission to save all people and reconcile all people from every nation, tribe, people, and language to himself through the blood of Christ. This work of God is not limited to "White people" as claimed by Kusasi traditional religion practitioners. Thus, the *missio Dei* from the time of Abraham, to the prophets, to the time of Jesus and disciples, through the centuries to the present time, and among the Kusasi people of Northern Ghana, is a reality.

### **The Blessings to Abraham Are Universal**

The mission of God to bless all nations through the seed of Abraham began when the Lord God called Abraham to leave his country and people to receive a blessing (Gen 12:2–3). "God promised that from Abram will come not only the people of Israel but also the Church of Christ which encompasses baptized disciples of Jesus from all nations (Matt 28:19)."<sup>29</sup> In the same way all people who by faith believe in the one true God are blessed along with Abraham (Gal 3:6–9) and receive the redemptive blessings he promised Israel. The God of Israel is also the creator of the whole world. "And because there is none like YHWH, all nations (including the Kusasi

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<sup>29</sup> *The Lutheran Study Bible (ESV)* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2009), footnote page 32.

people of Ghana) will eventually come and worship him as the only true God (Psalm 86:8–9).”<sup>30</sup>

The Lord blesses those who do not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers (Psalm 1:1). In Exodus 9, the omnipotent God brings plagues upon the Egyptians, because they refused to listen to God and his servant Moses, to show kindness to the Israelites. God desires that when the people experience plagues or some other epidemic they would believe or “know” that there is none like Yahweh in all the earth. Yahweh is not a local god, but the one true God who controls the whole world.<sup>31</sup>

King Hezekiah was very ill and he prayed to the one true God for healing and the Lord granted him his request and even gave him fifteen additional years to live (2 Kings 20:1–6). In the same way, people in Africa or Ghana and Kusasi men could pray to the God of Abraham and receive God’s blessings of protection and material blessing.

The story of David and Goliath directs all people to put their trust in Yahweh as “David puts his imminent defeat of Goliath in the same universal frame of reference.”<sup>32</sup> Those who put their trust in God are not put to shame. David foresaw that by the power of the one true God he would defeat strong and mighty Goliath. The Scriptures point out that the relationship of God is universal to all nations, peoples and tribes and all those who put their hope and trust in him alone are not disappointed (Gal 3:8–9). During King Solomon’s prayer of the dedication of the temple, he knew that Yahweh was in control of both the Israelites and the foreigners (1 Kg 8:41-43)<sup>33</sup>. The gospel will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come (Matt 24:14) when the Lord will judge all nations and will separate the sheep from the

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<sup>30</sup> Christopher J.H. Wright. *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible’s Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 77.

<sup>31</sup> Terence E. Fretheim. *Exodus Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Louisville, KY: John Knox, 1991), 125.

<sup>32</sup> Wright. *The Mission of God*, 228.

<sup>33</sup> Wright, *The Mission of God*, 347.

goats (Matt 25:31–33).

The *missio Dei* is active. Jonah went to Nineveh, a foreign nation, and preached. The people repented and were saved at that time (Jonah 3:10). Elijah went to the region of Tyre and Sidon to stay with a widow of Zarephath who subsequently became a believer in God (1 Kings 17:24). Elisha, healed Naaman of leprosy, and as a result, Naaman became a believer (2 Kings 5:17). The ways of the Lord are the salvation of all nations (Psalm 67:2) that will stream to the Lord (Isaiah 2:2) and will be blessed through him (Psalm 72:17).

“The universal blessing of all nations will come through whom the New Testament identifies as Jesus of Nazareth.”<sup>34</sup> The physical blessings that people received from Jesus are numerous. On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in a synagogue and he destroyed the power of an evil spirit that had made a woman crippled (Luke 3:10–16). Jesus referred to the woman as “daughter of Abraham” because everyone who trusts in the one true God is a son or daughter of Abraham. In Matt 9:1–8, Jesus proved to the teachers of the law that he is the one true God when he forgave the sins of a paralyzed man and healed his physical sickness. The feeding of the five thousand men (Matt 14:20–21) shows that we are always encouraged to daily listen to God’s Word because that is where we get to know him better and by the power of the Holy Spirit put our trust in him.. Then one day when he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee, he encountered ten lepers and healed them.<sup>35</sup> A person who had leprosy was considered unclean and was excluded from society. Jesus is the Christ and Savior of all people. He healed the sick, brought sight to the blind, made the lame to walk, and preached the good news to the poor. All who believe in Jesus are blessed (Matt 11:6). The healing of the lame man suggests a case of God’s blessing all the families of the earth. The blessings include God’s love, salvation, joy, and

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<sup>34</sup> Wright, *The Mission of God*, 233.

<sup>35</sup> Luke 17:11 ff (NIV).

peace. Indeed “happy” is the one whose sins are forgiven, for such a person has been reconciled to God.<sup>36</sup> “We need hardly add that it was this same universality and uniqueness that is attributed to Jesus by Paul in Phil 2:10–12.<sup>37</sup>

All peoples in the world who believe in Jesus Christ are sons of God through faith in Christ. They have been called and made royal priests (1 Peter 2:9). There is no difference whether you are a Kusasi, a Fanti, an Eve, an Akan, an American, or a German. “If we believe in Christ, then we belong to him and are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gen 12:1–3; Gal 3:26–29). The Lord has blessed his church with the means of grace through which believers receive God blessings of forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. All nations will come and worship the Lord (Rev 15:4), because salvation is found in no one else except in Jesus (Acts 4:12), so that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil 2:11).

### Theology of the Means of Grace

In the Old Testament, two Hebrew words are used to connote God’s grace: *hanan* and *hesed*. These words are variously translated as kindness, grace, mercy, compassion, and loving kindness. *Hesed* is the disposition of one person toward another that is far more than the ordinary kindness and friendship.<sup>38</sup>

The term *means of grace* refers to the divinely instituted means by which God offers and seals to human beings forgiveness of sins, life and salvation (Matt 18:20; 26:28; Acts 2:38; 20:24; Formula of Concord Solid Declaration II 57). It is also through the means of grace that the Holy Spirit strengthens and preserves saving faith in believers (Rom 1:16; 10:17; 1 Cor 4:15; 2

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<sup>36</sup> Psalm 32:1: [www.gotquestions.org/blessing.Bible.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/blessing.Bible.html) (accessed October 28, 2015).

<sup>37</sup> Wright, *The Mission of God*, 238.

<sup>38</sup> Desmond T. Alexander and David W. Baker. *Dictionary of the Old Testament Pentateuch: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 374.

Cor 2:14–17; 3:5–6; 1 Thess 2:13; 1 Peter 1:23; FC SD II 56). The Augsburg Confession V specifically denotes the Gospel as the means of grace, whereas the Apology of the Augsburg Confession VII–VIII 36; Smalcald Articles III VIII 10; and FC SD II 48 speak of the Word and the Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord’s Supper) as the means of grace. The believer needs the means of grace, for by them we are able to overcome the powers of the evil one and remain faithful to serve God and people both in our communities and beyond. Whereas denominations like the Roman Catholic Church recognize seven sacraments, Lutherans accept Baptism and the Lord’s Supper as the only sacraments, because these two sacraments have visible elements and also they convey forgiveness of sins and were instituted by Christ.

## **Baptism**

In the Old Testament there are numerous ways of washing or sprinkling with water by which people were cleansed of their diseases or sin. In Ezekiel 36:25, the Lord will sprinkle clean water upon the people and they will be clean from all their uncleanness. Leviticus 11–15 has several examples of baptisms. For example a person who had suffered from leprosy (the worst disease at that time) was sprinkled with water mixed with the blood of a sacrificed bird to “wash” away his sin of uncleanness (Lev 14:5ff).

The practice of baptism is also observed several tribes and groups of people. These include the Hindu rituals in the Ganges River, the purification ritual in the Babylonian cult of *Enki*, and the Egyptian practices of purifying newborn babies.<sup>39</sup> Among the Kusasi people, a woman who has confessed committing adultery is purified or cleansed when some herbs are mixed in water and the water is sprinkled on her. These rituals include words along with the practice of

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<sup>39</sup> Joel B. Green, Scott McKnight, and I. Howard Marshall. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992), 55.

“baptism.”

Christian baptism is water and the Word of God. Luther’s Small Catechism defines Baptism is, “not just plain water, but it is the water included in God’s command and combined with God’s word.”<sup>40</sup> Baptism is a visible application of the Gospel whereby a person is made part of God’s family through the action of the Holy Spirit working in the Word of forgiveness that is proclaimed and received by faith (Acts 2:38; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 3:21).

Baptism is in the name of the triune God (Matt 28:19), and whoever believes shall be saved (Mark 16:16). Any of the three modes of baptism (immersion, sprinkling and pouring) is valid. The Lutheran Church in Ghana has adopted the practice of pouring and it is suggested that all Lutheran Churches in Ghana maintain that mode to avoid confusion and misunderstanding. There is a river close to the Ziako church and when one hundred forty-three people were to be baptized, a suggestion was made to baptize the people in the river because Pentecostal churches do immersion. However, for the sake of uniformity, we utilized pouring instead of immersion. It is not the mode of applying water that saves but God’s Word connected with water, no matter how small or large the amount of water.

Richard C. H. Lenski, a renowned Lutheran scholar and author of several commentaries of the Bible has explained elsewhere in his writings that in Baptism God gives himself to us, for the Father becomes our father and adopts us as his children (Gal 3:26–27; John 1:12–13; 1 John 3:1). Lenski was not a member of the LCMS but old Ohio Synod. He spoke in very positive terms about Missouri’s adherence to correct doctrine.<sup>41</sup> In Baptism the Son becomes our Redeemer, for we are baptized in his death (Rom 6:4) and cleansed by his blood to be his own (Eph 5:26). In baptism the Holy Spirit becomes our Comforter and the guarantor of our inheritance (Eph 1:14; 2

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<sup>40</sup> *Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2005), 23

<sup>41</sup> [www.lutherquest.org/walther/articles/mc00037.htm](http://www.lutherquest.org/walther/articles/mc00037.htm) (accessed March 30, 2016).

Cor 11:22).

The purpose of Baptism is that it works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this. “Baptism promises and brings victory over death and the devil,” and as Kolb and Arand assert, “Baptism is a treasure and medicine that swallows up death and keeps all people alive”<sup>42</sup> and that Baptism further promises God’s grace, the entire Christ and the Holy Spirit for all Christians.<sup>43</sup> Hebart Friedemann supports Kolb and Arand by saying that Baptism brings victory over death and the devil, and brings forgiveness of sin and God’s favor. “The gifts of baptism are so immense that, if our timid self thinks about them, it may doubt whether they can all be true.”<sup>44</sup> In short, baptism saves because it joins us to the death of Jesus (Rom 6:3–11).<sup>45</sup>

“However, because some Christians do not view baptism as God’s action, and the many blessings received when one is baptized, but rather see it as a human response to God, they do not believe that infants should be baptized.”<sup>46</sup> These Christian denominations are refusing God’s gift of rebirth (Titus 3:4–6) to their babies. But there is no parent who will refuse taking a gift of one million Ghana Cedis (five hundred USD) for his baby. The value of baptism is a million times more than one million Ghana Cedis. When we ask ourselves these questions: Are babies attacked by witchcrafts? Are babies afraid? Do babies die? Do babies need help?<sup>47</sup> Since all the answers are “yes”, then parents should bring their children to the church to be baptized as soon

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<sup>42</sup> Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arand. *The Genius of Luther’s Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008), 191.

<sup>43</sup> Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, Large Catechism 461.

<sup>44</sup> Hebart Friedemann. *Luther’s Large Catechism: Anniversary Translation and Introduction Essay* (Adelaide, Australia: Lutheran Publishing House, 1983), 174.

<sup>45</sup> John T. Pless. *Handling the Word of Truth: Law and Gospel in the Church Today* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2004), 95.

<sup>46</sup> Robert Kolb. *The Christian Faith: A Lutheran Exposition* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1993), 223.

<sup>47</sup> Since the fall of Adam all human beings are born with sin. This innate disease and original sin (hereditary sin) is truly sin and deserves God’s eternal wrath for all those who are not baptized. See



as they are born. If we believe that babies have original sin, then they need forgiveness of sins. “Those who deny infant baptism must explain why the early Church fathers speak of it as a universal custom.”<sup>48</sup>

The Ghanaian worldview believes strongly in satanic and demonic powers such as witchcraft, evil eyes, and magic people who can harm or destroy others. It has been because of fear of witchcraft attacks that Pentecostal churches have organized special “deliverance services” to protect members from spiritual attacks. But a baptized person does not need any “deliverance” because Christ has conquered Satan and destroyed all its powers. In Baptism, the baptized is “exorcized” from witchcraft attack. In Baptism the believer is removed from the sphere of satanic demonic power,<sup>49</sup> and is made a child of God.

### **The Lord’s Supper**

The children of Israel were in bondage in Egypt for four hundred years and when their time of deliverance arrived God asked them to prepare the Passover meal using a lamb that had no defect (“sin”). The Lord’s Supper which is also known as Sacrament of the Altar, Holy Communion, or Eucharist, was instituted by Jesus Christ on the night during which the Passover was celebrated. “The Passover lamb in Egypt and the lambs sacrificed by Israelites as it was commanded by God were pointing at the true Lamb of God, Jesus Christ that sacrificed himself for our sake on the Cross of Calvary,”<sup>50</sup> So in the Lord’s Supper Christ distributed his own body and blood for the deliverance of all mankind as the pastor announces whenever Holy Communion is being celebrated.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> [www.orldutheran.com/trinfbap.html](http://www.orldutheran.com/trinfbap.html) (accessed October 29, 2015).

<sup>49</sup> Edmund Schlink. *The Doctrine of Baptism* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1972), 25.

<sup>50</sup> *The Lutheran Study Bible*, 201.

<sup>51</sup> *Lutheran Service Book*: Prepared by The Commission on Worship of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

The institution of the Lord's Supper is found in Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22 and 1 Corinthians 11. After the Passover meal, the Lord took bread in the presence of the disciples and gave it to them and said, "Take this bread" and apparently they held the bread in their palms. When Jesus again said to them, "eat" they ate the bread that was in their palm. "Eat" in this passage cannot be understood as a figure of speech. And in regard to the demonstrative particle "this" it points out what is distributed, received, and eaten in the Lord's Supper (bread and wine).<sup>52</sup> Concerning the elements, Christ was emphatic as he did not speculate or doubt what the bread was, or better still is. So the word "is" (*est*) explains what it is which is distributed and received. The word "body" is clearly explained, for Christ affirms that it is his body. Again by the use of the article "the" Christ strongly confirms the proper meaning of the word which is dealt with so clearly both in Luke and 1 Corinthians,<sup>53</sup> that is, Christ's body and Christ's blood. On the basis of the above, Lutherans believe that we receive Christ's true body and true blood when we take the Lord's Supper. The real presence of Christ's body and blood in the bread and wine is called sacramental presence for the "word *sacrament* in Latin is used to refer to a mystery."<sup>54</sup>

A report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod on the *Theology and Practice of the Lord Supper, Part I* has provided six tangible benefits that the Lord's Supper provides as found in the Lutheran Confessions. First the Lord's Supper offers and conveys forgiveness of sins (Small Catechism VI, 6; Augsburg Confession XXIV, 7). Christ shares his love and forgiveness with all the recipients, and they

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(St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2006), 217.

<sup>52</sup> Martin Chemnitz. *The Lord's Supper* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1979), 95.

<sup>53</sup> Chemnitz, *The Lord's Supper*, 96.

<sup>54</sup> Robert Kolb. *The Christian Faith: A Lutheran Exposition* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1993), 232.

share that love and forgiveness with each other.<sup>55</sup> The second benefit of the Lord's Supper is that it offers the truly present body and blood of Christ (Augsburg Confession X). Kusasi men would be excited to hear that they receive Christ's true body and blood, and that through Christ there is divine power with them that will fight against any evil forces or witchcraft that will come their way. The third benefit is that the Lord's Supper strengthens faith (1 Cor 11:26; Apology of the Augsburg Confession IV, 210). It is lack of faith in Christ that moves men to consult soothsayers and make sacrifices to ancestors. Taking the Lord's Support regularly is God's will for the strengthening of our faith in Christ. The fourth benefit of the Lord's Supper is that it imparts power for Christian living (Large Catechism V, 70). The precious blood of Christ has redeeming power, cleansing power, gracious power to pacify, power over all forces.<sup>56</sup> It has been observed that Kusasi men join the Church but after a short time some of them leave. Taking the Lord's Supper regularly and understanding what it does for the believers will enable men to remain and serve the Church faithfully. The fifth and sixth benefits of the Lord's Supper are, according to the Lutheran Confessions, that the Lord's Supper is "an act of thankful adoration" (Apology of the Augsburg Confession XXIV, 73–74) and a "celebration of Christian fellowship" (FC SD VII, 44).<sup>57</sup>

The Lord's Supper is a fulfilled promise and proclamation of the salvation that Christ accomplished for us by his redeeming work on the cross<sup>58</sup> so that all those who celebrate it regularly believe and understand that they are new people of God, who has freed them from the slavery of sin, the devil, and death. The Christian, having received Christ and all the blessings in

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<sup>55</sup> Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology*, 202.

<sup>56</sup> H.D. McDonald. *The Atoning of the Death of Christ: In Faith, Revelation and History* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1985), 21.

<sup>57</sup> *Theology and Practice of the Lord's Supper, Part I: A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the LCMS*, May 1983.

<sup>58</sup> Hermann, Sasse. *We Confess: Anthropology* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1999), 90.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper, is called to serve the Lord in our various vocations.

### Theology of Vocation

God created a beautiful world and put human beings to take control and use it (Gen 2:15) well to his glory (Gen 2:15). Adam and Eve disobeyed God and were unable to live a perfect life as God commanded. They rebelled against God's authority and hence brought a separation between mankind and God. God, because of his grace and mercy, called mankind out of sin and made mankind his chosen children once again (Eph 2:8-9). God now calls us to service (1 Cor 1:1-2; 26; Phil 3:10; 2 Peter 1:10) by bestowing his spiritual gifts of Word and Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper). God established the pastoral office, a special vocation wherein qualified men are called to administer Word and sacraments. God proclaims the gospel, Baptizes people, and gives the Lord's Supper to baptized Christians through the pastor.

Apart from pastors who administer Word and Sacrament the rest are laypeople who occupy all other vocations. All vocations are equal in the sight of God. For example, a doctor who serves her patients faithfully is just as God-pleasing as a pastor who proclaims God's Word to people. Both the doctor and pastor are called by God to serve others. The healing that the doctor brings and the spiritual blessings that the pastor provides are both mean through which God provides. Even though a father is an instrument of procreation God himself is the source and author of life. Human beings are God's masks for carrying out his providential care of the world. To be able function well in our vocations God gives each person a distinctive set of gifts, skills, and abilities which he desires for us to passionately deploy in service to him and his creation.<sup>59</sup>

Hesselgrave and Stetzer observe that "God speaks through Christ's followers and local

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<sup>59</sup> [www.alcportland.org/about-alc/statement-of-faith/what-is-lutheran/](http://www.alcportland.org/about-alc/statement-of-faith/what-is-lutheran/) (accessed November 3, 2015).

churches.”<sup>60</sup> Christians form local churches and, as Luther said, every Christian is called to particular offices and tasks to serve the neighbor and to participate in God’s creative and redemptive mission in the world. That is why Christians are sent out into the world to serve in their vocations as dentists, lawyers, farmers, teachers, accountants, musicians, etc. in ways that will glorify God and benefit the people they serve. In the same way the church sweeper, church drum player, church council chairman, treasurer, bell keeper, evangelism team member, and many more are to serve faithfully. Heiges warns that “unless Christians take their *vocatio or beruf* (calling) seriously within the church there is not much hope of their taking it seriously in the world outside the church.”<sup>61</sup>

Vocation is essentially God’s work but he hides behind human beings to do it. It is for this reason that Douglas Schuurman invites Christians to offer every aspect of their life as their divine worship.<sup>62</sup> Thus a Christian’s vocational calling is always connected to God’s mission of saving souls.

## **Male Vocation**

The doctrine of male vocation teaches that males are called to lead God’s people in the church and in the community. When God created heaven and earth and everything in it, man was put into the world to have dominion over the animals and over the whole earth (Gen 1:26, 28). God gave man the opportunity to name all the creatures and have dominion over the works of God’s hand (Psalm 8:7f). This dominion establishes man as the leader of the created things in the world. Male headship (1 Cor 11: 3, 8, 9 draws its support from Gen 2: 18, 22) was God’s design

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<sup>60</sup> David Hesselgrave and Ed. Stetzer, *Missionshift: Global Mission Issues in the Third Millennium* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2010), 230.

<sup>61</sup> Donald R. Heiges, *The Christian Calling* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1958), 41.

<sup>62</sup> Douglas J. Schuurman, *Vocation: Discerning our Calling in Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 61.

before the fall. Within his discussion concerning the husband's headship in the home, St. Paul appeals to Gen 2 in order to show God's desire for male headship in the church. Since male headship over woman was given before the fall, the Egalitarians' attempt to link male leadership to Gen 3 as a curse due to sin is in error.

Men have the divine obligation to be the spiritual leaders in the church as they are called to serve as representatives of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in the pastoral office. The church further needs wise and competent leadership sought among men who have already shown their abilities in the context of their families (1 Tim 3:1–7) to lead the church. This theological view adds weight to the call for men to live up to the responsibilities related to their divine call. Thus, Lutherans hold the view that from the order of creation it is only men who can hold the pastoral office, that is, preaching, teaching, shepherding, and administering the sacraments. Through these activities, God himself is working, bringing sinners to himself through the work of a pastor.

In the family, God has placed leadership in the husband and father (Eph 5:22–6:4). The stations of husband, wife, and children are vocations through which God works to rear and care for children. Each becomes what Luther termed a “mask of God.” In the Scriptures God has explained the crucial role of parents, especially the father (Psalm 78:5–8). The roles assigned by God to men and women are not based upon a rank or superiority, but have complementary roles for the purpose of fulfilling the will of God. Any male domination is a distortion of God's *ordo* (order). In the sight of God men, women, and children are spiritually equal before him (Gal 3:28).

Dr. Martin Luther considered the head of the household the “pastor” of his family, responsible to lead the household in religious instruction. The husband and father's role in the

“Mutual Conversation and Consolation of Believers”<sup>63</sup> is to lead the family in daily prayers and devotions and informally deliver the forgiveness of sins, that is, absolution to one another. The father was expected to sit at home with his wife and children and ask them what they learned from the previous sermon.<sup>64</sup> Robert Bast, elaborating on the role of the father in the family, added that the father made sure his family, which included domestic and other dependents as well as guests living in the house on a temporary basis, knew and understood the Ten Commandments, the Seven Deadly Sins,<sup>65</sup> which the Catholic Church teaches (although all sins are deadly, not only the seven), the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed.<sup>66</sup>

The title “overseer” used in 1 Tim 3:1 indicates a position involving the exercise of leadership. These overseers are also described as “elders” in Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1–4; Acts 20:28–31). Many exegetes see “overseer” and “elder” in these passages as synonyms for “pastor” in our day. In Church meetings, men continue to exercise authority over their families because men are the leaders. Members of the community need those considered to be leaders to do their best so that others may emulate their example. Leaders should be trustworthy and competent in what they do or say. Since people must have confidence in their leaders Kouzes-Posner’s First Law of Leadership states, “If you don’t believe in the messenger, you won’t believe the message.”<sup>67</sup> When the Kusasi Lutheran Churches have elders who are responsible, honest, and

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<sup>63</sup> In the Smalcald Articles, Luther cites Matthew 18:20, “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” Thus “mutual conversation and consolation of believers” involves among other things sharing of God’s law and gospel among people at home, in school, in church, in the community etc..

<sup>64</sup> Charles P. Arand. *That I May be His Own: An Overview of Luther’s Catechisms* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2000), 95–96.

<sup>65</sup> The Seven Deadly Sins are a group of vices that were originally used in the early Christian Church to teach and instruct followers concerning man’s tendency to commit sin. They are: lust, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, gluttony, and pride. ([http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index:\\_ylt](http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index:_ylt)). Accessed November 9, 2015.

<sup>66</sup> Robert James Bast. *Honor Your Fathers: Catechisms and the Emergence of a Patriarchal Ideology in Germany, 144–1600*, (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 59.

<sup>67</sup> James Kouzes and Barry Posner. *The Leadership Challenge: How to make Extraordinary Things happen in organizations* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 38.

capable, they would be recruited to assist the pastor in worship and general administration of the church. Among their responsibilities, if anyone is sick, these elders will be asked to go and pray for them (James 5:13–16).<sup>68</sup>

It is the Holy Spirit who prepares people for leadership either in the home or in the church. The Bible records good leaders from whom we can learn more about how they were used. A few examples of such leaders are the following. Abraham was a leader chosen by God. Davis said, “Abraham acts as a leader in three moments in the story of Genesis: his blessings; his intercession on behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah and his willingness to sacrifice his son.”<sup>69</sup> Moses another great leader of Israel, was chosen by God to lead the Israelites for forty years out of Egypt to the edge of the Promised Land. Joshua, the successor of Moses, was a strong leader whom the Lord used to conquer the land that God had given Israel. David was a chosen king who was described as “the man after God’s own heart.” In the book Judges the Lord chose leaders to lead and fight for the Israelites. St. Paul was an apostle the Lord chose to be a missionary to the Gentile people. The Lord used him to plant many churches; many people were converted and baptized in the name of the triune God. The Lord can prepare men in the Kusasi churches to bring the gospel to unbelievers in Kusasiland and beyond.

### **Male vocation in the Kusasi culture**

The expression in Kusaal, “*Po’a pu kuud waaf ka fi’igidi li zugo*,” which literally means “a woman does not kill a snake and cuts off its head,” distinguishes between the roles of males and females. It is believed among Kusasi people that a snake is never dead until its head is cut off. There are a lot of things that this proverb teaches. First, it is men who are responsible to make

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<sup>68</sup> Thomas C. Oden. *Corrective Love: The Power of Communion Discipline* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1995), 161.

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.faithandleadership.com/abraham-leader> (accessed November 8, 2015).



final decisions. Secondly, it also means that it is men who are expected to perform difficult tasks. This means that women perform inferior tasks and leave the rest to the men to carry out. However, in the sight of God no task is inferior. For example during farming, women do the sowing of the crops. This is termed easy because the woman digs the soil and puts in some seeds and buries them. Even though the task seems easy, it is not inferior because if the digging and planting did not take place, the man has no job to do. It is when the seeds germinate and are ready for weeding, that the man takes care to remove the weeds leaving the crops.

In marriage it is the man who performs the dowry by paying four cows to the family of his wife. It takes more than four years for an average man to work to earn money for four cows. When a man has provided the dowry (four cows, some assorted drinks, tobacco and guinea fowls), the saying that follows is, "I have now bought my wife." A woman in the Kusasi traditional set-up is then viewed as a possession of the man and that the woman's main responsibility is to provide children for the man. It is therefore not abnormal that a man divorces his wife because she has not given birth after three years of their marriage.

In the home, the husband holds the family together and becomes the symbol of their physical, material, and spiritual security. Within this role, he has to look for money to provide food for the family and is responsible for consulting the soothsayers and performing regular sacrifices to the idols, divinities, and the ancestors for the welfare of the family.

With regard to education, it is the role of the father/husband to assemble his family, especially the boys, in the evening to teach them many things. The religion of the father is the religion of his entire family. The boys are taught to memorize words used during rituals and sacrificing. When a sacrifice is being made, the entire family sits around and partakes of the rituals and the meat of the sacrificed animal.

The husband and father always makes decisions for the entire family. Kusasi traditional religion is the tradition that Kusasis were born into. The father is responsible for making the necessary consultations and sacrifices for the family. Every member of the family had to be a traditional religion practitioner. When the husband changes from traditional religion to Islam or Christianity his entire family has to follow him without question. As I have already mentioned in a previous chapter, my father abandoned the traditional religion and became a Muslim because he felt he was wasting his resources and getting no rewards. My mother and the rest of the family automatically became Muslims. When a husband becomes a Christians then the entire family would become Christians. Getting more men into the Church will go a long way to bring many more people into the church. God is always calling Kusasi Christian men to understand that he has called them to provide good leadership values to their families and also support the pastor and the congregation in the faith life of the congregation or church. It is through the life of Christians, more specifically men, that unbelieving men will hear the Gospel and be converted by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is strongly believed that faith comes through hearing (Rom 10:17) and God has called men into that vocation of leading others to Jesus.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE PROJECT IN THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

#### Introduction

Throughout biblical times and the history of the church, God has revealed the vital role of men in the *missio Dei* (the mission of God). “Preaching the gospel is the central activity of mission,”<sup>70</sup> and the Lord himself was concerned with mission. Jesus, a native of Nazareth, went from town to town preaching the good news. He also healed the sick, cast out demons, and brought physical relief to people in need. In his work of making disciples of all nations, Jesus chose and trained twelve male disciples.<sup>71</sup> These men became Jesus’ students who learned to proclaim the good news to all people. These men were chosen not because they were holier than other men; rather it was the Holy Spirit who made their selection possible. These twelve disciples, who were later referred to as the apostles, were leaders of the church and their ministry was the “ministry of the Word”<sup>72</sup> and the administration of the sacraments.<sup>73</sup> However, when the followers of Jesus multiplied and the apostles were unable to perform all the activities in the church, other men (not women) were chosen to assist them.<sup>74</sup> In fact, God can choose any man for a special job in the kingdom.

The life of Christians in the early Church was that of love, as described by St. Luke in Acts 2:42–47. They gathered as one body to hear the teaching of the apostles and to share their

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<sup>70</sup> Klaus Detlev Schulz. *Mission from the Cross: The Lutheran Theology of Mission* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2009), 14.

<sup>71</sup> Matt 1:1–4; Mark 3:16–20.

<sup>72</sup> Acts 6:2.

<sup>73</sup> The Lutheran Church believes that there are only two sacraments, namely Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

<sup>74</sup> Acts 6:3.

possessions with each other. Ernest Koenker asserts that the fellowship among the early Christians was grounded in common worship, and this worship was grounded in Christ's presence in the worshipping community.<sup>75</sup> To the early Christians weekly worship that was led by men was not optional but a necessity and as such Michael W. Foss stressed that "to be truly, fully human is to worship regularly in the church."<sup>76</sup> The Kusasi Lutheran Church lacks men who will assist the pastors as well as men who actively attend weekly worship services.

#### Evangelistic Work of Peter, Paul, and Other Apostles

The Church was first primarily located in Jerusalem and spread to other parts of the Roman world even in the face of persecution.<sup>77</sup> The work of evangelism and church planting was all done by men. The book of Acts records more than twenty men who played various roles in the expansion of the church. Apart from men like Peter, Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Luke, Timothy, James, John Mark, Apollos, Cornelius, and Stephen, men such as Crescens, Stephanas, Tropimus, Tychicus, Achaicus, Prudens, Jason, Fortunastus, Demas and Epaphras were involved in the Lord's work.

After the persecution of the Christians in connection with Stephen's death, some men travelled to Cyprus and Cyrene and to Antioch preaching the gospel to Jews (Acts 11:1–20). In the church at Antioch, Barnabas Simeon called Niger, Saul, and other believers gathered for worship. Through the Holy Spirit they chose Barnabas and Saul to be missionaries of the gospel (Acts 13:1–3). In Acts 15:22 ff., the apostles and elders chose some men and sent them forth to teach others about Jesus. Men were chosen or were responsible for the proclamation of the

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<sup>75</sup> Ernest Koenker. *Worship in Word and Sacrament* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1959), 37.

<sup>76</sup> Michael W. Foss. *Real Faith for Real Life: Living the Six Marks of Discipleship* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 2004), 43.

<sup>77</sup> Acts 5:17–18.

gospel according to Acts 16:1–2; 17:22; 18:24; 19:17, 28.

The first part of Acts focuses on Peter’s ministry. Acts 2 records the beginning of the Church’s public proclamation of the Gospel. During the Pentecost celebration period in Jerusalem, Peter preached and more than three thousand people believed and were baptized. Again when Peter was sent to Cornelius he preached to him about Jesus who came to suffer and die for the sins of the whole world. Cornelius believed and he and his household were baptized (Acts 10:48). Philip also witnessed to the Ethiopian eunuch with the result that the man believed and Philip baptized him (Acts 8:38).

The second part of Acts focuses on St. Paul’s ministry. Missionaries have always found a great deal of inspiration in Paul’s ministry. St. Paul devoted his entire ministry to the proclamation of the gospel to the Gentiles. He travelled to many towns and villages in the eastern Mediterranean and Greece preaching about the risen Lord and Savior Jesus. As a result, many people from Asia Minor and other parts of the world became Christians following his three missionary journeys. Paul wrote many letters to the churches he visited. These letters make up the main part of the New Testament.

Paul’s role as a leader within the early Christian community was resultant from his commission to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, which was recognized by the church at Antioch when it set him and Barnabas aside for this work (Acts 13:2–4). Paul considered the commission to preach to Gentiles (non-Jews) to be his particular calling (1 Tim 2:3). Beginning with Barnabas and later joined by other evangelists, Paul went across “the world” preaching about Jesus, the Son of God, who came to suffer, die, and rise for the good of all mankind. In spite of Paul’s assertion that his own calling was to preach and not to baptize (1 Cor 1:17), he knew that all of his converts “were washed.... sanctified.... justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

and in the Spirit of God” (1 Cor 6:11).

### Evangelistic Work of St. Patrick

The missionary work of St. Patrick of Ireland is pertinent for this project, since many things from St. Patrick’s missionary work are relevant to the Kusasi Lutheran ministry. St. Patrick was a Christian missionary involved in the evangelization of Ireland. Born in Britain but captured as a youth by Irish warriors, Patrick fled to mainland Europe where he studied at a monastery to become a missionary. He was eventually consecrated as a bishop and returned to Ireland to spread the gospel to the people. Ireland had been a land like the Kusasi land where the people offered their firstlings and other sacrifices to gods.

One of Patrick’s major initiatives was to prepare the Irish people adequately to ensure a rich harvest after he had planted the seed of the gospel there. In order to do this, he learned the old Gaelic language, appraised himself of the Irish people’s socio-political and economic circumstances, and translated the Good News of salvation into the Irish language. Not surprisingly, the people listened more readily to the Word of God proclaimed to them in their own native language and in the context of their own traditions in rural society. Patrick served the Irish people with humility and trust.

Another chief concern of Patrick was the raising of native clergy and abolishing paganism, idolatry, and sun worship. He made no distinction of classes in his preaching and was himself ready for imprisonment or death. St. Patrick traveled extensively throughout the country preaching, teaching, building churches, opening schools and monasteries, and converting chiefs and opinion leaders.<sup>78</sup>

At the time of St. Patrick, Ireland was a land of many idols. The most famous was called

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<sup>78</sup> [www.biography.com/people/st-patrick-9434729#-and-legacy-st-patrick-day](http://www.biography.com/people/st-patrick-9434729#-and-legacy-st-patrick-day)

Crom Crauch located in Leitrim. This idol was a huge rock, overlaid in gold, surrounded by twelve brass covered stones, representing the sun, moon, and stars. Patrick was said to have thrown down Crom Crauch with the “staff of Jesus,” and to call out its demons. Legend also credits Patrick with banishing snakes from Ireland and teaching the Irish about the concept of the Trinity by showing them the shamrock, a three-leafed clover. Through this example, Patrick highlighted the Christian doctrine of “three divine persons in one God,” (as opposed to the Arian belief that was popular in Patrick’s time). St. Patrick is credited with fostering the development of arts and crafts and introducing the knowledge of the use of lime as mortar in Ireland. He is responsible for the construction of clay churches in Ireland in the fifth century. St. Patrick also taught the Irish how to build arches of lime mortar instead of dry masonry. These beginnings of ceramic work developed into organized crafts, and that is how St. Patrick became a patron saint of engineers. St. Patrick has always been acknowledged as a pivotal figure in early Irish history and spirituality. His zeal for evangelism, attack on idols, writing books in the Irish language and bringing many Irish to Christ are lessons that need to be learned by leaders in the Kusasi Lutheran Church. St. Patrick is also known as the Patron Saint of Nigeria. Nigeria was evangelized primarily by Irish missionaries and priests from Saint Patrick’s Missionary Society known as the Kiltegan Missionaries.

The Kusasi Lutheran church and its mission work have a lot to learn from the Apostle Paul, St. Patrick of Ireland, and above all our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Like St. Patrick, the raising of local church leaders through leadership development programs prepares men to assist the pastors. Again, like St. Patrick, ways and means of developing skills such as better farming techniques, skills in building etc. should be found for the people. And like Apostle Paul, even in the face of difficulties the gospel must be preached because Jesus died for all people.

## The Historical Context

It was by the grace of God that the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) was established in 1847 and we praise and thank God for the pioneers like C.F.W. Walther who was the first president of the church body. The LCMS began when Saxon and other German immigrants established a new church body in America.<sup>79</sup> This church body embraced the mission Dei, which had led to their missionary work in Africa and in Ghana.

Ghana lies in the tropics, approximately between the limits of six and half degrees of longitude and six and half degrees latitude, and its climate is similar to that of other equatorial countries.. . Ghana, with a population of about twenty five million people, covers an area of 91,863 square miles including a coastline of about three hundred and fifty miles.

Mission history can be traced in Ghana to two main streams.<sup>80</sup> The first stream began in the fifteenth century when Augustinian, Capuchin, and Dominican friars attempted to make converts in the vicinity of Portuguese castles in Ghana (formerly Gold Coast), but there was no impact. The second stream, which started in the nineteenth century bore abiding fruit. During that period many mission societies in Europe sent missionaries to Africa, including Ghana.

The Methodist Mission out of Great Britain began work in Ghana in 1835, twelve years before the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) came to be. After the Methodist Mission the Bremen Mission, a Lutheran Mission endeavor out of Germany, arrived in 1848, a year after the LCMS was born in the United States of America (USA). “In defense of those who did any preliminary investigative work at all as to why the LCMS should make a mission start in Ghana, the ‘Lutheran’ character of the Bremen Mission and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EP

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<sup>79</sup> [www.lcms.org/aboutus/history](http://www.lcms.org/aboutus/history) (accessed November 18, 2015).

<sup>80</sup> Cephas N. Omenyo. *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Boekencentrum, Netherlands: Uitgeverij, 2002), 42–43.



Church) that grew out of its missionary endeavors was camouflaged by history.”<sup>81</sup> Following World War I and II, all the German Lutheran missionaries were taken into detention by the British Government. When these missionaries were later forced to leave Ghana, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland stepped in to fill the gap. Thus, what one sees today in Ghana is a church that is Presbyterian in name, but very much Lutheran in theology and practice. However, with the rise of Pentecostalism in recent years, the Presbyterian Church has drawn closer to their practice. This is particularly evident as the Presbyterian Church now has women in Church leadership positions.

In America, a group of Lutheran Church synods joined together in 1872 and was named the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America, in short the Synodical Conference.<sup>82</sup> Before the Synodical Conference was established there was the General Council<sup>83</sup> which comprised all Lutheran synods who acknowledged the Unaltered Augsburg Confession (AC). The General Council allowed divergent teachings regarding altar fellowship. The Synodical Conference was a loose affiliation, primarily for mission purposes, of the LCMS, and the Norwegian, Slovak, and Wisconsin Synods. The Synodical Conference initiated and supported mission work among African-Americans in the USA and mission work in Africa. Later on, following doctrinal disagreement on altar fellowship and other issues among members

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<sup>81</sup> Rev. Dr. James P. Dretke was one of the first LCMS missionaries who came to Ghana as a pioneer evangelistic missionary.

<sup>82</sup> Carl S. Meyer. *Moving Frontiers: Readings in the History of the LCMS* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1964), 260–61.

<sup>83</sup> The General Council was a legislative body and it considered conformity to its decisions a moral obligation. Confessionalism was lax. Non-Lutherans were allowed to commune with Lutherans. Teaching by some leaders on topics like conversion, inspiration of Scripture and evolution were not in harmony with the Bible. The General Council did not take action with such men. In view of the weak stand of the General Council, the Synodical Conference was formed five years later so that synods that agreed in doctrine and practice could work together to proclaim the gospel even beyond their borders. The collapse of the Synodical Conference in 1963 was also due to doctrinal differences among the members- altar and pulpit sharing issues was among the reasons.

of the General Council,<sup>84</sup> the Synodical Conference was disbanded in 1963, and the LCMS was given the mandate to take over both mission fields. The African mission work was centered in Nigeria.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana (ELCG) came into being through missionaries who were sent from Nigeria to Ghana. The history of the Nigerian Mission plays an important role in the development of the church in Ghana. In 1934, a union of twenty congregations (mostly Apostolic Church) in Nigeria sent a representative to go to America to find a “Bible believing” church to sponsor them and to help them extend their work. The request, on recommendation of the representative in the USA, Mr. Jonathan Ekong, was extended to the Missouri Synod which accepted the responsibility on its behalf of fellow members of the Synodical Conference. The LCMS and the Wisconsin Synod began missionary activity in Southern Nigeria in 1936 and today the Lutheran Church in Nigeria is a very large one. Nigeria has been a blessing to Ghana.

“The Macedonian call” to begin Lutheran missionary work in Ghana came about in an unusual manner, by way of a pastor of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church by name Rev. S.K. Asante. According to Mr. Osei Agyemang,<sup>85</sup> a former Chairman of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana, Pastor S.K. Asante visited the United States of America and saw how the Lutheran Church was widespread and well known throughout the country. When Asante returned to Ghana he wrote to the Synodical Conference of the Lutheran Church

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<sup>84</sup> The General Council was formed after the General Synod. The General Synod was a body of Lutheran Synods that was formed in 1820 through the initiative of Samuel Simon Schmucker. The General Synod approved of the gradual abandonment of the Lutheran Confessions as a sign of progress toward a uniquely American Lutheranism and Christianity. While the Synod wanted the Confessions to be used as consensus of Protestantism, the General Council under Krauth, wanted the Confessions to be used as catechesis and a means of identifying Lutherans from other bodies.

<sup>85</sup> Pastor Joseph Bart-Plange of Takoradi St. John’s Lutheran Church interviewed Mr. Agyemang and it was from Plange that I gathered what Mr. Agyemang said about S.K. Asante.

saying he had seen the Martin Luther film and came to realize that he was Lutheran, not AME Zion, and therefore had left the AME Zion Church and started his own Lutheran Church in Accra, the capital city of Ghana. But he needed help<sup>86</sup> because he continued with the teaching of the AME Church. Though Asante had sent letters to twenty-seven different Lutheran bodies in North America requesting help, only the United Lutheran Church (now part of the ELCA) sent their letter on to the Synodical Conference headquarters in St. Louis suggesting that since they were working in Nigeria, they might consider this invitation to Ghana.

At the time the United Lutheran Church sent Asante's letter to St. Louis, an LCMS missionary serving in Nigeria, Rev. Dr. James Dretke,<sup>87</sup> was in St. Louis attending a meeting of the Executive Board of the LCMS Mission of which he was a member before he came to Ghana in 1960. Dr. Dretke later became a key person in founding the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana (ELCG). In St. Louis, Dr. Karl Kurth (Executive Director of the Synodical Conference Mission Board) and his staff saw this as "a true Macedonian call," and asked that one of the missionaries in Nigeria go to Ghana to work with Asante and teach him the true Lutheran doctrine. The church needs men to lead.

The Executive Committee in Nigeria reluctantly acquiesced, sending Rev. Bill Schweppe, who was the Mission Superintendent and one of the early missionaries in Nigeria, to go to Ghana and test out the faith and sincerity of S.K. Asante. Bill Schweppe, in Ghana, was not convinced of Asante's intention and genuineness so he returned to Nigeria after three months in Ghana. Experienced missionaries Hector and Mary Ottemoeller were sent to Ghana for six months to

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<sup>86</sup> Asante needed help in many ways. First he wanted to know more about the Lutheran teachings. Secondly, he needed material assistance in the form of money for administration and church work. He also needed an LCMS missionary to come to work with him in Ghana.

<sup>87</sup> Rev. Dr. James Dretke was the first missionary sent by the LCMS to Ghana. I am most grateful to Dr. Dretke for information I gathered from him to write this history of the founding of the ELCG

further evaluate the situation. Even though the Ottemoellers, like Schweppe, expressed concern over the sincerity of Asante, the LCMS Mission Executive in St. Louis could not relinquish the idea that this was a clear Macedonian call. Thus they took steps to call a new missionary from America to work with this Ghanaian pastor who was still not confirmed in the Lutheran faith. The LCMS's attempt to send an African-American missionary, Rev. Joseph Lavalais a pastor at St. Philip Lutheran Church,<sup>88</sup> Philadelphia, failed because Lavalais could neither speak Ghanaian language nor understand the culture. The LCMS Board for Missions, however, did not give up. When the Mission Board asked Dr. Dretke (an LCMS missionary in Nigeria) to go to Ghana, he and his wife Barbara consented. When the Dretkes arrived in Ghana in October 1960, two infant congregations (Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Kaneshie-Accra, and Trinity Lutheran Church in Tema) had been established. By this time S.K. Asante was nowhere to be found and later it was learned he had gone back to the USA.

In Ghana, while the Dretkes were trying to get settled, they became more and more aware of God's call for them to carve their own niche into the life and mission of the church. This was not Dr. Dretke's first experience in dealing with this kind of challenge. Already in Nigeria he had gained experience in dealing with urban missionary challenges. In Nigeria he was privileged to have a hand in starting congregations in two small cities in Nigeria (Ikot Ekpene and Aba), and two very large and growing cities (Port Harcourt and Lagos). In each of these urban settings they encountered similar challenges to those which faced them during the initial stages of their work in Ghana.

An added incentive to concentrate on the urban areas of Ghana was the recognition that multitudes of people were coming into the cities from rural areas looking for work. They came to

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<sup>88</sup> [https://archive.org/stream/biographicaldict00luth/biographicaldict00luth\\_divu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/biographicaldict00luth/biographicaldict00luth_divu.txt). (accessed Feb. 9, 2016).

the cities to work, but their primary orientation was still toward the farm and their villages back home. The Dretkes wondered if they were able to bring them to Christ in the city, might they not, in turn, be missionaries to their people back home. Hence, they decided to concentrate, in the first instance, on the urban areas of Ghana. The Dretkes were right! I had come from a rural area in Northern Ghana to work in the city of Tema. My aim was to make money and return to my home town.

The Dretkes saw how the Lord was leading in Ghana and that they did have a legitimate and needed ministry in Ghana. They began to seriously look for other areas in which to serve. Kumasi and Takoradi emerged as the next cities to be targeted. While they also began planting a new church in Nima, a large, mostly Muslim slum area in a suburb of Accra. Dr. Dretke says, “It was my joy, while in Ghana, to baptize eleven Muslims, a beginning outreach into the Muslim community that I pray is going on even stronger today as the ELCG has spread into so many different areas, both urban and rural, almost all of which have Muslims there.”

In 1962 the LCMS sent the Reverend Don Maier and his wife Sylvia to begin missionary work in Kumasi, the second largest city in Ghana. Two years later the Reverend Dreher and his wife Joy came to start the work in Takoradi, and a year later, the Reverend Arnold Brammeier and his wife Ruth arrived to work alongside the Maiers in Kumasi. The whole field was ripe unto the harvest and in dire need of all kinds of missionaries, from medical workers to agriculturists to Bible translators to evangelists.

Rev. Dr. Walt DeMoss and his wife Helena were first sent as missionaries to Kumasi. About six months later, when new work began in northern Ghana among the Moba people through the ELCG, Walt and Helena were sent there. They had the opportunity to start new work and train workers. Some of these early trainees are now key leaders in the ELCG. Later, in the

mid-1970s, LCMS World Mission realized that the Moba people extended east into another country, Togo. Because Walt DeMoss already knew the Moba language, culture and geography, he was asked to spearhead this new work in Togo. The DeMoss family moved to Togo in September 1979 to begin the Togo mission.

The Reverend Dan Kunkel and his family were first called as evangelistic missionaries to serve with Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Kumasi, to continue the work of Don Maier and Brammeier. . The Kunkels had worked the longest<sup>89</sup> in Ghana (1973–1995), cementing the work done by the Dretkes and others as well as opening more avenues for church development and growth. The Bible classes and theological training programs that Rev. Kunkel organized for me enabled me to teach the Word of God in my home area. By God’s grace at one service 143 people were baptized.

Reverend Vernon Schindler and his family arrived in Ghana on November 3, 1967 to continue with the work of Dreher in Takoradi. The Schindlers were privileged to be part of the infant Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana, which became a partner church of the LCMS during their tenure. During the period of their service, St. John’s Lutheran congregation grew and eventually dedicated their chapel building. Under Vernon’s pastoral leadership, two additional congregations were established (All Saints Lutheran Church in Sekondi and Bethel

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<sup>89</sup> A summary of the work of Rev. Dan Kunkel: 1973—1979: Pastor, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Kumasi; 1974–1975: Secretary, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana; 1975–1978: Project Developer and Supervisor, Lutheran Child Care Center, Kumasi; 1975–1976: Assistant Secretary, ELCG; 1977–1981: Mission Supervisor, Ashanti and Brong Ahafo Regions; 1977–1989: Advisor, Lutheran School Project, Kumasi; 1978–1979: Assistant Secretary, ELCG; 1978–1980: Acting Mission Supervisor, Bimoba Mission, Bunkpurugu; 1978–1980: Project Supervisor and Funding Developer, Bunkpurugu Agric Station; 1978–1981: Member, ELCG Committee on Ministry, Evangelism, Planning and Theological Education by Extension; 1978–1982: Advisor, Lutheran Youth Fellowship, Ghana and Ghana Seafarers Mission; 1980–1987: Director, ELCG Leadership Training Program; 1981–1982: Advisor, ELCG Interim Management Committee; 1982–1989: Missionary Counselor and member, Missionary Advisory Committee; 1988–1994: Church Planter and Leadership Trainer, Brong Ahafo Region; 1988–1994: Counselor and trainer, ELCG Services with the Deaf; 1989–1994: Counselor and trainer, ELCG Services with the Blind; 1991–1994: ELCG Advisor, Ghana Non-Formal Education Project, Kintampo, Brong Ahafo Region; 1992–1994: ELCG Advisor, Babatokuma Employable Skills Center Project, via Kintampo, Brong Ahafo Region.

Lutheran Church in Sofokrom).

Dr. Ralph von Qualen and his wife Sharon served as agricultural missionaries in Ghana from 1987 to 1994.<sup>90</sup> Ralph, while serving in Ghana, designed a project to meet some of the many needs of people in northern Ghana where he was serving, which was funded by the LCMS-World Relief. In order to address the specific needs of people, he used a five prong approach: literacy, agriculture, agro forestry, health and wells.

Another missionary who played unique role in evangelistic work was Rev. Tim Heiney. Rev. Heiney is a gifted artist who used photos to teach people the Order of Service, the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed. Tim had learned the Konkomba language so well that he did not need an interpreter when preaching a sermon.

The president of the ELCG met the LCMS Synod Board for Mission Services in the USA in 1990 to request help for starting a Theological Education by Extension (TEE) program in Ghana. TEE represents a new form of ministerial education whereby lay leaders can be trained in large numbers for more effective leadership in the church. The LCMS, in answer to the ELCG's need, sent Mr. Dalton Noack and his wife Deanne to Ghana in 1994. Mr. Noack, working with the church leaders, was able to develop thirty-six course materials which were taught in six learning centers<sup>91</sup> throughout the country. Before Mr. Noack left Ghana to return to the USA in 2001, more than one hundred men and one woman had completed all the courses and were commissioned as evangelists and a deaconess. With the help of the LCMS the ELCG established a seminary in Ghana in 1996. More than thirty pastors have so far been trained.

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<sup>90</sup> Ralph's great-great uncle, Hans von Qualen, went to China as a pioneer missionary with the Evangelical Free Church in 1887. Hans died and was buried in China but his relatives in Illinois still hold him up as a role model. Mission work is highly respected in the von Qualen family. The above information about the von Qualen's was provided by Dr. Ralph von Qualen who I personally knew quite well in Ghana.

<sup>91</sup> The six learning centers were located in Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi, Ziako, Bunkpurugu, and Gbintiri. Among the teachers in these centers were: Rev. Yaw Gyakyee Amoateng, Edward Younge, Joseph Bart Plange, Gyampo-Kumi, Nicholas Salifu, John Amoah, Matthew Bisianin and Samuel Konlaan.

In 1993 with the support of the Lutheran Hour Ministries, the Lutheran Media Ministry was established. The Lutheran Media Ministry undertook radio and television broadcasts, Bible correspondence courses in various Ghanaian languages and in English. It was also involved in other evangelistic activities including drama and youth activities, aimed at bringing “Christ to the people and the people to the church.” The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana continues to receive funds for the major activities from the LCMS and other foreign countries. However, with their monetary support, the Ghanaians perform the rest of the activities. For example the directors of the various programs are all Ghanaians. However, it is our hope that the ELCG becomes self-financing soon.

Because of the civil war in Nigeria, Rev. Walter Schmidt and his family were transferred in 1968 to serve as evangelistic missionaries in Tema, a modern city eighteen miles from Accra. Having come down south to Tema to find a job, I came into contact with Rev. Schmidt through my tribesman who was acquainted with the missionary who had organized adult literacy teacher training classes. Through Rev. Schmidt, I learned some skills in teaching adults a local language. Being a Muslim at that time, I did not know the truth about Jesus, but had learned in Islam that Jesus was a prophet like the others and that he was a kind and loving man. Muslims do not believe he is the Son of God or God. But by the grace of God, I got more than I could dream. Rev. Schmidt introduced me to the gospel and the Holy Spirit converted me from Islam. I was eventually baptized and later confirmed. After working for a few years in Tema, I returned to my home town carrying the Word of God with me to share with my brothers and sisters.

Reaching the unsaved is not an easy exercise. It requires patience and endurance. Quite often, the non-believers are ignorant of who Jesus is and what he has come to do for mankind. In 1985 we began witnessing Christ to the people of Ziako, my village in the Bawku district of the



Upper East Region. Our goal of the witness was to point the people to Jesus who is the once and for all sacrifice for their sins. The Kusasi people, like the Irish people, worship and offer sacrifices of chicken, sheep, and goats to divinities such as rivers, stones, lakes, trees, and ancestors. The message for these traditional religion worshipers is “Jesus has power over the spirits.”<sup>92</sup> Among the Kusasi people are also Muslims and the message we have for them is, “Jesus has the ability to break the system of their futile attempt to gain salvation through good works and give true salvation.”<sup>93</sup>

The Church planting exercise helped to change the eternal destinies of the Kusasi people who were saved by Christ. It also helped to change their economic status, because the Church not only addressed spiritual salvation, but also physical needs. Through the introduction of improved farming methods, the economic life of the people has become better. Similarly, the resulting spiritual change has made some Christians to abandon sinful habits such as drunkenness, fornication, fighting, and other destructive behaviors which had previously ruined their lives. Another important way Kusasi adults have benefitted from the church is their ability to read and write Kusaal through adult literacy class program. Translation of Luther’s Small and Large Catechisms, The Augsburg Confession, Smalcald Articles, The Treatise of the Papacy and other books into Kusaal have motivated adult to learn to read and write Kusaal. The ultimate goal is for the people to read the Bible and other books in Kusaal. Lutheran Heritage Foundation is graciously printing all the books that have been translated.

Being blessed with translated Lutheran books and other Scriptural materials, the need for adult males is crucial because the church requires them to become elders, deacons and pastors to

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<sup>92</sup> Steve Smith with Ying Kai. *T4T: A Discipleship ReRevolution* (Bangalore, India: Brilliant Publishers, 2011), 217.

<sup>93</sup> Smith and Kai, *T4T*, 217

lead the congregations.<sup>94</sup> The Greek word “*didaskien*” which mean “to teach” and its noun forms “*didaskalia*” that is, “teaching” and “*didaskalos*” which means “*teacher*,” are mainly used in the New Testament to describe the careful and authoritative transmission of biblical truth by men (1 Tim 4:11–16; 2 Tim 3:16; 4:2). The role of the elder in these verses is clearly defined as male role. The scriptures above use exclusively masculine forms of the Greek words to qualify the person as male. It is for this reason that the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana has taken the position that the role of preaching and teaching God’s Word in our congregations should be done by elders or pastors who are men approved by the church to lead. Elders and pastors have been given the authoritative role by the Lord to lead the flock or congregation. However, the problem faced by the Bugzunde Lutheran Church and all Lutheran Churches in the Kusasi area of Ghana is a serious shortage of adult males in the church.

This problem was observed when the first baptism service in the Kusasi church was made by Rev. Dan Kunkel and Rev. Phil Sipes in 1985 where one hundred and forty three people were baptized at Ziako church. Out of the one hundred and forty three people who were baptized, adult males were less than thirty. But surprisingly after a few months some of these baptized adult males left the church. From these men who left the church, one of them has become a chief and has married another wife. Two of them converted to Islam and the rest have erected idols in front of their houses where they make sacrifices regularly. In the Kusasi culture where the husband controls all members of the family in all aspects of their lives, a non-Christian husband would either stop his wife and children from becoming Christians or restrict their contributions both financially and physically to the church. Additionally, the various roles in the church that need to be taken care of by men would be disrupted.

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<sup>94</sup> Titus 1:7-9; 1 Tim 3:1-7

One great disadvantage of not having many adult males in the church is our inability to recruit males to be trained in the leadership training class to assist in leading the twenty five churches that were established between 1990 and 2000. Because of the shortage of leaders some of the congregations have been closed down while others merged. Presently there are only twelve churches in the Kusasi area of Ghana.

To be able to fulfill the mission and goal of the church, that is, baptizing people, starting more churches and teaching them to participate actively in church's life, it has become my desire to investigate to find out how best to reach male adults and also keep them active in the church. This issue is the topic of my Major Applied Project (MAP). I prepared a set of interview questions and distributed them to active adult males in the Kusasi Lutheran church. The responses received from all the ten men interviewed had similar answers.

The most frequent response from the interview was that Kusasi men view Christianity as a "White man's" religion. Other frequent responses were: Kusasi men cannot abandon the ancestor and idol worship because that will separate them from the rest of the family both living and dead, another response was it is a Kusasi tradition to marry more than one wife so as to have many children. It was also recorded that the fear of witchcraft is a factor that drives Kusasi men to seek protection from other sources where the church is unable to provide. Since all these issues form part of the Kusasi worldview, it will not be enough to tell a Kusasi man to abandon ancestor worship or stop going to the soothsayer for protection or become monogamous. It is my goal to discuss in detail why Kusasi men still practice what they do even though their problems are not solved. It will go further to use the Word of God, the final rule and norm of our faith to explain why Christians should do what the Bible says.

## The Literature Review

Throughout biblical times and the history of the church, God used men to lead his people. Leadership over the church is a role designed uniquely for men. God called David and Ezekiel and Ezra (1 Sam 13:14, Eze 22:30; and Ezra 7:10 respectively). These leaders were expected to teach the Word of God to the people directly or indirectly. A great need exists for more men to serve God by teaching his Word but we do not have enough qualified men in the church to teach in our Bible studies, Sunday school and other ministries.

“When pastors are not leading the congregation courageously, men leave, and when women lead, men leave.”<sup>95</sup> Pastors are expected to regularly visit the members in their homes, when they are sick, or have a problem. The pastor serves as a spiritual father to the men. Every man in the church needs a spiritual father and at the same time every man is expected to become a spiritual father to others. “Spiritual fathers are men who are walking with God and leading men by example to maturity in Christ.”<sup>96</sup> Jesus was a spiritual father to the twelve disciples. Paul was a spiritual father to Timothy and Titus and he called them his sons. Fathers do not only have an on-going relationship with their children, they teach them by example.<sup>97</sup>

David Murrow in his popular book *Why Men Hate Going to Church* made a point that Jesus and his male disciples founded Christianity and that it was men who God used to write the Scriptures. Murrow’s point was that males have important role to play in the church. But Murrow goes on to stress that when one visits a church one will find most of the adults (60%) being women. Murrow explained that ninety percent of American men believe in God<sup>98</sup>. Five out

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<sup>95</sup> Murrow. *Why Men Hate Going to Church*, 153.

<sup>96</sup> Murrow. *Why Men Hate Going to Church*, 218.

<sup>97</sup> Proverbs 22:6

<sup>98</sup> “God” is the one in whom a person looks for identity, meaning and security. Whereas African look to other gods like divinities and ancestors for their security, the people in the West find their identity and security in

of six call themselves Christians. Yet just two in six can be found in church on a Sunday. The men who show up often seem passive, bored or out-of-place. He laments that of the men who attend church, most of them decline to actively participate in the Christian life as their wives and children do. Adair Lummis in a paper remarked that “There are so few men in our churches now! Why is this happening? How can we fix this crisis! How can we get more men participating?”<sup>99</sup> Adair Lummis stated that women outnumber men four to one in his present congregation. Lummis ended by saying that there is almost a total absence of programs for improving the participation of men. Men do not usually congregate unless there is a specific goal or project in mind. But women are involved in the choir, Bible studies, care of children, cooking, etc. Lummis’ predicament is similar to what is taken place in the Kusasi Lutheran Church in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

I side with Murrow who disagrees with people who believe that men do not play active role in the church because they are just less spiritual. In fact, men are equally religious like women as the saying goes that Africans are incurably religious. Male and female participation are roughly equal in Judaism, Buddhism and Hinduism. But in Islam men are publicly religious and their membership is much higher than women during their Friday worship service. Among the world’s great religions, it is only Christianity that has a consistently low number of male members.<sup>100</sup> The question that has often been in my mind is “What is it that is driving Kusasi men away from the church? And how can we find the men to keep them active in the church?”

The absence of men in churches does not affect only the Lutheran Churches in the Upper

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themselves. Thus while Africans should be taught to abandon idols, the West should rely on God, the creator and not on the individual.

<sup>99</sup> A Paper delivered by Adair T. Lummis at *The Annual Meetings of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion*, October 2003, Norfolk, Virginia.

<sup>100</sup> [www.churchformen.com](http://www.churchformen.com) (Nov. 25, 2015 accessed).

East Ghana, but is a worldwide phenomenon. United States Census 2000 showed that at least 24.5 million married women attend church on a given Sunday, but only 19 million married men attend. That is 5.5 million more women, or 22.5%. The actual number may be even higher, because married people attend church in much greater number than singles. More than 90% of American men believe in God, and five out of six call themselves Christians. But only one out of six attend church on a given Sunday. The average man accepts the reality of Jesus Christ, but fails to see any value in going to church. Over 70% of the boys who are being raised in church will abandon it during their teens and twenties.<sup>101</sup>

A survey by Ellison Research found that 31% of men never attend church even on holidays. A man's lackadaisical attitude towards church attendance can influence his children's perception of Christianity. It is much more difficult for a mother to convince her son that attending church is important if her husband invalidates her arguments by neither going to church nor getting actively involved in the church's programs.<sup>102</sup>

The presence and active involvement of men in the church could lead to church growth. A study from Hartford Seminary under Hartford Institute for Religion Research found that men's involvement in the church was statistically correlated with church growth, health, and harmony. Meanwhile, a lack of male participation is strongly associated with congregational decline.<sup>103</sup>

Frederick J. Goodall's blog *Mocha Dad*<sup>104</sup> lists several reasons why men either hate the church or do not like to become Christians. Frederick further stated that many churches are not interested in making disciples. Men want a place where they would be challenged and equipped

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<sup>101</sup> [www.uscongregations.org/key.htm](http://www.uscongregations.org/key.htm) (accessed December 7, 2015).

<sup>102</sup> [www.ellison.com/corp\\_northamerica?tp](http://www.ellison.com/corp_northamerica?tp) (accessed December 7, 2015).

<sup>103</sup> C. Kirk Hadaway, *Facts on Growth: A New Look at the Dynamics of Growth and Decline in American Congregations Based on the Faith Communities Today 2005 National Survey of Congregations*. Hartford Institute for Religion Research. <http://hrr.hartsem.edu>.

<sup>104</sup> <http://www.mochadad.com> (accessed December 7, 2015).

biblically so that they may lead in their homes, schools, and churches. A place that will not empower their men to be disciples of Jesus and leaders of men will not see many men. Arthur J. Clement's handbook *The Shepherd's Assistants: A Handbook for Church Elders or Deacons*<sup>105</sup> listed twenty nine reasons why church members become delinquent. Among the main reasons are that the needs of men are not met in the church. Many people attend church not only to worship God and hear the Word preached, but for the fulfillment of social needs as well. "One of the foremost social needs is to love and be loved."<sup>106</sup> Another reason men don't attend church is because of work schedule in the rainy and farming season, from May to September. They have to plow the field and weed the farm. But Karl Grebe and Wilfred Fon who have lived and worked in Cameroon have provided insight about why Africans find it difficult to become Christians.<sup>107</sup>

Most African Christians have grown up in cultures that are intricately intertwined with the traditional religion of that ethnic group. Their belief in the spiritual nature of the world, the existence and remoteness of God, the role of the spirits and mystical powers make it difficult to abandon the previous religion which is at the heart of their cultures. Thus, becoming a Christian does not automatically change all of one's worldview nor does it need to change completely.

Grebe and Fon provide a solution as to how to get the Christian to remain a faithful Christian.<sup>108</sup>

Dr. Cephas Omenyo, a senior lecturer in the University of Ghana who is also a minister of religion in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, in his research on *Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* came to the conclusion that Christians left the church and consulted pagan priests because, "the missionaries could not scratch where the local people

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<sup>105</sup> Arthur J. Clement. *The Shepherd's Assistants: A Handbook for Church Elder or Deacons*. San Prairie, WI: (Zondervan, 1989), 93-98.

<sup>106</sup> Clement. *The Shepherd's Assistants*, 93.

<sup>107</sup> Karl Grebe and Wilfred Fon. *African Traditional Religion and Christian Counseling*. (Oasis, 2006), 9.

<sup>108</sup> There should be a conscious effort of the church to teach Christian discernment and to equip the Christians to live victoriously in their culture that is permeated with fear of the spirit world. This entails teaching the biblical resources for spiritual warfare and ministering to the spiritually oppressed.

itched most.”<sup>109</sup> African traditional religion people look to the deities for their needs. According to Farrow,<sup>110</sup> Africans believe in the spirit world and Mbiti<sup>111</sup> adds that spirits in African traditional religion are created by God, and so to deny the existence of divinities and spirits is to deny the existence of African religion. And Cornelius Olowola points out that to deny the existence of the devil, evil spirits and demon-possession is to deny reality.<sup>112</sup> These spirit beings and divinities are understood as the agents of God, and man must relate properly to these beings. The noted African scholar Joseph Omosade Awolalu<sup>113</sup> of the University of Ibadan in Nigeria gives six fundamental beliefs of traditional religion as follows:

- i. that this world was brought into being by the Supreme Being;
- ii. that the Supreme Being brought into being a number of divinities and spirits to act as his functionaries in the orderly maintenance of the world;
- iii. that death does not write ‘the end’ to human life but opens the gate to the hereafter- hence prominence is given to belief in the continuation of life after death;
- iv. that divinities and spirits together with the ancestral spirits are in the supersensible world but are interested in what goes on in the world of man;
- v. that there are mysterious powers or forces in the world and that their presence makes man live in fear;
- vi. that if men and women are to enjoy peace, they would live according to the laid down directives of the Supreme Being and his agents.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, 46.

<sup>110</sup> S.S. Farrow, *Fancies and Fetich* (London: SPCK, 1924), 116.

<sup>111</sup> Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (NY: Doubleday, 1970), 98.

<sup>112</sup> Cornelius Olowola. *African Traditional Religion and the Christian Faith* (Achimota, Ghana: African Christian Press, 1993), 32.

<sup>113</sup> [www.studiesincomparativereligion.com](http://www.studiesincomparativereligion.com) (accessed Feb 18, 2016).

<sup>114</sup> Olowola, *African Traditional Religion and the Christian Faith*, 9.



The issue of witchcraft is a universal one. “Witchcraft was widespread in the Roman Empire, and penalties against it were severe during the Constantinian era.”<sup>115</sup>

During the early Middle Ages, simple witchcraft was treated with relative leniency. However the persistence of witchcraft led the church to suppress it by trial and execution during the Inquisition.<sup>116</sup> The persistence of witchcraft for more than a thousand years in Europe was due to the fact that the church simply tried to stamp it out, and did not try to understand it and provide a better biblical response to the human needs that gave it birth.

In fact, “Witchcraft beliefs are prominent all over Africa”<sup>117</sup> and because of that the Christian Council of Ghana appointed a special commission on witchcraft which published a pamphlet on the subject. It was reported that “It would be a grave error to assume that witchcraft beliefs in Ghana are nothing more than picturesque survivals of olden times, to be read as fairy tales.”<sup>118</sup> Witchcraft is the traditional way of explaining the ultimate cause of any evil, misfortune or death. As a matter of fact, any misfortune or sudden death among Kusasi people is attributed to witchcraft.

Barren women, people whose children die at birth, women with irregular menstrual flow, accident victims, traders who suffer losses, office workers who fail to get promotions, a political candidate who fails to get elected, a student who fails examinations, a person who notices scratches on his or her body, a hunter or fisherman who fails to bring home meat, a farmer with bad crop yields, a football team that consistently loses matches – all suspect witches as the cause of their misfortune. Even those who are most successful in their business or profession constantly fear being bewitched by envious relatives or friends.<sup>119</sup>

The researcher had travelled outside home to find a job in the city. He was able to save

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<sup>115</sup> Hiebert, Shaw and Tienou. *Understanding Folk Religion*. 173.

<sup>116</sup> Based on Exod 22:18 and 1 Cor 10:20, the Catholic Church under the Inquisition killed people who were considered sorcerers or witches.

<sup>117</sup> H. Debrunner. *Witchcraft in Ghana: A study on the belief in destructive witches and its effect on the Akan tribes* (London: Brown Knight and Truscott Limited, 1961), 2.

<sup>118</sup> Debrunner, *Witchcraft in Ghana*. 2

<sup>119</sup> Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*. 377.

money and when he returned home several years later he was the first to roof his mud-house with corrugated iron sheets. He also set up two grinding mills for grinding grain. He became the “talk of the town” and some of his friends and family members reprimanded him for doing what he did because witches were going to attack him. Others asked the researcher to look for protection from witch-doctors and other “powerful” people. The researcher never consulted any “special person” and up till now no witch has been able to cause harm to him. God almighty is more powerful than any spirit and he daily watches and protects his redeemed children.

Dr. Waje Kunhiyop makes a point that stories and confessions about witchcraft do not prove the reality and certainty of witchcraft.<sup>120</sup> He has a good advice and warning for all Christians, when he quoted Robert J. Priest:

A principal way in which traditional religions accredit, justify and propagate ideas about the supernatural is through the telling and retelling of stories of the supernatural. We are expected to assent to the validity of the stories. However if we proceed on the mistaken assumption that we can infer truth about spirits from people’s beliefs about spirits, we will invariably end up syncretistically incorporating animistic and magical notions of spirit power into our doctrinal understandings of the demonic world.<sup>121</sup>

Kunhiyop further cautions Christians, saying:

Though we claim to be Christians, we are quick to suspect witchcraft when someone’s child becomes sick or dies. We foolishly cling to this explanation because it satisfies our desire to find answers to our questions. The result is that many young Christians can tell countless stories testifying to the power of witches and wizards, but can hardly tell one story about deliverance from demonic power. As long as Christians have more stories (whether true or false) about witchcraft than about Christ’s power, they will feel that witchcraft has a greater degree of power over the child of God.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*, 380.

<sup>121</sup> Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*. 380.

<sup>122</sup> Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*. 383.

Kunhiyop further notes that many professing Christians are ignorant of scriptural truths and theology and are therefore unaware of what the Bible really teaches about witchcraft. The sovereignty of God is an important point that every Christian must know and believe. Because God is sovereign, Satan and evil spirits including witchcraft cannot harm the child of God. “Knowledge of the sovereignty of God affords a deep sense of security in a world that is full of misery and trouble (Rom 8:31-39).

Kunhiyop has good news for Christians. The omnipresence of God gives hope and comfort to Christians at all times in their lives.

God told Moses that he will always go with him (Exod 33:14). The Scriptures do not deny the existence of demons, evil spirits and witchcraft. But they insist that the presence of God and his angels provide security against demons and any other cause for human fear. After all, the Apostle John reminds us, “the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world” (1 John 4:4). Our God, who is always with us, is greater, mightier and stronger than the devil and all the powers. The Christian can rest confidently on Christ’s promise that he will be with us to the end of the age (Matt 28:20). The point is not to deny the existence and power of Satan and his agents like demons and witches but to affirm the power of God over those who oppose us.<sup>123</sup>

On the issue of polygamy Kunhiyop has observed the rigid and unsympathetic view that some Christians have for polygamy. There is a story of a man of considerable influence who was denied church membership because his home was polygamous. Unwilling to reject his wives, this man became a Muslim. The advice Kunhiyop gives to Christians is “there is great need for tact and understanding concerning the issue of polygamy, especially when there is no clear biblical statement that equates it with adultery.”<sup>124</sup>

Clinton Arnold in his book *Ephesians: Power and Magic* focuses on divine power and “powers” of spiritual beings in the book of Ephesians.

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<sup>123</sup> Kunhiyop. *African Christian Ethics*. 387.

<sup>124</sup> Kunhiyop. *African Christian Ethics*, 241.

The earth is full of demons. Humanity is plagued by them. Almost all misfortunes are because of the demons: sickness, drought, death, and especially humanity's weaknesses about remaining faithful to the covenant. The region between heaven and earth seems to be almost cluttered by demons and angels; humanity is often seen as a pawn, helpless in the face of such cosmic forces.<sup>125</sup>

The emphasis on the power of God in the book of Ephesians reaches its zenith in 6:10-12. There the divine power is provided to the believer. Believers should no longer seek access to power along idol, gods or divinities. The people of God are brought into the closest possible union with Jesus who provides them with strength which is received by faith. The power of God strengthens the believer to love after the pattern of Christ. The strengthening enables the believer to resist the onslaught of the devil, who would like to see the convert fall into disobedience. The power of God enables the church to fulfill its mission of proclaiming the gospel in spite of the opposition of the devil and his host of "powers." There were several congregations in Ephesus by the time Paul wrote the epistle with the aim that those churches and even other churches in Asia Minor would receive his letters.

In Acts 19, Luke the author of that book implied that there were a large number of people who practiced magic at Ephesus. The main characteristic of the practice of magic throughout Asia Minor was the cognizance of a spirit world exercising influence over every aspect of life. But through Paul's evangelism work, quite a number of magicians were converted and as an expression of their new allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ, gathered all of their magical books together and burned them. However, there was a tendency for some Christians either to retain or take up magical beliefs and practices. This was true of Christians throughout Asia Minor in spite of Luke's account of a large number of Christians burning their magical books in Ephesus. In the same manner, there are Christians in our days who have been baptized into the Church and yet

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<sup>125</sup> Arnold, Ephesians: Power and Magic. 1989, 47.

still visit soothsayers, fetish shrines and other places for protection.

Since Kusasi men are afraid of witchcraft and they also believe that ancestor worship is essential, the pastor or evangelist who simply tells traditional Kusasi men that “idol worshipping is satanic and un-christian” will not make any impact in his evangelistic work. This simplistic approach does not address the men’s felt needs, nor does it encourage change. Further, the church condemns men who are polygamous before becoming Christians and further warns all men that it is a sin to have two wives. There is a lot more to be done. In the next chapter of this MAP, issues that prevent Kusasi men from becoming Christians; and also playing active role in the church are going to be discussed. Effective means of reaching Kusasi men will also be discussed.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE PROJECT DEVELOPED**

#### **Introduction**

This MAP is seeks to formulate effective means to reach adult males in the Kusasi area of Ghana. Few men are active the church of Ghana, whereas there are many men in both traditional religion and Islam. The ultimate aim is to reach non-Christians with the Gospel, and to teach these men about the futility of idols. In addition this MAP will address ancestor worship, witchcraft, and polygamy, which are practices widely accepted in the Kusasi culture. Identifying these issues is important in order to have beneficial discussions with a person who is not a Christian.

Initially, I had planned to interview as many as fifty people, including Muslims, traditional African practitioners, active and inactive Lutherans, as well as pastors and members of other Christian denominations. Following the recommendations of my MAP advisor and reader, Dr. Robert Kolb and Dr. Tony Cook respectively, I limited the group of people to be interviewed to ten active adult males in the Lutheran Churches in the Kusasi area of Ghana. The men interviewed are Christians who are presently active in the church, each of whom had either been traditional religion practitioners (five), Muslims (three), or had been born into Christian homes of various denominations (two). Interviewing such men would bring out their own stories of what, why, and how they abandoned their previous religion and became active members of the Lutheran Church.

## **The Design of the Study**

In selecting the men for the interview, I met with the Kusasi Lutheran Church council executives who know all the congregation members quite well. I shared with them the purpose of my MAP and the desire I have to help the church reach more adult males. I explained to them the problems the church faces due to the low number of active adult males. I also reflected that the reduction of the number of congregations from twenty five to only twelve convicts us of the reality that the Church's goal of "making disciples of all nations" (Matt 28:19) was not fulfilled. I further explained to the church council the reasons that the church needs men as elders to assist the pastor. Men are also needed to be trained as lay leaders who could be used to plant new churches among the three-hundred communities in the Kusasi area. After some discussions ten men who are active in their various congregations were recommended to me to contact for the interview. Some of these men serve as elders and they all are involved in Bible studies, Sunday school, evangelism and outreach programs, and other programs in the churches. They are also men who have held various positions in the church and are interested in the growth of the church. This was encouraging, since eight of those men had been in my mind to be nominated for the interview. .

My hope is that the findings from these interviews will provide insights for me to produce a good and usable MAP. Further, it is my hope that this MAP will benefit pastors not only in the Lutheran Church in the Kusasi area but pastors in Northern Ghana and Ghana as a whole. In the end I pray that anyone who reads the MAP and has the intention of reaching men would be able to witness Christ effectively to Muslims and traditional practitioners and by the grace of God the people reached will be converted and become active members of the church. I prepared a set of interview questions (see appendix Two), shared them with my MAP advisor and he approved them. I then sent letters to the ten men who had been recommended by the church council to be

interviewed (the letter of invitation is found in appendix One). The proposed locations for the interviews were St. Immanuel Lutheran Church at Ziako, Concordia Preparatory School, and my house. They all agreed to come to my house saying that would make the interview “more friendly” in the sense that they will have the freedom to speak their minds. I had often invited people to my home where we prayed together, shared and discussed issues of common interest. They enjoyed the hospitality of my family who provided some refreshment and meals. They had nothing to fear in coming to house to discuss issues that would enhance the growth of the church. Following my invitation, they came on the agreed dates and the interviews went well, but as usual most of them came late (as usual, those who came in late apologized), making what is termed “African punctuality” a reality.

The first three interviews were recorded on a tape recorder. It was very difficult and time consuming trying to play it back and write. Later I decided to ask my son, who is a professional teacher, to be secretary to take down notes while the interview was going on. I also took down some notes on my computer while interviewing the individuals. I explained to them why I found it necessary to take down notes and not to tape record the responses. After every interview the respondent was given some “kola” that is some cash token and some soft drinks.

After the interviews, I began to code them to discover the common threads in all what they said. I used the basic coding technique which requires numerical counting of words and phrases that appear most. It was through this technique that I sorted out the main issues being discussed in my MAP.

Having noted and listed the main issues, I needed to do more library research. During that period I was privileged to travel with my daughter to the USA in August, 2015. While in the USA, I visited Concordia Seminary library to look for relevant books on the various issues. I



took notes and borrowed some of the books to use when I returned to Ghana in September, 2015.

Back in Ghana, I wrote invitation letters<sup>126</sup> to the men who participated in the in-depth interview for a focus group discussion. This discussion aids the construction of this MAP as another qualitative research method in addition to the initial interviews. Of the ten men I invited, only six attended. Some of them forgot the date while others informed me that they were unable to attend. The six men who attended provided good responses. Like the previous interview the men agreed to meet in my house for the focus group discussion. Mr. Prosper Atiiga, the chairman of the Lutheran church council, served as the moderator who had been given a set of leading topics and questions.<sup>127</sup> I took a lot of notes on why Kusasi men worship idols, worship their ancestors and fear witchcraft. I also took a lot of notes on why Kusasi men still want to marry more than one wife. The responses during the focus group discussion also shed light on why Christianity is viewed by some Kusasi men as White man's religion.

I shared the data I gathered from the focus group discussion with pastors both in the Lutheran Church and other denominations. My intent in gathering this data is to enable me compare the data with the Word of God, the rule and norm of our faith. The information put together in the MAP is intended to help pastors and laymen to view Christianity as a religion God gave to Kusasi people and all human beings. With that knowledge pastors and interested laymen would be able to use Scripture to explain why idol worship and ancestor worship are not in agreement with the Word of God. They will further be able to show and teach that witchcraft is not from God but the devil, and that a Christian does not have to fear it because Christ has made witchcraft powerless before Christians. Furthermore, on the issue of polygamy, pastors and laymen would be able to teach that it was never God's intention that human beings practice or

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<sup>126</sup> Appendix One

<sup>127</sup> Appendix Two

ignore the fact that monogamy is the only type of marriage that is pleasing to God.

I decided to employ qualitative research data collection because that approach involves direct one-on-one interaction with the individuals in an in-depth interview. Even though qualitative research data collection methods are time consuming, the interviewer gains a much better understanding of the person interviewed through his gestures, tone, and body language. It is often suggested that in such in-depth interviews, a good sample of eight to ten people is enough to gather very good data.

One great advantage of the qualitative approach is that the information gathered is richer and has a deeper insight into the phenomenon being studied. Another advantage of this approach is that in-depth interviews have open-ended discussion wherein the person interviewed can express his opinion and even give additional responses.

### **Research Tools and Methodology**

In order to verify the problem identified in my thesis and learn more about idol worship, ancestor worship, witchcraft, polygamy and the perception of Christianity as a White man's religion, I decided to interview individuals who had been worshipping idols and making regular sacrifices to their ancestors but are now active Christians who fully participate in the Church's faith life.

### **Implementation of the Project**

Before I submitted my Major Applied Project proposal to the seminary committee, I had mentioned in some of the Doctor of Ministry classes at Concordia Seminary one of the major problems I faced in my ministry as sole pastor for twenty-five churches, namely the presence and participation of men in the churches. The ideas I received from both my professors and

classmates were helpful. In June 2014, I submitted the MAP proposal for committee approval. The proposal received some constructive criticisms which helped me to revise both the topic and the proposal in general.

In November 2014, I resent the MAP proposal to the committee for approval. In February 2015, the committee approved my proposal. However, the message got to me in May 2015, and I praised God for that blessing. I was given some suggestions to help make the interview questions more interactive. My adviser, Dr. Robert Kolb, was satisfied with my interview questions and gave me the go ahead to conduct the interviews.

I intended to interview a wider sample of people including Muslims, traditional religion practitioners, Lutherans, and various people from other Christian denominations. This required interviewing as many as fifty people. However, from the good counsel of one of my readers, Dr. Tony Cook, I narrowed the people to be interviewed to only active Lutheran adult males.

In March 2015, I met the Kusasi area Lutheran Church council and briefed them about my MAP and also about the candidates I hoped to interview. I suggested that these men should include those who had been traditional religion practitioners, some previous Muslims and those who were born into Christian families.

In July 2015, I began to look for specific books on the various issues by asking fellow pastors both Lutherans and other denominations. I consulted two lecturers at the University of Ghana, Legon, Rev. Dr. Abraham Kwakye and Dr. Harry Agbanu, , who recommended books addressing idol worship, witchcraft, polygamy, and other pertinent topics.

In October 2015 following the information I had gathered from the recommended books, I consulted people who had had encounter with witchcraft or were active idol worshippers and listened to their own stories. Three members of the focus group discussion told their own stories

about ancestor worship and witchcraft.

I had faced a lot of challenges in writing my MAP and I suggested to the Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program to find an editor to guide me in the research and writing.

Guided by the suggestions received from my editor and a few pastors, I rewrote chapter one entirely, as well as some portions of chapter two. This led to the successful composition of chapter 3. On January 13, 2016 I completed writing the Implementation of the Project in Chapter Four and immediately began writing Chapter Five.

### **Conclusion for Implementation**

After the in-depth interviews and the focus group discussions, the responses helped me to contact other people including as pastors and non-Christian religious leaders to gather additional data. I was amazed to note that in all the research work, I had contacted more than one hundred people who provided various input. The tremendous support and enthusiasm from people, especially Lutheran pastors both in Ghana and the USA, motivated me to pursue the research to its conclusion.

In Chapter five the responses received and the information gathered from recommended books will be analyzed with the aim that I will be able to develop materials written to reach Kusasi adult males by effective witness concerning who Jesus is and what he has done for them in contrast to their previous beliefs. The research findings, I believe, will also provide valuable insights for pastors and laymen who possess the desire and interest to reach Kusasi adult males with the gospel. Finally Chapter six will summarize this project and make recommendations for further study. The ultimate goal of this MAP is to enable me to make use of what I learn so that, by God's grace, there will be more adult Kusasi males in the Lutheran Church to assist pastors in their pastoral duties.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **THE PROJECT EVALUATED**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this MAP is to effectively teach Christians and non-Christians that the power of Jesus is superior to all powers in the world, and that idol worship, ancestor worship, and witchcraft have no power over Christians who put their faith and trust in Jesus, the Son of God who came to this world to save all human beings.

The findings from all the interviews showed that if the pastor and other church leaders can teach people to see Christ as powerful and superior to all things, then they will be motivated to become Christians and remain active in the church. The findings also showed that idol worship which involves consulting soothsayers, diviners and witchdoctors and making persistent sacrifices was part and parcel of a local Kusasiman's life. Together with the idol worship is also ancestor worship which every traditional Kusasi male adult must perform in order to live in peace with his ancestors and also receive material blessings from them. Since human beings face challenges in life, it is believed that all evil deeds are manipulated by witchcraft. Because of this, local Kusasi men do all they can to protect themselves from witchcraft attack. And one main reason why Kusasi men are not interested in becoming Christians is the idea of abandoning polygamy which is part of their culture and sticking to monogamy which is seen as "foreign" culture. Appendix Two provides detailed responses during the interviews. The researcher believes that when the issues discussed in the interviews are examined and dealt with from the biblical worldview, the Holy Spirit will move Kusasi men to Christ.

This Chapter will contain detailed discussions providing correctives for the issues that resulted in the decline of Kusasi adult male membership and active participation in the church: (1) Christianity is not a Whiteman's religion but a religion for all human beings including Kusasis, (2) Worshipping God is superior and better than worshipping idols and ancestors, (3) Witchcraft is fully accepted in the Kusasi culture but Christ's power overcomes all spiritual powers in the world, and (4) Polygamy is a culturally accepted practice among Kusasi people but it is not a God-pleasing way of Christian marriage.

### Christianity Is a Universal Religion

Christianity is God's way of salvation for the whole world through Jesus Christ (John 5:39). The whole world means people of all nations and tribes. The Bible mentions people of different tribes who are Christians and children of God.<sup>128</sup> Mention is made of black people and black nations such as Ethiopia, Cush and Egypt more than one thousand times. Christianity had been well established in Africa six hundred years before Islam. Thus, it is appropriate for African scholar and theologian Dr. John Mbiti to say, "Christianity in Africa is so old that it can be rightly described as an indigenous, traditional and African religion."<sup>129</sup> Mbiti further explains that long before Mohammed founded Islam in the seventh century, Christianity was well established in North Africa, Egypt, parts of the Sudan and Ethiopia. The Christian Church has been continuously present on the African continent since the days of Christ, and it continues to grow.

Philip Jenkins, in *The New Faces of Christianity* is optimistic that by the year 2025, "Africa and Latin America will vie for the title of the most Christian continent."<sup>130</sup> Jenkins has

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<sup>128</sup> Rev. 7:9

<sup>129</sup> John S. Mbiti. *African Religions and Philosophy* (1990), 223.

<sup>130</sup> Philip Jenkins. *The New Faces of Christianity*. (Oxford University Press, 2006), 9.

provided some statistics to support what he said.<sup>131</sup> Thus, Christianity is not only a religion for the White man but also for the black man, including Kusasi people of Northern Ghana.

### **Africans Took Part in the Early Spread of Christianity**

In Acts 2 it is recorded that on the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was poured on the people gathered and more than 3000 of them were converted to Christianity. Some of those converted were Africans. After the Pentecost festival celebration the Africans took the gospel back to their homeland. Thus the gospel reached Africa not in the seventeenth century through Western missionaries but in the first century through native Africans who were converted on the Day of Pentecost.

In Acts 8 an Ethiopian eunuch of great authority heard the gospel explained to him by Apostle Philip. The Holy Spirit converted the eunuch, who asked Philip to baptize him. Thus, this Ethiopian was converted long before the Apostle Paul took the gospel to Europe.

In Acts 11, Africans served as missionaries to Europeans. In Acts 11:19, the Jews who followed Jesus would not preach to the Greeks. But Acts 11:20, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, a city in North Africa, went to Antioch and preached the gospel to the Greeks. It is interesting to note that during the crucifixion of Jesus, it was Simon, from Cyrene, an African city, who helped Jesus to carry the cross to Mount Calvary (Matt 27:32).

Many brilliant ancient Church fathers came from Africa and particularly Alexandria such as Clement,<sup>132</sup> Origen,<sup>133</sup> Athanasius,<sup>134</sup> and Cyril.<sup>135</sup> Augustine, a philosopher and one of the

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<sup>131</sup> Jenkins. *The New Faces of Christianity*, 9.

<sup>132</sup> Clement was among the first members of the church of Alexandria who became a great teacher.

<sup>133</sup> Origen was a scholar and theologian. According to tradition, he was an Egyptian who taught in Alexandria, reviving the Catechetical School where Clement had taught. Using his knowledge of Hebrew, he produced a corrected Septuagint. He also wrote commentaries on all the books of the Bible.

<sup>134</sup> Athanasius was a theologian and Pope of Alexandria, and a noted leader of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. He is

most important figures in the development of Western Christianity, was born in the present day Algeria in North Africa to a Christian mother, Monica. Tertullian, another African church father and theologian, first coined the term “Trinity.” Early African Christians played important roles in “developing the modern university, maturing Christian exegesis of Scripture, shaping early Christian dogmas, such as the Nicene Creed, and stimulating early monasticism by St. Anthony.”<sup>136</sup> The immense contributions made by early African Christians should inspire and motivate present day Africans, including Kusasi men, to see and value Christianity as a gift from God that has been passed to them by early African Christians.

### Some Reasons Why Ghanaians Called Christianity a White Man’s Religion

Every group of people has a culture which they value and respect. When another group of people want to force others to change their culture or stop them from practicing their culture, there is always some resistance and sometimes confrontation. The early missionaries did not take time to understand why Ghanaians did some things which the missionaries found to be inappropriate.

### **Ban on Drumming and Dancing in Church**

Although in Africa cultures, the beats of drums make a song lively and danceable, the early missionaries banned drumming, clapping of hands, and dancing in church. According to the

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remembered for his role in the conflict with Arianism and for his affirmation of the Trinity. At the Council of Nacea in 325 AD, Athanasius argued against the Arian doctrine that Christ is of a distinct substance from the Father. The theological controversies in the 4<sup>th</sup> century which brought about what is called the Nicene Creed, an important statement of faith which is used by many Churches worldwide has its root from African Theology.

<sup>135</sup> Cyril was the Bishop of Alexandria when the city was at its height of influence and power within the Roman Empire. He wrote extensively and was a leading protagonist in the Christological controversies of the late 4<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries. He was a central figure in the First Council of Ephesus in 431, which led to the deposition of Nestorius as Archbishop of Constantinople. Cyril’s reputation within the Christian world has resulted in his titles “Pillar of Faith” and “Seal of all the fathers”).

<sup>136</sup> [www.amazon.com/Africa-Shaped-Christian-Mind-Rediscovering/dp/0830837501](http://www.amazon.com/Africa-Shaped-Christian-Mind-Rediscovering/dp/0830837501). (Accessed January 21, 2016).



Ghanaian Christian, one of the things he valued has been removed by the church and the missionary. This ban showed that to become a Christian, a person has to stop doing certain things that his culture permits, hence Christianity was not seen as an African religion.

### **Ban on Wearing Native Cloth to Preach in Church**

Ephraim Amu was teacher-catechist in the Presbyterian Church in the 1930s. Amu was always proud to wear African attire instead of the imported Western dress. He decided not to wear warm unsuitable European clothes in Ghana during the hot dry season. In 1931 after Amu preached a sermon wearing his beautiful Ghanaian attire on a Sunday, he was summoned to appear before the church court. He was told that he should never conduct Sunday service in a native cloth. The early missionaries have created the impression among educated Ghanaians that wearing a suit and tie makes a person a gentleman more than wearing native attire. Currently, it is even sad to see pastors wearing suit and tie in the hot dry season in Northern Ghana during church services sweating profusely in a chapel where there is no fan much more an air-conditioner. The teaching of the missionaries which made Ghanaian Christians look more like Westerners in their dress code than as Ghanaians, promoted the notion that Christianity is a White man's religion.

### **Rejection of Puberty Rites for Girls**

Puberty rites have been a practice where young girls go through several training processes aimed at equipping them to become good housewives when they get married. Among some tribes, the test of the girl's virginity was also performed during puberty rites. The missionaries' rejection of this practice led the Ghanaians to call Christianity White man's religion. While it is true that the practice of libation pouring and sacrifices are not in agreement with the Word of

God, puberty rites have some good aspects which prepare the girls to be good house wives. The Kusasi church can encourage helpful aspects of the practice and replace the libation and sacrifice aspect with church services and thanking God for the life given to the young girls. Prayers should be said that the Lord provides the girls good Christian men to marry to make good Christian homes.

### **The *Salem* Community**

*Salem* was a new community that the missionaries established to keep the new converts away from the local traditional community. The practice of communal living and the common sharing and support in the extended family system is prevalent in Africa. In the Ghanaian traditional society every member was expected to participate in the rituals and practices that were associated with sacrifices. The early missionaries tried to break this communal living by separating Christians from their families. The missionaries bought land, usually on the outskirts of the town and created new settlements where the new converts lived away from the other people who participated in certain rituals and idol worship practices. This approach isolated the converts and led them to see everything about their culture as demonic.

Among the positive things created by the *Salem* is the introduction of morning prayers in church and houses. The people developed good working habits and attended to all activities punctually. Every Tuesday was set for Bible studies. Biblical morality was evident in the *Salem* community. The *Salem* system, however, in spite of its positive aspects, created identity crisis. It produced a class society where educated Christians had access to better jobs and prosperity, and such people started to regard the inhabitants of the traditional areas as uncivilized and barbaric. The *Salems* also undermined rulers and jeopardized social cohesion. This is one reason why some Ghanaians termed Christianity as White man's religion, a religion that has divided its

people into classes.

### **The Insistence of Monogamous Marriages**

The Kusasi culture favorably supports polygamy because of the cultural and economic benefits that a polygamist gets. Cultures determine which practices are acceptable and which are not. For example, in the Toda culture of southern India, a woman may be simultaneously married to several men. Fatherhood is not always connected with actual biological facts. Also the Balinese of Indonesia permit twins to marry each other because they believe that twins have already been intimate in the womb. In the Banaro culture of New Guinea, the husband is forbidden to have intercourse with his wife until she has first borne a child by another man chosen for that purpose.<sup>137</sup> Kusasis have “good” reasons for practicing polygamy. Among the main reasons are when a man has many wives he has a means of getting many children to expand the extended family

When the missionaries came and immediately abolished polygamy, a lot of suffering occurred as faithful Christians had to divorce all but his first wife. Children of divorced women also faced a lot of social and economic hardships. The missionaries labeled polygamy as one of the greatest sins. However, some Bremen missionaries admitted polygamists to baptism and Holy Communion, maintaining that Christ did not make polygamy a barrier to entry into the Christian Church.<sup>138</sup> The rejection of polygamy and acceptance of divorce by the missionaries are among the reasons why Kusasis view Christianity as White man’s religion. The issue of polygamy will be treated further in this research.

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<sup>137</sup> Schaefer, *Sociology: A Brief Introduction*. 289.

<sup>138</sup> Peter Clarke. *West Africa and Christianity* (Place of publication?: Edward Arnold Publication, 1986), 60.

## Positive Influence of the Early Missionaries

Even if some people consider Christianity a White man's religion, every objective person cannot overlook the positive things like schools, hospitals, roads, agriculture, technology, economic gains etc. which the West brought to Africa. The missionaries not only preached the gospel and taught the Africans how to read and write the English language, they also coined the alphabets and taught the African how to read and write their mother tongue.<sup>139</sup> The early missionaries, from 1840s, broadened the curriculum in the schools to include subjects like agriculture, commerce and joinery. In this way Ghanaians were taught the habit of sustained application to work, which in turn led to a more civilized and economically prosperous society.<sup>140</sup> Today, politicians, the clergy, lawyers, doctors, technicians, engineers, broadcasters, teachers, and farmers in Africa cannot deny the fact that the Western involvement in African history has made them what they are. Thus without the coming of Christianity, I wonder whether those who absolutely condemn Christianity would have had the privilege of speaking English. Indeed Christianity has provided a holistic transformation of people's lives.

### **Christianity: The True Religion for Kusasi People**

Despite the fact that Christianity has been seen as a White man's religion, every Kusasi person should embrace Christianity as his religion that God has given. To regard the Christian faith as a foreign intruder as far as the Kusasi is concerned is erroneous for it would mean a denial of his request to have the Truth, which is only taught by Christianity. That Truth is Jesus (John 14:6).

One of the people interviewed was an idol worshipper who regularly consulted

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<sup>139</sup> <https://www.modernghana.com/news/313167/1/is-christianiy-a-whitemans-religion-and-has-it-de.html> (Accessed January 18, 2016).

<sup>140</sup> Clarke. *West Africa and Christianity*, 58

soothsayers or diviners and made sacrifices almost every day. Through an evangelism outreach program this young man got to know the Truth and was touched by the Holy Spirit and he became a Christian. He confessed that before becoming a Christian, he did not know that God loves him so much that he (God) did not need man's sacrifices but rather he has asked his only Son to make the best sacrifice for all human beings. He lives a happy life and he and his family attend Immanuel Lutheran Church at Ziako. Kusasis Christians do not cease to be Kusasis, but "they change qualitatively in their outlook, value-options, priorities, norms of conduct, etc."<sup>141</sup>

It was the missionaries who developed Kusaal language orthography and continued to introduce literacy classes in different villages, teaching them how to read and write Kusaal. Missionaries translated the Kusaal New Testament and printed it in 1976, which Kusasi Christians have revised. They have also translated the Old Testament giving the Kusasi people God's Word in their own language. An elderly man remarked that God is a Kusasiman because he speaks to God in Kusaal and God understands.

### **Contributions Made By the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana to the Kusasi People**

The Lutheran Church was established in the Kusasi area of Ghana in 1983 without any missionary. When the missionaries who were serving in other parts of Ghana were asked to provide training assistance, they agreed. In October 1985, one hundred and fortythree people were baptized in the first church, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Ziako. Between 1990 and 2000, twenty-five churches were established in the Kusasi area of Ghana. From 2002 to 2007, the number of churches had declined to twelve, because some had been closed and others merged. The churches had faced leadership problems because there were not enough men to be trained as lay leaders to lead the churches.

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<sup>141</sup> Okolo Ckukwudum. *Faces of African Theology* (Nigeria: Fulladu, 1997), 13.

One major contribution that the church in the Kusasi area has made to some communities is the provision of sanitary drinking water. Several areas in the Kusasi area lack sanitary drinking water, and because of that water- borne diseases are rampant in the area. With financial help from Ghana Harvest, a non for profit organization in the USA, more than fifty wells have been concrete lined, thus providing sanitary water for the people.

There are many widows in all the churches and such women are needy since they have no source of raising income. The Church from time to time purchases goats for the widows when funds are received from Ghana Harvest. When a goat is given to a widow, she is expected to give back one goat when she has had more than three lambs. This returned goat is given to another widow. These goats multiply very fast and so within a period of three years a woman could have about six or more goats from the first one she received. Income from a goat sold is used to support the widow.

Eight of the existing churches have chapels built with the help of Ghana Harvest. Since the chapel is the only building in the community that could house more than 50 people, chapels are used as schools, community meeting centers, and immunization centers.

Concordia Preparatory School is a private Christian school established on Pastor Nicholas Salifu's property. The school was started in 2012 and by the end of 2015 the enrollment had reached 486 students in classes up to the third grade. Luther's Small Catechism, Exploring Luther's Small Catechism, A Child's Garden of Bible Stories and the Bible are used in order to provide a Christian education. Concordia Preparatory School is in a way preparing the children so that some of them could be trained as pastors, teachers, etc. for the church in the future.

#### How to Deal with the Issue of Christianity Viewed as White Man's Religion

Scriptures tells us that Jesus was of Hebrew descent, that is, he was the son of David (Matt

1:1). The fact that Jesus was conceived and born of Mary, an Israelite, and that he looked like every other Israelite does indicate that he was not White or Black. He was most likely “in between.” In fact, if all human beings trace their root far enough we will find that we are all children of Adam and Eve, the first people God created and placed in the Garden of Eden. However, it was because of their rebellion and pride that they were expelled from paradise. But there is an alternative.

All human were lost through sin, but through one man, Jesus Christ, we are identified as children of God who have been reconciled to God by Jesus. So whether Jesus is a White man or a black man, he has made all those who believe in him redeemed children of God. Being white or black is not important, the important thing to know about Jesus is what he came to do for mankind. When God said, “This is my Son, whom I have chosen, listen to him,”<sup>142</sup> God was saying every human being should see Jesus as his Savior.

As believers in Christ, we are children of God first and members of a certain family or tribe or race second.

Jesus possessed the authority of God to declare to a Muslim or African traditional religion practitioner or any Kusasi man or woman that that person’s sins are washed away. The claim of Jesus to have authority on earth to forgive sins causes him to stand apart from Mohammed and other founders of the world major religions. Jesus Christ has the power to reconcile us to God and to forge new relationships in the world. “Indeed, when a person comes under the authority of Jesus and is set free, his life and his values change.”<sup>143</sup> If Jesus has set us free then we should not look to idol worship and or ancestor worship for any help..

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<sup>142</sup> Luke 9:35 (NIV).

<sup>143</sup> James Jones. *The Power and the Glory: The Authority of Jesus* (London: Darton, Longman, & Todd, 1994), 33.

## **Worshipping God Is Better than Worshipping Idols/Spirits**

An analogy is used to show the need to rely on God. When someone has a bicycle, he uses it to travel and carry water or firewood from the farm. When someone gives him a motor cycle free of charge, he will definitely stop using the bicycle and use the motor cycle. In the same way when a traditional religion person who relies on the gods and ancestors is told about Jesus Christ, that person will abandon the idols and rely on Jesus.

In all traditional societies in Africa, God is known as the omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Supreme Being. It is believed that, because of mankind's disobedience, the Supreme Being moved far away from mankind. In his absence he created spiritual beings to live among human beings as his representatives. The various spiritual beings include the nature gods, the ancestral spirits, and lesser spirits including witches, dwarfs, and ghosts. These beings were given power to bless people who comply with their demands but curse those who go against them. Kwame Bediako has noted some of the blessings that these deities give to human beings including barren women who are given babies, employment for men, young people writing and passing their examinations, travelers being safe and protected against motor accidents, businessmen being successful in their business ventures, people receiving protection against the suspected ill-will of another, healing received by a sick person or relative, protection against natural calamities such as drought, lightning, and many more. The curses that deities may bring on people include sickness, poverty, miserable life, death, and many more.<sup>144</sup> The reality of supernatural beings and their potency to bless or curse is certain among all traditional Kusasi people as well as the early Christians.

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<sup>144</sup> Kwame Bediako. *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995), 65.



## **Gods and the Goddesses Mentioned in the Book of Acts**

In Acts 14:8–20, after Paul healed a crippled man, the crowd concluded that Paul and Barnabas were an incarnation of Hermes and Zeus who were Greek gods. Paul and Barnabas immediately renounced their association with these pagan deities, and called them “worthless things.” That is a lesson to Kusasi Christians. Gods like Agole and Baakanga which traditional religion practitioners worship are “worthless things” before God. Every good thing that we receive is from God the creator of the universe.

In Athens, Paul read the inscription, “to an unknown god” (Acts 17:16–34). By calling attention to this inscription, Paul affirmed the Athenians’ keen spiritual interest, but he redirected their focus to the one true God, the Creator and sustainer of the world. Kusasi adult males’ attention should always be directed to the triune God.

In Ephesus, Paul incurred the wrath of a great mob incited by the members of a trade guild who made and sold shrines of the patron deity of the city, Artemis of Ephesus. Paul was considered a threat to the worship of their revered goddess. Kusasi Christians should stand firm when they are being ridiculed for refusing to take part in sacrificing to gods. Christians should also beware that being a child of God does not mean they will not face challenges. Suffering is part of the Christian’s life, but in all situations God is with them.

On the island of Malta when Paul was bitten by a poisonous snake, the people immediately assumed the goddess Dike (goddess of Justice) was punishing him. But when Paul neither died nor became sick after the snake bite, the people changed their minds and said Paul was a god (Acts 28:6). The early Christians believed in gods but as they grew in faith, their lives were changed. By that Christians are encouraged to regularly study the Word of God like the Bereans did (Acts 17:11).

Finally, Luke mentions by name two other pagan gods, Castor and Pollux, also known as

“the Twin Gods” (Acts 28:11). These gods were popular with navigators in the ancient world. “The reference to these deities serves as reminder of the multiplicity of deities in the New Testament world and their involvement in the everyday life of that time.”<sup>145</sup> In the sight of the people these gods were real and powerful. But for the Christian, the gods may be real but not powerful to the extent that they have to be worshipped and relied upon. Kusasis rely on many gods and spirits for power and protection.

### **Gods and Other Spirits in the Kusasi Traditional Area**

Apart from the Supreme Being who is called “Wina’am” (chief of the chiefs), Kusasis have a chief god called *Agole*. *Agole* is the land god (*Tengghan*) of all Kusasiland and his consort or wife is called *Agolpoak*, the queenmother of Kusasiland. It is believed that *Agole* is the overseer of all Kusasiland and that whatever a person does, no matter where you are, *Agole* sees. *Agolpoak* is consulted when someone is looking for a lost animal.

People have travelled from other parts of Ghana to seek help from *Agole and Agolpoak*. When there is drought or epidemic, the community contributes cash to purchase either a donkey or a cow to sacrifice to these deities in order to restore peace and health. *Agole* has delegated authority to other deities such as *Akolwoko* (*long river*) and *Gbanwaa* (*python*), ancestors, family and personal gods, dwarfs, soothsayers or diviners, and other spirits like witches.

It is believed that by the power that *Agole* has given these deities or spirits they would be able to grant people their wishes. These spirit beings have power to bless barren women with children or close the womb of other women who might have offended the deities. They have the power of making some people rich and others poor. The spirit beings have appointed some people and given them the power to heal the sick, some the power to bring fortune or misfortune,

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<sup>145</sup> Clinton Arnold, *Powers of Darkness* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 104.

and the power of protection in various kinds.

### **“Yoya”, Power to Ward off Evil Spirits**

“Yoya” means “pot.” It is “medicine” that is stored in a pot and wards off evil spirits that haunt people. People who have nightmares or people who dream all night go to the *Yoya* medicine man for treatment. The fee for the medicine is some cash and animals such as a goat or sheep. *Yoya* medicine is also used to treat people who have spiritual problems.

### **“Notood Medicine”**

“*Notood*” is “medicine” that either brings curses on people or prevents curses to have effect on people. The word *Notood* means “bitter mouth.” *Notood* is used for protection against an enemy who plans to destroy another person’s farm, property, animals, wealth, etc. It is believed that curses are bitter so bitter herbs and all kinds dead animals’ parts are used in the preparation of the “medicine.” People who go for *Notood* medicine are given talisman or rings of various kinds. There are specific rituals that the receiver has to perform regularly.

### **“Yamzang Medicine”**

“*Yamzang*” means “taking of wisdom.” *Yamzang* is “medicine” that cures many diseases. Annually the members of the family that have this “medicine” have to be cleansed. The cleansing is performed by every member bringing a chicken to be slaughtered by the head of the family as a sacrifice to *Yamzang* god. When a chicken is slaughtered, it is thrown on the ground and it is expected to die with its breast up. When that has taken place the owner of the chicken is declared pure and has no sin. However, when the chicken is slaughtered and it dies with the breast down, that person has to provide another chicken. The head of the family has to consult soothsayers to find out the sin of that person and further sacrifices are made. The Kusasi

Christian is blessed to have a Savior who made one perfect sacrifice that takes away all sins.

### ***“Gbiano Medicine”***

*“Gbiano”* is believed to be bullet-proof attire. Men go for *Gbiano* “medicine” so that in times of war or tribal conflict, they feel safe and protected from bullet shots or any harm to the body. It has been about thirty years now since there has been tribal conflict between the Kusasi people and the Mamprusis. There had been serious times when lives were lost during clashes. Because of the conflict, men have gone in for *Gbiano* to protect themselves. However, there have been instances when people, especially those who thought they have *Gbiano* “medicine” have been shot dead.

### ***“Piebir Medicine”***

*“Piebir”* is a kind of “medicine” that the owner sends out to shoot other people. It is believed *Piebir* when administered goes out like an arrow to “shoot” another person, always an enemy. If a person knows that another person intends to harm him, he also goes in for *Piebir* and this time, it counteracts the effect of the incoming *Piebir*. Quite often a person who goes in for *Piebir* medicine also takes the *Gbiano* medicine. The life of the traditional Kusasi adult male is marked by series of sacrifices and rituals. Many people have lost all their property due to the acquisition of “medicine.” A Christian has Christ, the most potent power we have. When a person becomes a Christian he has to abandon all the above because the Word of God forbids man from seeking help from gods.

### **Kusasis also Have Personal and Family Idols or Gods**

It is not very strange to learn that traditional Kusasis, like some of the Old Testament people, possess “*teraphim*” or household idols or gods. The family or personal gods are

inherited from the ancestors or personally acquired. The family gods are believed to give good crops and bring good luck (like winning the national lottery). They cause sterile women to have babies and students to pass their important examinations.<sup>146</sup> Kusasi young men have gone to diviners to acquire personal idols as means of protection against their enemies. These personal idols are of various kinds. There are some that are in the form of amulets and others as rings that the people wear.

The Bible mentions several people who had *teraphim*. These idols were used as talismans to bring a blessing upon the individual or the household. The Bible mentions Rachel, Jacob's wife (Genesis 31) and Michal, daughter of King Saul and wife of King David (1 Sam 14:49) as women who possessed idols.

Genesis does not explain why Rachel stole the household idols. A possible reason could be that the idols were made of valuable materials and if so, then, Rachel may have taken them for financial gain. Perhaps, a better reason could be that Rachel believed in the power of the idols. She may have stolen the idols out of fear of moving from home without a protector. The *Concordia Self Study Bible*<sup>147</sup> (NIV) footnote<sup>148</sup> on Genesis 31:19 provides an explanation that is real among Kusasi traditional people.

Michal, the wife of King David, also had a *teraphim* in her possession. It appears this large idol was already in her house. No explanation for its presence is given in the text, although some commentators conjecture that Saul had already forsaken the Lord and had turned to idols by this

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<sup>146</sup> Philip M. Steyne. *Gods of Power: A Study of The Beliefs and Practices of Animists* (Houston, TX: Touch, 1990), 76.

<sup>147</sup> Concordia Self Study Bible: NIV, 1984.

<sup>148</sup> Small portable idols, which Rachel probably stole because she thought they would bring her protection and blessing. Or perhaps she wanted to have something tangible to worship on the long journey ahead, a practice referred to much later in the writings of Josephus, a first-century Jewish historian. In any case, Rachel was not yet free of the pagan background (see Gen 35:2; Jos 24:2).

time. Michal could have smuggled the idol from her father's house into David's when she came to live there. Interestingly, in both Rachel and Michal's cases the wife of a godly man continued to be influenced by pagan spiritual practices.

Idols are not to be part of a Christian's life in any form. Scripture is clear that there is only one God, and he alone is to be worshipped. However, just as some Christians in Ghana hide to worship idols, some Christians in the West still maintain a form of household idols such as an image of St. Joseph used to sell a house, an image of St. Christopher used to protect travelers in a car, an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe used to impart grace, or other such idols.

### **The Reality of Evil Spirits is Acknowledged World-Wide**

All African traditional practitioners believe the reality of spirits and demons and their power to destroy life and property. One of the lay leaders of the Lutheran Church told me how he confronted an "evil spirit" one night but when he shouted, "Jesus save me," the "evil spirit" turned back and suddenly vanished. There have been many stories told in the newspapers and television of how evil spirits have sent sicknesses to people. The reports also mentioned how pastors have prayed in Jesus's name and healed those who were attacked by evil spirits. There are scholars, especially in the Western world, who have rejected the reality of evil spirits. "The devil's greatest trick was to persuade us that he does not exist."<sup>149</sup> For example, Professor Walter Wink of Auburn Seminary in Alabama, USA in his book *Naming the Powers*, said that it was impossible for people to believe the real existence of demonic powers.<sup>150</sup> Another Western scholar Rudolf Bultmann, agreeing with Wink, asserted that "belief in the spirits is out-dated."<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Jones. *The Power and the Glory*, 65.

<sup>150</sup> Walter Wink. *Naming the Powers* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 4.

<sup>151</sup> Steyne. *Gods of Power: A study of the Beliefs and Practices of Animists*. (Houston, TX: Touch Publications, 1990), 60.

But Clinton Arnold cautions in his book *Powers of Darkness*, “The West needs to realize that it is the only contemporary society that denies the reality of evil spirits.”<sup>152</sup> Anthropologist Paul Hiebert, a missionary to India, came to the conclusion on the issue of belief and power of evil spirit that Western cultures has a significant “blind spot” when it comes to the question of spirits and evil spirits.<sup>153</sup> What Hiebert meant by “blind spot” was the rejection or disbelief by the West that there are spirits and other powers in the world that control the lives of human beings apart from the Supreme Being. The Christian should recognize the extent of the power of the evil one but he must be certain and convinced that the sovereign power of God is greater.

Apostle Paul, spoke of the principalities, powers, authorities in the epistles he wrote. Paul was clear that evil spirits and demons are real but Christ has declawed them and they are toothless before a believer, a person who knows that Jesus is with him. For a Christian, any created object that takes the position or responsibility of God should be rejected. Even though Kusasi Christians may believe in the reality of evil spirits, by their baptism these spirits can do them no harm or bring them any good thing.

Dr. Robert Kolb in his book *The Christian Faith* pointed out that wherever “we find Identity, Security, and Meaning is our God.”<sup>154</sup> A god is that to which we look for all good and in which to trust and believe in with our heart.<sup>155</sup> Agreeing with Luther and Kolb, everyone has a god, but there are many false gods. The Holy Spirit will guide believers in Christ to trust only the triune God as the only true God. The true God is the creator and sustainer of the world and his love for his creation is great (John 3:16).

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<sup>152</sup> Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 177.

<sup>153</sup> Arnold, *Powers of Darkness*, 180.

<sup>154</sup> Robert Kolb. *The Christian Faith: A Lutheran Exposition* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1993), 8.

<sup>155</sup> Large Catechism, Ten Commandments, 2, in *The Book of Concord*, trans. and ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 386.

Dr. Martin Luther, the father of the reformation explained the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in God the Father almighty as this:

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that he has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my limbs, my reason, and all my senses, and still preserves them. He provides me richly and daily he gives me all that I need to support this body and life, protects me from all danger, guards and preserves me from all evil; and all this out of pure, fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me; for all which I owe it to him to thank, praise, serve, and obey him.<sup>156</sup>

### **God's Power is Superior and above All Earthly Powers**

No power is equal or can be compared to the power of God. All things (*ta panta*) including divinities and demons which are frequently contacted and invoked by traditional Kusasi men are under the power of God. God's superior power is available to Kusasi men who believe in Jesus. Believers are always in the presence of God and are being protected by God. Therefore they need not seek any additional protection from the "powers" that are inferior to God's power. The devil is always trying to change the believer's mind into visiting a soothsayer whenever one is facing issues like sickness and poverty. Christians must bear in mind that Satan, the head of the evil spirits, will continue to engage Christians trying to convert them back to the traditional religion where there is no power that saves. Kusasi Christians, like all Christians, have access to the living God through Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.<sup>157</sup>

Christ is more powerful than any evil force in the world. During his incarnation, he confronted Satan, evil spirits, and demons. He went to the cross to defeat the power of Satan.

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<sup>156</sup> Kolb and Wengert. *Book of Concord*. 354.

<sup>157</sup> 1 John 4:14



The cross was the breaking of the stranglehold of evil on the world and now through his living presence among believers he entrusts that same victorious power to us.

The author Ephesians provides another expression to emphasize the comprehensive nature of Christ's supremacy. "Every name that is named" is encompassed in the mighty reign of the Lord Jesus Christ and that no power is outside of the dominion of Christ (Ps 8:7ff). The emphasis on Christ's victory over the "powers" is affirmed by the fact that there is a surpassingly great power effective in believers:

For the person who has been converted out of a background of idol worship or magical practices, Eph 1:21 would convey a powerful message. Christ's power and authority is cosmic in scope. His name alone, and not his name in addition to others, is sufficient for a successful confrontation with the "powers" of evil. The convert would no longer need to live with the fear that perhaps one or a number of supernatural "powers" could be equal to or superior to Christ. Christ's power and authority is exceedingly superior to all categories of "powers," every name that is named"!<sup>158</sup>

Satan's tactics is to trick Kusasi believers and other Christians to doubt Christ's victory for us. Christ calls us and gives us power. After Peter was given the gift of the Holy Spirit to believe and openly confess that Jesus is the Christ, he (Peter) and the Church and all believers were given the power against Satan (Matt 16:17-18). Christ gives the power to overcome all evil forces to us today just as He gave it Peter and the disciples and the early church.<sup>159</sup> The Holy Spirit is available to all Kusasi men, providing them strength to overcome and resist any temptations that the devil might bring to change their minds from trusting in God's power.

God disarmed the powers of divinities such as River god (*Akolwoko*), mountains such as

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<sup>158</sup> Arnold, *Ephesians, Powers and Magic*. 56.

<sup>159</sup> Lloyd, Ogilvie. *Why Not? Accept Christ's Healing and Wholeness* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1985), 142.

*Agoldaug* and his consort *Agolpoak*, and other “powers” like *Gbanwaa*, and other less powerful gods like *Baakanga*. It is believed that *Baakanga* is a god who protects babies from being attacked by evil spirits and witches. But for a believer in Jesus, the death and resurrection of Christ climaxed his once-and-for-all victory over these powers. Christ’s death and resurrection deprived these evil forces of effective power against any person who is baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

After God disarmed all these spiritual forces, he publicly exposed them as powerless. Paul described what Christ did to the powers as disgrace or mockery. If Christ disgraced Satan on the cross, then the Christian has the assurance that Christ’s victory is a reality for all believers.<sup>160</sup> The disgrace on the evil powers could be likened to the way a Kusasi woman who has committed adultery is mocked and disgraced. The woman is stripped naked, and given some leaves to cover her private part. She is whipped on her front part several times with bush thorns and the women around tease her as a useless cheap woman.

The statement Apostle Paul made about the defeat of Satan in Col 2:15 makes Satan a useless being and one that should never be worshipped or feared. It is like killing a snake dead and then cutting off its head. Paul described Satan’s defeat and its accompanying victory parade. God paraded the powers he had defeated in a triumphal procession. It was common in the context of a Roman military victory for the successful general to lead a procession, followed by his army singing hymns of victory and jubilating in their conquest. Also in the parade would be the defeated king with all his surviving warriors. The defeated army became a public spectacle for ridicule. In a similar manner, God has put the principalities and powers on public display,

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<sup>160</sup> “He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.” 1 John 3:8

revealing their powerlessness before Christ.<sup>161</sup> The refreshing message for Kusasis, especially men who worship gods and divinities, is that neither *Agole*, *Agolpoak*, *Baakanga*, *Gbanwaa*, nor any spirit has power over a Christian. None of these powers can be compared to God's power in Christ that is given freely to those who believe and confess in their hearts that Jesus has all power and authority (Matt 28:18–20). A distinction can be drawn between *power* and *authority* as used in the New Testament. “*Power*” (*dunamis*) and “*authority*” (*exousia*) are used by Jesus where “*power*” is the strength, the might and the ability that belongs to someone. “*Power*” is used by Jesus when, for example, the woman touches him in the crowd and he senses that *dunamis/power* has gone out of him. “*Exousia/authority* is not just the ability to perform an action but the right and the freedom to do so which has been conferred by a higher person in command. *Exousia/authority* is the right that lies behind the exercise of *dunamis/power*, though the two terms are sometimes used almost synonymously.<sup>162</sup>

The Greek word for “power” is “*dunamis*”, from which we get the word “dynamite”. Dynamite can crumble large buildings and can also be used to kill and make war. But in the person of Jesus Christ comes a new power and authority to destroy death and bring the world to forgiveness and life everlasting.<sup>163</sup>

### **Who Are the Ancestors?**

T.N.O. Quarcoopome defines ancestors as “the souls of the departed heroes and heroines of the various tribes.”<sup>164</sup> But from this research, there is no female ancestor, for ancestorship is

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<sup>161</sup> Clinton, *Powers of Darkness*, 106.

<sup>162</sup> [www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/dunamis.html](http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/dunamis.html) (accessed Feb 19, 2016).

<sup>163</sup> Jones. *The Power and the Glory*, 49–51

<sup>164</sup> T.N.O. Quarcoopome. *West African Traditional Religion* (Ibadan, Nigeria: African University Press, 1987), 128.

reserved for only men who are always the head of families. Belief in the ancestor is based on the general notion that life continues after death and that the ancestors are believed to have power to influence the affairs of the living for better or for worse. The ancestors are still not separated from their earthly families by death and therefore their relationship to the living on earth does not cease at death. They are interested in the well-being of the family to which they gave life.

“Ancestors help those who care for them, and punish those who bring disgrace and harm to their kinsmen.”<sup>165</sup> The needs of the living are assumed to be known by the ancestors because they have lived before. They provide more children, abundant harvest, more wealth, long life, solidarity and harmony among men, and avoidance of disruptive quarrels.<sup>166</sup> There are qualifications for a dead person to become an ancestor. For example, person should have died at a very old age and has performed some exemplary work in his life-time. However, because of elaborate funeral rites followed by a series of sacrifices, every elderly Kusasi man who is the head of a household can become an ancestor when he dies. The sacrifices and the funeral are meant to pave the way for the dead to reach the ancestors.

### **Why Kusasi Christians Should not Revere or Worship the Ancestors**

In the Kusasi or Ghanaian society, the relationship of parent and child, and of grandparent and grandchild, are very strong, and there is great respect for progenitors. Kusasis believe that ancestors are generally seen as the guardian of family affairs, traditions and every activity. The living people are expected to show respect to the ancestors. The idea of veneration or worship should not be applied to the ancestors. Kraft’s assertion that “honoring ancestors is not

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<sup>165</sup> Hiebert, Paul G., Shaw R. Daniel and Tienou Tite. *Understanding Folk Religion: A Christian Response to Popular Beliefs and Practices* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999), 119.

<sup>166</sup> Chris Abotchie. *SOC1 203 Traditional Ghanaian Social Institutions, First Semester 2002/2003 Notes, University of Ghana* (Legon, Ghana: University of Ghana, 2003), 10.

necessarily worshipping them” and that those who revere their ancestors are fulfilling the commandment that says “honor your father and mother,”<sup>167</sup> is not theologically and biblically correct. The Scriptures do not teach that our parents who have died (ancestors) should be honored but rather our living parents. In Dr. Martin Luther’s *Large Catechism*, he said “not only has (God) commanded us to love parents but to honor them.”<sup>168</sup> We have to esteem our earthly parents above all things and even value them as we value a precious treasure. “The highest form of honor we can give to our parents is by living holy lives of godly character and behavior.”<sup>169</sup> While God requires the living to honor their parents, the living must not try to contact the dead or seek the help dead relatives (Deut. 18:10–11). However, there are some ways by which we can think of our ancestors. First we can give our dead parents fitting Christian burial and funeral, not extravagant funeral. The church should hold a well-organized All Saints Day service each year. The church does not pray for the dead as some people do, or ask the dead to help the family; rather the good works they did should be mentioned trusting that by the power of the Holy Spirit the living would emulate their deeds. Another way to honor our ancestors is to name our children after them. The most important way we can remember our ancestors is to emulate their good life and teach others the same. The Israelites remembered Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for their accomplishments (Exod. 3:16; 1 Chron. 29:18).

The ancestors remain essentially dead human spirits but because it is an accepted traditional belief, Christians should not deny the existence of ancestors, because a denial will immediately cut off the opportunities for communicating the gospel to the traditional Kusasi man. It is a wise thing to take the belief of the traditional Kusasi man seriously and then seek to

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<sup>167</sup> Charles Kraft. *Anthropology for Christian Witness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998), 234.

<sup>168</sup> Large Catechism, Ten Commandments, 105, in *The Book of Concord*, trans. and ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2000), 401.

<sup>169</sup> Wilbur O’Donovan. *Biblical Christianity in African Perspective* (Ilorin, Nigeria: Paternoster, 2000), 222

lead him from any form of idolatry he may be practicing into truly putting God the creator first by worshipping him alone.

The worship of ancestors is inconsistent and contrary to the doctrine of the Church because it is a violation of the first and second commandment. Idolatry is explained in the second commandment.<sup>170</sup> God opposes every visible form of idolatry, and any kind of worship of anything apart from the triune God.

### **Christians Should Celebrate the Annual “*Samanpiid*” Harvest Festival without any Sacrifices**

One major way that Kusasis worship the ancestors is through the celebration of the annual post-harvest thanksgiving festival known as “*Samanpiid*.” Kusasis are mostly peasant farmers who plant corn, millet, soya beans and other crops annually. Farmers need good soil, rain and good weather to be able to produce a good harvest. Paul Hiebert describes it further in his book *Transforming Worldviews*.<sup>171</sup>

Ancestors are frequently supplicated at times of plowing, seed planting, and harvesting crops to assure their blessings. Special offerings are made when someone dreams of an ancestor, or there is illness or misfortune in the family because ancestors are angry and want to be fed, it is widely believed that ancestors can help the living and intercede on their behalf with the gods.

Thus, before the rains set in, every traditional Kusasi family head makes a sacrifice of chicken and goat to the ancestors to provide rain and good harvest of crops. The ancestors are also asked to protect the life of the people against scorpions, snakes, and any misfortune that will not allow the family to farm. When the crops are harvested in November, every family celebrates the *Samanpiid* festival. The *Samanpiid* is celebrated annually as a post-harvest thanksgiving

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<sup>170</sup> Exodus 20:4–6

<sup>171</sup> Paul G. Hiebert. *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of how People Change* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008), 109.

event meant to thank the Supreme Being and the ancestors for a successful farming season. This festival takes place toward the end of December and every traditional family celebrates it by making a series of sacrifices to the ancestors for all the blessings they received.

The celebration of the *Samanpiid* festival is a tradition that is strongly rooted and its abolition is not possible. Since Christians live with the non-Christians and since not every aspect *Samanpiid* is connected with ancestor worship, Christians can take part in the celebration without making any sacrifice to the ancestors. In place of the sacrifice, prayer and possibly family Christian worship should be performed because it was the triune God who, out of grace, provided the land, rain, good weather, and protection before, during, and after harvesting of crops. We must “worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity.”<sup>172</sup> What this statement means according to the Athanasian Creed is that we worship one God in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Indeed, a true and God pleasing worship is the response of faith to God’s mercy in Christ Jesus for all the blessings received freely without cost. Christians have direct access to God through Christ and as such there is no need to rely on another person or a god.

### **What is Witchcraft?**

Almost all African societies believe in witchcraft. Witchcraft means supernatural power that is given to witches and wizards which they apply consciously or unconsciously to harm others. Evans-Pitchard, in his study of witchcraft among the Azande people of Sudan, came to the conclusion that “Among the Azande people, witchcraft is involved in every activity, including agriculture, fishing, hunting, domestic life, and living in community.”<sup>173</sup> Witchcraft is

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<sup>172</sup> *Lutheran Service Book: Prepared by The Commission on Worship of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2006), 319.

<sup>173</sup> Hiebert, Paul G, Shaw, Daniel R. and Tienou, Tite, *Understanding Folk Religion* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999), 148.

the traditional way of explaining the ultimate cause of any evil misfortune or death. Daniel A. Offiong in his book *Witchcraft, Sorcery, Magic and Social Order among the Ibibio of Nigeria* describes what the witches and wizards do.

Barren women, people whose children die at birth, women with irregular menstrual flow, accident victims, traders who suffer losses, office workers who fail to get promotions, a political candidate who fails to get elected, a student who fails examinations, a person who notices scratches on his or her body, a hunter or fisherman who fails to bring home meat, a farmer with bad crop yields, a football team that consistently loses matches – all suspect witches as the cause of their misfortune. Even those who are most successful in their businesses or professions constantly fear being bewitched by envious relatives or friends.<sup>174</sup>

A Kusasi traditional religion practitioner said emphatically that Kusasis belief in supernatural phenomena, and witchcraft is not a perception or sheer imagination, but a reality. This belief is so because Kusasis, like other Africans, live in a world that is controlled and manipulated by spiritual forces and powers.

### **Significance of Witchcraft**

The significance of witchcraft belief lies in the fact that it is seen as a reality among majority of all classes of Africans including the well educated elite. The reality of witchcraft among Kusasis is evidenced in the belief that the witches are responsible for all kinds of misfortunes: barrenness, sudden death, road accidents, failure in life, etc. It has been said often that when twenty passengers are in a bus and an accident occurs but only one person dies, it is surely the work of witches. A pastor of a different church was convinced that his son was “killed” by witches. His son was driving a car and suddenly a tree fell on the car and killed the young man. A grandfather who had contracted smallpox was denied medication until he

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<sup>174</sup> Samuel Waje Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics* (Grand Rapids: MI: Hippo, 2008), 377.



confessed that he had killed somebody through witchcraft several years back.<sup>175</sup> During the research work, one of the men told a story about how a witch “caught” somebody (see Appendix). “Self-confessed witches in Ghana have disclosed that witches and wizards regularly organize nocturnal orgies at which discussions are held and decisions taken.”<sup>176</sup>

### **How to Deal with Witchcraft Issues**

Witchcraft like idol worship and ancestor worship has been a serious problem facing the church. There has often been widespread belief in the power of witchcraft and the fear of being bewitched. Pastors and church leaders need to show believers that the power of God is greater than any other power they face, and that the believer can be delivered from whatever curses people place on them.

The Word of God has a lot to say about God’s power.

God *El Shaddai*, that is, God Almighty (Gen. 17:1), who created and sustains all things by his power (Gen. 1), who defeated Satan and his hosts (John 16:33), and who will bring all things into subjection to himself (Eph. 1:22). Moreover, by his might he saves those who turn to him and gives them power to become like him and bear witness to his greatness.<sup>177</sup>

If we put our trust in someone or something which does not come from God but Satan, then we are doubting the power of God for Christians. God knows our needs and he has plans for every believer. Christians do not need to fear witchcraft or curses, no matter how strongly they are applied. Jesus Christ, who lives in the heart of a Christian, is infinitely more powerful than the world. Indeed witches are terrified in the presence of Jesus. Kusasi adult males must be told that witchcraft and other spiritual forces or powers exist. To deny its reality only drives the non-believer from listening to the gospel. The good news is to tell them that the power of God in

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<sup>175</sup> Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*, 378.

<sup>176</sup> Chris Abotchie, 9.

<sup>177</sup> Hiebert, Shaw and Tienou, *Understanding Folk Religion*. 374.

Christ is far greater and more powerful than those powers. Christians can live above the fear of witches because Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, lives within them, and Christ is infinitely more powerful than witches and all evil spirits (1 John 4:4). Jesus has given authority and power to his followers to overcome all the power of Satan (Luke 10:17). To seek power apart from God's is idolatry. Witchcraft is Satan's work but he has no power before God.

## **Polygamy**

There had been some faithful married men of the Kusasi Lutheran Churches who left the church because of their desire of marrying a second wife. These men argued that if God did not approve of polygamy why did the Bible mention many polygamists and there is no explicit condemnation of most of them? They contend that since God allowed the Old Testament people to marry more than one wife, it was equally appropriate if Kusasis became polygamists. For Kusasi people, "Polygamy is a culturally determined, socially accepted, and legally recognized form of permanent marriage in which a husband may have more than one wife at the same time."<sup>178</sup> Even there are cultures that allow a woman to have several husbands simultaneously. "In fact, most societies throughout the world, past and present, have preferred polygamy to monogamy"<sup>179</sup> as it is believed that "polygamy may be as old as Africa."<sup>180</sup>

## **Reasons for polygamy**

There are many "good" reasons why Kusasi men want to marry more than one wife. Having several wives has been a symbol of power, wealth, and influence in the Kusasi traditional

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<sup>178</sup> Eugene, Hillman, *Polygamy Reconsidered: African Plural Marriage and the Christian Churches* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1975), 11.

<sup>179</sup> Richard T. Schaefer. *Sociology: A Brief Introduction* (NY: McGraw Hill Company, 2000), 290.

<sup>180</sup> Richard T. Schaefer. *Sociology: A Brief Introduction* (NY: McGraw Hill Company, 2000), 291.

society. When a man marries many wives his immediate intention is to have many children. The desire to have many children who will perpetuate the ancestral worship provides one of the obvious incentives for a man to marry many wives.

One of the contributing factors to polygamy among Kusasis is found rooted in the economic condition of the people whose chief occupation and source of income is agriculture. Hiring laborers is not generally practiced, and female labor is essential for planting and weeding the farm. The more children these women produce, the better it is for the father and husband.

A first wife may suggest the taking of a second wife by her husband to provide for the husband's sexual needs during periods of cultural abstinence (which can be from the beginning of pregnancy for a period of up to two or even three years after a child is born). A first wife may also encourage her husband to take a second wife if she realizes that she is unable to bear children, just as Rachel encouraged Jacob to take her servant girl, Bilhah, as a second wife in order to have a child (Gen. 30:3). Also when Abraham saw that his wife, Sarah, was barren, he decided to listen to Sarah's suggestion and to have a son by his Egyptian maidservant Hagar.

### **Kusasis Practice Levirate Marriage**

Levirate marriage was a custom whereby a dead man's brother or next closest relative was obliged to marry the widow and raise up children for the deceased brother. Levirate marriage's general purpose was to prevent the dead man's name from dying out. So if a man has a wife and his brother dies, he had to marry the widow thus making the marriage polygamous.

The first levirate marriage recorded in the Bible was when Judah's son Er had died, and his brother, Onan, was expected to keep Er's widow, Tamar. The formal statement of the levirate law is found in Deuteronomy 25. The second case of levirate marriage involved Ruth and Boaz (Ruth 3).

A Lutheran pastor was dismissed from his office because he married the widow of his late brother. My younger brother died leaving behind a wife and four little children. The extended family decided that I should marry this widow but they knew that I would not. I did not marry her but I took care of her and the children just as I did to my own children. The woman has stayed a widow until now. Levirate marriage should not be practiced by Christians. However, the man who is responsible for the widow has to provide the needed care and attention. At best, the widow should be encouraged to marry someone who has no wife.

### **Is Polygamy a Sinful Practice?**

The Bible is clear on the point that polygamy is not the will of God. Although polygamy is not presented in the Bible as a “great sin,” it is certainly not approved by God in any way. The bad effects of polygamy continue from one generation to another in spite of the arguments given in favor of polygamy. Polygamy denies a woman the emotional fulfillment God intended her to have by enjoying the undivided love and attention of her husband.

The Bible records jealousy and hatred among wives in a polygamous families. A man who has two wives will favor one over the other in many cases. For example Jacob favored Rachel over Leah. In the story of Elkanah and his two wives in 1 Samuel, Hannah and Peninnah, there was conflict between the two women. Because Hannah was barren, her rival, Peninnah “kept provoking her in order to irritate her.”<sup>181</sup> Elkanah had to relieve the emotional distress of Hannah by providing her with generous additional portions of food.

### **Polygamy in Islam**

Islam is one of the monotheistic religions. The question people ask is why does Islam allow

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<sup>181</sup> 1 Sam. 1:5.

a man to marry four wives? The practice of polygamy in Islam is a permission given in the Qu’ran with clearly worded moral restrictions. It is not encouraged or recommended as the norm for society but as valid marriage for special circumstances. The verse on which the permission for polygamy is built is found in *Sura 4:3*, which reads, “If you fear that you will not act justly towards the orphans, marry such women as seem good to you, two, three, four; but if you fear you will not be equitable (in treating more than one wife), then only one.”

Thus the context of this permission is found in providing a fatherly figure for the protection of orphans, as Mohammed himself did in later life, and not as a general license for lust or polygamy. More important, it is clear that Mohammed recognized the fundamental inability of men to treat multiple wives with equality, hence the warning to take only one wife if that is to be a problem. The Qu’ran later states, “You cannot be equitable in a polygamous relationship, no matter how hard you try” (*Sura 4:129*). Kwame Bediako attributes the attraction and growth of Islam in Ghana to the fact that Islam does not insist on a sudden break with the African past regarding some social practices such as polygamy.<sup>182</sup> Thus the general teaching of Islam, especially in the writings of contemporary Muslim theologians, presents an emphasis on the wisdom and value of monogamy in contrast to polygamy. Thus, Islam, in short, also speaks in favor of monogamous marriages.

### **Biblical Perspective on Polygamy**

The Bible records approximately forty polygamists. The first polygamist mentioned in the Bible is Lamech (Gen. 4:19–25), who married two wives. Lamech has been accused of lust for taking a second wife. If a person loves his wife, he will not consider taking another wife.

Abraham took another wife for a reason similar to those of the traditional Kusasi people. Since

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<sup>182</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 33.

Sarah was Abraham's half-sister, the daughter of his father, it is probable that Terah had concubines or multiple wives. Abraham took Sarah's maidservant, Hagar, and she gave birth to Ishmael. King David was also a polygamist just as his son Solomon who had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines.

The recording of instances of polygamy in the Bible is not an endorsement of it by God. The Bible records both good and bad actions of people, even of people considered to be righteous. The fact that David and Solomon had several wives and that it is in the Bible doesn't automatically imply that God was pleased by them having many wives. In the Old Testament, many of the men of earliest times were monogamists in spite of living in polygamous cultures. Such men as Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth, Isaac, Joseph, Manoah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel were monogamists.

In the New Testament times, monogamy was the accepted pattern among God's people. In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he spoke about the need for each man to have his own wife (not wives) to prevent immorality (1 Cor. 7:20). Monogamy was and is God's will and God's perfect plan of marriage. It is important for the church to teach her members that monogamy is God's perfect plan. The church should teach the biblical principle of loving, monogamous Christian marriage and family life.

As Christians we would not copy the bad examples of men in the Bible who married many wives and brought problems to themselves and to God. The desire for status, for example, is simply a cultural justification for pride, a sin which God hates (Prov. 16:5; 21:4). The same reason can be said for the continuation of a person's family name in future generations. Traditional beliefs about ancestors do not turn people to faith in Christ but rather turns them away from Christ. But the Word of God is what turns them to Christ and if they avoid the Word

because of a desire for two or more wives, then they are cutting themselves from Christ.

Having a large family which Kusasi polygamists look for can be a blessing from God.<sup>183</sup> There are certain earthly advantages and blessings in having a large family, so long as the parents are able to provide well for the children they bear. If the parents are not able to provide properly for the children they bear, having many children is irresponsible behavior which is a disgrace to the Lord according to the Bible (1 Tim. 5:8). The Bible teaches the eternal family of God is not based on membership in an earthly family. The eternal family of God is made up of those who have their faith in Jesus Christ (John 1:12–13).

Men should rather emulate those who married only one wife. Paul's admonition to the early Christians is also valid to Kusasi Christian men.

When God instituted marriage at creation, he intended that it be the lifelong union of one man and one woman. "By its very nature the one flesh union of husband and wife will not permit the intrusion of a third party; therefore, what God has joined together let no man put asunder by bringing in another party."<sup>184</sup> In marriage, Christians have a "divine joining together" which requires obedience to God and his will that the union remains lifelong "for better and for worse", "and until death do us part." One man one woman is the ideal way of marriage that is pleasing to God.

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<sup>183</sup> Psalm 127:3–5.

<sup>184</sup> *A Report of the CTCR, Divorce and Remarriage: An Exegetical study* (1987), 37.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

More than half of the population of the Kusasi area of Ghana are non-Christians. It is the desire of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana to reach them with the gospel. Historically, it has been difficult to bring more men into the church, and the few men in the church do not actively participate in the church's activities. The situation has not changed during the fifteen years that I have served as pastor of the Kusasi area.

I decided to pursue the Master of Divinity program at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, USA to learn to become a better pastor. After the M.Div. training, I realized that I needed to pursue the Doctor of Ministry (D.Min) program so that I would better be "re-tooled" not only for leadership, but also expand my pastoral ability and skills to be able to reach Kusasi adult males with the gospel. The readings, classes and seminars that I took in the Missional Leadership route courses, and the various interviews I carried out helped me in the research and writing of my Major Applied Project (MAP) on the topic of Formulating an Effective Means of Reaching Adult Males with the gospel.

Researching and writing the MAP has been challenging but rewarding in the long run. Being a pastor serving twelve congregations, translating the Book of Concord into Kusaal, teaching adult literacy classes, carrying out evangelism and outreach programs, organizing regular leadership training classes for lay leaders, performing weekly radio broadcasting program, and also managing a family of ten have been part of the challenges that I encountered in the research and writing process. In addition to these, because English is not my first



language, I had to ask for an editor to guide and assist me in the formatting and editing of the writing. However, the reward is great. I believe the MAP will help me in the ministry of the proclamation of the gospel to African traditional religion believers and also help Christians to put their trust in God alone. I also believe that the MAP will be a blessing to any person who reads it such that he will be motivated and encouraged to reach adult males with the gospel.

This final Chapter, Chapter Six, will explore the contributions of this MAP to ministry, as well as its contributions to me personally and professionally. The chapter will also explore recommendations on what additional research should be carried out to further improve the ways to reach adult males and bring them to remain active participants in the church's programs and activities.

### **Contributions to Ministry**

The primary goad of this MAP is to contribute to the ministry of St. Luke Lutheran Church, Bugzunde. St. Luke Lutheran Church has a membership of two hundred forty-six. Out of this number, there are only fifteen adult males. Two years ago there were eighteen men and last year, 2015, the number reduced to sixteen. These men are neither regular in attending church services and programs nor play any active roles in the church. Noting these problems, the MAP has helped us to discover the main reasons why Kusasi men are not interested in becoming Christians or being active in the church. The findings of this project have given direction and focus for St. Luke Lutheran Church and its pastor in reaching out to the male un-churched.

The findings also showed that Kusasi traditional religion practitioners wrongly believe that the Supreme Being, God Almighty, has removed himself from the world and then elevated idols and ancestors to be in control of the world. Hence, human beings are expected to put their trust in these created idols. The word "idol" comes from the Greek word "*Eidolon*" and it means "a

thing of naught, something that does not exist.<sup>185</sup> The Old Testament rightly recognizes that idols are nothing but there is a demonic spiritual force or power represented by that image. It is this force or power which the idols have that has attracted people to worship them instead of God. According to Kusasi traditional religion practitioners, God is far away and is unable to support them in their lives and struggles, hence, their dependence on idols and spirits for power and protection. For the Christian who may worship ancestors or any divinity, Apostle John advises “Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” (1 John 5:21 ESV) The Apostle Paul also exhorts Christians “Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.” (1 Cor 10:14 ESV) This MAP will therefore help its reader to look up to God for all their needs because he alone is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent.

The findings from the interviews also showed that even some pastors and lay leaders consult soothsayers who direct them to make sacrifices when these people encounter problems in their lives. One major purpose of sacrifices is that by their performance, the people who make them have hope to obtain favor with the supernatural powers. Sacrifices are also believed to appease the spirits, to ward off evil spirits from attacking people, to forestall loss, suffering, and accidents.

A contribution of this MAP to ministry is that it has pointed out that Christians should not deny the existence of ancestors, witchcraft and other spiritual powers when they encounter non-Christians. Denying the existence of the ancestors or witchcraft, the Christian will immediately cut off the opportunities for communicating the gospel and seek to lead unbelievers from any form of idolatry they are practicing into truly putting God first. The Christian should use the “Bicycle and Motor Cycle” analogy which has been explained previously as introduction to

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<sup>185</sup> [www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/idolatry](http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/idolatry) (accessed February 8, 2016).

sharing the gospel with unbelievers.

This MAP also highlights the observation that in an encounter with non-Christians, a holistic approach in dealing with human needs is necessary. Thus, evangelism and social action should go side by side so as to address both the spiritual and physical needs of Kusasi men. The relationships between evangelism and social action are inseparable “like the two blades of scissors or the two wings of a bird or airplane.”<sup>186</sup> Thus, when the evangelism team goes to a community to evangelize and realizes that the people are facing a common problem like malaria or diarrhea, the team should investigate to find the cause and try to address it. For example, if there are a lot of malaria cases reported in the community, the team should contact the Ministry of Health officials for help. But in the long run, the community should be taught the importance of personal hygiene and good sanitation. With such support and help to the community, the church will be building good relationships with them. From there, opportunities will arrive for the provision of spiritual blessing that is the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

#### Contributions to St. Luke Lutheran Church, Bugzunde

The Women’s Fellowship of St. Luke Lutheran Church is actively involved in the Church’s programs. Learning from the women, the men have formed Men’s Fellowship that meets every Saturday for Bible studies in the men’s homes. One of the men who can read and write in English leads the class. They discuss issues concerning their daily lives. Learning from the women who learn about successful women like Sarah, Hannah, Mary, Esther, etc., the men study about men who trusted God like Abraham who trusted God and was willing to kill his son, Isaac when God asked him to do so. Another man of faith in God was Joshua who said

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<sup>186</sup> Wright, *The Mission of God*. 316.

Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord. (Jos 24:14–15 NIV)

The Men Fellowship will embark on spiritual retreat twice a year. Learning from Jesus, they now know that retreats are important in their lives. Before our Lord's important work of selecting his twelve apostles, he went out to a mountainside to pray (Luke 6:12; Matt 14:23). "Regular, intimate, importune prayer to God is the best way of obtaining strength, above all before an important step in life."<sup>187</sup> The importance of the men getting away for a period of time to spend time with God is very rewarding. The men will have time to pray and study the Word of God. They will also learn about men in the Bible who worshiped God alone. The retreat will help strengthen and deepen the men's involvement in the faith life of the congregation.

The men in St. Luke Lutheran Church are interested in their Bible studies because they learn that the Christian's power and strength comes from God. It is from the study of God's Word that they get to know God better and his promises. The men have been encouraged to make the study of God's Word and devotion a daily exercise. Those who diligently study the Bible are being changed so that their lives reflect Christ-like character. The example of the Berean Christians is worthy of emulation by all Christians (Acts 17: 11f).

Teaching of the power of God over ancestors and witchcraft should be made during baptism and the celebration of the Lord's Supper. For example, during the baptism, the following should be included in the vows:

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<sup>187</sup> Paul E. Kretzmann. *Popular Commentary of the Bible: The New Testament, Vol I* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1921), 296.

Do you renounce the devil? Do you renounce witchcraft and any power it may have? Do you believe that witchcraft cannot “catch” you? Do you believe that the ancestors have no power to bless or harm you? Do you believe that the rivers, stones, trees, or even Agole and Agolpoak and Baakanga mountain have no power to bless or harm you? Do you believe that dwarfs have no power over you? Do you believe that “*silinsiis*” or ghosts have no power over you? Do you believe that Jesus power is far greater and more powerful than any other power in the world? Do you believe that Jesus loves you so much that he will not allow any spiritual power to do you any harm?

During the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, the pastor will include: This true body and blood of Jesus Christ will keep you strong every day so that the witches, ancestors, demons, dwarfs, ghosts, and any evil spirit will not have any power to harm you in any way.

### **Contributions to Personal and Professional Growth**

The MAP has given me a better understanding of why at this modern age of science and technology Kusasi people still worship their ancestors and idols and attribute any misfortune to witchcraft. I have understood that ancestors, gods, witchcraft, and other spiritual beings belong to the category where God is (the unseen). However, I had thought that the Kusasi traditional religion practitioner considered the Supreme Being to be higher than all other powers. During my research I understood what Paul Hiebert termed “the Excluded Middle.”<sup>188</sup> What Hiebert meant was that when considering the ultimate unseen powers that govern the universe, the ancestors, divinities, gods, and other spiritual powers are involved, not only God the Creator. However, since God the Creator has distanced himself from this world because of man’s fault, the powers are all in the hands of the ancestors, divinities and gods and no more in God.

From the MAP I am in a much better situation to tell unbelievers that God is present now and that happened when Jesus’ incarnation took place. Martin Luther in his explanation of the

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<sup>188</sup> Scott Moreau. *Contextualization in World Missions; Mapping and assessing Evangelical Models* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2012), 153.

second Article of the Apostles' Creed tells us who Jesus is and what every Christian should know and believe about Jesus:

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God and also true man is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with his holy, precious blood, with his innocent suffering and death, in order that I may be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as he is risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity.<sup>189</sup>

### **Comfort for Christians in times of suffering**

In my life experiences, two years after I had completed high school my father died and I had to take care of my mother and my younger siblings. Then a few years later I lost two brothers within a period of two months through illness. A third brother drowned when I was busily writing my final examinations in the University of Ghana. A faithful Christian woman in one of our churches has been ill for nearly five years and still has not been healed. There are some people who are so poor financially that sometimes they go to bed without a meal. There is no doubt that every Christian has faced similar challenges and losses. For the Kusasi Christian man, his most trying and challenging moment is when there is serious sickness in the home. For Christians, it is in the testing or suffering that happens to us that challenges our trust in God's presence and promises. It is in such situations that a Christian may ask God, "Where is the God I worship?" Psychologically faith becomes stronger through such trials or sufferings even when our trust seems to falter at first as we encounter them. This is evident in my own life and in the life of some of the faithful Christians I know.

When we are facing challenges in our lives it appears that God has been absent and allowed suffering to come to the Christian. **In some of these situations** God creates **or strengthens** faith through the suffering of his children and they remain faithful servants. The background for

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<sup>189</sup> *Luther's Small Catechism: With Explanation.* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1991), 16.

understanding this situation comes from Luther's distinction of God Hidden (Deus Absconditus) and God Revealed (Deus Revelatus). Deus Absconditus, according to Luther, is at work when God seems absent or even hostile to us. Deus Absconditus and Deus Revelatus are not two Gods or two versions of God that have contrary wills. They are the same one true God. That is why we do not experience everything as good but in all things God is governing our lives and moving us toward stronger trust in him.<sup>190</sup> **God works all things together in the end for the good of those who love him (Rom. 8:28).**

In Luther's lectures on Genesis he assured his students that God Hidden (Deus Absconditus) often seems to be doing the opposite of what God Revealed (Deus Revelatus) promises. In his lectures he retells the account of Joseph's wrathful treatment of his brothers in order to test their character, before making himself known to them as their brother. Luther views this story as analogous to God's dealing with faithful Christians. God afflicts the Godly and conceals the fact that he is our God and Father and rather conducts himself as one who tortures and destroys his children.<sup>191</sup> Luther again explains that God hides himself in suffering. In his own life he experienced great physical illness. Consequently, for the faithful Christian too, physical suffering which people might think it is the work of the ancestors or witchcraft could be experienced in our lives. Luther knew a lot about human suffering, but he never became fixated on suffering. His faith fixed his attention on God. When he lost two of his children, and when his beloved student Johann Agricola betrayed him, he coped with the pains he encountered.<sup>192</sup> Luther's God and our God is a suffering God who went to the cross to endure the worst suffering. Luther

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<sup>190</sup> Gerhard O. Forde, *On Being a Theologian of the Cross: Reflections on Luther's Heidelberg Disputation, 1518* (Grand rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 3.

<sup>191</sup> Luther, Martin. *Lectures on Genesis Chapter 45-50*. Luther's Works Vol 8. Edited by Jaroslav Pelikan, St. Louis, MO, Concordia, 1966.

<sup>192</sup> *Lutheran Quarterly* 16-4, Kolb 2/12/03 15:25 page 445.

believes that the highest stage of faith is reached when one perseveres through physical suffering. In such situations, God's hiddenness moves the believer to follow God without evidence of God's goodness. The believer must stand firm on the truths and promises God has given us in his Word. As Abraham held to the promise of descendants in spite of his age so the believer must hold to the promise of God's goodness in the Word when faced by circumstances of sickness, poverty, or suffering of any kind. The believer should take comfort in the fact that his suffering is God's purposeful intention, that his faith might be strengthened beyond any other means.

Luther made a point that not all suffering is a result of sin. For example, in an address to women who have had a miscarriage, he explains that the grieving woman should not think that God is angry with her or someone else involved in the situation. Rather, she should see this trial as a test to develop her patience and trust in God.<sup>193</sup> Gerhard Forde advises that, faithful Christians can claim that their suffering is good and that this suffering is the only way to know and trust God.<sup>194</sup> All suffering though alien to God's character can be used by God to transform the believer. Christians should not be surprised when they experience suffering<sup>195</sup> but should consider it all joy<sup>196</sup>. Richard C. Eyer writes: "If a person holds to a tragic view of life that pursues happiness now at any cost, a view that devalues the sufferings of this life, he will inevitably hold to a theology of glory"<sup>197</sup>.

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<sup>193</sup> Martin Luther, "Comfort for women who have had a miscarriage, Luther's Works, 43, Devotional Writing II ed. Gustav K. Wiencke (Philadelphia, Fortress, 1969).

<sup>194</sup> Gerhard O. Forde, *On Being a Theologian of the Cross: Reflections on Luther's Heidelberg Disputation, 1518* (Grand rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 84.

<sup>195</sup> 1 Peter 4:12-13.

<sup>196</sup> Jas 1:2-4.

<sup>197</sup> Richard C. Eyer, *Pastoral Care Under the Cross: God in the Midst of Suffering* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1994), 28.



The theologian of the cross knows that God reveals himself in weakness and helps mankind in the same weakness. Christ, who is true God, set aside his power and might to become man in order to win salvation for man.

On the cross he was in conflict with Satan the liar and murderer (John 8:44) but Christ was victorious. If Christ our master and Lord was attacked by Satan, how can we his servants be exempted from such attacks by Satan? But by Christ's victory over Satan we gain assurance in our suffering that Satan recognizes us as his enemy, as people on God's side, and that is the right side the faithful Christian is even in times of suffering. On the cross where God's absence was most profound, God's mercy and grace was most present.

As we speak to people who are suffering in sickness we can tell them God's grace is most present and that he may grant them healing as a foretaste of what is to come when Christ comes the second time. We can also tell the person who has no hope of physical or mental healing that God has not abandoned them, but in the life to come they will be restored completely and no longer suffer. St. John tells us in Revelation: "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away" (Rev. 21:4).

Pastors may bring Holy Communion to those who are suffering, especially the sick, and remind them of their baptism and its promises of forgiveness of sin, life and salvation. It is while in suffering that people need to be surrounded by fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. This is one of the regular means by which God brings earthly comfort to those who are suffering. Prayer and Scripture reading should accompany any visit to a suffering person because God has promised to be with us to the end of the age (Matt 28:20).

The Apostle Paul declares that we rejoice in our suffering, knowing that suffering produces patient endurance, and patient endurance character, and character hope that doesn't disappoint (Rom 5:3-5). Our present sufferings do not compare with the glory that will be revealed in us (Rom 8:18-25). Being confident that if it is God's will to save us through suffering, the faithful in Christ bear patiently with suffering and death, enduring and even embracing them, because Christ by his suffering and death has embraced us. "To live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil 1:21).

The impact of this MAP has already been noticed. At the Lutheran Church 2015 Christmas convention held at St. Mark's Lutheran Church at Zawse Sakpanatenga, one of the twelve churches in the Kusasi area, a discussion about ancestors was led by the researcher during a Bible studies session. I was a bit surprised to observe that more than half the members still believed that the ancestors have power over Christians. This gave me the opportunity to explain the person and work of Jesus Christ on our behalf. I went on to encourage them to take Bible studies serious.

For more than ten years, I have been training lay leaders who do not know how to read English. These men are responsible for leading worship services and Bible classes. The MAP will help me to be able to teach these men the power of God over ancestors and divinities and any spiritual power in the world. I will also use my MAP to teach them not to fear witchcraft. The people believe that ancestors often bring sickness. They also believe that witches are after the lives of others, either out of revenge or jealousy.<sup>198</sup> The knowledge about the power of God over all these forces will be shared to other church members by these lay leaders.

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<sup>198</sup> Karl Grebe and Wilfred Fon. *African Traditional Religion and Christian Counseling* (Oasis, 1997), 20.

With the translation principles and skills that I acquired from Wycliffe Bible Translators, I have been translating Lutheran books into Kusaal language. With that skill, I will translate relevant portions of my MAP and make them available to the churches that I serve.

I will meet with the coordinator of Evangelism and Outreach program in order to share my MAP with him and organize a workshop for all the evangelism/outreach teams to share my MAP with them also. I will encourage them not to condemn ancestor worship and other traditional beliefs outright but rather use “Bicycle and Motor Bike” analogy as introduction in their evangelism work. As explained earlier, the Bicycle represents the idols and ancestors which the people believe have helped them. But now we introduce a Motor bike which is compared to Jesus who is by far better than the idols and ancestors.

### **Contributions to Church in general**

Although this MAP was written with St. Luke Lutheran Church as the focus, I believe Chapter Five of this MAP would be useful for all pastors and congregations in Northern Ghana. The Bimobas, Konkombas, Dagombas, Frafras, and Mamprusis are tribes that share similar tradition and culture with the Kusasis. They also belong to the same language group, Moole-Dagbani, as the Kusasis and have similar annual festivals like the Kusasi *Samanpiid*.

All African traditional religion practitioners believe that God has given power to the divinities to bless and to cause harm on human beings depending on the circumstances. This MAP will therefore help African Christians to be able to tell people who are not Christians that the Supreme Being is always with us, and that even though the divinities may have some powers from Satan, they cannot do anything against the Christian who has been baptized in Jesus’ name (Matt 28:19–20).

It is also my hope that any church where the members have come out of African traditional religion can contact me as a resource person on how to reach men and bring them to the church so that they will remain and be active participants in the church's programs.

### **Recommendations**

Church drama groups should be encouraged to present dramas showing the power of God over other spirits or gods. For example, the story of Elijah's encounter on Mount Carmel with the prophets of Baal (1 Kg 18:15ff) and the story of the Ark of the Covenant and the Philistine god Dagon (1 Samuel 5) could be performed. The healing miracles of Jesus could also be performed.

Currently, the Lutheran Church has a thirty minute slot on the local FM radio station, Source FM in Bawku. The radio program committee should be encouraged to make use of the MAP so that the radio station can be a more effective evangelism tool to proclaim the power of God over all other forces.

This MAP will also assist Lutheran congregations when a series of Bible studies are written on the following topics: Witchcraft, Ancestors, Divinities, and Polygamy etc. Equally important will be sermon outlines on the same topics. Once these are written they may be used during pre-baptism classes as well.

As I work with other church leaders to understand and analyze my MAP, I discovered that some beliefs and practices need to be modified to be acceptable for Christians. For example, it is very appropriate for Christian boys to be initiated and become men, but the prayers offered during the traditional initiation ceremonies need to be directed to God, not to other divinities and gods. Male initiation as well as female puberty rites should be examined to make them fit the teachings of the Bible.

## Conclusion

Researching and writing this MAP has been challenging but rewarding, similar to a woman in labor, and then delivers her baby. I have personally learned a lot from works of many scholars and the various people I interviewed and also had informal conversations with. Honestly, I had not known that even pastors still believe and fear witchcraft, ancestors, and other deities. I have received reports of pastors consulting soothsayers and making various sacrifices either on their own behalf or for members of their families. If pastors are still in this situation, how would a non-Christian feel about the ancestors and other spiritual powers? The solution, I suggest would be effective teaching of the power of God in Jesus Christ over every created spirit or being.

Therefore, the lordship of Christ is to be effectively and regularly taught in the Bible class, conventions, funerals, church council meetings, Women and Men Fellowship meetings as well youth gatherings. Teaching about the power of God should be part and parcel of all evangelism and church outreach programs. The Christian's message should not deal with only about going to heaven when we die but it should also answer the questions of traditional Kusasi traditional people, which include: good health, ability to ward off evil spirits by the power of the Holy Spirit, prosperity, peace of mind, human and animal fertility, mutual relationship, and success in one's occupation.<sup>199</sup> The answers to the needs of Kusasi men must be based on a biblical worldview and not on the African traditional worldview.

This MAP, I believe, will benefit St. Luke Lutheran Church, Bugzunde, all the Lutheran Churches in the Kusasi area, and all the Lutheran Churches in northern Ghana. I rejoice and praise God for the many heads and brains that supported me in this project without whom I would have abandoned the MAP writing.

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<sup>199</sup> Cephas N. Omenyo. *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 2002:30



**APPENDIX ONE**

**INVITATION LETTER**

Dear.....

My name is Pastor Nicholas Salifu, and I come from Ziako-Zawse in the Binduri District of the Upper East Region of Ghana. Currently, I am a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min) student at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, United States of America. My dissertation topic is on how to motivate men in the Lutheran Church of Ghana to actively participate in the life of the church. I also hope to find ways of bringing more adult males into the church.

I am in the process of identifying individuals who would be willing to be interviewed for the research and I have considered you to be a useful person for the interview. Should you agree to be interviewed, you are free to stop the interview at any time. You are also free to answer the questions in any way or not at all. To ensure that I have every important thing discussed during the interview noted, this interview will be recorded on a tape recorder or another recording device. The information you give in this interview will be used by Pastor Nicholas salifu to help write his Doctor of Ministry dissertation which may be published in a book. Your name will not be revealed in any public document.

Do you agree with this plan of the interview and Pastor Nicholas Salifu's use of the interview information? Please, if you are willing to be interviewed, sign your name below.

Consent: I, ..... am willing to be interviewed by Pastor Nicholas Salifu based on the terms mentioned above.

Signature..... Date:.....



## APPENDIX TWO

### QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW

- a. Please give a short personal history of yourself
- b. What religion did you belong to before becoming a Christian?
- c. How was your life as a non-Christian?
- d. How are felt needs of Muslim men or non-Christians men met?
- e. What is the biggest problem that Kusasi men feel?
- f. What makes your previous religion appealing to its adherents?
- g. Why did you leave that religion to become a Christian?
- h. What did you know about Jesus before you became a Christian?
- i. What relationships did you develop with church members prior to coming to the church?
- j. How did you become a Christian?
- k. What makes the church attractive enough to you as compared to your previous religion?
- l. In your view, what are some obstacles to adult male church membership in the Kusasi culture?
- m. How does your faith in Christ impact the way you live as husband and father?
- n. How are your felt needs met as a Christian?
- o. I have observed many non-Christians wearing rings on their fingers. What do you know about these rings?
- p. Why should a Christian not wear such rings?

- q. Before becoming a Christian what did you do if something went wrong in your life?
- r. Now that you are a Christian what will you do if something goes wrong in your life?
- s. What programs and activities in the church are most appealing to you?
- t. How have you been involved in evangelism?
- u. What are the most frequent questions people ask you during evangelism?
- v. How effective has your response been?
- w. I have observed that on Fridays, mosques are full of both young and older men. What do you consider to be the motivating factor for this?
- x. Is there anything we can learn from the Muslims to bring more adult males into the church?
- y. Would you suggest other ways that you think would motivate men to stay in the church?
- z. Please, do you have any questions or anything you want to add to what you have said?

## **APPENDIX THREE**

### **INTERVIEW RESPONSES**

All ten men I sent invitation letters to for the interview responded affirmatively. I called each of them on my cell phone (they all have cell phones) to express my gratitude for their acceptance. I once again made it clear to them both the rationale and purpose for the interview, and that they were free to answer a question or simply say, "I cannot answer this question." Next, I scheduled an interview for each of them and asked them to respond by accepting the date and time or propose another time (outside the days scheduled for other men). They all agreed to the day and time except one person who requested his time to be changed from 9:00 am to 11:00 am to 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

We spent about ten minutes exchanging greetings and talking about our crops (corn and soya beans) which have been planted. Before each of them arrived at my house (the agreed place for the interview), there was "water" (locally brewed beer) ready for them as tradition demanded. Two of them who do not drink alcohol were served soft drinks.

Before I introduced what was required and repeated the essence of the interview, I prayed and after the introduction I asked the interviewee to also pray. I once again read the invitation letter to him. I stressed the need to be honest and say what he felt was the truth. This was necessary because quite often people who are interviewed are inclined to say what the interviewer is itching to hear.

## **Mba Abu**

**I:** I thank you very much for leaving your work behind and coming to help me to do a very important job for the church.

**Mba:** Yauu!, pastor. (You are welcome! pastor)

**I:** You have come to assist me to write a very important document which will help me and every pastor, including you, to be able to serve the church in ways that will be pleasing to God. When you observe our churches (Lutheran) you notice that there are very few men. As you know in our homes and communities males play unique roles such that if men are not around then many things go wrong. In the same way if there are very few men in our churches then it means certain things which men are expected to do will be left undone. I know that you are one of the few men in our church who is quite active and so I am going to hear from you so that in the end I would be able to write a document that will help me as your pastor to reach more men and have them participate actively like you are doing.

**I:** My first question is, please give a short personal history of yourself.

**Mba:** You know my name is Mba Abu, I come from Badu. I am about 55 years old. My parents and I were all idol worshipers until I became a Christian about 20 years ago.

**I:** What religion did you belong to before becoming a Christian?

**Mba:** As I said, my parents and I were all idol worshipers but I became a Christian about 20 years ago.

**I:** How was your life as a non-Christian?

**Mba:** My father always made sacrifices of chicken and sometimes of goats. Whenever someone in the family was ill, my father consulted soothsayers and in every case he had to make a sacrifice or promise to offer a sacrifice when the sickness was gone.

**I:** How are felt needs of Muslim men or non-Christian men met? (Let me explain what is meant by felt needs).

**Mba:** The most important need for most people in the Kusasi area is food. Even now that we are expecting rain, people are worried that there will be poor harvest. Also people want protection against evil spirits, and witchcraft.

**I:** You have mentioned witchcraft. Let us move on, but later on in our discussion I will ask more questions on witchcraft. The question that follows is what is the biggest problem that Kusasi men feel?

**Mba:** Pastor, I think the greatest problem is sickness and following sickness is poverty.

**I:** What causes sickness and poverty?

**Mba:** Again, pastor, this is what the traditional religion person thinks. Most sickness and in fact serious ones are caused by the gods who were given what they demanded from the people. Also serious sickness could come due to one person's sin in the family. For example, if a woman committed adultery and kept it secret, the gods who are unseen and know everything people do, will begin to bring sickness to the family. In most cases, the sickness does not come to the woman who committed adultery but her rival's children. The gods can bring malaria, diarrhea, headache, ulcer, cancer, diabetes, AIDS etc. Even though people now believe the hospitals have medicines for all these sicknesses, unless the gods are appeased the sickness will never be cured with only hospital medicine.

**I:** What about poverty? What is the cause?

**Mba:** The same thing! The gods bring drought and sometimes flooding so that people will not have good harvest. Since most people are farmers when there is crop failure which happens all

the time, then poverty comes eventually. That is the more reason why the people make “samanpiid” to ask for the blessings of the gods in the coming years.

**I:** What makes your previous religion appealing to its adherents?

**Mba:** Idol worshipping has been passed on from generation to generation. It is the tradition of the people and as it is said, “tradition dies hard.” You see during the annual “*samanpiid*<sup>200</sup>” festival all the extended family members gather and as they eat and drink, they receive the blessings of the ancestors and “*Wina’am*” (God). The ancestors are watching us and will bless us in the coming years if only they do what the ancestors want. Pastor, you know I do not believe this now, but that is what idol worshippers believe.

**I:** Why did you leave traditional religion to become a Christian?

**Mba:** I thank God for Awini Azu who told me the good news about Jesus. (Azu was one of the first members of the Lutheran Church in this area). When I realized how my father was using all the chickens and goats he had for sacrifices to the idols and gods, the good news that Christians do not have to make any sacrifices was appealing to me. I still remember one message Azu told me which I never forget. Jesus said, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” This was a most comforting statement I heard and I thought of joining the Lutheran Church to learn and know more about God and Jesus.

**I:** Mba, where is Azu now? I know the answer but I still want you to tell me.

**Mba:** Hmmm! Pastor, Azu has stopped being a Christian and is now worshipping idols like our fathers. Azu comes to church maybe once in two years.

**I:** Why did he leave Christianity?

**Mba:** He left because he was afraid his dead father would kill him if he refused to “give him drink” (libation and sacrifice).

**I:** So you think Azu was ambivalent?

**Mba:** Pastor that is what many Christians are. They are here and there (Christians and idol worshippers). When their needs are not met in Christianity, they turn to idol worshipping. Sometimes it helps and many times nothing happens.

**I:** What did you know about Jesus before you became a Christian?

**Mba:** Very very little.

**I:** Tell me the little that you knew about Jesus before you became a Christian.

**Mba:** Some Christians call him Yesu, others call him Isa Messia and others call him Jesus. Christmas is an important day for Christians because that was the day Jesus was born. Easter too was another important day for Christians. Christianity was a religion of the white man because they do not make sacrifices and also they do not marry more than one wife.

**I:** What relationships did you develop with church members prior to coming to the church?

**Mba:** Not really! Although Christians were not as discriminative as Muslims, they did not associate themselves much with non-Christians.

**I:** How did you become a Christian?

**Mba:** Azu had often told me to come to church but I was reluctant until one Sunday morning he came to my house and I went with him to the Baduk Church. That was the beginning, my first time of entering a church.

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<sup>200</sup> Samanpiid is an annual harvest festival. As soon as the millet or sorghum is harvested, a portion is set aside and later on used to prepare local beer known as “pito.” The festival takes place in December and it is aimed at thanking the idols and ancestors for the crops, and the protection received. Then they asked for blessings in the coming years.

**I:** How did you feel when you were in the church?

**Mba:** It was a real experience for me. They first sang a song then they told God the wrong things they had done (The Ten Commandments) and the pastor said something like this, “God has told me to forgive all your wrong things and now you are a child of God.” Then they sang some songs and the pastor read the Bible and explained it (sermon). Then a plate was passed around and people put in coins but I did not go with any money. What I liked most was the prayers. Two people and the pastor prayed for rain, for healing of the sick, for those who have travelled, for children, for our country, the chiefs and especially for me.

**I:** What makes the church attractive enough to you as compared to your previous religion?

**Mba:** I am free from making sacrifices. When I pray God answers my prayers. I also realize how in the church we support one another. Especially when someone is in need (financially or other needs).

**I:** In your view, what are some obstacles to male adult church membership in the Kusasi culture?

**Mba:** I think male adults don't want to become Christians because they think they are not secured enough in Christianity. Also because Christianity when one becomes a Christian he will not be allowed to marry a second wife even though he finds a lot of faults with his wife.

**I:** How does your faith in Christ impact the way you live with your family members?

**Mba:** In our house where I am the head of the household, and even in our entire community, when people have a problem they approach me for help. For example, when someone is sick they call me to pray for him. The church has given me a three wheeler motor cycle and this is being used to transport sick people to the hospital. Some couples have come to me for counseling. For my family, every evening we gather to have devotion where I read the Bible, make some explanation and we pray. I give the chance to everyone to bring a request and we all pray for one another.

**I:** How are your felt needs met as a Christian?

**Mba:** Because of Jesus I do not fear witchcraft or evil spirits. Jesus has given the assurance that he will be with me always and that he cares for me. In times of sickness, people like you visit me and give me the assurance of God's protection. And indeed God does heal.

**I:** I have observed many non-Christians wearing rings on their fingers. What do you know about these rings?

**Mba:** There are many types of rings, some curved, some of various colors. Rings are basically for protection. For example there is one type of ring called “*bang-nwenling*” (twisting ring). People who wear this type of ring believe they can vanish when a serious problem is at hand, such as lorry accident. There is another ring that protects the wearer from cutlass wound or gun shot. Several women also go in for rings that give “good luck” in their trading business or for their husbands to love them etc. It would surprise you to know that these days women rush to soothsayers, fortune tellers, diviners and Muslim spiritual leaders to pay money and get these rings.

**I:** Why do you think a Christian should not wear such rings?

**Mba:** When I was an idol worshipper, my father gave me a ring. But I threw it away when I was baptized. Christians are protected by the blood of Jesus. When I was baptized, I still remember the questions you asked me. “Do you reject the idols and gods? Do you believe that rings or amulets can do nothing for the Christians?”

**I:** Before becoming a Christian what did you do if something went wrong in your life?

**Mba:** When I was young my father went to consult the soothsayer to find out the cause of the problem. But when I became an adult, a young man, I consulted the soothsayer myself.

**I:** Now that you are a Christian what will you do if something goes wrong in your life?

**Mba:** I will entrust everything into the Lord's hands. I will pray about it. In Church I will put in a prayer request. The Bible says, "Pray at all times; Call upon me in the day you have problem and I will answer you and you will glorify my name. If it is a problem of sickness I will pray and go to the hospital because I know God has given the doctors the knowledge and ability to treat sicknesses.

**I:** What programs and activities in the church are most appealing to you?

**Mba:** Pastor, explain this question.

**I:** I mean, in the church so many things are done, such as Sunday worship, Bible studies on Wednesdays, and prayer meeting on Friday, Evangelism/Outreach etc.

**Mba:** I like the Bible studies because I get to understand the Bible much better.

**I:** How have you been involved in evangelism?

**Mba:** I am a member of the regional evangelism team. We often go to a community to carry out house-to-house evangelism and the response has been great.

**I:** What are the most frequent questions people ask you during evangelism? How effective has your response been?

**Mba:** Questions household heads always ask are "Can I still worship idols and be a Christian?" "Do you forbid alcohol and tobacco?" "Do you accept polygamists in the church?"

**I:** What responses have you given to such people?

**Mba:** Those who ask about idol worship and Christianity, I often give them the analogy you told us. I tell them if you have a bicycle it serves you quite well. But when someone gives you a motor cycle, what will you do with the bicycle? In the same way, your idols serve you but now Christianity is coming to serve you much better. How would you like to use a bicycle when a free motor cycle is ready for you? Concerning alcohol and tobacco, my response has been, the church does not prohibit alcohol or tobacco as some churches do. However, if taking too much alcohol will affect your health and your standing or reputation in the community then my advice is to drink in moderation. You even know that "too much of everything is bad." The last point is on polygamist in the church. The church does not forbid polygamists. However, the church encourages every married man to remain faithful to his wife and love her with his whole heart. If a man loves his wife with his whole heart, he will not consider taking another wife a good thing because that will break the heart of his wife. Even on the social front, having more than one wife brings a lot of problem to the man and his family. There will be rivalry, hatred and envy on the part of the wives and among the children.

**I:** It appears male adults prefer being Muslims than Christians, why is that so?

**Mba:** Islam is a religion that allows its members to do whatever they want. You can be a Muslim and still worship your idols and consult the soothsayers. What is important for a Muslim to do is to observe the prayers. When people see you going to the mosque then you are a good Muslim. Also in a community where there are many Muslims, if you are not a Muslim you will be unhappy all the time because they will try to shun you and even tease you until you convert to Islam. Another thing Islam is appealing to Kusasi traditional religion people is that a Muslim freely participates in all the traditional practices of the people and gets involved in the family sacrifices. A Muslim can marry today and divorce tomorrow and receive the blessing of the leader.

**I:** I have observed that on Fridays, mosques are full of both young and older men. What do you consider to be the motivating factor for this?

**Mba:** I really don't understand them. As you know, their worship and prayers are said in Arabic

but apart from the leader, none of the members understands. But because Islam is a religion of laws, dos and don'ts, the members live in fear and are always compelled to obey their laws. If a member failed to go to the mosque on Fridays he had a "debt" to pay.

**I:** Is there anything we can learn from the Muslims to bring more male adults into the church?

**Mba:** I don't think so.

**I:** Would you suggest other ways that you think would motivate men to stay in the church?

**Mba:** I think pastors should teach the men well to understand what Christianity is and what Christ has done for us especially when one is faced with issues of sickness and witchcraft. I also think if the church could have a fund that will help the men to make their farms better so as to get enough food for the family, and some money to take care of their families especially when they are sick, they will see the church as a place where they care for each other.

**I:** I am most grateful to you for taking your precious time to answer these questions. As I said, nowhere will your name be mentioned for saying what you said. The final report will be shared with you all and I believe it will help the church in general. God bless you!

**Mba:** I also thank you and God bless you too. Please thank your wife for providing me such delicious meal.

### **Alako Asam**

**I:** Please give a short personal history of yourself.

**Asam:** I was born in 1956 at Jentiig, a village in Bawku area. I attended Mognori Primary School and proceeded to Bawku Middle boarding school. Being the only son and child of my parents, I was not given the chance to continue my education because my father thought I would leave the house and not follow his religion and ways. So as soon as I completed Middle school I travelled to southern Ghana to look for farm hand job. I stayed there for seven years and returned home and took to farming.

**I:** What religion did you belong to before becoming a Christian?

**Asam:** Pastor, as you know, the religion of the father is always the religion of the son, especially the oldest son. My father was a soothsayer, and so he worshipped idols/traditional religion practitioner. As the male child I was responsible for making sacrifices for my mother's god called "*win*." My mother did not consult the soothsayers but it was my father's responsibility to consult the soothsayers on my mother's behalf. After the consultation, my mother provided the chicken or goat and I made the sacrifice for her.

**I:** Can you tell me what you said before making the sacrifice for your mother?

**Asam:** Yes!

**I:** Please tell me.

**Asam:** "*M ma win du'om ka die ku'om, ka gu' o biis la yis pua ne zug puugin.*" ("My mother's god, please get up and receive this water and watch over her children so that nothing happens to their health, no stomach or head pains."). It was quite usual to only make libation, that is, pour only water as sacrifice but vow to provide a goat or chicken when the wishes come true.

**I:** How was your life as a non-Christian?

**Asam:** Life was not easy, it was very difficult living as an idol worshipper. Every now and then, the soothsayer had to be consulted and sacrifices made. There was no time that nothing was not asked of me. If a soothsayer told me to provide a goat and I had none, I had to borrow a goat or money to get one otherwise, my life would be miserable. If I borrowed a male goat I paid back with a female goat whose price was always higher than the female. In other words, I had to pay



back with “interest.”

**I:** How are felt needs of Muslim men or non-Christian men met?

**Asam:** They can go to a good person to help them financially. The sick went to soothsayer who told them the sacrifice to make. Or one could ask a relative or a close friend to consult the soothsayer for him. If a person violated to make a sacrifice bad things could happen to him. I knew this was true before I became a Christian but I believe it no more.

**I:** What is the biggest problem that Kusasi men feel?

**Asam:** Many problems, I cannot count all. Funerals: where a man may be asked to provide two or three goats for his in-laws. Idol worship is also finishing men’s property and money. There is also the “*samanpiid*” festival where people spend a lot of money and food to make sacrifices. People even borrow goats or money to make sacrifices.

**I:** You have mentioned many problems. Which of them is the greatest?

**Asam:** Idol worshipping.

**I:** What makes traditional religion appealing to its adherents?

**Asam:** The practitioners believe since it is the Kusasi traditional religion, the ancestors are there to support and protect them. They believe when they die they will go to the ancestors. Heaven is a new concept. Kusasis do not have a word for heaven. The concept heaven, “*arazana*” was got from Islam which came to Kusasi land many years before Christianity about 40 years ago. A woman will follow her husband to the ancestors. Heaven is a new term. They believe the ancestors more than God. When a man dies a ritual called “*Ba’ab*” is made in other that the deceased would have access to come into the house to “drink water.” Portions or morsels of food and meat are given to the dead. Unmarried people who die do not join the ancestors. Elaborate funeral are made to ensure the dead goes to the ancestors. When a person dies he is thirsty until they make a sacrifice called “*Nua Nwe’eb*” before the deceased can enter and be with the family.

**I:** Why did you leave traditional religion or idol worshipping to become a Christian?

**Asam:** Through formal education I realized that I was in the wrong religion. So when I went to the south where my father was not there to control me, I joined the Anglican Church and was even baptized. When I came back home my father did not want me to become a Christian but I did not go to the Anglican Church because there was none in the area. When you (interviewer) led a Lutheran evangelism team to evangelize the people of Bugzunde, I came and joined the Lutheran Church. Soon afterwards, I became very sick, and even though my father had then died, my other family members said, I was being punished for abandoning my father’s religion. I stood my ground because I was in my own house and nobody could force me to do what I did not want to do. But God healed me.

**I:** What did you know about Jesus before you became a Christian?

**Asam:** I knew very little. A Roman Catholic catechist taught me that God’s son had come and we were to worship him. I did not know the forgiveness of sins that Jesus has given us. I did not know anything about the Ten Commandments.

**I:** What relationships did you develop with church members prior to coming to the church?

**Asam:** I did not have anything to do with Christians. I did things with my fellow idol worshippers. There were very few Christians and they never did any evangelism until Lutherans come. They visited me often and prayed for me. I believe if we don’t engage in evangelism it will be difficult for non-Christians to become one.

When I heard the message that when Christians die they go to God was refreshing. Saying we die and go to our ancestors is not right because some of them did very bad things and I will not like to go them.

**I:** What makes the church attractive enough to you as compared to your previous religion?

**Asam:** Christian gatherings are attractive: Christmas, Easter, conventions, etc. But the traditional Samanpiid festival, you cannot invite anybody. But for the church all people are invited to participate. You get to know people and make friends. They speak God's love at all gatherings. Soothsayer will never tell you good news but only things you must do otherwise something bad will happen to you.

**I:** In your view, what are some obstacles to male adult church membership in the Kusasi culture?

**Asam:** Christians find it difficult to completely abandon idol worshipping. Our tradition favors idol worship because that is what we came to meet. A religion of do this, do that, you must not do this, you must do that.

**I:** How does your faith in Christ impact the way you live as husband and father?

**Asam:** Christ did it all. I try to be Christ-like to my family and neighbors. But not perfect.

**I:** How are your felt needs met as a Christian?

**Asam:** As a Christian my salvation is first thing I am certain I have. God knows all and as loving Father he will provide my needs of food shelter and safety. In Christ, I have everything even when I am poor I know in Christ, I am rich for he protects and gives my daily needs.

**I:** I have observed many non-Christians wearing rings on their fingers. What do you know about these rings?

**Asam:** Rings: there are rings for decoration or beauty. There is great difference between this type of ring and rings for power, protection and good luck. If you wear a ring you are not a Christian because you follow two gods. They wear ring for protection: danger, fighting, lorry, "throw medicine" nothing will happen. These rings of power are made by medicine men and Muslim spiritualists. You must make a sacrifice of dog, sheep, or goat before you get these special rings. It is believed with some rings you can shout and someone will fall.

**I:** Why should a Christian not wear such rings?

**Asam:** Jesus is our ring, he is our everything!

**I:** Before becoming a Christian what did you do if something went wrong in your life?

**Asam:** I went to the soothsayer or asked someone to go to him for me.

**I:** Now that you are a Christian what will you do if something goes wrong in your life?

**Asam:** I will run to Christ, just as a non-Christian will run to the soothsayer.

**I:** What programs and activities in the church are most appealing to you?

**Asam:** Worship; evangelism, Bible studies, Prayers, building chapel, Sunday school. I like them all.

**I:** How have you been involved in evangelism?

**Asam:** Yes.

**I:** What are the most frequent questions people ask you during evangelism? How effective has your response been?

**Asam:** These are some of the questions: Who is Christ? What has he done for us?; Where is Christ now?, Do I need to abandon my idols if I become a Christian? Do you forbid alcohol and tobacco? Are we all not God's children? Are all religions not the same? Is Christianity not a white man's religion that says we should not worship idols and also not marry more than one wife?

**I:** I have observed that on Fridays, mosques are full of both young and older men. What do you consider to be the motivating factor for this?

**Asam:** Muslims don't forbid idol worship. They only go for people to see them; it is like a fashion. Most of them are not true Muslims but imposters. But for us, even if we are few and we

trust in Jesus it is enough.

**I:** Is there anything we can learn from the Muslims to bring more male adults into the church?

**Asam:** What I learn from Muslims is that they are ignorant of who Jesus is and we need to tell them.

**I:** Would you suggest other ways that you think would motivate men to stay in the church?

**Asam:** Teach them very well to know that idols are nothing. Effectively tell them about Jesus. Go from house to house to evangelize but don't leave it there. Back it up with follow-up and more teachings at Bible class. Also our own lifestyles should be exemplary. I will suggest that we minimize the way we sing songs that condemn idol worshipping because such songs drives them far away. We need to get them before we teach them about Jesus and the need to rely on Jesus not on the gods who are created beings. Also our women should be advised to respect, love and honor their husbands, especially non-Christian men. Esther at Kpaliga's husband has become a Christian because of the way Esther led her life before him. Another example is Cecilia who brought her Muslim husband to the church. I also suggest that during our conventions we make special invitation to men whose wives are in Church but they are not. These men should be honored, (given front seats) and meals provided them.

### **Anaba Ali**

**I:** Please give a short personal history of yourself.

**Ali:** My name Anaba Ali and was born at Kuka, a suburb of Bawku. Parents were Muslims so was I. Father told us during Ramadan that I should go to the farm but my elder brother to go to pray. He bought him a nice attire but none for me. At Christmas he bought him a nice attire again but did not buy one for me. On Christmas day because I had no new uniform I stayed at home. Christmas a day of happiness for everyone. I was sad so I ran to my uncle's house and my maternal grandmother bought me attire to dress up for Christmas. My uncle who was also in Accra had returned and also bought new dresses for me.

**I:** Who was your uncle?

**Ali:** You.

**I:** Continue with your story.

**Ali:** From that time I decided not to go back to my family but remain with my grandmother and uncle. My uncle was very kind. He gave me everything that I needed. I had enough food to eat. I followed him wherever he went.

**I:** How was your life as a non-Christian?

**Ali:** I did not find any help or good in being a Muslim.

**I:** Why do you say you did not find any good in being a Muslim?

**Ali:** I did not understand any Arabic.

**I:** Why did you remain in it if you found no good in it?

**Ali:** My father forced me.

**I:** How are felt needs of Muslim men met?

**Ali:** Muslims have sanba, made to get money. Or use the Koran to get whatever they needed. The Malam will write qu'ranic verses on a slate and wash it and people paid money for them. Because I was young I did not go for this medicine. When I needed something (food) I asked my father or someone who could give.

**I:** What is the biggest problem that Kusasi men feel?

**Ali:** They want good life (food, money, cattle, health, what will protect them so that evil eyes don't kill them. That is protect themselves so that juju men are unable to disturb them. etc.)

**I:** You mentioned many problems, what is the number one?

**Ali:** Laafe (that is long good health).

**I:** If someone needed laafe, what did he or she do?

**Ali:** He will use water to make libation, and call upon God to give health.

**I:** What did they say?

**Ali:** "God is the elder, receive this water. My father get up and receive this water and let it reach "earth rock" to reach "farming bugur" so that he will give me good health and I plant and all will germinate. I should not step on a snake or scorpion. If all my request come true during harvest I will give you red cock and white guinea fowl.

**I:** Why red cock and white guinea fowl?

**Ali:** Red cock stands for farming period when people's eyes are red. White guinea fowl stands for when he farmed and did not step on scorpion or snake which means his heart is pleased (white symbol of joy).

**I:** What makes your previous religion appealing to its adherents?

**Ali:** There are many ways by which one can get what he wants. Like money, juju, many wives.

**I:** Why did you leave that religion to become a Christian?

**Ali:** I did not understand what they said in their prayers. I became a Christian because when my uncle came and started the Lutheran Church and what he taught I heard it in my own language and the message he gave was that there is everlasting life prepared for all those who are Christians.

**I:** What did you know about Jesus before you became a Christian?

**Ali:** What I heard was Jesus, God's Son. I did not know what he has done for me.

**I:** What relationships did you develop with church members prior to coming to the church?

**Ali:** My uncle used to gather people and because I stayed in his house I heard about Jesus' love for me. I was very happy about the literacy class in Kusaal that was started for I learned to read and write Kusaal and even read the Kusaal Bible.

**I:** How did you become a Christian?

**Ali:** When you started the Church, and followed you on your evangelistic programs, I learned a lot about Christianity and saw that it was by far better than Islam.

**I:** What makes the church attractive enough to you as compared to Islam?

**Ali:** Christians have compassion for one another. They love one another.

**I:** In your view, what are some obstacles to male adult church membership in the Kusasi culture?

**Ali:** First, they think of their bodily needs. They like medicine for protection. They go to medicine men who charge them money and prepare the medicine. As Christians they cannot meet their dead parents when they also die. They want marry many wives.

**I:** How does your faith in Christ impact the way you live as husband and father?

**Ali:** We realize how God loves us and helps us always. Every morning I go round to greet all members of the household. We sit down and discuss issues without shouting at each other. I exhibit patience when I am offended by a member of the family.

**I:** How are your felt needs met as a Christian?

**Ali:** I pray first. Then I think of somebody who I believe can help me.

**I:** I have observed many non-Christians wearing rings on their fingers. What do you know about these rings?

**Ali:** I know they do. There are many types of rings. Some rings are for long life. Some for protection such that if someone intends killing you he can't with a gun or knife. There is amulet also that protects people from being killed by witch. There is another ring for good luck. Another ring for fertility. Another ring for good farm. Ring for stealing or robbery. There is also a tail that is used to "tie" people and rob them.

**I:** Why should a Christian not wear such rings?

**Ali:** Christians believe there is God who has power and controls everything.

**I:** Before becoming a Christian what did you do if something went wrong in your life?

**Ali:** He will go to the Imam who will read the Quran and make a "bukata". The Imam will make an amulet or will ask me to bring kola and white cloth. I will be taught to recite some qu'oranic verses which I never know its meaning. I will send the kola nuts and the white cloth to a cross road. Or I will be asked to but local cakes "Ma'asa" and share it to children.

**I:** Now that you are a Christian what will you do if something goes wrong in your life?

**Ali:** I will pray, putting all my worries and problems into his hands.

**I:** What programs and activities in the church are most appealing to you?

**Ali:** Prayer meeting, evangelism, visiting the sick, radio program, reading the Bible to people.

**I:** How have you been involved in evangelism?

**Ali:** Yes.

**I:** What are the most frequent questions people ask you during evangelism? How effective has your response been?

**Ali:** If I go to church can I still worship idols? Do you forbid alcohol? When I die will you allow my family to make local sacrifices or rituals? Do you forbid polygamy?

**I:** Why ask about local rituals?

**Ali:** It is believed that when you die it is your father who will come to take you to himself. If the local rituals are not made, you will suffer.

**I:** I have observed that on Fridays mosques are full of both young and older men. What do you consider to be the motivating factor for this?

**Ali:** They do so because it is a law for them. If they fail to go to the mosque or even perform their daily prayers, they fear something will happen to them. If one fails to go for the Friday prayers, it means he is not counted as a Muslim. They are always looking for money and nothing else.

**I:** Is there anything we can learn from Muslims to bring more male adults into the church?

**Ali:** There is nothing.

**I:** Would you suggest other ways that you think would motivate men to stay in the church?

**Ali:** Make friends and build relationships with them. Where men are try and be there, like funerals, market places, drinking bars.

**I:** Anaba Ali, I thank you for all what you have told me. I will call you and others at another time so that together we think of the next step.

Awam Ben

**I:** Please give a short personal history of yourself.

**Ben:** My name is Awam Ben. Before I became a Christian I was an idol worshipper because my father was one. He is still an idol worshipper. I was a non-Christian from age one to 13. Before I became a Christian life was not as simple as I see in Christianity. I used to follow my father any time he was going to consult the soothsayers. I became a Christian in 1989 when I was 13. I was baptized in the same year by Rev. Nicholas Salifu after learning the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles'

Creed, the Ten Commandment and what is baptism and its benefits. In fact, through Christianity, I have benefited a lot by being the first person in my extended family to go to school to reach the tertiary level.

**I:** What religion did you belong to before becoming a Christian?

**Ben:** My father was an idol worshipper so I was one.

**I:** How was your life as a non-Christian?

**Ben:** In fact, my father was rich by then, and all his property went wasted through consulting the gods and Imams (Muslim spiritual leaders) and soothsayers but when I became a Christian, I made him to understand that it was a waste of resources and energy. My father understood me a bit and sent me to school.

**I:** How are felt needs of traditional religion practitioners met?

**Ben:** When a person was sick or needed money he went to the soothsayer to look for solutions.

**I:** What is the biggest problem that Kusasi men feel?

**Ben:** Kusasi men feel that when they are converted to Christianity all their liberties they enjoyed in the family and in the society will cease. That is, they will not be allowed to take a second wife even when he has found so many faults with his wife. Also Kusasi men feel that when they become Christians they will have to stop worshipping idols, but they are afraid to completely abandon the idols or gods for fear of death, or serious calamity coming upon them.

**I:** What makes your previous religion appealing to its adherents?

**Ben:** Traditional religion forbids women from being a head of a family. This makes men happy because they feel superior to the women. Men are the decision makers. But in Christianity there is equality where both husband and wife make contributions and take collective decisions. Again, traditional religion allows men to marry more women as they can. The religion also allows men to smoke, drink etc. the way they like.

**I:** Why did you leave that religion to become a Christian?

**Ben:** I noticed that there is a lot of freedom in Christianity in the sense that Christians are saved through Christ. They do not need to pay or do anything when it comes to their salvation. What they need is to have faith in Jesus and they will be assured of everlasting life.

**I:** What did you know about Jesus before you became a Christian?

**Ben:** I had heard the name Jesus but beyond that I knew nothing about him until Rev. Nicholas Salifu came to our community with a group of people to evangelize. Their message was simple and clear. God has sent his Son Jesus Christ, forgive us and save us from all our sins.

**I:** What relationships did you develop with church members prior to coming to the church?

**Ben:** The relationship was very cordial. Members were friendly and always ready to forgive and forget as compared to non-Christians (Muslims and traditional religion practitioners).

**I:** How did you become a Christian?

**Ben:** Through the evangelism that was led by Rev. Nicholas Salifu. I asked him to write down my name as a young boy who wanted to be a Christian and he did. I believe that was the day I became a Christian and I followed up by enrolling in the pre-baptism class.

**I:** What makes the church attractive enough to you as compared to your previous religion?

**Ben:** The church is attractive because one doesn't need to pay for his life but needs to believe in Christ alone because he came and died for all.

**I:** In your view, what are some obstacles to male adult church membership in the Kusasi culture?

**Ben:** Men are not allowed to practice polygamy. Men are also not active in prayer because of fear of them abandoning their gods.

**I:** How does your faith in Christ impact the way you live as husband and father?

**Ben:** It has a great impact because we live peacefully with everybody in the family. This is because Christ himself preached peace and love.

**I:** How are your felt needs met as a Christian?

**Ben:** I pray to God for all my needs and he grants me always.

**I:** I have observed many non-Christians wearing rings on their fingers. What do you know about these rings?

**Ben:** Apart from wedding rings and rings that people wear pleasure and beauty, all other rings are made by medicine men, imams and soothsayers. People go in for rings for variety of purposes: money, people children also go in for special amulets, rings to counteract bullets and knife cuts, ring for vanishing when danger is at hand, rings for charming girls, etc. in fact there are rings for anything that one needs.

**I:** Why should a Christian not wear such rings?

**Ben:** A Christian has all he needs in Christ. A Christian who wears a ring, in fact some do, is not a true Christian.

**I:** Before becoming a Christian what did you do if something went wrong in your life?

**Ben:** I used to tell my father about my problems whenever I had a bad time and he would in turn consult a soothsayer or go to a Muslim Imam for solution. In all cases my father had to provide a chicken or pay for it.

**I:** Now that you are a Christian what will you do if something goes wrong in your life?

**Ben:** I will pray to God who made all things including me. When I pray I believe and have hope that my request would be granted.

**I:** What programs and activities in the church are most appealing to you?

**Ben:** Sunday church service, leadership training which I always participated, Bible studies, house-to-house evangelism, are all appealing to me.

**I:** Since you are involved in evangelism, what are the most frequent questions people ask you during evangelism?

**Ben:** How can we completely leave our own religion which we came to meet and take a foreign religion? Can we pour libation alongside being a Christian? Can we eat food offered to the gods? All religions worship God so why do you want us to leave our religion? If I join the church what will I take to protect my family (no ring, no amulet, no tail, nothing?)

**I:** How effective has your response been?

**Ben:** Some understood our message and became Christians even though many male adults just refused to become Christians.

**I:** I have observed that on Fridays mosques are full of both young and older men. What do you consider to be the motivating factor for this?

**Ben:** Most of them are hypocrites! They just want the world to know that they are Muslims. Others also go because they believe that by going they will get money. They will get what they want such as a wife, property etc.

**I:** Would you suggest other ways that you think would motivate men to stay in the church?

**Ben:** if the church is able to gain a stand, we should try to sponsor or support the needy but brilliant students in the church to pursue their education. These are the same people who would become adults and support the church in future (we will get pastors, teachers, lawyers, doctors, nurses accountants etc.). Presently, our church lack most of these people but we need them.

**I:** Ben, thank you very for your time.

## **Eli Asampam**

**I:** Please give a short personal history of yourself.

**Eli:** Eli Asampam. 26 years. Born at Bugri, all parents in Ghana in our family house.

**I:** What religion did you belong to before becoming a Christian?

**Eli:** Was idol worshipper. Then also a Muslim. Abu. Then became a Christian.

**I:** How was your life as a non-Christian?

**Eli:** Was a child as idol worshiper. My father just brought water for me to make libation. He said and I followed. Like, Ba'ar duom die ka gur yir ka pua ne zug da kena.

**I:** Why you?

**Eli:** Different idols. I was making my mother's idol since women did not make sacrifices.

**I:** As a Muslim?

**Eli:** I still made the sacrifice for my mother and my father forced me. I was the oldest son so all was upon me. I had to succeed my father.

**I:** How are felt needs of Muslim men or non-Christian men met?

**Eli:** Sold leaves. Used herbs (black medicine).

**I:** What is the biggest problem that Kusasi men feel?

**Eli:** Money. Farming. Education.

**I:** What did you do when needing money?

**Eli:** Parents. Or go DC or other government officials. Parents sold sheep or goats. Parents did all they could. Farming time father went to farm to get money.

**I:** What makes your previous religion appealing to its adherents?

**Eli:** Idol worship. They forbid very few things free to do everything. Can visit soothsayers. Muslims are similar. Many still go to soothsayers.

**I:** Why did you leave that religion to become a Christian?

**Eli:** Idol worshippers, my father went to church after coming from the south. I followed him and became a Christian. But he reverted to idol worshippers. I refused to eat idol meat and father beat me. I told him frankly that I was now a Christian and will not eat idol food. Catholic Church-he went.

**I:** What did you know about Jesus before you became a Christian?

**Eli:** I only heard his name. At gatherings. I saw the Jesus film. I wept that day.

**I:** What relationships did you develop with church members prior to coming to the church?

**Eli:** Evangelism started at my village and the church started with all of us. My father sang Christian songs even when farming and I learned a lot from the songs as he praised God.

**I:** How did you become a Christian?

**Eli:** Through evangelism team. First gathering you (Nicholas) was present. Then the church was started and a chapel built.

**I:** What makes the church attractive enough to you as compared to your previous religion?

**Eli:** The church members don't go to soothsayers. Our women don't wear medicine rings. Don't drink concoction that can cause sickness.

**I:** In your view, what are some obstacles to male adult church membership in the Kusasi culture?

**Eli:** First, can't leave idol worshipping. This is a serious one. Some men have idols and don't want to abandon them. Second, many women in church. Women's life not show husband how good Christianity is. 3<sup>rd</sup>. the few men life is not different from those who are not Christians. They mix with idol worshippers in samanpiid. When we have a problem the way we approach it is nothing to emulate. In short, the few men don't show anything to the non-Christians how a



Christian's life should be. 4<sup>th</sup>. Men want people to come and share the gospel. If we intensify our evangelism more men will come.

**I:** How does your faith in Christ impact the way you live as a child of God in your family?

**Eli:** My parents know I never eat food offered to idols. They know that Church work I like it. Every Sunday I am not giving any work because they know I will go to church and pray for them.

**I:** How are your felt needs met as a Christian?

**Eli:** This is an important question. I know only Christ. Other Christian friends help me get my needs.

**I:** I have observed many non-Christians wearing rings on their fingers. What do you know about these rings?

**Eli:** They follow a different way and think the rings will help them. Ring for good health, Good luck, protection, marriage some find it difficult to get a spouse so the ring will help them get a wife.

**I:** Why should a Christian not wear such rings?

**Eli:** Christians don't have a problem beyond Christ. Christ is not a ring you wear. We call upon him at all times. A Christian who wears a ring is an imposter.

**I:** Before becoming a Christian what did you do if something went wrong in your life?

**Eli:** My father will consult the soothsayer. He will be told whether to get a ring or whatever solution.

**I:** Now that you are a Christian what will you do if something goes wrong in your life?

**Eli:** If it is beyond my control, I will contact my pastor: we pray.

**I:** What programs and activities in the church are most appealing to you?

**Eli:** Early service is good. Harvest festivals. Friday Wednesday and Saturday programs (Bible studies, Youth, and prayers.

**I:** How have you been involved in evangelism?

**Eli:** Yes.

**I:** What are the most frequent questions people ask you during evangelism? How effective has your response been?

**Eli:** Who is the real or true Christ? Your church what is the benefit for people? If you join what help will you get? If I come will I still practice idol worship or I should stop? What about food offered to idols, can I eat?

**I:** I have observed that on Fridays mosques are full of both young and older men. What do you consider to be the motivating factor for this?

**Eli:** That is their holy day and no one wants to miss. They believe when you go to the mosque no matter your sins you will be forgiven. It is like the Christian Sunday. If you commit serious sin and you go to mosque 40 times God will forgive you.

**I:** Would you suggest other ways that you think would motivate men to stay in the church?

**Eli:** Many ways. Get people to do effective evangelism to teach who Jesus is. Also the church needs counselors to advice the women how to honor and respect their husbands. I believe there are men who will come if their wives led good lives. For example. A man who hired his rooms to tenants observed how one couple led good life but the others fought. The land lord eventually joined the man's church. Alcohol. Christians drinking. Married man following girls and doing indecent things. The few men must show example that they are Christians. Get visitation team that visits the sick and possibly give some gift. Bugzunde church members (youth) to farm for weak men.

**I:** Thank you very much.

### **Jim Abaa**

**I:** Please give a short personal history of yourself.

**Jim:** My name is Jim Abaa. I come from Nayokog, a village in the Bawku Municipality. I was born on June 1, 1980. I went to Primary and then to Junior High School but dropped out in 1992 due to financial problems on the part of my father. In 1998 my mother sent me to south to continue my education and I proceeded to Bawku Senior High School and completed in 2012. Because of financial problems I could not continue so I went to the south again to do onion farming. All this while my parents were good Catholics for they used the rosary and never missed the mass. But I did not go to church or worshipped idols or became a Muslim. I asked myself why I did not go to church even though my parents were. I joined Christian Mission International church in 2004. But when the Lutherans came to our village and did evangelism, I was moved and I decided to join the Lutheran Church.

**I:** What religion did you belong to before becoming a Christian?

**Jim:** I did not belong to any church. Neither Christian nor Islam or traditional.

**I:** How was your life as a non-Christian?

**Jim:** I never thought of going to a Muslim Imam or a pastor or a soothsayer because my father never introduced me to any of these. I was like a “free thinker.”

**I:** How are felt needs of non-Christian men met?

**Jim:** What I heard was when a traditionalist had a problem he immediately went to the soothsayer to diagnose and find a solution.

**I:** What is the biggest problem that Kusasi men feel?

**Jim:** When a difficult situation arose then one thought of how to solve it. There are many ways. Non-Christians have a “god” they rely upon. He will run to that god for assistance. Problems of marriage, a person might look and not get a wife. Health issues. Food supply. Fertility issues. The most pressing one is health issues.

**I:** Why did you become a Christian?

**Jim:** I had already said my parents were Christians. They used to tell me about the Church and what Jesus means to them. I also got to know that Christians have patience and they love one another. I had observed them and saw those qualities in my parents.

**I:** What did you know about Jesus before you became a Christian?

**Jim:** My father told me about Christ. He told me that Christ came to free us from the power of the evil one. If I wanted long life and eternal life I have to give my life to Christ. My father wanted me to join his church-catholic but I did not want to be Catholic because people said that church was not good. They drank alcohol and did all sorts things.

**I:** What relationships did you develop with church members prior to coming to the church?

**Jim:** There are many Muslims in my home area. Only one Christian. He developed good relationship with me and told me how good it would be for me to become a Christian. He visited me often and prayed for me.

**I:** How did you become a Christian?

**Jim:** One Saturday I shaved my busy hair and told my parents that I was going to become a Christian. On Sunday I went to the Christian Mission Church because that was the church my

friend belonged to. I later joined the Lutheran Church because the woman I married is a Lutheran who has impacted my life greatly.

**I:** What makes the church attractive enough to you as compared to when you were without a religion?

**Jim:** As a Christian I was free to get to people to talk and learn from each other. Before that I did not want to associate myself with anybody. The gospel message I heard, I also decided to tell others about Christ and what he has done for me and other people. I developed much interest in doing God's work.

**I:** In your view, what are some obstacles to male adult church membership in the Kusasi culture?

**Jim:** They find it very difficult to abandon idol worship. Also many think when you become a Christian you must not drink alcohol. The Kusasi culture favors polygamy but the Church forbids men marrying more than one wife.

**I:** How does your faith in Christ impact the way you live as husband and father?

**Jim:** There is understanding among us. Before being a Christian there used to be problems. Now there is love and patience. Anytime I am away they are not happy but at first, they were happy when I was away because we used to quarrel and argue over unnecessary things.

**I:** How are your felt needs met as a Christian?

**Jim:** I beg God and trust he will provide my needs all the time.

**I:** I have observed many non-Christians wearing rings on their fingers. What do you know about these rings?

**Jim:** They say the rings protect them and do many things for them. Some wear as good luck. Some wear it so that you cannot harm spiritually. Some wear it as knife or gunshot protection. Some wear it because of sickness they have for healing. For fertility.

**I:** Why should a Christian not wear such rings?

**Jim:** Christians wear wedding rings. If not wedding ring, any Christian who wears a ring has another god.

**I:** Before becoming a Christian what did you do if something went wrong in your life?

**Jim:** I never experienced any serious problem. My father was there to support me.

**I:** Now that you are a Christian what will you do if something goes wrong in your life?

**Jim:** I will put my problem before God.

**I:** What programs and activities in the church are most appealing to you?

**Jim:** The three readings every week. Liturgy. Communion reception. Infant baptism. Catechism class.

**I:** How have you been involved in evangelism?

**Jim:** Yes.

**I:** What are the most frequent questions people ask you during evangelism? How effective has your response been?

**Jim:** You say Christ is Lord, was it not his own man who betrayed him? If I join your church can I still perform my idol worship and make sacrifices to my ancestors? If my wife is infertile, will you not allow me to marry another woman who will bear me children? Do you believe there is a place called "heaven?" A woman once asked me that as a Christian when she dies will she join her dead husband at the place where the ancestors are? A Muslim friend asked that Jesus said he will send the Comforter. Why then don't Christians follow Mohamed?

**I:** I have observed that on Fridays mosques are full of both young and older men. What do you consider to be the motivating factor for this?

**Jim:** They go by the law. If it is time for prayers and you miss you lose the blessings. It has

become a habit that they must do. They never feel comfortable when they miss prayer time. As I said, it is a force and compulsory that they do what they do. Christianity is different in that you go to church because you want to worship and hear God's Word.

**I:** Would you suggest other ways that you think would motivate men to stay in the church?

**Jim:** We need to intensify our evangelism/outreach programs and make it a regular activity. New members who join the church should be made to feel at home and should be visited on regular basis. Leaders should set examples for members to follow. Regular encouragement and visits. At my church following my regular visits our Chairman and vice who were not regular are now very punctual and regular.

**I:** Jim, I am very grateful to you for coming and answering my questions.

### **Paul Aboko**

**I:** Please give a short personal history of yourself.

**Paul:** Paul Aboko from Gumbo. I am a bicycle mechanic and also a farmer. My parents were idol worshippers and did not know the true God. I saw how idol worshipping was disturbing so I became a Muslim. But when I travelled to southern Ghana to find a job, I joined the Church of Pentecost. I have five children. When I returned from the south about seven years ago, I wasn't going to Church because it was far away and so I joined the Lutheran Church. My family members (wife and children) are all members of the Lutheran Church.

**I:** What religion did you belong to before becoming a Christian?

**Paul:** I was a Muslim.

**I:** How did you become a Muslim?

**Paul:** When we were children we followed each other and as several of them were Muslims, I also decided to join them.

**I:** How was your life as a Muslim?

**Paul:** There were lots of problems. I was always sick so was my wife. The Muslim prayers I did which I never understood what the Arabic is never helped me. The persistent alms I was compelled to give to poor people did no good to me. While in southern Ghana, a Church of Pentecost pastor visited us and told us when we join Christianity all will be well. When we joined the Church we got better through prayers and fasting prescribed by the pastor.

**I:** How are felt needs of Muslim men?

**Paul:** Needs are met through spiritual consultations by the imam. Needs include: healing of sickness, money, and protection against witchcraft and other demonic attacks. The imam goes to his room and writes some Arabic sentences or words, washes it and gives it to me to drink and rob my body with it. It is not free one is charged to pay for it. Muslims are not like Christians who only pray and trust God. Christians are not asked to bring a cock or sheep.

**I:** What is the biggest problem that Kusasi men feel?

**Paul:** Many problems. Our fathers have idols at home that protect them and all the time they must satisfy the idols by means of sacrifices. The bottom line of all the sacrifices is fear. Our fathers fear the idols very much in that whatever the soothsayer says, our fathers must perform. Several men have killed their only bullocks during farming simply because the idols wanted a sacrifice. Imagine a poor farmer who has killed his bullock and has none to farm. That year he will have problems of getting enough food for his family.

**I:** How did they get the idol?

**Paul:** When things don't get well for people, they look for an idol to help them meet the need. The person goes to a soothsayer for consultation and the soothsayer after throwing the cowries and other items is able to find a suitable idol for the person in need. Sacrifices are made. Some of the idols are clay pots, others are stones and others are mud molded like a human being with head eyes etc. Idols can be bought from another area where they believe the idol is powerful.

**I:** What makes idol worshipping appealing to its adherents?

**Paul:** They believe it is good and helpful. It is good in the sense that it protects the family and their work will go on well.

**I:** What about Islam?

**Paul:** They believe when you pray and fast during Ramadan period and obey all the Islamic laws you will go to *arazana* (heaven).

**I:** Why did you leave that religion to become a Christian?

**Paul:** I have personally observed that those religions are not helpful to me. For ten years I saw that those religions are based doing things and paying money all the time. I realized that I was wasting my resources and nothing good came out of it.

**I:** What did you know about Jesus before you became a Christian?

**Paul:** As Muslims we went to several places. I saw many churches in the south. The Christians did evangelism. Prayers for people and altar calls. What I also knew about Christianity was they prayed for sick people even mad people and they were healed. You paid no money free. That even motivated me to join the Church of Pentecost.

**I:** How did you become a Christian?

**Paul:** A Pentecost pastor prayed for my wife who was sick and invited us to the Church. He and the elders prayed for us and my wife got better. We joined the church and remained. So it was the Pastor who made me to join the Church.

**I:** What makes the church attractive enough to you as compared to your previous religions?

**Paul:** I wasted my money when I was an idol worshipper and a Muslim. As a Christian I am free. When my child was sick I had to pay but now I pray and God heals. I believe God has made the hospitals for us to go when we are sick, not to go to the soothsayers or imams.

**I:** In your view, what are some obstacles to male adult church membership in the Kusasi culture?

**Paul:** I have already said their idols. Men find it difficult to abandon the idols because they were inherited from their fathers as a good property which they cannot throw away. Another obstacle is caused by the Christian women. Most of them have failed to respect their husbands as we read in the Bible. If women let their non-Christian husbands see Christ in their lives, the men will like to join the Church. But if a woman does not respect her traditional religion husband and tells him to stop idol worshipping, it will even make the husband very angry. I know of some idol worshippers who have stopped their wives from coming to church because the woman was challenging the husband and telling him that he was going to hell if he did not become a Christian. If your husband is an idol worshipper or a drunkard and you shout on him and tell him idol worship is not good, there will always be quarrel at home. Men trust in their idols which is ignorance. The women should have patience to help them know who Jesus is.

**I:** How does your faith in Christ impact the way you live as husband and father?

**Paul:** My wife and children have no problems, no quarrels we do things together in love. But we live in an extended family house with my elder and younger brothers who are not Christians. There is always fighting and quarreling among them.

**I:** Why don't witness to them?

**Paul:** I have told them about Christ but they are still not listening. They drink all the time.

**I:** How did you become a Lutheran?

**R:** Pentecost is far from our home. But since Christ is one I joined Lutheran which is in my village. The way I served at the Pentecost Church I do the same in the Lutheran Church.

**I:** What difference have you observed between Lutheran and Pentecost?

**Paul:** Both are good for me. But since I became a Lutheran I have stopped praying in tongues. In fact, it stopped by itself because nobody in the Lutheran Church prays in tongues.

**I:** How are your felt needs met as a Christian?

**Paul:** Pray and trust God will provide. We don't have to sit idle but do our normal duties.

**I:** I have observed many non-Christians wearing rings on their fingers. What do you know about these rings?

**Paul:** Because of idol worshipping. Soothsayer tells you what type of ring to wear. Some also have it for protection. They say a man does not go empty handed you need something to protect you.

**I:** Why should a Christian not wear such rings?

**Paul:** If you put your trust in Jesus, you need no ring. I have never seen God wear a protective ring.

**I:** Before becoming a Christian what did you do if something went wrong in your life?

**Paul:** I went to the *malam* who will throw white cowries on his mat and do certain spiritual things. One time, I wanted a girl to marry and he charmed her. The girl came to my wife but after a few months the charm was no more potent and the girl left.

**I:** Now that you are a Christian what will you do if something goes wrong in your life?

**Paul:** Whenever I encounter a problem I pray. I also inform my pastor and other Christians to pray for me. We support each other in our physical needs.

**I:** What programs and activities in the church are most appealing to you?

**Paul:** I like Bible studies and prayer meeting best.

**I:** How have you been involved in evangelism?

**Paul:** I am not a member of the regular evangelism team. But I have been speaking to people about my faith in Jesus.

**I:** What are some of the questions people often ask when you are speaking to them about Jesus?

**Paul:** What benefit have you had? Who has died and returned to tell us about how heaven is? How can one leave idol worship and join your Church? I learn every Sunday people pay money what about if I don't have money?

**I:** I have observed that on Fridays mosques are full of both young and older men. What do you consider to be the motivating factor for this ?

**Paul:** They want God's blessing. They don't want the prayer time to pass else they miss the blessing.

**I:** Would you suggest other ways that you think would motivate men to stay in the church?

**Paul:** We need to ask God to change the minds of men so that they see only Jesus as the Savior of the world. Also after every Sunday service we should go out in groups to make visits/evangelism.

**I:** Paul Aboko, thank you for your time. I will call you again soon.

**Paul:** I am ready to help.

## Bob Gado

**I:** Please give a short personal history of yourself.

**Bob:** My name is Bob Gado. I was born and bred in Zuuku. I grew up as a Muslim. Mysteriously I became a Christian in 1997 in the AG church in Bawku. Because of ill health I found it more convenient to join the Lutheran Church at Zuuku which is just a stone throw from my house.

**I:** How mysterious was your conversion?

**Bob:** When I was a Muslim I did my best to defend Islam strongly. I often debated with Christians about which was a better religion. Because of this I never thought I would leave Islam. One day a Christian friend man in Bawku told me to come and work for him for he saw that I was someone who could do God's work. Following his persistent invitation to go to the Assembly of God Church with him, one day I decided to "satisfy" my master. The pastor prayed for me. I was very happy and I remained and became a member of the Church. I did not know what made me to go to the church that day, but now I know it was God who saved my life.

**I:** How was your life as a Muslim?

**Bob:** As a Muslim, you know they trained us to be people who will be ready to defend the Muslim faith. As a Muslim I did not want to hear anyone talk evil of Islam. Ramadan was compulsory for me to fast 30 days. We did certain things which I did not understand because I did not read the Qu'ran. I accepted what they told me and tried to live as a good Muslim.

**I:** How are felt needs of Muslim men met?

**Bob:** Muslims believed in prayers and given of zakat (giving out 1/40 of whatever you have accumulated for one year to the Muslim leaders). They trust that having followed all the rules and regulations Allah will grant their needs and also bless them with long life and prosperity. When Muslims wanted something they went to *malam* to seek help.

**I:** What is the biggest problem that Kusasi men feel?

**Bob:** Fear is the biggest problem. They think there are some powers elsewhere that could harm them. Poverty is another problem. Another problem they face is the issue of helping one another. Kusasi men don't want to help their colleagues so the area is not developing. There is also a problem of becoming a Christian, they think it is a foreign religion.

**I:** What about Islam, is it also not a foreign religion?

**Bob:** You see they see Christianity as foreign because Christians are forbidden to use black magic/juju or go to soothsayers or marry more than one wife. Muslims do all these things including their own Islamic practices. But when you are a Christian you don't go anywhere except God.

**I:** What makes Islam religion appealing to its adherents?

**Bob:** Several things. The key thing is that in Islam you will easily get money. They have contributions that help defray funerals expenses and marriages. People like a place where they could be assisted when in need and Muslims do that for only their members. Islam is a religion where you have liberty to do certain things like going to *malam* to make you prosperous. You know people like money.

**I:** Why did you leave Islam to become a Christian?

**Bob:** I mentioned earlier that it was something mysterious. I believe God had a plan for me like he had for Paul. Before I was born God's hand was upon me, calling me from Islam, like he called Paul from Judaism.

**I:** What did you know about Jesus before you became a Christian?

**Bob:** In Islam, we heard the name *Anabi Isa*, a prophet of God. In the Qu'ran we heard that Jesus

used clay to make life birds. When he was 4 days old he began to speak. So I knew a bit about Jesus as told by my former Muslim imam.

**I:** What relationships did you develop with church members prior to coming to the church?

**Bob:** I had good relationships with Christians. Baba (your son) was a close friend. I spend a good deal of my time in Pastor Salifu's house, and we used to eat together.

**I:** How did you become a Christian?

**Bob:** This has been said already. When a Christian invited me to go church and ever since I went I have not stopped up till now.

**I:** What makes the church attractive enough to you as compared to Islam?

**Bob:** Several things: 1. We have the Bible in our own language. 2. The way we relate to one another in prayer and praying for others.

**I:** In your view, what are some obstacles to male adult church membership in the Kusasi culture?

**Bob:** Several things, the biggest thing is that the Church came as something foreign.

Missionaries did not make it fit the Kusasi culture. It was not appealing. They brought their own culture and wanted the Kusasis to accept foreign culture. Kusasis are accustomed to idol/traditional. They fear if they leave it something will happen to them. A spirit will kill them. Also we the Christians, the way we do things scare people from coming. The life styles may repel or attract them. Relations that we have with non-Christians should improve. We think idol worship is demonic and we never want to associate with unbelievers. Our attitude toward unbelievers also drive them away. Polygamy is another issue, but Kusasis don't want to join the church because they will not be allowed to marry many wives. In the olden days many wives and children was a prestige. Other churches men ratio is higher. In others they have institutions that offer employment to their members. But Lutherans have none. Jobs also take away some of our men. No effective teaching about Lutheran doctrine.

**I:** How does your faith in Christ impact the way you live as husband and father?

**Bob:** Forgiveness is a key thing in every family. I have learned to forgive members of my family and this has made them to respect me greatly. Forgiveness is what God has helped me to have.

**I:** How are your felt needs met as a Christian?

**Bob:** Prayer and hard work.

**I:** What do you mean by hard work?

**Bob:** You don't have to cross your arms and think manna will fall from heaven. If you are a farmer, till your land. If you are a student, study hard and pray.

**I:** I have observed many non-Christians wearing rings on their fingers. What do you know about these rings?

**Bob:** The ring is for protection. Because of fear of unseen things, evil spirits that can destroy them. Some of the rings are for good luck because your grandfather could have something that made him prosperous so he gives that ring to one of his sons to inherit his good luck.

**I:** Why should a Christian not wear such rings?

**Bob:** A Christian is not supposed to wear such rings. Doing so means he has another god he serves. But Christ's blood protects us and we need no other protection. A Christian can wear wedding rings.

**I:** Before becoming a Christian what did you do if something went wrong in your life?

**Bob:** I was a Muslim and when something went wrong, my father looked for the cause. He went to the malam to find out the cause and will be instructed to make *sadaka* so that such a problem will go away or stop. Another one is, there is a prayer which the imam will tell you to recite. If it is evil attack it will go.



**I:** Now that you are a Christian what will you do if something goes wrong in your life?

**Bob:** Only pray and ask God to help me trusting that he will help. We should remember that Christians are not immune to temptation so we should rely on God. When you pray, we may need others to guide us.

**I:** What programs and activities in the church are most appealing to you?

**Bob:** Evangelism because of Christ's commission. Women and youth fellowships can also help the church to grow. No men fellowship but we are almost ready to form one.

**I:** How have you been involved in evangelism?

**Bob:** Yes, several times.

**I:** What are the most frequent questions people ask you during evangelism? How effective has your response been?

**Bob:** What help will I receive when I join your church? Why don't you have your church branch in the towns and cities but only in the rural areas? Why don't you have radio and television programs? People ask whether they can become Christians and still worship their idols. Polygamy and eating food offered to idols are also questions people ask about it.

**I:** I have observed that on Fridays mosques are full of both young and older men. What do you consider to be the motivating factor for this?

**Bob:** They believe that time of prayers is important. They believe when they are there an angel comes with blessing which they don't want to miss.

**I:** Would you suggest other ways that you think would motivate men to stay in the church?

**Bob:** Yes. I think one way for us to do is to encourage the formation of men fellowship. Have programs that will make them active. Find a way of attracting the literate men so that when they even go to higher institutions they will still be part of the church. Men in the church have to be given some tasks to perform.

**I:** What programs for men do you suggest?

**Bob:** Programs or projects like: long term and short term projects. To me if we could establish a school for the church. Short term project like assisting the men to purchase fertilizers for their crops and pay later.

**I:** Bob Gado, thank you very much for your time.

### **Aduk Azumah**

**I:** Please give a short personal history of yourself.

**Aduk:** I was born into idol worshipping. When the church was started I went but did not know much. My name is Aduk Azumah from Tengpaalug.

**I:** What religion did you belong to before becoming a Christian?

**Aduk:** Idol worshipping.

**I:** How was your life as a non-Christian?

**Aduk:** I was roaming aimlessly chasing girls and looking for juju or medicine. Medicine which nobody could beat me.

**I:** How are felt needs of idol worshipping men met?

**Aduk:** Perform sacrifices to idols to help them get whatever they wanted.

**I:** What is the biggest problem that Kusasi men feel?

**Aduk:** They trust idols and I see this as the biggest problem. The men don't allow their wives to

come to church even though they themselves don't attend.

**I:** What makes idol worshipping appealing to its adherents?

**Aduk:** They believe it will help them. They also believe there is God and there is also idol and so they cannot leave it. Others think it is compulsory. Some think if they failed to do it they will die.

**I:** Why did you leave idol worshipping to become a Christian?

**Aduk:** I was very sick but when pastor told me about Christ in an evangelistic program in village I joined the church and God healed me. When I was sick, there was no medicine I did not do but never got well until I joined the church.

**I:** What did you know about Jesus before you became a Christian?

**Aduk:** I heard that if you gave yourself to Jesus you will be saved. I also heard Jesus came to die for all our sins including our sicknesses.

**I:** What relationships did you develop with church members prior to coming to the church?

**Aduk:** I did not want to listen to them.

**I:** How did you become a Christian?

**Aduk:** When I was sick I was told Christ could heal me so I joined the church during an evangelistic program in my village.

**I:** What makes the church attractive enough to you as compared to idol worshipping?

**Aduk:** Idol worshipping gathering there was no advice given to us concerning our moral lives, but the Church does that always and I have a changed life now.

**I:** In your view, what are some obstacles to male adult church membership in the Kusasi culture?

**Aduk:** Some fear that if they abandon idol worshipping the idol will kill them. Some say the Church is for white men, foreign religion. They say it is through idol worshipping that they can reach their ancestors when they die. When they become Christians they will no more make sacrifices to their ancestors and these ancestors who are unseen members of the family will go thirsty and leave the family to the river side to get water to drink. When the ancestors leave the family, there will be all sorts of calamities.

**I:** How does your faith in Christ impact the way you live as a member of the family?

**Aduk:** Before I and my parents quarreled all the time as if we were equals. But now every week-end we sit together and I read the Bible and we study. Every evening we have devotion except my father who is still a strong idol worshipper.

**I:** How are your felt needs met as a Christian?

**Aduk:** I pray and even if I do not get what I need I still pray.

**I:** I have observed many non-Christians wearing rings on their fingers. What do you know about these rings?

**Aduk:** Rings provide power to protect their lives so that evil powers cannot harm them.

**I:** Why should a Christian not wear such rings?

**Aduk:** Christians believe in only one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Wearing a ring means you believe in other gods.

**I:** Before becoming a Christian what did you do if something went wrong in your life?

**Aduk:** Any problem that came I asked my father to go and consult the soothsayers. They will be told what went wrong and the necessary sacrifices made.

**I:** Now that you are a Christian what will you do if something goes wrong in your life?

**Aduk:** I pray to God to help me.

**I:** What programs and activities in the church are most appealing to you?

**Aduk:** Prayers on Fridays, songs and evangelism.

**I:** How have you been involved in evangelism?

**Aduk:** Yes.

**I:** What are the most frequent questions people ask you during evangelism? How effective has your response been?

**Aduk:** Where is God that we don't see him? If idol worshipping is not good how were we born into idol worshipping families? Some say, "Why do young people also die suddenly?"

**I:** I have observed that on Fridays mosques are full of both young and older men. What do you consider to be the motivating factor for this?

**Aduk:** Muslims teaching does not forbid idol worship. The men go to the mosque and return home and do sacrifices to idols so they are here and there.

**I:** Would you suggest other ways that you think would motivate men to stay in the church?

**Aduk:** If the church is able to get some type of business or project that will help men. They need to be motivated by way of some material rewards. Farming subsidies. We can learn positively from the Muslims who are punctual at all their services except that our motivations are not the same.

**I:** Jacob, thank you very much for your time.

**Aduk:** It is my pleasure.

### **Joe Alem**

**I:** Please give a short personal history of yourself.

**Joe:** Thank you, pastor! My name is Joe Alem from Yapaala. I went to school when I was very young and I got to know God from my friends while in school. It was the Catholic Church at Yapaala that I attended by then. Later on I left the Catholic Church and joined the Lutheran Church in 1983.

**I:** What religion did you belong to before becoming a Christian?

**Joe:** I was born into idol worshipping family. But I joined the Catholic Church and later joined the Lutheran Church because it was not far from my house.

**I:** How was your life as a non-Christian?

**Joe:** I was very young so I cannot remember how it was.

**I:** How are felt needs idol worshipping men met?

**Joe:** Now that I am old and have observed, when they have a problem they know what to do and trust they will get what they need. They go to soothsayers who tell them what to do. Can pour libation. Can kill a fowl. Some of the sacrifices you eat the meat others none.

**I:** What is the biggest problem that Kusasi men feel?

**Joe:** Biggest problem is marriage, funerals, ignorance leading to worries. The greatest problem is how they will get their needs. They always rely on something. Muslims rely on Allah, Christians rely on God and idol worshippers rely on the gods or idols.

**I:** What makes idol worshipping appealing to its adherents?

**Joe:** They believe they can have their needs met. They need many things. Health issues, marriage, good living, long life. When one need is met, they look for another.

**I:** Why did you leave idol worshipping to become a Christian?

**Joe:** Because the friends I went to school with convinced me to join the Catholic Church with them. But now I believe it was God who told me to leave idol worshipping to join the Catholic Church.

**I:** What did you know about Jesus before you became a Christian?

**Joe:** I was young. I only followed my friends to the Catholic Church.

**I:** What relationships did you develop with church members prior to coming to the church?

**Joe:** Not much.

**I:** How did you become a Christian?

**Joe:** Through my friends, like Edmund and others who were a bit older than me.

**I:** What makes the church attractive enough to you as compared to idol worshipping?

**Joe:** Christians do things out of love, they do not discriminate like Muslims. For idol worshippers, they are always afraid that something will happen to them so they make sacrifices and pour libation all the time. They are always afraid. But Christians are free because Jesus has done everything for them. It is better to choose someone who can do things better for you than you doing it yourself but always failing and never doing it good enough.

**I:** In your view, what are some obstacles to male adult church membership in the Kusasi culture?

**Joe:** In short, ignorance.

**I:** Why do you say ignorance?

**Joe:** They know there is God, but they think the Church is a place for playing. But Church is a place we receive blessing and good things from God. They think idol worshipping is where they can get what they need.

**I:** How does your faith in Christ impact the way you live as husband and father?

**Joe:** Thank you. My wife and I believe and trust God. We seldom quarrel. We eat together and pray together. We sit down together and chat all the time. But we are not in the family house alone. There are idol worshippers who do not know God and his love. Their lives are the opposite, always quarreling and fighting and insulting each other. My uncle does not know God. There is problem in extended family system.

**I:** How are your felt needs met as a Christian?

**Joe:** When we have a need we pray. Also I contact other people I believe could be of help to me like my pastor and good Christian friends. I am not afraid to ask because the Bible says so.

**I:** I have observed many non-Christians wearing rings on their fingers. What do you know about these rings?

**Joe:** The rings are for protection and that is as a result of ignorance. Chiefs wear many rings for protection because they are afraid of other people and because they have a lot of needs. The rings are their gods to protect and provide wealth, power and prestige.

**I:** Why should a Christian not wear such rings?

**Joe:** There is one God. Put your faith in him alone. He can do all things for us. We cannot say there will not be troubles or hardship. But God is God. You break the First Commandment when you wear a ring for protection or power. A Christian who wears a ring makes the faith of new believers fall.

**I:** Before becoming a Christian what did you do if something went wrong in your life?

**Joe:** I relied on my parents.

**I:** Now that you are a Christian what will you do if something goes wrong in your life?

**Joe:** Prayer and telling close friends and my pastor.

**I:** What programs and activities in the church are most appealing to you?

**Joe:** Evangelism is number one. I always tell people who Jesus is and what he has done for me.

**I:** How have you been involved in evangelism?

**Joe:** Yes. I deal more with women more than men. Women like gathering and listening to God's word.

**I:** What are the most frequent questions people ask you during evangelism? How effective has your response been?

**Joe:** There are so many Churches, so which is the right church? Do your church do miracles? Can I still worship idols and join your church? Why don't you allow polygamists in the church?

**I:** I have observed that on Fridays mosques are full of both young and older men. What do you consider to be the motivating factor for this?

**Joe:** In the nutshell, it is a matter of faith. Christ has saved us. But some Christians don't think it was an expensive work Christ did for us and so don't take church attendance serious. Muslims started with YOU MUST DO IT or you go astray. So on Friday they must go. You must do something before you are blessed. They have faith that if you don't go to the mosque you will not be blessed.

**I:** Anything we can learn from the Muslims?

**Joe:** They have the commitment but motivated by fear. Eg. Fasting is not compulsory but they have made it compulsory. You must do this and that.

**I:** Would you suggest other ways that you think would motivate men to stay in the church?

**Joe:** Talk to them. Educate them, encourage them. Visitation. Helping them in their problem solving. Men are not easy to understand like women. Togetherness is very important. This is all evangelism. Those in the church should be made to grow in the spirit.

**I:** What is helping you to remain and are active?

**Joe:** It is the Spirit that has made me to cultivate love for people.

**I:** I thank you very much.

**Joe:** Thank you.

## APPENDIX FOUR

### INTERVIEW RESPONSES MAIN POINTS

#### Alako Asam

1. The religion of the father is always the religion of the sons- idol worshiping.
2. Sacrificing to idols, consulting soothsayers are done regularly.
3. *Samanpiid* festival is practiced by all Kusasis annually.
4. Ancestor worship is part of idol worshiping.
5. Wearing of rings is for protection and “good luck.”
6. Christianity is white man’s religion.
7. Christian women don’t show their husbands that their religion is good; they do not exhibit humility and obedience.
8. Men like Islam because they want to be polygamous.
9. Men like Islam because they want to wear rings for protection.
10. Many non-Christians know very little about Jesus.

#### Awam David

1. Idol worshiping is what many men practice.
2. Worship of ancestor goes with idol worship.
3. Soothsaying and consulting soothsayers.
4. Polygamy is a cultural practice and most Kusasi men practice. Those who don’t are the poor men.
5. Christianity is a foreign religion.
6. Many people know very little about what Jesus came to do for us.
7. Protection by way of using rings and amulets is common, especially among young Kusasis because of the tribal wars.

#### Eli Asampam

1. Idol worshiping is the religion of Kusasi men.
2. Sacrificing to idol and ancestors are very common.
3. Soothsaying is done to find out what is wrong in the family and the solution.
4. Evangelism is not effective.
5. Rings and other things are worn for protection.

#### Jim Abaa

1. Evangelism is the means of getting men into the church.

2. Men are interested in soothsaying.
3. Idol worshipers always do soothsaying and make various sacrifices.
4. Polygamy is a common practice among Kusasis, they know it is the right thing for normal person to do.
5. Men look for protection from Muslim leaders and soothsayers.
6. Praying to God is not important.

#### Aduk Azumah

1. Protection against enemies and evil spirits.
2. Idol worshiping.
3. Sacrificing to ancestors for better life and protection.
4. Evangelism is not effective in getting men into the church.
5. Christianity is a white man's religion.
6. Soothsaying instead of praying to God.

#### Bob Gado

1. Muslims believe in prayer and zakat (special donations to poor people) so as to be blessed and protected by Allah.
2. Christianity is a white man's religion.
3. Polygamy is the norm for all men.
4. In Islam a person is expected to be rich financially.
5. Soothsaying and visiting Muslim leaders for medicine for protection.
6. There is no effective teaching about Jesus.
7. Men wear rings for protection against enemies.
8. Fear of witchcraft and ancestors make men do sacrifices

#### Paul Aboko

1. Muslims needs are met through spiritual consultations and obeying the rules.
2. Fear of witchcraft and demonic attacks.
3. Idol worshiping.
4. Sickness and poverty are great needs which Christ cannot solve.
5. Sacrifices are made to ancestors because of fear.
6. Christianity is white man's religion.

#### Joe Alem

1. Idol worship is a common practice.
2. Soothsaying and sacrifice.
3. Pouring of libation to ancestors for protection and safety.
4. Men's needs are healthy family, marriage, long life, many children.
5. Rings are used for protection, some allow the owner to vanish in case of danger.

6. Evangelism is a tool for winning souls.
7. Polygamy is a practice which men think is good for them.
8. Fear witchcraft is a major thing among Kusasis.
9. Islam is a religion of rules which men think when they perform they will get what they want in life.

Ali Anaba

1. Muslims wear rings, amulets and some necklaces for protection and some for money.
2. Good health is the greatest need of men.
3. Many non-Christians know little about Christ. Even some Christians do not know much because they cannot read the Bible.
4. Polygamy is an accepted practice and nobody blames a person who goes for a second wife.
5. Idol worshiping, fear of ancestors and evil spirits are part of their life.
6. Christianity is seen as white man's religion.
7. Fear of witchcraft is another thing many people are in.

Mba Abu

1. Idol worship is practiced by all pagans, even many Muslims consult soothsayers.
2. Witchcraft can kill people so they find protection by worshipping the ancestors.
3. Christianity is a foreign religion to Kusasi people.
4. Idol worship and fear of the ancestors and evil spirits are part of the worldview of Kusasis.
5. Polygamy gives men many children and they are proud of that.



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