

MISSIONS

Second Edition

*An Introductory Course Text for Students Offering Missions and Communications
in Theological Schools and Seminaries*



EGBEYON F. ILENBODIAYE, MA.

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FOREWORD



In the second edition of his book, **Missions**, Rev. Egbeyon F. Ilenbodiaye has gone a long way to challenge his readers with the urgency of the unfinished task that awaits us as the Church. Though I do not have the benefit of perusing the first edition, going through this edition gives the impression that he has left no stone unturned in order to present a timely challenge for all of us to wake up to this unfinished task.

Ilenbodiaye has probed deeply into the realms of Church History, History of Missions, World History, Philosophy, Cross-Cultural Communication, Cultural Anthropology, Islamics and Missiology to challenge every reader with a wake-up call to arise to the Master's mandate. He does not write to leave us in our comfort zone. So he writes clearly and lucidly with incisive observations and in places with appropriate stinging rebuke especially to African missionary effort (Chapter 4).

The closing chapter which presents a summary of unreached people cannot be much more poignant with the startling statistics of how enormous the task that awaits the Church is. It is nothing short of a jolt for the reader to realize that the mandate has hardly been scratched.

To accomplish this effort, Ilenbodiaye has gathered his energy to present a well researched work which should stand the test of time, and take its place as a good resource material for teachers and students of Missions. My earnest desire and prayer is that none should go through this work and return to his or her lethargy as far as Missions and Evangelism are concerned. Let the Church arise with the best of her resources to this enormous task.

Rev. Okpara E. Inworogu, Ph.D

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January 31, 2015

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There has always been an avid desire in me to blaze the trail in this ministry particularly in literary works. This desire was, in one way or another, revitalized about fifteen years ago. In such a long period of time, I have inevitably accumulated many intellectual and spiritual debts, some of which are perhaps unrecognized by my creditors. In particular, however, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of publicly thanking my fathers in the Lord, Rev. Ehigie Isaiah, and Rev. E. L. Onaburekhan, Edo East District Superintendent, for the roles they have played in mentoring and modeling me for the ministry.

I must, most humbly, acknowledge the wonderful contributions of Rev. Dr. O. E. Inworogu, Rector, Nigerian Advanced School of Theology, Ewu, for proofreading the work and writing the foreword. Sir, your work cum people-oriented style of administration, your ability, dedication, impeccable integrity coupled with your friendliness has been an inestimable source of inspiration to me ever since I met you. As a matter of fact, no amount of felicitations can express my profound gratitude to you.

I am particularly grateful to my tolerant, meticulous and eagle-eyed proofreaders: Rev. F. N. C. Obi, H.O.D. Missions and Communications, and my bosom friend and a brother, Rev. Monn Ogbidi, Senior Lecturer. You were fertile in suggestions, ruthless in criticism and vigilant in the detection of errors. I sincerely appreciate these colleagues for editing the manuscript.

For the development and production of the BOOK itself, I feel a deep sense of gratitude to the numerous authors whose works I have rummaged through in order to benefit from their pearls of wisdom. It is noteworthy to say that I am particularly indebted to people like: Lois K. Fuller whose work forms the basis of the first edition of this book, and Stephen Ross, Barrett David, Elijah Maswanganyi, Bruce Britten and A. C. Odogwu. Part of the information contained in chapter ten is an excerpt from your works because I found that I could never have treated the various topics better than the way you did. Notwithstanding, I am solely responsible for any surviving errors in this work.

Finally, I wish to pay a tribute to my amiable wife, Pastor (Mrs.) F. O. Ilenbodiaye for her endless patience and indulgence that gave me the impetus to continue in the drive to produce this fourth book. Honey, you are the Lord's special gift to me, the perfect consort of an academic husband. I owe you a life-long appreciation.

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated first and foremost to the Almighty God who poured his immeasurable grace upon my life and inspired me to put down in writing form what He has impressed upon my heart, and to the loving memory of my late father, Mr. Ilenbodiaye I. Oboh, who taught me early in life to cultivate the useful virtues of humility, transparent honesty, hard-work and commitment to worthwhile enterprises.

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PREFATORY NOTE

During these twenty-four uninterrupted years of my practical pastoral ministries with Assemblies of God Nigeria coupled with my ten years experience as a classroom teacher in teaching this course, INTRODUCTION TO MISSIONS to the diploma graduating students of The Nigerian Advanced School of Theology, Ewu, Edo State, I have observed, among other things, that “Missions” is one of the subjects in which frantic efforts are being made to answer the puzzling questions which exist when we reflect on the existence of man and the immortality of his soul. According to Ben Okafor, “The study of man has gained much interest in the field of theology, philosophy, sociology, psychology, anthropology etc.”¹ However, each of these aforementioned fields has particular area of interest in the study of man.

Man is an intelligent being but he cannot fully understand himself except he teaches himself. It is equally not possible for him to know the primary purpose of his existence unless he sees himself in the light of God's word. Lending support to this assertion, Ugwuanyi writes “Life presents itself more clearly to man when he achieves rationality.”²

Consequent upon the foregoing, it is pertinent that he knows what life is and the purpose why God gave it, for only in so doing can he truly understand himself and live happily in this world. It has been said that, it takes what one knows to introduce him to what he needs. The question “What is Life?” has given rise to different views and assertions, which have grossly affected man's life in one-way or the other.

To the mystic philosophers, life is nothing but a tale that is told. To the great skeptics, life is the by-product of human imagination. The African Traditionalists, in the light of their belief in reincarnation, see life as a reoccurring event. The Evolutionists and most Anthropologists argue that human life is the product of evolutionary processes; that humankind, society and culture evolved from the gradual evolutionary changes. The rich and highly placed in the society see life as a privilege. While the commoner and less privileged see life as a game of chance.³

Besides, if we say that life is the union of the soul and body, the Botanists and Zoologists will object to it because plants and animals don't have soul but have life. If we say that life is the period of time between birth and death, the medical practitioners will disagree because they see life as a thing that exists before birth. A period of time they refer to as prenatal stage. If we also say that life is the state of being alive, the theologians will dispute it because life, to them, goes beyond the grave. In the light of this, Shakespeare wrote “After a man's demise, his fantasy remains.”⁴

The only indisputable and most reliable definitions or views of life are those found in the Holy Scriptures. It should be remarked that Life and Death are critical theological concepts, explored in a number of Old and New Testaments passages. In the creation story, God is portrayed as the source of life for every creature; plant life, animal life, and human life (Gen. 1: 21). In Genesis 2: 7 we read, “And the Lord

God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”⁵ The New Testament uses a number of Greek words to express the concept of life in its different shades of meaning.

The Bible speaks, for instance, of a holy life (bios), of life on earth (psyche), and of eternal life (Zoë). The Greek word ‘Bios,’ which is not frequently used in the NT (only 11 occurrences), is an ethical term that originally deals with one’s lifestyle, and it was later used to denote one’s external moral behaviour. Psyche, which occurred about 103 times, is typically translated soul and is often equated with the inner person or personality.⁶ “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men”⁷ (Jn. 1: 4). Zoë, the third significant Greek word, is used in the classical Greek to refer literarily to the natural life, the principle that enables living things to move as well as to grow.

In a deeper sense, it focuses on the theological meaning of life rather than on the biological. In this sense, Zoë refers to the principle of life that has a meaning that lifts one’s vision beyond the temporal or limited earthly human existence to reveal a unique quality of life, which spans time and eternity and has its root in God.⁸

From the foregoing premises, the conclusion can be drawn that life is the immaterial part in man that is not subject to decay or limited in its span. It is theologically described as a loan or trust given to man by God in that whatever it was that had made the corpse (product of matter) a person and animated the body was gone leaving the body to return to its original source from where it was derived. In addition, “Plato advanced the notion that personality, being moral and immaterial, must continue after the death of the body.”⁹

On the other hand, death, which is a derivative of the Greek ‘thanatos,’ denotes the cessation of breath occasioned by the separation of the God-factor from the matter, and the introduction of the soul to the unseen world. From this also, it can be deduced that human beings are more than mere matter, and that life is more than a passing quality.

The purpose of life is therefore to afford man the opportunity to prepare himself for eternity in heaven or hell depending on his relationship with his creator-God Himself. To further explain, sin separates man from God, a condition described as spiritual death. If an individual remains in this state of spiritual deadness throughout his or her biological lifetime, he or she will stand in misfortune of eternal peril, a condition described as eternal death.¹⁰

In view of the significance and relevance of this preparation, the all-important subject matter ‘Missions’ seeks to guide man in his decision-making processes. It is at this time when we can clearly understand things and make judgments about life that we find ourselves confronted daily with questions and challenges bordering on decision, one of which is to decide what to do with life and to find out how best, and where to invest the rich potentials of life.¹¹

This second edition of the book, *Missions*, which has developed over a period of time is designed to meet some crucial needs in missions’ enterprise. Therefore, I believe that it will prove itself helpful to teachers and students in theological

institutions as well as well-spirited laypersons that are deeply involved in the all-important business of soul winning.

Let it be remarked that everyone who painstakingly studies this book will undoubtedly find it worthwhile to make a constant recourse to it. It should be borne in mind that if life on earth must be blissful and eternity in heaven assured, it follows necessarily that the various lessons presented in this book have to be thoroughly learned and imbibed. On the whole, my earnest prayer and desire is that this book will bring glory to God and great blessing to its readers.

Finally, this edition was necessitated by the fact that new things needed to be added to the work, which led to the inclusion of another chapter, and there are some minor typographical errors and a few other corrections that needed to be made.

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Senior Lecturer/Deputy Registrar, NAST- Ewu

January 12, 2015.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

As a missiologist of no mean repute has pointed out, MISSIONS is too broad to be defined in a simple term. This owes to the fact that the view of people is based on two major characteristics. The first one is *Its Biblical Orientation*, and the second one is *Its Contemporary Focus*. Nevertheless, in order to give the student an overview of the course and to ensure a better understanding as well as help him to approach his study with purpose and enthusiasm, attempt has to be made to define missions and other related terms.

I. MISSION: In the literal sense, Mission is defined as “a ministry commissioned by a religious organization to propagate its faith or carry on humanitarian work.”¹² In the biblical sense, Mission can be defined as the effort of God which has roots in His eternal and redemptive purpose in saving the lost humanity or world.¹³ It can also be described as the total biblical mandate or assignment of the Lord to the Church to go and share the gospel with people of all nations with a view to making disciples for Christ.¹⁴ ‘Mission’ has its source in God and dates back to eternity.

II. MISSIONS: Mission gave birth to Missions. Therefore, missions, being a part of mission, has been defined as the Church in one culture sending forth authorized persons with the Gospel of Jesus Christ to other gospel–destitute areas/cultures for the purpose of winning converts, turning them into disciples and planting indigenous, functioning, and multiplying local churches who will bear fruit of Christianity in these areas.¹⁵ The term ‘Missions’ has to do with all the efforts made by the Church to bring the lost humanity to Christ, so they can taste of the kingdom’s goodness here and hereafter.

In other words, it is the church’s participation in ensuring that God’s program is realized. As Rev. Dr. Charles O. Osueke puts it, “The extent of a church’s real existence... can be measured by how missionary it is.”¹⁶ Put in another term, missions is the logical and natural outflow of the life of Christ through His mystical body, the church. It is the very character and thrust of the Spirit who dwells in everyone who believes in Jesus Christ.¹⁷

III. MISSIONARY: The word “Missionary” is derived from the Latin word “*Mitto*” which means “To Send”. Its Greek equivalent is “*Apostello*” meaning “To Send Forth.”¹⁸ It usually suggests an official or authoritative sending. Thus a missionary is one sent with a commission from a higher authority¹⁹ to preach the Gospel of Christ and win souls to the Kingdom of God.

IV. MISSIOLOGY: This is defined in the literal sense as “The study of the church’s mission especially with respect to missionary activities.”²⁰ In the theological sense, it is seen as “a discipline that deals with the science of missions.”²¹ Missiologists are missionary Pastors that possess a systematic knowledge of the principles governing success in missions’ enterprise.

THE HISTORY OF MISSIONS

It is never a gainsaying that man is a rational being and that his life over the centuries has been characterized by his curious inquiry concerning the past. The assertion has been made that the present is the product of the past and the seed of the future. One reason that has made most Christians to show a special interest in history is because the very foundations of the faith they profess are rooted in it.

The study of the history of missions and of the church is therefore a matter of profound interest to the Christian who earnestly desires to be enlightened concerning his spiritual ancestry. Apart from the fact that church history offers edification, inspiration, or enthusiasm that stimulates spiritual life, one of its numerous values is that it links the past factual data of the Christian gospel with its future proclamation and application.

Any missionary who wants to be successful today must study the history of missions. The intellectuals who propounded the cyclical philosophy of history asserted that history tends to repeat itself when one fails to learn meaningfully from it. The zeal and zest of present day missionaries will increase when they critically and analytically evaluate the activities of past missionaries with a view to finding out the areas they failed, the causes and consequences of their failures as well as the areas they succeeded, what kind of achievements they made, and the factors that were parameter to their successes.²²

Besides, their findings will spell out the principles underlying the successes of those before them as well as help them to take precautionary measures to avert their mistakes. Therefore, we need knowledge of the past events to enable us know the good examples of the past to emulate and to avoid the errors that the church has frequently made.

A careful examination of every available record of missionary activities from the beginning of church age reveals the most sublime, extensive and feasible superintendence of God over human affairs even in their minutest details. God, who planned history, has given out His word that the gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all nations of the world before the end comes. He will continue to watch over His word to see it fulfilled and its goal accomplished notwithstanding the war of extermination waged against Christianity by Satan and his cohorts.

To ensure a proper understanding of the history of missions from its origin to the present day, its activities in general and the events of church history in particular, the story is presented systematically and with a high sense of clarity to reflect on the persons, places, dates, events, ideas and trends in their proper geographical and historical setting with a view to helping the student of church history to grasp its flow with ease and precision.

I. THE ORIGIN OF MISSIONS

God craves after fellowship. The account of the creation of man reveals that man was created primarily for that purpose. Genesis chapter three presents the scene of God's visit to the Garden of Eden, Adam's paternal home, for the purpose of fellowship. But when Adam committed the irrevocable offense of his life by his infringement upon God's sovereign authority, he lost that fellowship to sin and was banished and destined to walk on the path of affliction where thorns and thistles grew (3:17-19). God's whole interest now in man is to remove every barrier to that fellowship. Thus God's first missionary move to the Garden of Eden to seek for Adam and Eve and to save them from guilt, which was the outcome of their fall, became the origin of missions and God is the originator/initiator.

God is mission- minded. We can see His missionary purpose to all nations (World Evangelization) right through the Old Testament. It all started after the fall of man (Genesis 3) when God promised that the 'Seed of the woman' would crush the head of the serpent even though he would also suffer in the process (Gen. 13:15). Sin and defeat came to all people through the ancestor of our race - Adam. The defeat of sin and Satan will come for all Adam's descendants (all nations) through this promise. This promise, of course, has been fulfilled in the 'Person' and 'Work' of Christ.

II. MISSIONS IN OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

It has been said that, one's personal philosophy of life is the greatest determinant factor in how it works out. The same goes for Missions. One's understanding of the concept missions will determine his attitude towards it as well as his involvement in it. The method of evangelism adopted by the Old Testament believers pre-supposes their shallow understanding of the subject matter, missions.

God set the nation of Israel aside and gave them the privilege and mandate to reach the entire universe for Him with a view to getting sinners converted. Unfortunately, they could not accomplish that missionary purpose/objective. Their failure was consequent upon their distorted perception of missions. The nation's approach to missions can best be described as a thing that had CENTRIPETAL emphasis. People of other nations were called upon to come to Judaism and be proselytes.²³ This was by adopting the Jewish ceremonial rites and culture. The underlying implication was that their converts lost their true national identity.

There is a difference in the New Testament Era. The approach and emphasis now is CENTRIFUGAL missions. Instead of the Christians to wait for the sinners to come into the church to look for salvation by themselves, they (Christians) are expected or rather mandated to reach out to them (sinners) at any cost and through every affordable means be it natural or scientific, simple or complex.

Missions can best be described as a divine imperative. The command of Christ in Matthew 28:18- 20 and Mark 16:16-18 are centrifugal in nature. This Great Commission is not necessarily an imposition on the church, rather, it is consistent with her very nature. The church derives her character from God who is essentially a missionary. The church, therefore, is intrinsically missionary. The church does not

have to be made missionary. She is already missionary in nature. “The essence of “Church hood” is missions. A church ceases to be one when it is no longer missionary.”²⁴ Lending support to this assertion, Emil Bruner remarks, “The church exists by missions, as fire exists by burning.”²⁵

III. THE YEARS OF PREPARATIONS

One wonders why God allowed the time gap between when the promise of the Messiah was made in Genesis 3: 8 and its fulfillment as in Luke 2: 8-21. It should be noted that God was not hasty in sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to the earth in human form to carry out His redemptive plan despite the fact that souls were perishing. Paul draws our attention to the historic era of providential preparations and timing, which brought the world to a state of readiness to receive the missionary message (Galatians 4: 4).

A careful consideration of the events that preceded the appearance of Christ on earth will naturally lead the sober student of history to acknowledge the fact that these contributions made at different times by different people aided in bringing historical, spiritual and intellectual development to the point where Christ could make the maximum impart on history in a way not possible before the time of His birth. Ajah, in his book entitled *The Church Militant* mentioned the preparations God made in the world to unite it into one great community before the advent of Jesus Christ.

A. INTELLECTUAL PREPARATION: The Roman government put in place some political structures that were overshadowed by the intellectual environment the Greek mind, particularly the Athenians, had provided. God used their serious thoughts and great ideas to create such environment that favoured the birth and nurture of the church as well as aided in the propagation of the gospel message. Some of these great intellectuals who prepared the people mentally for the gospel include the following persons:

- 1. Thales of Miletus (640?-546 BC):** He set the ball of philosophy rolling by rejecting the traditional belief of the people about the universe. In order to shake the heathen loose from their polytheistic inclination, he proposed that instead of gods and goddesses just doing whatever they pleased about the operation of the universe, there are some permanent laws, which are governing the world.²⁶
- 2. Pythagoras (582-510 BC):** He lived in the southern part of Italy. His philosophical inquiries and quest for salvation having been satisfied by religion, roused people’s minds for a form of religion that would bring one into personal contact with his God. As a celebrated mathematician and philosopher, he talked about infinitude, an idea he got from his study of numbers.
- 3. Parmenides of Elea (475? BC):** His major philosophical reasoning was that polytheism was stupid, adding that there must be only one God. “He insisted that God existed and could have no beginning or an end.”²⁷
- 4. Socrates of Athens (469-399 BC):** He pointed out that the Greek gods were immoral and could not be a good example of virtue to human beings. He is also

reputed for asserting that virtue lies in the middle. Socrates, the famous Greek philosopher, was brought to trial and eventually condemned to death for such charges as corrupting the youths and for attacking the sacred truths of religion and the state.²⁸ However, he is remembered today as an example of one who lived by his principles though they ultimately cost him his life. "Neglecting his own affairs, he spent his time discussing virtue, justice, and piety wherever his fellow congregated."²⁹

5. **Plato of Athens (427-347 BC):** He was born amidst aristocratic surroundings. As a student under Socrates and the man who introduced idealism into philosophical reasoning, he planned to enter politics but gave up that goal when Socrates, whom he admired and followed, was sentenced to death by the state.³⁰ As an idealist, he argued that every object today originated from a certain mind. He used this to prove that the universe could not have existed physically if it did not first exist in a certain mind.
6. **Aristotle of Macedonian (384-322 BC):** He was a philosopher, scientist and an educator. As a student of Plato and a realist, he is widely considered as one of the most influential thinkers in Western civilization. He opposed Plato's idealism. Having been greatly intrigued by the phenomenon of motion, he, in his bid to solve this mystery, made up his mind that there must be one 'unmoved mover.'³¹ As an ethicist, he asserted that man needs to discover values and the meaning of things especially in view of the fact that life forces him to make choices and to act on the basis of some scale of values. That man necessarily has to decide questions of truth and falsity, of beauty and ugliness, and of right and wrong.³²

B. RELIGIOUS PREPARATION: As Christianity may be thought to have developed in the political milieu of Rome, Judaism may as well be thought of as the stalk on which it blossomed. God greatly used the nation of Israel to prepare the world through a religion, which had its emphasis on a sound spiritual monotheistic worship that existed in striking contrast to the generality of pagan polytheistic religions.

The Jews provided an institution, the establishment of synagogues all over the place; that was most useful in the rise and development of early Christianity. These synagogues were the learning centers where the Old Testament scriptures were taught. As they provided the infant church with its message, the Old Testament, so the synagogues they built everywhere became the first place in every city where preachers went to when they began to tour the world with the gospel of salvation. In addition to this, the Jewish people offered to the world the hope of a coming Messiah who would establish righteousness on earth and bring peace to His people. This atmosphere of expectancy, among other things, helped the gospel to realize its goal.

C. CULTURAL PREPARATION: The up-hill task of uniting the then known World into one great community began with the military conquests of the illustrious Macedonian General, Alexander the Great. Alexander ascended the throne at the

age of 20 and his trail linked three continents as he vigorously pursued his father, Philip's dream to conquer Persia that the knife of his assassin had almost bastardized. "The single decade that brought him from youth to death took him beyond the known boundaries of civilization."³³ Aristotle his private teacher told him, "To rule well, first be ruled"³⁴ and he also gave him a copy of Homer's Iliad, which became his most treasured possession.

History reports that though he was rich in glory and plunder but his thirst for fame and his questing spirit drove him on. Arian, commenting on his aspirations, wrote:

Alexander had no small or mean conceptions, nor would ever have remained contented with any of his possessions... but would always have searched far beyond... being always the rival, if of no other, yet of himself.³⁵

Alexander's most famous address to his army as recorded by Arian, reads:

I set no limits of labours to a man of spirit, save only that the labours themselves... lead on to noble enterprises... It is a lovely thing to live with courage, and to die, leaving behind an everlasting renown.³⁶

From Alexander's conquests that brought about the Greek settlement in all the land came the Hellenization of the world. By Hellenization, we mean the spread of Greek culture and the conversion of all the peoples of the world into the Greek way of life. According to Prof. P. O. Ajah,

This Hellenization program was so successful that the Greek language became the common language of the entire then-known world. Imagine how difficult spreading the gospel would have been if the people of the world were still estranged from one another by the confusion of languages?³⁷

Lending support to this assertion Cairns remarked, "The universal gospel was in need of a universal language if it was to make maximum impart on the world."³⁸

D. POLITICAL PREPARATION: God raised the Roman government to bring about the development of a sense of the unity of mankind under a universal law. He used its special governmental powers to unite the whole world then under the auspices of Caesar Augustus, the Roman Emperor, to prepare the world politically for the advent of Christ. The world was under one law and one judge, Caesar who had no rival. This sense of solidarity in the empire created an environment favourable to the reception of a gospel that proclaimed the unity of the human race in the universal organism, the Christian church called Christ's mystical body.

The Romans developed an excellent system of good roads radiating out from the city, connected them to army garrisons built all over the place, and stationed soldiers everywhere to maintain law and order. This political

environment known for its peace, security, safety and easy movements was favourable to the spread of Christianity in the days of its infancy. It made it possible for preachers and missionaries to spread the gospel without fear of being attacked by robbers and pirates.

E. IMMEDIATE PREPARATION: The birth, ministry of Jesus Christ, His death and the unprecedented events surrounding His glorious resurrection, are other factors that contributed to the spread of the gospel from the City of Jerusalem to other parts of the earth. The birth of Christ is a mystery that has continued to make everyone to become sober. God ordained that His Son be born of a human mother so He might live a complete human life. A virgin of Nazareth, Mary, who was divinely chosen for the singular honour of becoming the mother of the Son of God, was found with child after having been overshadowed by the Holy Spirit. This manner of conception, which defied the natural laws, is a fact that gives credence to the gospel of salvation.

More so, the Jews rejected the messiahship of Christ, sniffed at the kind of gospel He came to preach, opposed His claims as one equal with God and felt that He, having blasphemed, should be crucified. But when they, together with the Roman centurion who stood by, saw the darkness following His death and the veil of the temple that got torn among other signs, they confessed that Jesus was no mortal.

As discussed above, these various levels of preparations, which God used the Roman government as well as different people to make in the world before the birth of the Church were the factors that served as catalysts to its development and expansion. If these structures were not in place as at AD 33, what would have become of the church in its infancy in the face of the inimical oppositions that threatened its very existence? God cannot and will never be overtaken by events including those that seem to be unprecedented because as one who knows the end from the beginning, He will always make adequate preparations before ever they start to unfold.

IV. THE BIRTH OF THE CHURCH

The City of Jerusalem is obviously the place where the church of Christ began. Earle Cairns remarked, "That the very center of bitterest enmity to Christ should have become the city where Christian religion first emerged seems paradoxical, but such was the case."³⁹ It was altogether fitting that the church of Christ should first be established in Jerusalem since it was the capital city of the nation of Israel, which gave the world its Saviour and was the scene of the Lord's death, His burial, resurrection and ascension.⁴⁰

It is on record that Jesus began His ministry of preaching, teaching, and healing about the age of thirty, using the town of Capernaum as his main base. His handpicked disciples were ordinary Jewish citizens. Some of them were fishermen, one came from the socially despised tax collectors, and the others similarly came from low-ranking occupations.

Nevertheless, He used His unique and exemplary lifestyle coupled with His teaching to transform the personalities and temperaments of these selected individuals. When Pontius Pilate crucified Christ, it appeared to His disciples that everything had come to an end. Seeing the fate of their teacher and master, they feared for their lives and thought that what they had been privileged to see and hear for three years now turned out to be a mistaken dream.⁴¹

However, the post resurrection appearances of Jesus to His disciples did not only restore hope to them and transformed them from fear and doubt, but they were also motivated to proclaim that message in various parts of the world without fear. Schmidt remarked,

So convinced and motivated were they that according to well-attested tradition, all except the Apostle John signed their testimony in blood by dying for what they preached and wrote.⁴²

History had it that Jews from all parts of the Mediterranean world were present at Jerusalem to observe the Feast of Pentecost at the time of the founding of the Church. On the Day of Pentecost, the day the church was officially proclaimed into existence, the Holy Spirit came upon the 120 believers including the disciples who were in the 'Upper Room'. The unprecedented experience made a scene that afforded Peter ample opportunity to preach a message that was so impactful that about 3, 000 persons who accepted the word were baptized into the church that day.

The growth of the church was so rapid that it began to have great opposition and severe persecutions. At first, the persecution was religiously motivated. But later it became primarily political. Through documented church history, we could see the struggles of its fledging existence and also the numerous attempts to stop the advancement of the church and the resistance the body put up to such attempts at the costly price of its followers.

The Sanhedrin, who constituted the ecclesiastical authorities of that time, rallied their forces to combat Christianity upon the realization that Christianity offered a threat to their prerogatives as interpreters and priests of the law. Having obtained Roman permission with which they supervised the civil and religious life of the state, they let loose their unquenchable anger on the church and persecuted it savagely. The war of extermination waged against the church by the religious and political authorities continued unabated resulting in the cruel death of thousands of defenseless Christians. Emperor Nero resorted to using Christians as human torches to illuminate his gardens at night during banquets.⁴³

Notwithstanding, Christianity spread throughout the regions amidst persecutions and oppositions from reigning emperors and Jewish religious authorities. The glory of the church is that it rests upon Jesus Christ, the solid foundation. By virtue of this implication, it can neither be destroyed nor be extinguished come what may.

V. THE GROWTH AND EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH

The Early Church that was planted in Jerusalem like a mustard seed, grew and spread so greatly that before the end of the third century, its impact was already felt everywhere around the world. Two major factors brought about the expansion of the church. On one hand, the church grew spontaneously as a living cell in the Body of Christ. On the other hand, the growth was necessitated by the outbreak of severe persecutions by both the religious and political authorities of that time.

A. THE APOSTOLIC PERIOD (AD 30-100): When the disciples tended to quench the fire of evangelism ignited on the Day of Pentecost, God left them at the mercy of some heartless Roman Emperors who persecuted them severely. Ajah remarks that “History reports no mightier, longer and deadlier conflict than this war of extermination waged by heathen Rome against defenseless Christianity...”⁴⁴ Some of these merciless emperors include:

- 1. Emperor Nero (AD 54-68):** This emperor was a tyrant and despotic leader. Rumor had it that he set Rome on fire in his mad ambition to rebuild it and name it after himself. But when he was suspected of the act, he alleged that the Christians did it. This false allegation resulted in a very severe persecution of Christians in his days.
- 2. Emperor Domitian (AD 81-96):** He was the fierce persecutor who made himself “lord and god”, and demanded that all must worship him. But when Christians objected to it, a severe persecution broke out that claimed the lives of Andrew, Mark, Onesimus, Dionysius- the Areopagite. Hundreds of other martyrs are believed to have gone to their early graves in the Coliseum, Roman amphitheatre where many sightseers were entertained with martyr relics (Christians thrown to the wild animals).⁴⁵

Jewish tradition has it that it was during the wave of persecution brought by this heartless man that Apostle John suffered many things before he was finally banished to the Island of Patmos where he wrote the Book of Revelation.
- 3. Emperor Trajan (AD 98-117):** He was described as exceedingly wicked and mostly remembered as the first man to proscribe Christianity as “a secret society” and a “*religio illicit*”. It was in his own time that Ignatius of Antioch and Symeon of Jerusalem were martyred.
- 4. Emperor Hadrian (AD 117-138):** Though he did not personally kill Christians, he is today described as a compromiser because he upheld Trajan’s proscription of the religion. He granted the profession of Christian faith a criminal status, worthy of death, and in order to insult both Christians and the Jews, he erected a temple of Jupiter and of Venus at the traditional sites of the temple of Jerusalem and the crucifixion. In his own days, Christians were accused of many heinous offenses such as cannibalism, atheism and incest.⁴⁶
- 5. Emperor Marcus Aurelius (AD 161-180):** He is described in the pages of history as a very crude and heartless emperor. Ajah noted that he ignored all the apologies that Christians wrote him without ever finding time to read any. It was in his days that Justin Martyr shed his blood for the faith and a famous girl and

virgin, Bladinda was martyred, so did Ponticus, a boy of fifteen. The natural way that Christians survived those days was that these persecutors and butchers became tired in time.⁴⁷

6. Emperor Diocletian (AD 303–311): This man is best described today as a callous, crude and merciless emperor who spared neither age nor sex, not even rank. He chose to concentrate all his talents on the extermination of the seemingly defenseless church which did not seem to have had any chance to survive because this wicked emperor arranged for a systematic destruction of the “troublesome religion” throughout the empire.

However, there were some other factors that hampered the spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire during this period.

- The first Christians were mostly people of little education and socio-political status in the society who had little or no natural influence.
- The expected Messiah, to the Jews, came from a poor family. This descent invariably disagreed with the official Jewish theology on many points.
- The Romans did not like Christians because of their refusal to say “Caesar is lord” and for not sacrificing to Roman gods.
- The Christians were accused of many heinous offenses such as atheism, infanticide, incest and cannibalism due to the fact that they held their meetings in secret places.
- The Popes taught the doctrines of *Transubstantiation* (The Bread and Wine which are used as symbols for communion becoming the real body and blood as developed by Cyprian of Carthage), and *Consubstantiation* (The actual substantial presence and combination of the body and blood of Christ with the Eucharistic bread and wine according to a teaching associated with Martin Luther).

B. THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS (AD 100-313 AND BEYOND): These were the set of church leaders who took over from the apostles. They are very important in church history because they link up the apostolic age with the subsequent generations and because they were the interpreters of the apostles to all the world of the proceeding generations.

- 1. Clement of Rome (AD 30-101):** He was a bishop, teacher and prolific writer who was well versed in the Old Testament Scriptures and had great influence in Caesar’s household. He wrote his famous “Epistle to the Corinthians.”
- 2. Polycarp of Smyrna (AD 69-155):** He was a devout bishop who was known for his invincible determination to stand for Christ in the face of trials. He said “Fourscore and six years have I been his servant and He hath done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my king who saved me?”⁴⁸
- 3. Flavius Justinus of Samaria (AD 100-163):** He was a philosopher and the foremost apologist of the second century. He was popularly known as Justin Martyr. He directed his first Apology to Emperor Antoninus Pius and his adopted sons. In it he earnestly urged the emperors to examine the charges

against Christians and to free them from legal disabilities if they were found to be innocent.

He argued that Christians are not atheists or idolaters adding that their persecution is an unreasonable project. He introduced the gospel of Christ as the best philosophy of life. He was honoured for writing apologies and dialogue. In his dialogue, he endeavored to convince the Jews that Jesus Christ is the Messiah.

Nevertheless, he introduced what is known in theology as Subordination. Justin and other Apologists taught that the “Son” is a creature but of a higher nature hence powerful enough to create the world. He maintained that before the creation of the world, God was alone and that there was no Son. Within God, however, there was “Reason” or “Mind” (Logos). When God desired to create the world, He needed an agent to do this for Him. This necessity arose out of the Greek view that God cannot concern Himself with another.

- 4. Ignatius (AD 110-200):** Bishop of Antioch in Syria was a polemicist that directed his letters towards the heretical teaching called Docetics. The Docetists sought to keep Christ a purely spiritual being, free from any contamination by a material body, adding that only a phantom (without substantial existence), suffered on the cross. He was the first to use the terms Christianity and Catholic.

In his own days, though there was no law against Christianity, professing Christ was considered to be a capital offense. As a matter of fact, it was allegiance to the name of Christ that brought believers into conflict with the Roman authorities, and anyone who professed the name was liable to be put to death.⁴⁹

- 5. Irenaeus (AD 130-202):** Was a native of Asia Minor. He was a disciple of Papias and of Polycarp, and bishop of Lyons. As a renowned and most outstanding of all polemicists of his generation, he directed his five-volume work specifically against Gnosticism. He was an Anti-Gnostic polemicist and one of the scholarly men who were able to use their gifts to confront the new movements, Gnosticism and Docetism.⁵⁰ Tradition has it that he was martyred during the wave of persecution which came upon the church in the days of Emperor Septimus Severus in AD 202.

- 6. Clement of Alexandria (AD 150-220):** He was a teacher and philosopher known, respected and now remembered mainly for his labours as an instructor in Alexandrian school. He instructed that philosophy is from God and should be used to serve the purposes of Christ and the church. As a matter of fact, Ajah noted that Clement

...Suggested that some of the truths which were found among the statements of some of the heathen philosophers were there either because those philosophers were directly inspired by God or because they had borrowed from the inspired Old Testament prophets.⁵¹

- 7. Tertullian of Carthage– North Africa. Today’s Tunisia and Algeria (AD 155-230):** Tertullian was won to the faith by the powerful effect which the death of martyrs had on unbelievers because rather than destroying the church, the death of Christians actually increased admiration and respect for them. Tertullian

declared, "Martyrdom is the bait that wins men for our school... the blood of Christians is seed...."⁵² He was a reputable lawyer, polemicist and an apologist. He was also the founder of Western Theology and the first person to use the term "Trinity."

As a legal luminary, he demanded that Christians be given fair hearing and trial that all other accused persons enjoyed in Rome.⁵³ He taught rhetorics and was reputed for apologetics and polemics writings, which were directed against Gnosticism (esoteric knowledge of spiritual truth held by the ancient Gnostics to be essential to salvation).

8. Origen of Alexandria (AD 185-254): He was a theologian and prolific writer of no mean repute. At the age of 18, he became the head of Catechetical school. Origen was known and respected for his exceptional intelligence, his many writings, his work as a teacher and his exegetical work on the Scriptures. As a prolific writer, he wrote more books than any single person can possibly read in a lifetime. Some people estimated his works at Six Thousand (6000). His father's name was Leonides, one of the martyrs for Christ, who died leaving a family of six for Origen to care for at the age of 16 years.

As reputable as Origen was, it is unfortunate to remark that he made some outstanding mistakes.

1. He thought of Christ as subordinate to the Father.
2. He believed that Christ's death is a ransom to Satan also.
3. He held the ideas of the pre-existence of the soul and final restoration of all spirits; and
4. He denied a physical resurrection.

However, he is regarded as an exegetist, a renowned theologian, teacher, church father and the most intelligent man that history has ever had.

9. Cyprian of Carthage (AD 200-258): Cyprian was a successful teacher of rhetorics and a wealthy lawyer who was famous for his learning and eloquence, and was a man of high social status. He is regarded as the greatest bishop of the third century because of his great talent in church organization. He was an administrator per-excellence. He developed the doctrine of transubstantiation and was the originator of autocratic church government. In the face of martyrdom, Cyprian and others were given chance to change their minds, but they remained loyal to Christ, declaring: "We render honour to Caesar as Caesar, but worship and prayer belong to God alone."⁵⁴

10. Eusebius of Caesarea (263-339): Eusebius was a wealthy and educated man born in Palestine during the reign of Emperor Gallienus. Though hardly anything is known of him during his early years, the major influence on his life was that of the presbyter Pamphilus who was a scholar of considerable repute, and was dedicated to the spread of sound learning. Eusebius was elected bishop of Caesarea in 314. He became a firm friend of Emperor Constantine and their admiration was mutual.

His greatness lies essentially in his work as a historian, which remains an inestimable value to the Church, and he was the first writer to attempt a history on a grand scale, setting the pattern for future historians to follow. This explains why he is regarded as the 'Father of Church History' in that scholars are indebted to him for his monumental and authoritative account of the story of the Early Church, its persecutions and martyrdoms, its heresies and divisions.⁵⁵

- 11. Ambrose of Rome (340-397):** Ambrose came from a Roman noble family which had a long Christian pedigree. He studied law and was appointed to the court of the Praetorian Prefect of Italy and was later promoted to the position of a Consular Magistrate. His qualities as a magistrate stood him out as a conscientious and genuinely religious officer. He was consecrated bishop of Milan due to his awesome qualities. He was known to be a famous preacher who had genuine humanitarian concern, not only for his own flock but for the universal church. He is respected for establishing the principle of the authority of the Church above that of the State, and for fighting successfully for orthodox doctrine and a Church based on the deity of Jesus Christ.⁵⁶
- 12. Jerome of Bethlehem (345-420):** Jerome was born by well-to-do Christian parents who taught him the rudiments of the Christian faith and also gave him an expensive education. After completing his education, he decided to renounce his secular ambitions and live a life of contemplation. He joined a colony of hermits living in the Syrian Desert in an attempt 'to find God.' Jerome studied Hebrew and later went to Rome on invitation where he became a secretary to Bishop of Damascus and was able to further use his translation skills. He translated the Vulgate and produced Bible commentaries on the prophets, and corresponded with individuals about their spiritual problems, especially exhorting them to follow after chastity.⁵⁷
- 13. Augustine of Thagaste, modern Algeria, North Africa (354-431):** Augustine was an intelligent man who had his early and decent education at a local school. His Christian influence was mainly from his Christian mother, Monica. In his teenage years, he was unwillingly going to the church with his mother, but usually paid more attention to the girls than the sermon.⁵⁸ Yet it was the consistent witness and persistent prayers of his believing mother that finally brought about his salvation. After his education, he moved to Milan in 383 where he became a professor of rhetoric. He later became the Bishop of Hippo and wrote over one hundred treatises and opposed five different heretics. The church is indebted to him for his teaching which is described as the highest attainment of religion since apostolic times.

END NOTES FOR PREFATORY NOTES/ CHAPTER ONE

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THE BIBLICAL BASIS OF MISSIONS

Nothing is more important to God in this world than man and there is nothing more important to God in man than the very nucleus of his life – the soul. This is shown in God’s deep involvement in the work of mission and missions. God created man on purpose and for a purpose. The question “Who or what is Man,” has gained the attention of most scholars namely Philosophers, Anthropologists, Psychologists, Sociologists etc. On the other hand, the question “Why did God create man in His own image?” which has been a subject of inquiry to Theologians is one of the reasons for this work.

The importance of the biblical basis of missions is predicated on the fact that we would not know that God has a purpose for creating man unless He had revealed it to us. The study of the biblical basis of missions brings this knowledge to us. It takes us out of the abysmal ignorance of God’s purpose for creating man in His own image, which He has shown us in His word.¹ God’s divine plan for the whole world and our part in that scheme of work are written in the Bible. As a matter of necessity, we will turn to it now with a view to finding out what that divine revelation is all about.

The Bible teaches that all problems and ills of the human race are ultimately traceable to its alienation from God who is the true source of goodness and peaceful life. The veteran preacher, M. A. Ootobo of blessed memory, in one of his thought provoking sermons remarked that the greatest evil that Satan has done to man is to displace him from the position God put him. As a consequence of man’s sin, he was separated from God and left to lead a miserable life of uncertainties. What a tragic event! As it is written:

And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever; therefore, the Lord God sent him out of the Garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed Cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden, and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life [Gen. 3: 22- 24].²

But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you.... [Isa. 59: 2].³

The fact can be established in view of this diagnosis that the only reliable and most efficacious therapy that can be prescribed for a spiritually meaningful life is redemption from sin and rehabilitation in fellowship with God. Abdiyan remarked, “But this is something beyond the power of the natural man who is so miserably stuck in the quicksand of sin that the more he tries to extricate himself the deeper he sinks.”⁴ Consequently, if he were to trace his way back to God, he would have

forever remained lost in hopelessness and total obscurity. But thanks and glory be to God that salvation is made possible only through Christ.

I. CHRIST AND MISSIONS

As we have seen, God the Father is a missions-minded God. Having planned history, He gave the Bible- His written word (Logos) with a view to bringing people of all nations to Himself. The greatest act of His missions' concern was to send the greatest missionary, Jesus His son, into the world to die a vicarious death.⁵ The birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ were for missions. Not only did He train his disciples and sent them forth for missions, He too was actively involved in missions. Moved by love and compassion for sinners, He (Christ) went to various places to seek and save them. Christ visited such places as Galilee, Samaria and Judea in order to give the people salvation and eternal life. He equally visited Lebanon, Syria and Jordan (Mk. 7: 31; 8: 27; Matt. 4: 25).

Lois Fuller argued that the attitude of Jesus coupled with His lifestyle is the supreme examples for us as missionaries. We have to learn as well as imbibe them. The following are the examples he identified:

1. He humbled Himself as a servant (Phil. 2: 5-8).
2. He identified with those he came to win by becoming like them (incarnation- Heb. 2: 4-18; 4:15).
3. He faced the work with an undivided loyalty and attention (Matt. 4:1-11).
4. He delighted in His work and made it His food and joy (Lk. 10:17- 21; Jn. 4: 34).
5. He felt the urgency of His work (Jn. 9:4; Mk. 1:35-39, Jn. 4: 35).
6. He relied on prayer and urged us to pray for more workers (Lk. 10: 2; Mt. 9: 38).
7. His last request was that we should carry on this work of missions (Matt. 28: 18-20; Acts 1: 8).⁶

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND MISSIONS

Missions programme is trinitarian activity involving the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. This trinitarian involvement is exemplified by the fact that each of the three Persons in the Godhead has been active in a very special way apart from the collective efforts being made.

A. The Holy Spirit Is Also a Sent One. He was sent into the world in a special way at Pentecost. Notwithstanding, He had been active in the world in various ways before that time. Jesus sent Him into the world to replace Him as the divine presence with believers⁷ (Jn. 16: 7). His ministry to believers is principally to teach, encourage and empower them (Jn. 14: 26; 16:13-15). In addition to that, He has a missionary ministry to unbelievers in convicting (Jn. 16: 8-11) and regenerating them⁸ (Jn. 3: 8).

B. The Holy Spirit as the Director of the Missionary Enterprise. The book of Acts of the Apostles shows the all-important role of the Spirit in the Church's

missionary outreaches to new nations and peoples all over the world.⁹ These are some of the observations that someone has made to that effect.

1. The Mission could not begin until the Holy Spirit came (Acts 1: 4-5).
2. He alone provides power for missions' works (Acts 1: 8).
3. He sent Philip to speak to the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8: 28).
4. He told Peter to go to the Gentile (Cornelius, a Roman soldier stationed in Caesarea Acts 10:1-33) and authenticated the conversion of the Gentiles in the presence of the Jews who were unwilling to accept them into the church¹⁰ (Acts 10: 44- 47).
5. It was the Holy Spirit who told the prophets and teachers at Antioch to send out the first Missionary team (Acts 13: 2), and He also told Apostle Paul that he was to be a missionary to the Gentiles (Acts 9: 15, 16).
6. It was the report of the Spirit's work that guided the decision of the Jerusalem Council to accept Gentiles freely into the church without making them Jews first by submitting to circumcision among other rites¹¹ (Acts 15: 7-12).
7. It was the Holy Spirit who prevented the Missionaries from going to Asia Minor or Bithynia (16:6-7). Instead, He directed them to Troas where they got the Macedonian call to a whole new continent (16: 8-10).¹²
8. The leaders that the Holy Spirit raised up for the new churches were gifted to be overseers (20: 28).

III. THE CHURCH AND MISSIONS

The Church exists by Missions while mission exists for the church. Mission involves God's program in His plan to save the lost humanity while missions has to do with the participation of the church in that divine program.

Let it be understood that just as the 'Father' sent the Son on a mission into the world, He came and had procured redemption with His own blood, so has the 'Son' sent the 'Church,' His mystical body, on a mission into the world for the actualization of God's redemptive programme.

In the words of A. E. Ogba, "The mission of the church on earth is to rescue men and women, youths and children of this age from the slavery of sin and the tyranny of Satan, the evil one."¹³ It is rather unfortunate that the 21st century Christian Church, like the Church of Ephesus (Rev. 2: 1- 5), has forsaken missions, which is the ultimate purpose of her existence on earth. The pursuit of fleeting things of this life such as education, power, fame, money and material wealth, has invariably taken the place of a natural outflow of a passion for the lost or perishing sinners that used to be the most characteristic feature of the Church.

Worst still, instead of the Christians of the 21st century to use the facilities provided by modern technology to further enhance their productivity and effectiveness in soul winning, they sit back in their oases, church edifices, cathedral or whatever they are called; and are enjoying the comforts brought about by these technologies. They have forgotten that praise and worship offered to God are not complete until they are coupled with service to mankind, the most significant of

which is soul-winning. That God Himself is intensely concerned with the salvation of sinners needs no mentioning. The veteran prophet remarked, "Do I have pleasure at all that the wicked should die? Says the Lord God, and not that he should turn from his ways and live?"¹⁴ (Ezekiel 18: 23, 32; 33: 11).

Consequent upon the church's neglect of her duty and subsequent failure to fulfill the purpose of her existence, she has ceased to be relevant in God's redemptive program. Therefore, if the church would regain her credibility and remain relevant in God's scheme of events for this end time, she must go back to her first love for God, commitment to His work, and passion for rescuing the perishing.¹⁵

According to Gibbs, "The church that does not go with the gospel will soon be gone."¹⁶ In the same progression, he noted, "The curse that came upon the people of Meroz, was not because of any wrong thing they did, but because of the right thing they failed to do"¹⁷ (Judges 5: 23). General Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, who was consumed with passion for lost souls, more especially with Christians' indifference towards the plight of the unsaved decried,

... Every Christian ought to be sent to hell for a week; for this would make a lost eternity so real to him, he would spend the rest of his life on earth in seeking to deliver people from the possibility of eternal damnation.¹⁸

What is more, King Solomon in his days equally cried out against the enormity of this aberrance especially that which has to do with willful neglect of one's duties. It is an established fact that an investor who ceases to make investments, causes the value of his capital to depreciate with the passing of time. In like vein, if a farmer neglects to plow and sow his fields in the spring, he would invariably face the prospect of empty barns at harvest time, unless he desires a harvest of weeds.¹⁹ In relation to soul winning, a Christian who gives nothing to the Lord or does nothing for Him, is good for -nothing.²⁰

Examples abound in the scriptures of well-spirited laymen who did not wait to become pastors before launching into the fields to harvest ripened souls into God's kingdom.

1. Priscilla and Aquilla are examples of early Christians who moved around and started churches wherever they went (Acts 18:18-19, 26).
2. Apollos was another traveling preacher (Acts 18: 27, 28).
3. The churches had "apostles" or missionaries whom they sent with Paul's team (Acts 20: 4, II Cor.8: 23).
4. The word of God sounded forth from the Thessalonians Church to Macedonia and Achaia (I Thess. 1: 8).
5. All Asia heard God's word while Paul was teaching in Ephesus (Acts 19:10, 26; Col. 1: 4-7) although it seems that he himself did not travel out to other towns.
6. The Philippians supported Paul' missionary work financially (Phil. 4:14-18) and Paul asked the Ephesians for prayer support (Eph. 6:18-20).

7. Unknown missionaries carried the gospel everywhere and churches were planted In Rome, Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and Britain.

In fact, a church without a missionary outreach is unknown in the New Testament, and cannot be considered a church in the true sense of the word. The church has three main responsibilities in the world: *Evangelism, Fellowship* and *Service to mankind*, but Evangelism or soul-winning programme was what Christ stressed as he was leaving. In order for missions to be theocentric as well as holistic in nature, it has to be evangelism coupled with social concern. The account of the fall of man in Genesis teaches that God cares for the whole man. God used the blood of the animal He killed to cover the sin of Adam and Eve, and clothed their nakedness with the animal skin. Consequently,

A church which is so busy in evangelism; without any concern or desire to respond to the social pressures upon human life in society, is a church which has misunderstood the life transforming thrust of the gospel itself.²¹

However, the social aspect of the gospel should not be stressed out of proportion. As Utah puts it, "All social action without the 'spiritual dimension' is not God-glorifying."²²

Using Assemblies of God Nigeria as a case study, a brief survey of the General Council's involvement in missions reveals that Missions' Department has at different times launched several evangelistic campaigns at national and international levels, using various methods of approach. This department with its formidable team has had the "Decade of Harvest" programme, "Operation One Win One" programme, "Home Cell Evangelism", and other programmes too numerous to count.

Looking at the local scene, the mission was involved in in-depth and result-oriented evangelism and church planting in places like: Ilorin, Kafanchan, Taraba, Sokoto, Gombe, Osun, Bida, Kwara etc. At the foreign scene, there were several evangelistic campaigns or gospel outreaches in places like: Equatorial Guinea, Republic of Garbon, Republic of Niger, Republic of Cameroon, Liberia, Gambia, among others. Districts and local churches have also taken active part in sponsoring missionaries to both home and foreign missions fields.

Besides, there is an ongoing missions' week programme, which holds annually. In the year 1997, for instance, the missions' week programme which was tagged "Committed to Prayer and World Evangelization" was aimed at raising prayer warriors across the nation who would make out time to pray for missionaries and their various activities. The year 2003 programme tagged "Rescue the Perishing" paid special attention to the unsaved in tertiary institutions across the nation, among other things. That of year 2004 which had its emphasis on harvest was aimed at helping churches and individuals alike to recapture the passion for souls, which has not been given the much emphasis it deserves lately.

I must give kudos to the four currently serving Generals, sixteen other Executive Committee Members and Missions Board Members. It is unwieldy for me to enumerate them here. However, mention must be made of certain individuals like: Rev. Dr. Charles O. Osueke- Retired General Supt.; Rev. Dr. Franklyn O. Ukomah- Retired Assistant General Supt.; Rev. M. Okoegbele of blessed memory; Rev. S. K. Asiedu, and Rev. A. E. Ogba just to mention but a few.

All the same, let us not be oblivious of the fact that something has gone amiss. Missions' week programme, in recent times, is misconstrued by many people as a thing geared towards financial pursuit. This distorted practice of missions coupled with a negative attitude towards it and passive participation in it makes the program usually a defeated one.

Knowing that "a church without a sense of mission is like a salt without savor..."²³ I cease this opportunity to appeal to the relevant authorities to re-orient the entire constituency on this all-important issue. This awareness will help to make the individual roles redefined. It will also help to make the task of reaching the unreached people less onerous and the goals realizable, if properly strategized.

IV. THE FACES OF MISSIONS

The Church's Missions Program can broadly be group into two segments: The "Home" and the "Foreign" Missions. But for the purpose of easy approach and proper understanding, we shall look at it in three phases: most people refer to this as "Evangelism 1, 2 and 3."

A. EVANGELISM ONE- INTRA-CULTURAL MISSIONS: This is evangelism within the culture of the missionary. It is the simplest type of missions in that the missionary has little or no cultural barrier to grapple with. The language is similar if not exactly the same.

B. EVANGELISM TWO- CROSS-CULTURAL BUT NATIONAL MISSIONS: This is a little more cumbersome. The missionary has to acculturate. That is, he has to drop aspects of his own culture having to do with language, worldview and ways of life, and learn those of his target audience, respondents. Most people have failed in the past because of ethnocentrism. Some have suffered unwanted persecutions, confiscation of property and even martyrdom. By ethnocentrism, we mean the belief that one's own culture is the best and should be used as a standard by which others are judged.

C. EVANGELISM THREE- GLOBAL MISSIONS: This type of missions is both international and intercontinental. It is time consuming and capital intensive. In order not to engage in a foolish escapade, one has to do a lot of underground work or preparations.

END NOTES FOR CHAPTER TWO

¹Onyeije Nganwa Ogba, *Evangelism and Its Strategy*, (Ekpoma: Timeless Publishers, 2003), 85.

² *The Holy Bible; New King James Version*, (Nashville; Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1988), 3.

³Ibid., 642.

⁴Abdul-Haqq, Abdiyan Akbar. *Sharing Your Faith With a Muslim*. (Kaduna, Nigeria: Evangel Publishers Ltd., 1980), 157.

⁵Louis K. Fuller, *Going to The Nations, 3rd ed.*, (Plateau State, Nigeria: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2001), 13.

⁶Ibid., 17; ⁷Ibid., 23; ⁸Ibid.; ⁹Ibid.; ¹⁰Ibid., 24.

¹¹Ibid., 25.; ¹²Ibid.

¹³A. E. Ogba, *Rescue The Perishing*, (Enugu: Onuoha and Associates Nigeria, 2003), 5.

¹⁴*The Holy Bible*, 730, 746.

¹⁵Ogba, *Rescue The Perishing*, 15.

¹⁶Alfred P. Gibbs, *Personal Evangelism*, (Dubuque: Emmaus Bible College, 1973), 11.

¹⁷Ibid.; ¹⁸Ibid., 15.; ¹⁹Ibid., 16.; ²⁰Ibid., 11.

²¹Egbeyon F. Ilenbodiaye, *Missions 1st ed.*, (Asaba: Frontier Glory Publishers Ltd., 2008), 63.

²²Jude C. Utah, *Cross-Cultural Gospel Communications*, (Lagos: Eagle and Joy Educational Publishers, 2000),

²³A. E. Ogba, *Committed to Prayer and World Evangelization*, (Enugu: Dulacs Press, 1997), 29.

HIGHLIGHTS ON EUROPE MISSIONS

Missiologists of no mean repute have asserted that the purpose of studying the theology of missions is to analytically examine how biblical the subject of missions is. That is, to find out the biblical basis for carrying out missionary works in the world. Missions is said to be the heartbeat of God. Therefore, the study of missions reveals how the *Missio Dei* (the mission of God) in the world has been unfolded in the entire Bible. The importance of this knowledge is predicated on the fact that not until a missionary knows how God has revealed His missionary purpose in His word, the Bible, he or she will not appreciate the fact that he or she is supposed to take the gospel to the whole world in fulfillment of God's divine mandate.¹

In the same vein, the purpose for the inclusion of this chapter and the next is to reveal to us how early missionaries sacrificially took the gospel across Europe continent to everywhere in the world regardless of the inimical oppositions of Satan and his hostile agents. Besides, apart from the fact that their deep involvement has some global missiological significance, their own example serves as a springboard out of the abysmal ignorance of people who say that there is no need to evangelize since God will convert the heathen when He pleases, with or without our aid.² It is therefore expected that after everyone in the missionary enterprise has finished reading through the pages of this work as a whole, he or she will be sufficiently challenged, sincerely motivated and purposefully propelled to go into the world searching for sinners to save.

I. MISSION IN EASTERN EUROPE (AD 313- 1000)

This was the period when Christianity became the official religion of all Europe. In AD 313 Emperor Constantine, in the 'Edict of Milan' (a decree) made Christianity a legal religion. There were three main centers that sent out missionaries: Rome, Constantinople, and Ireland.

A. ULFILAS (AD 311-380): The Goths were a wild, warlike people living outside the Roman Empire where Romania is today. A Christian they captured (by attacking Roman borders) from Cappadocia married a Gothic wife and their son was Ulfilas. When the King of the Goths sent him to the Emperor at Constantinople, he got to know the bishop there who trained him and used him as a preacher for ten years. Having consecrated him the bishop of the Goths, he sent him away and he came back and traveled around with the Goths for a period of forty years to bring the gospel to them. He also invented alphabets for the Gothic language and translated the Bible into Gothic.³

B. CYRIL (ALSO CALLED CONSTANTINE) AND METHODIUS: The bishop at Constantinople sent these two brothers to evangelize the Slavs who lived in what

is today Czechoslovakia. Having invented alphabets for the Slavs, they translated the Bible and church liturgy into their language. After their death, their work became the basis, which other missionaries used to reach the Slavs who lived in Russia.⁴

II. IRISH MISSIONS (AD 389- 461)

Mention will be made of only Patrick. He was a Celtic boy in England brought up by a Christian family. When the pagan raiders attacked the town, they carried Patrick to Ireland as a slave when he was in his teens. He sought God earnestly due to his conviction that he was just a nominal Christian and God helped him to escape to France where he became truly converted and was trained as a monk. After this, God sent him back to Ireland as a missionary and empowered him to overcome the pagan priest. His three major achievements at Ireland were:

- 1) As a missionary, he traveled all over Ireland in the 30 years of his ministry, baptized about 100,000 converts;
- 2) He planted over 200 churches, and
- 3) He built several monasteries for the training of leaders.⁵ He who fights and runs away lives to fight another day, as the saying goes. Therefore, escaping from a place, if the possibility is there, is never a sign of defeat but gives one an opportunity for further achievements.

III. WESTERN EUROPE AND ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSIONS

Let it be remembered that Christianity had been present in Britain when it was still under the Roman Empire. But in the fifth century (400s) Rome lost Britain to the pagan Anglo-Saxons from the European mainland who invaded the land. Consequent upon this invasion, Christianity was pushed into the remote regions. We shall briefly look at some of the missionary activities in these regions.

A. CONVERSION OF THE FRANKS: At this time, the Roman Empire was breaking apart because of the “Barbarian” tribes who were pushing at its border from the North and East.

1. **Clovis (AD 493):** He was the king of the Franks and he married a princess of an old Gaulish family called Clotilda. She persuaded her husband to get converted and later in Battle, he promised he would become one if he won. He did and was baptized in AD 496. He used his position and authority to declare that the Franks were now to be Christians and this gave freedom to the priests and missionaries to come in and instruct them in the new faith.⁶
2. **Augustine (AD 596):** In the year AD 596, Pope Gregory planned a mission outreach to Kent in Constantinople, which was the capital of one of the Saxon kingdoms. He decided to send Augustine who was a monk with a team of missionaries. Augustine was gripped with fear upon the realization that the Saxons were reputable for being warlike. He wanted to stop in France but Gregory ordered him to go on. To their own amazement, when they got to Kent,

they were well received as missionaries by King Ethelbert whose wife was a Christian from Gaul.

Through their efforts, the king and a large number of his people got converted to the church. These missionaries also destroyed the idols of the people, converted their idol temples into churches, and also substituted Christian feasts for these people's pagan feasts. A few years later, the church grew and became so strong that they started sending missionaries to northern Europe.⁷

3. **Willibrord (AD 658- 739):** Willibrord was an English monk who spent about 45 years preaching and planting churches among the Frisian people of what is today Holland and Belgium. He was made bishop of the area, and he and his team, like other British missionaries of this period, established several monasteries from which the evangelism of the area went forward.
4. **Boniface (AD 680- 754):** Boniface was another English monk who went out at the age of 40 with Willibrord. But in 722, the Pope made him bishop of Germany and through his missionary programme in that territory, he claimed it for Roman Catholic Church. The famous story that is told today is how he publicly cut down the sacred oak tree of Thor the god of thunder. The pagans there expected Thor to strike him dead but when they saw that nothing happened to him, they came out in large number to join Boniface who eventually brought all Germany under Catholic influence.

At the end of his life, he went back to pioneer a work in north of Holland where he and his team were murdered by a gang of angry pagan. However, Boniface is said to have had a deeper influence on the history of Europe than any other Englishman who has ever lived. He is also known to have been the first missionary to involve female nuns and converts in missionary work.⁸

5. **Charlemagne (AD 771- 814):** He was the Christian king of the Franks. When "The pagan Saxon tribe" was pressing his borders to the north, he used a two-fold strategy for survival and victory over them. The first strategy was that he conquered them in the battle and second he forced them to accept the Christian faith. He succeeded and turned the Saxon into Roman Catholic Christians.

- B. **ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSIONARY EFFORTS:** In the 1400s and 1500s, Portugal and Spain were the main countries that sent out explorers. The Portuguese and Spanish rulers (kings and queens) were committed Roman Catholic Christians and they felt that it was part of their responsibilities as Christians to ensure that missionaries were sent to the places where their sailors had discovered in the course of their exploration. Consequently, their government gave maximum support to the missionaries they had sent out. Talking about Africa in particular, the Pope gave the Portuguese the mandate to send missionaries out to evangelize the continent. These missionaries made remarkable success in their mission to Congo, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Madagascar and even in places like Senegambia and Benin in Nigeria, and they had scores of converts to show for it. Nevertheless, the impact of their mission was short lived.

This was essentially because:

1. These European missionaries could not survive long due to their vulnerability to African climate and diseases.
2. They did not condemn the slave trade that was successfully impoverishing Africans and as such made the people to doubt seriously whether Christianity was really a good religion to reckon with.
3. The state of political instability in Africa itself due to a lot of wars and coups deterred the continuity of their work as most callous rulers made laws that were detrimental to the Christian faith.
4. The missionaries were not able to relate freely with their converts and soon nurtured an unhealthy atmosphere.
5. They were not foresighted enough to train many of their converts to become indigenous church leaders to ensure continuity.
6. Most of their converts came to Christianity without really having the experience of new birth and soon abandoned the faith in the face of political threats.

IV. THE ENCOUNTER WITH ISLAM (AD 570- 1500)

Mohammad, the founder of Islam, was born into the most prominent aristocratic family in Mecca. Before his birth in AD 570, his father (Abdullah) had already died, and his mother (Amina) died six years later. The responsibility of bringing him up was bequeathed to his grandfather (Abdal-Multalib) and later by his uncle Abu Talib.⁹ However, he was brought up with concern and tenderness.

The man Mohammad was, in fact, an exception in his culture. He grew in an animist and polytheistic environment where their shrine was also the site of at least 360 idols imaging their many gods that were presided over by their chief god, Allah.¹⁰ But he never participated in the pagan activities of Meccan life. This was due to the fact that his early life was greatly influence by an Ebionite Christian Pastor by the name of Waraqa Ibn Naufal, a good friend and distant cousin of both his grandfather and Khadija who later became his first wife.

He learned to spend much time in meditation, fasting and prayer in caves in the mountains north of Mecca. This Ebionite, legalistic influence of Judaism can be said to have influenced the Islamic religious philosophy and drive in the area of salvation by merits, religious superiority and impulsiveness among others.

As a young and successful businessman, Muhammad gained the patronage of a wealthy widow, Khadija who eventually became his wife though she was fifteen years older than him. After the death of his wife, he had eleven women as wives and concubines, the youngest of whom was nine years when they consummated their marriage.

He announced his call as a prophet in the fortieth year of his life. From then on he embarked on a vigorous campaign for the conversion of his people, the Arabs. His flight from Mecca to Medina, known as *Hijra*, with 150 followers is regarded as the beginning of Islam. Muhammad became a political leader ruling Medina the city of the prophet as he named it. He raised several armies to fight the Meccans,

attacking them with 10,000 men forcing them to accept Islam. He subdued all of Arabia to Islam; he raided over 50 caravans for booty, executed over 700 Jews and confiscated their goods, wives and children.¹¹ Thus, he became wealthy.

Ajah remarks that when Islamic religion was in its cradle, Mohammed conquered Palestine, which the Jewish Christians considered to be their “Holy Land.” Before his death in 632, he had practically united all Arabia under his religious empire.¹² His followers took the enormous task of converting the rest of the world to “the way of truth” with such a deep sense of obligation that they succeeded wonderfully. The result of the spread of Islam was such that the churches in Egypt and the Middle East were severely crippled and the churches in North Africa and Syria eventually disappeared. In these places, they completely vanquished every military opposition and almost every religious opposition as well. By 732, Islam ruled Constantinople and its environs. Consequently, nearly all the Christian churches in those places were ruthlessly destroyed and some converted into mosques. Thus, the glory of the Christian era faded away to the category of tales.¹³

Nevertheless, in AD 732, the Franks led by Charles Martel, otherwise known as Charles the Hammer, defeated the Moslems at the battle of Tours and stopped their advance into France.

A. THE CRUSADES: The crusades were religious wars of the Medieval Period, which the Christians of Western Europe waged against the Moslems who were the dominant powers in the Middle East in those days. They were brought about by the molestations that Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem were receiving from the Moslem Turks.¹⁴ In reaction to this, rulers of various Christian groups in Western Europe decided to launch some military campaigns against the Moslems in Palestine and regain the land for Christians.

Thousands of zealous, tireless and purpose-driven people from all walks of life, who responded freely to the papal appeals to rescue the land of Christ’s birth and death, were enlisted for these military campaigns. It is regrettable that the crusaders did not achieve their original goals in spite of the frantic efforts they made. Nevertheless, these crusades brought about two major outcomes- one positive and the other negative.

B. THE NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE RESULTS OF THE CRUSADES: Within the space of nearly two centuries (from AD 1096 – 1270), there were altogether seven campaigns or crusades against the Moslems, which failed almost completely.

- The crusades created great hatred between the Muslims and the Christians, which still lasts until date.
- The only good thing that came out of the crusades was that the Europeans, who were less civilized and advanced, learned a lot of new technology, science and culture by their contact with Arabs. This brought about a new phase of culture, trade and civilization called the Renaissance.¹⁵

V. THE REFORMATION PERIOD AND THE PROTESTANTS (AD 1300–1700)

It should be borne in mind that there were many causes especially changes in all ramifications, which had their roots in the centuries preceding the reformation because Rome had opposed any internal reform and had ignored the rising tide of external opposition that was to cause her so much trouble. The Protestant historians, however, interpret the reformation largely as “a religious movement that sought to recover the purity of the primitive Christianity that is depicted in the New Testament.”¹⁶ The Roman Catholic historians, in an attempt to disprove and debunk Luther's famous protest in the “Ninety-five Theses” (95) against the abuse of indulgences, described the reformation “as a heresy inspired by Martin Luther from base motives, such as his desire to marry.”¹⁷

Nevertheless, the humanistic scholars, having seen the discrepancies between the church about which they read in the New Testament and the Roman Catholic Church of their day, became fed up with the corruption, which had spread through both the head and members of the hierarchy of the Roman Church. The spiritual deadness and moral decadence of Roman Catholic Church officers was such that self-seeking clerics bought and sold offices freely. In the words of Cairns, “Too many enjoyed sinecures, positions in which they received the salary but did none of the work usually associate with the office.”¹⁸

Besides, because justice was bought and sold in the church courts, one could for a payment of money get a dispensation that would permit him to marry a close relative, even though the canon law forbids it. Many priests lived in open sin with impunity as it were or kept concubines. The devout Christians who became sick and tired of the moral decadence of most clergymen saw the Reformation as a welcomed development.

During this age of the Reformation, God raised men who were ready to carry out the assignment and the most outstanding name connected with this great revolt is Martin Luther (AD 1483-1546). However, Luther being an exponent was not the only reformer in his day although he was the leader of the struggle in Germany. John Wycliffe (AD 1320-1384) was the major proponent of the Reformation. Besides, several other countries had their own torch-bearers at the time. If there was any one man who was the master (teacher) of all the reformers, it was a man called Erasmus. Other exponents associated with the Reformation include: William Tyndale, Bible translator (1494-1536), and John Calvin, a reformer and theologian (1509-1564), just to mention but a few.

The Reformation started in 1517 and was famously sparked when Martin Luther posted his '95 Theses.' After that time many people in Europe broke away from the Roman Catholic Church and started various Protestant churches.

A. THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROTESTANTISM: Let it be remarked that for the first one thousand years of Christian history, there were no denominations within the Christian church as there are today. It is not a gainsaying that the various offshoot groups, which certainly existed were basically considered heresies and not part of the Christian church.

Protestantism as a movement officially began in 1529. It is interesting to note that the year 1592 marked the publication of the “Protestation,” directed at the imperial government. The authors, German princes who wanted the freedom to choose the faith of their territory, protested that “in matters which concern God’s honour and salvation and the eternal life of our souls, everyone must stand and give account before God for himself.”¹⁹

It is noteworthy to say that during the Reformation, the Catholics gained more members in other Countries than they lost to the Protestant churches because of their missionary efforts. But the Protestants did not really start getting involved in missions outside Europe until after AD 1700. Some of the reasons include the following:

1. Theologically, some Protestants believed so strongly in predestination that they thought evangelism was useless because God had already decided who would be saved and who would be lost and nothing could change this.²⁰
2. They were too busy teaching their people and handling the attacks of the Roman Catholics that there was no time to think about missions. What they did was to write new theology books with the Protestant view of theology and to form new denominations.²¹
3. They did not agree among themselves. They were busy fighting and persecuting each other because of the differences in doctrine and practice.
4. The countries where the Protestants were in the majority were not countries at first to send out sailors to look for new lands. Because of this myopic view of the world, they began from the remote places.
5. They were more interested in trade than in missions (Quest for materialism).
6. They gave themselves to luxury: wealth, pleasure, marriage etc. But the Catholic missionary order of monks, priests and nuns, all took vow to be poor, to abstain from sex and marriage, and to obey their authorities.

B. EARLY PROTESTANT MISSIONARY SOCIETIES (AD 1600- 1800)

1. **Pietism in Germany:** Philip Spener (1635- 1705) was one of the highly educated men of his days and his group is a good example of pietism in Germany. The pietist, a movement that stressed the value of a life of devotion rather than correct dogma, was some groups of pious people who were mostly interested in living a clean life of total devotion to God.²² Though they were part of the minority movements, they distinguished themselves from others and began to advocate for righteous living as against the backdrop of the fight about doctrinal soundness, which their counterparts considered more worthwhile.

As a result of their righteous living that was then confrontational to the corrupt, cold and carnal nature of the Lutheran Church; they were singled out and nicknamed Pietist. Ajah remarked that Spener’s evangelical movement, being one of the Senior Lutheran Pietism, was seen as a threat and consequent upon their having been labeled fanatics by Lutheran officials, pietist students were denied admission into the Lutheran Universities.

Consequently, Spener started a Pietist University at Halle, which became a center for training pietist missionary pastors. Lois Fuller noted that

Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Heinrich Plutschau were the first missionary recruits at Halle to be sent to Tranquebar in India where the Danish East India Company had a trading colony. Though these missionaries met a lot of oppositions from the Danish officials, their works became what was called the Danish-Halle Mission.

- 2. Moravian Missions:** In about AD 1722 when the persecutions of the Roman Catholic became fierce, a group of believers from Eastern Europe called 'The Moravians' fled to Germany where Count Nicholas Von Zinzendorf, who was a pietist, lived. He gave them land to settle and sometime later, precisely 1737, they asked him to become their bishop. Ziegenbalg whom he met at Halle aroused Zinzendorf's interest in missions. When he traveled to Denmark in 1730, he met a black West Indian and two Eskimos from Greenland who earnestly sought for missionaries to go to their land and her people.

In response to this crucial need, Zinzendorf went home to his Moravian missionaries and told them of this need. Having caught the vision, they raised transport fare for some of their members who were sent out to settle permanently in these unreached places but they were expected to support themselves with their trade while preaching the gospel.

The concern of the Moravians for the unsaved was such that by 1766, they had sent out two hundred and twenty six (226) missionaries to ten countries that resulted in their having converts overseas who were three times as many as they had in Germany. According to Fuller, "The Moravians were not highly educated, but they sacrificed all to do the job, even to the extent of being willing to become slaves to preach to slaves."²³

- 3. The Evangelical Awakening in Britain and America:** This awakening that was brought about by certain individuals is comparable to the Pietism in Germany that gave rise to interest in missions. It all started in the 1700s with the revival under John Wesley in Britain, and Jonathan Edwards and George Whitfield in America. This made the English people to become deeply involved in missions. It has been observed that John Wesley was converted through the influence of the Moravians.

It is on record today that prayer groups sprang up all over Britain and the United States, praying for the conversion of the unsaved. There were other missionary societies during this period some of which were The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England (1649), The Society for Promoting Christian knowledge (1698), and The Society of the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (1701).

END NOTES FOR CHAPTER THREE

¹Onyeije Nganwa Ogba, *Evangelism and its Strategy*, (Ekpoma: Timeless Publication, 2003), 85.

²Ibid., 84.

³Louis K. Fuller, *Going to The Nations, 3rd ed.*, (Plateau State, Nigeria: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2001), 46.

⁴Ibid., 47.; ⁵Ibid., 47, 48; ⁶Ibid., 49;

⁷Ibid., 49, 50; ⁸Ibid., 50.

⁹Ergun Mehmet Caner and Emir Fethi Caner, *Unveiling Islam* (Kaduna: Evangel Publication, 2002), 40.

Ibid., 53.

¹⁰ Jim Murk, *Islam Rising: The Never Ending Jihad Against Christianity, Book One* (Springfield, Missouri: 21st Century Press, 2006), 40.

¹¹Ibid., 39.

¹²Paul O. Ajah, *World History II*, (Uburu: Truth and Life Publications Ltd., 2004), 17.

¹³Ibid., 19-20.

¹⁴_____ *The Church Militant*, (Aba: Truth and Life Publications Inc., 1989), 102, 103.

¹⁵Ajah, *World History II*, 60.

¹⁶Earle E. Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries*, (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 277.

¹⁷Ibid., 276.; ¹⁸Ibid., 281.

¹⁹*Brief History of Christian Denominations*, (n.p. Religious Facts, 2001), 2.
<http://www.religionfacts.com/christianity/denominations/history.htm> (accessed October 4, 2014).

²⁰Fuller, 62. ²¹Ibid., 61.

²²Ajah, *The Church Militant*, 162.

²³Fuller, 64.

HIGHLIGHTS ON AFRICAN MISSIONS

As pointed out earlier, the Protestants were not immediately involved in missions outside Europe because of their lack of knowledge of the outside world. Before real missions in Africa actually took off, some explorers had already made many discoveries, which later aided missionaries. It should be noted, however, that these voyages of discoveries were made primarily for commercial and quest for achievement (fame) purposes. The Portuguese who were sailors used the philosophy of Pythagoras, which asserts that the earth is like an orange, as a guide in their adventures. They invented compass to control their ship and determine how far they were from the land. Eratosthenes drew the world map to assist sailors. Prince Henry, Son of the King of Portugal, established a school at Sagress where seamen were trained.

Thus, Vasco da Gamma, in 1498, discovered the sea route to India; an Italian geographer called Christopher Columbus discovered North and South America; Ferdinand Magellan, in 1519, made a bold step to sail round the world but ended up at South America where he was killed in a tribal war. These landmarks were what gave the missionaries in-roads to the outside world.

Talking about Africa in particular, the following people contributed sacrificially to the success of missions in one way or the other. In Southern Africa, it was John Theodore Vander Kemp and John Philip. In East and Central Africa, it was Robert Moffat and Ludwig Krapt. In West Africa, it was men like Mongo Park, the Lander Brothers and Macgregor Laird. Fuller noted that missions' work aimed at converting the Africans did not start until the AD 1700s.

I. NORTH AFRICA

Most North African Countries expelled all missionaries once they got independence. Notwithstanding, we must give kudos to people like Roland Bingham, Robert Moffat amongst others who were the pioneer missionaries God used to storm cities and villages with the gospel of emancipation.

II. SOUTH AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF PRETORIA

The most famous missionary sent out from London was David Livingstone who spent his life and career trekking through the bush doing research and exploring un-reached places where missionaries could be sent. He is remembered for his commitment to missions' work, which was premised on his famous words. He said,

Send me anywhere, lay any burden upon... I will not swerve a hair's breath from my work while life is spared. Sever any tie but the tie that binds me to thy service and ... nothing earthly will make me to give up my work or cause me to despair.¹

David Livingstone went through untold hardship in his bid to reach Africans who were living in the remotest parts. He had the excruciating and horrible experience of having to trek for miles on lonely paths in the desert and jungles in trying to reach his target audience. He suffered terribly of ill- health resulting from malnutrition, vulnerability to different communicable diseases due to the unhygienic nature of the environment, and lack of medical health care facilities, which led to his untimely death.

III. EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF KENYA AND UGANDA

The first missionary to East Africa was Ludwig Krapf with the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S) who went to Kenya in 1844. Both the Anglicans and the Roman Catholics provided places of refuge for all the slaves that escaped and got converts on the East Coast.² A Christian from Malawi named Muffat went with Henry Stanley exploring group to Lake Victoria in Uganda. He witnessed to the King there and stayed with him as a missionary to the Ugandans. In Central Africa, the people were more responsive to Christianity in Zaire than in Kenya and Uganda.

IV. WEST AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF NIGERIA

John Wesley and others started revival in England that resulted in Christians seeing the evils of the African slave trade and decided to stop it. Such men as Granville Sharp, William Wilberforce, a philanthropist and Reformer born in Hull, Yorkshire (1759 – 1833) and Thomas Larson caught this vision and kept urging the British Parliament to pass the law to abolish slave trade. By and large, it was realized in 1805. The most famous example of slaves who survived following the abolition of slave trade is Samuel Ajayi Crowder who later became a bishop.

Thomas Birch Freeman was born in England to an African father and an English mother. He came to Africa in 1837 and was to become the first Methodist Missionary to set foot in Nigerian. He landed at Badagary on the 24th of September 1842. William and Mrs. De Graft, a Ghanaian couple, were pioneering Methodist Missionaries in Badagary, Nigeria. John Martin, a Ghanaian also, was another pioneer Methodist missionary to Lagos. While Mary Slessor (1848-1915), a missionary to Calabar was one of those who first landed in Calabar, Nigeria.

V. PITFALLS OF AFRICAN MISSIONS

The term pitfalls within this context refers to those factors that have been more of a bane than a boom to missions' work in Africa. They can be summarized under the following headings:

A. LEADERSHIP: Leadership by description is that machinery that keeps an organization on course. It ensures that the aims and objectives of the organization are vigorously pursued and attained. Christian leadership requires serious training to be able to stand the fierce pressures that befall a leader. Unfortunately, many leaders are unable to combat the external and internal foes due to lack of adequate training and preparation. The church leader's most

dangerous enemies are his own flesh, pride, covetousness and indwelling sin nature which constitute a vicious and deceptive foe.³

Coupled with this are the enormous temptations and pressures from outside which have combined to form a snare against leadership career in the church, thus causing the church in Africa to suffer much set backs in many countries due to lack of managerial competency. It is usually that the leadership is weak, ignorant or vindictive. It is not uncommon to find Africa leaders greedy and insatiable. As it is in the political sector, so it is in the religious. Many church leaders in Africa are caged by get rich syndrome and the inordinate ambition to occupy a place of prominence. Their lack of interest in souls of men and quest for money, which often result in unhealthy relationships and rivalry, have caused disintegration.

- B. FINANCE:** Considering the magnitude of the job of missions in Africa, great wealth is required to tackle it. However, many missionaries in Africa lack adequate financial and material resources to carry out this laudable project. On a general note, Africans have limited resources to meet financial demands from immediate and extended family members let alone taking active part in financing missions.⁴
- C. IGNORANCE:** The high level of illiteracy in Africa, which makes creation of awareness difficult, if not impossible, is one factor hampering effective missionary activities. The lack of exposure of most Africans is a major setback to awareness campaign through the various media of communication. Not until people begin to get themselves into the world of advanced information technology brought about by the facilities of satellite and screens coupled with the radio and print media, it will remain a difficult task keeping them abreast with happenings around them. Knowing that it is the first that determines the rest, the problem of ignorance has to be dealt with decisively alongside the issue of Satanic entanglements.
- D. TRADITION:** Though culture is universal yet there are certain demands in culture, which are cultural variables and can be termed tradition that tends to limit Africa evangelization. Tradition such as idolatry, ancestral worship, various feasts and festivals associated with animism, and concealing women from strangers in Islamic dominated parts of Africa are all constraints to missions' activities.
- E. FAMILY TIES:** Africans have strong family ties. Parents (biological and foster), brothers, sisters, uncles, aunties, in-laws and relatives, are bound together by family ties. Everyone within this cycle of relationship is under obligation not only to maintain it but also to extend it. This sense of oneness and belongingness to a great extent hinders individual response to the gospel as such attempt could

result in opposition, ostracism or even death penalty especially in Islam dominated areas.

F. FEAR: An average African fears the invisible. These are extra-terrestrial powers whose manifestations culminate around witchcraft and sorcery. Paul O. Ajah, a professor, in his book entitled, *African Traditional Religion* noted,

People in Africa generally fear these powers because they are mercilessly destructive. Therefore, efforts are made to get remedies against them for the safety and security of people and their belongings.⁵

He also asserted that it is almost impossible for a real man who is worth his salt to stand idly by while the agents of these powers do havoc around him. Instead he would "... seek to control these mysterious powers for his own good and for the good of the people that depend upon him for protection."⁶

He remarked that African societies are plagued with fear and suspicion, which stems from the fact, that these magical arts: charms, witchcraft and sorcery seek to endanger the lives of people. In order to secure themselves, they therefore resort to divination with a view to finding out what lies ahead as well as ascertaining the possible ways of evaluating their attacks and protecting themselves and their households. Notably, this expected protection and preservation from the danger of these agencies of the power of evil and destruction will only come as these individuals adhere strictly to "... diviners prescribe measures and sacrifices to meet the challenges of the anti-social elements in the society."⁷

G. SYNCRETISM: Gehman, quoting Tippet, defines syncretism "as the union of two opposite forces, beliefs, systems or tenets so that the united form is a new thing, neither one nor the other."⁸ The issue of joining the Christian faith with the traditional beliefs or the combination or reconciliation of differing beliefs in religion, philosophy, or an attempt to effect such compromise is very common in Africa. One will not want to offend the village heads by accepting biblical standard only. There are a lot of compromises in Africa. If Christian missionaries are able to combat these problems, the gospel will yield the desired results.

According to Gehman, "The goal of Christian missionary work is to plant churches that are both true to the word of God and indigenous."⁹ By this he meant that the Christians in these cultures are expected to be Christ-like in their behaviours by following the ways of Christ; yet they should reflect the good and wholesome qualities of their cultures. Adopting different customs, beliefs or practices is not necessarily syncretism. If a Christian church adopts certain African customs that are not at variance with the scriptures, they have no problem. However, they should not compromise their stand by becoming syncretic.

END NOTES FOR CHAPTER FOUR

¹Egbeyon F. Ilenbodiaye, *Unlocking the Door of God's Blessings: The Secrets*. (Asaba: Frontier Glory Publishing Ltd., 2010), 3.

²Louis K. Fuller, *Going to The Nations, 3rd ed.*, (Plateau State, Nigeria: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2001), 73.

³Ralph Mahoney, *The Making of a Leader*, (Burbank, California: World Missionary Assistance Plan, 1985), 81.

⁴Ehigie L. Onaburekhan, "Introduction to Missions." (Ewu: Nigerian Advanced School of Theology, 2002 (Unpublished Book), 21.

⁵Paul O. Ajah, *African Tradition Religion*, (Uburu, Ebonyi State, Truth and Life Publication Ltd., 2007), 164.

⁶Ibid., 165.; ⁷Ibid.,165.

⁸Richard J. Gehman, *African Traditional Religion*, (Bukuru, Plateau State: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2001), 213.

⁹Ibid., 212.

THE CALL OF A MISSIONARY

The highest calling of a missionary today is the call to be a priest who intercedes at the Mercy Seat. It has been opined that the greatest misfortune God's work has suffered in recent times in missions' enterprise is the fact that there are thousands of preachers and missionaries but few intercessors hence the results of our evangelistic campaigns are usually far below expectations. It was into this dreadful state of spiritual decline that the Israelites fell when their spiritual leaders preferred their man-made traditions to keeping the sacred fire at the Altar of Incense burning to bring God's glory and mercy upon the land. Larry Lea remarked, "The greatest tragedy of all was the absence of the shechinah cloud of glory that had once dwelt in the holy of holies."¹

Regardless of the personal cost or sacrifice, we must raise up for ourselves and the work a formidable team of intercessors who will stand daily before God, interceding for sinners, asking for divine forgiveness, deliverance, restoration and transformation. It is only by doing so that the glory of God will return to us and something supernatural and unprecedented will start to happen. When an intercessor solicits for God's mercy for one man, that mercy turns out to be for everyone, everywhere in the world.

That notwithstanding, considering the Herculean nature of the task itself, the complexity of the society, the on-going but inimical oppositions from Satan and his cohorts coupled with the devilish inclinations of human heart, the missionary, as a matter of necessity and urgency, has to be called, trained and thoroughly furnished both physically and spiritually before he undertakes to do the job. Otherwise he would be thrown overboard for lack of proper orientation and adequate skills.

I. WHO IS A MISSIONARY?

If by "Missionary" we mean someone who is called to witness for Christ, we have to take for granted that every Christian is a missionary. But that is not the sense in which we are using the term here. A missionary, in a deeper (professional) sense, "is one sent across geographical and/or cultural boundaries to proclaim the gospel and plant local indigenous churches."² Therefore, not every Christian is or should be called a missionary.

II. THE CALL OF A MISSIONARY

It is the belief of most people that if God wants to call someone to be a missionary, He does that only through dreams or visions. But the Holy Scriptures reveal that God uses many methods to call people depending on the best possible way to convince the individual in question. That is, his spiritual perception. There are so many things that are suggestive of God's calling. As you test your missionary call, consider the following things:

1. God seldom puts a desire in men's heart to do missionary work.
2. He makes men aware of His personal guidance and leading to do the work.
3. Sometimes God keeps arranging circumstances so as to focus a person's attention on what He wants him or her to do.
4. He makes other people aware of His plans for your life and gives them courage to speak with you about them.
5. He sometimes creates the burden of sponsorship in the heart of other people in the body of Christ concerning you.
6. He could also speak with men through dreams and visions.³

HINDRANCES TO MISSIONARY CALL

A. INTERNAL HINDRANCES: There are many people whom God has called, gifted and commissioned for missions' work but who are not willing to obey the call and launch out into the work due to the fact that they are either afraid of the nature of the work or are confused. Some of their fears include the following:

1. Fear of "unconditional surrender" to God's will.
2. Unwillingness to loose one's personal freedom.
3. Fear of lack of support or poverty.
4. To the young people, it is the fear of loosing the chance of getting a suitable life partner.
5. To parents, it is the fear of inability to source fund for their children's education or the probability of finding better schools.
6. Some are hindered by the nature of the work itself. That is, oppositions, persecutions or general hostility of people and difficulty.
7. Some people are afraid or unwilling to separate from relatives and friends.
8. Some people have difficulty making up their minds to take any gallant and definite step.

B. EXTERNAL HINDRANCES: A person may be convinced of God's will for his or her life, may have conquered all fears and may be willing to be a missionary, but there are certain circumstances in life that may prevent him or her from yielding completely and immediately. These circumstances include:

1. Pressure from friends and relations can hinder one from yielding to God's will.
2. One's spouse who is against going into mission's field can also pose hindrance.
3. Financial indebtedness can be an inhibition.
4. Fear of failure in witnessing brought about by the notion that preaching to every creature implies converting everyone. Jesus did not convert everyone, neither can we?
5. Fear of inability to deal decisively with territorial demons, cultic powers and the resistance from demonic trado-medical practitioners.
6. Fear of death resulting from being trapped in the on-going ethnic and religious rivalries in Nigeria and other countries.

7. The issue of predestination coupled with people's low receptiveness to the gospel can also constitute a hindrance.

However, it should be remembered that "Success in witnessing is simply taking the initiative to share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, and leaving the results to God,"⁴ as Bright puts it. One who would be a successful missionary today must be determined to succeed and be wholeheartedly committed to his work in season and out of season. All the same, some of these circumstances can be avoided if care is taken, others can be overcome with determination, while one has to depend on God's intervention in some special cases.

III. THE PREPARATION OF A MISSIONARY

Missionary work is indubitably a calling. Nevertheless, in its truest sense, it calls for professionalism. The need for a special and formal training therefore can never be overemphasized. Such training programme systematically and purposefully designed to prepare the would-be missionaries is parameter to fruitfulness and effectiveness in service. As it has been said, it takes what you know to introduce you to what you need. Another person puts it this way, Success is not measured by what you have but by what you do with what you have. Training, therefore, helps to activate latent capabilities: ability to teach and organize, managerial skills, evangelistic empowerment and the like. It helps to foster the spirit of creativity and competency. It is a boost to confidence and personal worth.⁵

A. GETTING THE MISSIONARY TRAINING: The first training a Missionary should receive is training in the Word of God. He has to have a working knowledge of the Bible. He should be able to commit to his heart those passages concerning the steps to salvation. Thereafter, he should proceed to a theological school for further studies. It is not just any seminary but a place where missions' related courses are offered. Courses like: History of Missions, Cultural Anthropology, Cross-Cultural Communications, Mission Trends, Issues and Strategies, Church Planting Principles, Mission Research, Church Growth and Church Organization, among others.⁶

B. FINDING A MISSION TO SERVE WITH: It is pertinent to point out that being a missionary does not make one an employee in the ordinary sense of the word. That is, it does not place one on the receiving end. However, we are not implying that it is a hell of sufferings. The point here is that one should be prepared to place first priority on soul winning as he expects all other comforts to necessarily follow. If you are convinced beyond every atom of doubt that the hand of God is upon you and that you are going to be a missionary, then it is up to you to decide what kind of Organization you will work with. In Fuller's opinion,

When you are considering any mission, you must find out their vision, what training they require, what fields they work in, their financial policies, the authority structure, field policies and any

other thing that will let you know whether you would be able to fit in with them.⁷

If you belong to a denomination that has missions programme you can contact them. If not, you can either approach any other mission body or you go out independently where the means is available.

IV. QUALIFICATIONS OF A MISSIONARY

Achievers have opined that true success in a given field of human endeavor is not determined necessarily by how much effort one makes but is based on one's strict compliance with the rules of the game among other factors. In the missionary enterprise also, there are some factors that favourably dispose a missionary to success in his own field.

These factors include:

A. SPIRITUAL QUALIFICATIONS: We must bear in mind that missionary work is a spiritual one and as such we should expect that the most important qualifications for doing it are spiritual.

- 1. Genuine Conversion:** The missionary must be born again experientially. He must be someone who, by repentance and faith toward God, has received new life in Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit in his or her life.⁸
- 2. Water and Holy Spirit Baptism:** Following conversion is baptism in water by immersion, which is one of the signs of a godly life of obedience to God's word (Mk. 16:15,16). He should seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit knowing that it takes the Spirit of God to bring about spiritual victories, not just mere physical or mechanical powers. He should equally seek for the gifts of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:4-11) for efficiency and far-reaching results in the ministry of soul winning.
- 3. Strong Prayer Life:** Missionaries will usually meet many trials and obstacles. They need to be so personally close to Christ through prayers so as to get divine guidance for their own plans as well as to get God's power to fight the spiritual warfare against the forces of evil. If Jesus could spend nights in prayer to secure the power to perform His task, how much more do we need to do it (Lk. 22:40-46).
- 4. A Servant Spirit:** The Bible made us to know that God can or will only really bless the work of people who are realistic enough to be humble. Missionaries need to acknowledge the fact that they do not belong to themselves. They do not enjoy the privilege of asserting their rights independent of Him either. But they are simply His trusted servants and labourers in His vineyard. Every missionary must meet these requirements among others if he intends to lead a strong, balanced and growing spiritual life.

B. PHYSICAL QUALIFICATIONS: The pastoral ministry in general is the most demanding, energy sapping and all- encompassing of all the activities in all fields of human endeavor. The Pastor is expected to be everything to each of his members

so long as such commitment does not dent his image or drag his reputation to the mud. The sick ones will expect him to visit and pray for them, the bereaved families need his sympathy and empathy, the poor need his material and financial assistance, the discouraged need his attention, the neglected need his companionship, and what have you. If he or she is not physically strong and healthy, he or she will often suffer a breakdown in health.

Missionaries and pastors of all categories should be people who are in good health physically and psychologically (*men sana in corpo sano*), and strong enough to do their work so that they will not cause their missions a lot of expenses with their medical bills. That is why any physically challenged person is not fit or good enough for the work because of its tasking nature physically, mentally and spiritually.

C. EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS: In the years past, people of 'little mind' hardly see the relevance of sound education to pastoral ministries. They thought and even preached that since the Holy Spirit is the person who convicts and converts sinners, education was not a necessity. By way of strengthening their argument on this issue, they would quote the old saying, what has Athens in common with Jerusalem? Recent research shows that Jerusalem has got virtually everything in common with Athens.

While appreciating the fact that the Holy Spirit is the one who alone can convict a sinner, leading him or her to faith in Christ resulting in repentance, it should be remarked that a sound educational base is indubitably imperative for an effective communication in contemporary global village. It is a truism that in the past, people who had little or no formal education had made waves and impacted greatly on their own generation. However, it is not a gainsaying that their success was basically circumstantial. Lending support to this assertion, Pastor (Mrs.) Betty Oseghale remarked,

It is recognized that some elderly Pastors have, through self-actualization blaze the trail in evangelism, preaching and teaching in those days with remarkable success. Without prejudice to such pastors, such success arose from the prevailing circumstance at their time. But the days of "very early, very early" in place of "verily, verily" are gone. ⁹

The necessity of a sound educational base for missionaries and pastors of all categories is predicated on the fact that a pastor who preaches today, using the language of the nineteenth century will not only be a stranger in our contemporary society, his words also will undoubtedly be mere sounds in a noisy and busy world, addressed to everyone but heard by nobody.

What is more, there is hardly any church in our contemporary society, notwithstanding the location, that is not a mixed group comprising people of different [social and cultural] background including those of the intelligentsia community. On the other hand, the dynamism of the world coupled with advanced

information technology suggests that leaders of all categories need to keep abreast with contemporary happenings. If they are too conservative, their lack of exposure will make them to be strangers to their subjects who have been enriched and updated by the facilities of satellites and screens.

In the light of this, pastors need a sound working knowledge of the Bible. They need to be so versed as to be able to know where to find what. Besides, they need to be well educated so that they will be highly innovative in their approach to sermon preparation and delivery as well as in other issues relating to their pastoral ministries. The more formal education a pastor has, the better so long as his/her zeal for and dedication to God's work is not dampened. In the words of Betty Oseghale,

A well- educated Pastor enjoys rapidity in acquiring Knowledge or facts, he has durability of retention, he enjoys readiness of recall of facts and serviceableness of reproduction. His sermon therefore flows.¹⁰

On the contrary, the uneducated, uninformed or ill-prepared Pastor while delivering his sermon soon run short of words to convey his thoughts and as a result digresses into mounting verbal attacks on the authorities that have seemingly not improved his lot as well as some members of his congregation for failing to dance to his tone. This inadequacy of pastors among other factors, accounts for the migration of members from one church to another in recent times in search of greener pastures to graze in.

It is pertinent therefore to implore pastors to avail themselves of the ample opportunity for in-service training created by their leaders to enhance their ministerial acumen. There is no denying the fact that pastoral ministry is a calling. But as a service, which calls for highly skilled personnel, professional training is imperative. Therefore, the stress one may pass through in one's educational pursuit and the amount of money and time one may invest in it is worth the knowledge one will acquire at the end of the day.

D. FAMILY QUALIFICATIONS: Although it is not a requirement in the Bible that a missionary has to be married so long as he or she is morally pure but if the need arises, he or she has to be married to just one person (Monogamy). He or she should not be polygamous or polyandrous. In rare cases, most missionaries may resolve to practice celibacy. But this, as it were, has to be celibacy in its truest sense (total abstinence). Not as a cover- up.

E. CHARACTER QUALIFICATIONS: Fuller stressed that to qualify for good missionary work, there are some traits that should be found in the life of a missionary. He listed them as follows:

1. Able to adapt to changes quickly.
2. One that has a sense of humour and humility, and is accommodating.

3. Not easily provoked, discouraged, fearful or depressed to the extent that he/she would contemplate quitting the work (II Tim. 1:7).
4. Able to work harmoniously in a spirit of co-operation with others (1 Pet. 3:8; Rom. 12:18).
5. Willing to take orders and agree to group decisions.
6. Able to endure hardness or difficult times in life and ministry (II Tim. 2:3).
7. One who does not gossip or complain (Phil. 2:14).
8. Without feelings of superiority or prejudice towards others (Rom. 15:7).
9. Able to think carefully before doing something and not to rush into things without planning.
10. One whose life is above reproach.

V. QUALITIES OF AN EFFECTIVE MISSIONARY

It should be remarked that there are some qualities that are the parameters of success in mission's enterprise. Any missionary who does not possess these qualities may not succeed notwithstanding his efforts.

- A. **SPIRIT-GIFTEDNESS:** This is the "... bestowment by the grace of God on believers that provides a channel through which the Holy Spirit's power flows in ministry"¹¹ (I Cor. 12: 7).
- B. **BOLDNESS:** Conflict will often times occur when the true gospel is preached in the power of the Holy Spirit but it takes courage to stand in the face of opposition that tends to intimidate. Without boldness, nothing significant can be accomplished for Christ through the gospel.
- C. **HUMILITY:** This is the supreme spiritual virtue that places believers where the power of the Holy Spirit is released upon their lives as they walk each moment of each day in obedience to the truth. It enables them to successfully handle the temptation to succumb to pride, in the event that God uses them to perform outstanding miracles (Acts 12: 22).
- D. **PERSISTENCE:** This virtue enables one to persist in the face of changes. The fickleness of men in our contemporary society is reminiscent of the people of Jerusalem who acknowledged and hailed Jesus as the Messiah at the triumphal entry, then afterwards called for His execution.
- E. **CARING:** "An effective servant of God knows the Great Commission is not merely to gain professions of faith but to nurture that faith to maturity."¹² As earlier remarked, any missionary effort that is not coupled with social concern can never be theocentric and holistic in nature.
- F. **COMMITMENT:** A servant of God has to be committed to fulfilling his calling no matter what circumstance he may be facing. It is very unfortunate that commitment to one's duty or calling is a virtue that is apparently not found in the church today.
- G. **REVERENCE:** The depth of a person's spiritual perception informs his reverential attitude towards God. Some people boast of the churches they have planted, the number of converts they have won, the miracles they have performed, and the good services they have rendered to God. But those who

possess the qualities listed above, keep all their accomplishments in the proper perspective. They give credit and honour to God who had passed through them to do those things while acknowledging the fact that they were mere instruments through which God had accomplished His divine purposes in the world.

VI. THE SCOPE AND GOALS OF MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES

In the past, mission work was conceived of as Western affairs. It was seen as the work of a limited few. A missionary was regarded as a European couple or a man or lady who is sent to the Dark Continent of Africa and Asia to evangelize. "... the fewness of labourers in the global field and our being confronted with the appalling fact that we can only look to the United States and Canada to evangelize the world"¹³ are strong factors that have been hindering world evangelization. The tide of things has changed. Missions is no longer a foreign or western affairs but global in nature. God needs corporate efforts and divergent methods in reaching the lost for Christ.

A. THE SCOPE OF MISSIONS: In God's own perspective, the activities of a missionary know no bound. This world has advanced remarkably in terms of technology. Missionaries cannot afford to remain myopic and indifferent to the enormous changes and privileges brought about by satellites and screens. They have to be tactful, resourceful and be determined to take advantage of modern technologies in their gospel outreaches.

- 1. Cross-cultural Missions (Matt. 28:19; Lk. 24: 47):** Matthew and Luke say that the gospel is to be taken to "*ALL NATIONS.*" All nations in Greek is *panta ta ethne*. This implies that no ethnic group is to be left aside. Its primary meaning is to the Jews and also included are all Gentile nations.¹⁴
- 2. Global Missions (Mk. 16:15):** In Mark we read "*THE ENTIRE WORLD.*" This command implies that nobody is to be left from hearing the gospel.
- 3. In-depth Missions (Acts 1: 8):** Luke in Acts says "*TO THE END OF THE EARTH.*" This statement, which implies thoroughness, suggests that no place is to be regarded as too far to be reached.
- 4. On-going Missions (Matt. 24:14):** Matthew says "*TO THE END OF THE AGE.*" This is the extent of time and it denotes a continuous effort. In other words, even if we have covered the whole world with the gospel, each new generation must be nurtured into disciples afresh. There is basically no time to relax from the work of missions.¹⁵

B. THE GOALS OF MISSIONS: Any journey without a purpose and a clear-cut destination is a waste of time, energy and scarce resources. The same is true of Missionary work. All efforts made in the missionary enterprise are geared toward two goals: The Immediate and the Ultimate Goals.

The immediate goal of missions is the redemption of the people of God. The preaching of the gospel makes the realization of this goal possible. It is what results in the repentance and forgiveness of the recipients, leading them on to

receive the gift of eternal life in Christ. Therefore, the primary task of a missionary is to contribute his or her own quota, using the specific ministerial talent God has given to him or her. His/her ministry, rather than contradicting, should complement that of his/her predecessors and colleagues.

The ultimate goal in missions is the glory of God Himself, the initiator of missions. Jesus remarked that His mission to this world is one that will glorify his heavenly father (Jn. 15:8, Heb. 5:5). Paul also noted that credit should not be given to he who plants or he who waters. But that the one who gives the increase should be praised (1 Cor. 3:7). Therefore, no missionary should work with a view to earning man's applause or commendations. His priority should be to glorify God.

There is a relationship between the immediate and ultimate goals. The former makes the latter possible. It is the redemption of people (immediate goal) that brings glory to God (ultimate goal). In like manner, there should be a relationship between the activities of missionaries today, those of the past, as well as the future ones.

VII. THE TASK OF A MISSIONARY AND ITS URGENCY

A. THE TASK: The task of a missionary is enormous as well as multi-dimensional.

As God's agent, he has been charged with the responsibility of carrying out these functions:

- 1. To Make Disciples (Matt. 28:19):** "*Poieo mathetes*," To construct and produce a thoughtful and serious learner.
- 2. To Preach the Gospel (Mk. 16:15):** "*Kerusso euangelion*." To purposefully and persuasively proclaim the Good News to others with a view to getting them saved.
- 3. To Witness (Acts 1:8):** "*Martureo*" To fearlessly bear witness to what one has seen, heard and known.
- 4. To Teach (Matt. 28:20):** "*Didasko*" To consciously, painstakingly and properly give doctrinal and spiritual instructions.
- 5. To Go Out (Matt. 28:19):** "*Poreuomai*". To go from place to place in order to carry out all the afore-mentioned responsibilities.

As the missionary embarks on discharging his duty as it affects any or all of the aforementioned area(s), he should take special notice of the following points:

1. He should know that the message that saves sinner is that which centers on Christ. (Kerugma).
2. He should do proper follow up to ensure a lasting effect of God's word on his converts.
3. He must have burning love for lost souls. This passion will keep him going in the face of all odds.
4. He should employ the services of others when and where necessary to ensure efficiency.

5. Whenever there is an encounter with the forces of darkness, he should count on God to defend His name and work on his behalf.
6. He should have a thorough knowledge of the Holy Scriptures so as to face the enemy of the gospel without being ashamed.
7. He should appreciate cultural differences among people and be willing to make all necessary adjustments where necessary for the sake of the Gospel of Christ.
8. He should employ all available resources to reach the lost for Christ. This includes human, financial, material and mental resources.
9. He should be tactful in his approach to sinners so that his actions will not be misconstrued (his good will not be evil spoken of).
10. He should depend on the Holy Spirit for guidance in all ways and consult with Him at all times.

B. THE URGENCY OF THE TASK: The mission of soul-winning is the Lord's chiefest business here on earth and it requires urgency on the part of the church who serves as God's agent on earth in executing the plan of salvation of man.¹⁶ Time is said to be very precious but limited. If a missionary misappropriates his opportunities by lack of proper time management, which often shows itself in procrastination, those opportunities for service would be gone forever. As a French philosopher puts it, "He who values his life must be careful of his time; for time is the stuff out of which life is made."¹⁷

The urgency of our work as missionaries is seen by the fact that if a sinner transits into eternity without being offered ample opportunity to repent and confess Christ, his fate remains irrevocable. We certainly cannot stop people from dying, but it is within our reach to, at least, offer them the opportunity to save themselves from the judgment of eternal lake of fire.¹⁸ Rev. M. Otobo argued that there are other compelling reasons why Christians must be aggressive in sharing their faith in Christ with those without new life in Christ. Campus prostitution in tertiary institutions is in alarming rate.¹⁹ Besides, the Great Commission itself is over 2010 years old indicating that it is old enough to be completed.

We must bear in mind that sharing is God's method to tell all peoples, nations and tribes, he noted. Professor P. O. Ajah opined that there is a need for the church to discern the signs of the times Jesus spoke about in Matthew chapter 16 verses 1-3 and other passages. The advent of the third millennium has brought with it a great paradigm shift in morals, culture, science and technology, and virtually every other area.

He noted that this millennium would perhaps be the last one adding that the various factors, which are characteristic of the present age, allude to this fact. He outlined ten features which he said mostly characterize this new millennium some of which are: global cosmopolitanism, entertainment culture, satanic aggression, Pentecostalism confused, money priority, God manipulation, prevalent evil, among others.²⁰

In the light of the foregoing premises, the inescapable conclusion can be drawn that the sound of the Trumpet will be heard sooner than we think; that the time for world evangelization is now; that the time the church should go all out and aggressively seek for the emancipation of the lost is now, and that the time to incapacitate the enemies and overthrow their kingdoms is now. Consequently, missionaries, pastors, evangelists, and laymen alike, should use their God-given time judiciously in view of the fact that they shall give an account of it to their master, Christ Himself, who has called them into this "Ministry of Reconciliation."

It has also been asserted that the unsaved man has several essential needs calling for the attention of missionaries and all other classes of workers in the vineyard. These essential but spiritual needs are to be met before eternity sets in. Otherwise, they would never again be met. It should be remembered that "The Intermediate State" is *NOT* a state of further probation or a process of purification at purgatory before entering into supreme blessedness and joys of heaven. It has been misconstrued that purgatory is a place of purification and of preparation for the souls of believers who are not so sure of an ultimate entrance to heaven. That, as a means to an end, it provides the souls of believers an opportunity to suffer some pains, which afflict the soul and that, these sufferings serve as a kind of atonement.

The duration as well as the intensity of their sufferings varies according to the degree of purification still needed. They can be shortened or alleviated by the prayers and the good works of the faithful on earth, and especially by the sacrifice of the Mass.²¹

The Pope is said to have jurisdiction over purgatory and that it is his prerogative to grant indulgences, which are believed to have the efficacy to lighten the purgatorial sufferings, if not entirely terminating them. That it can also in the end grant permission to enter eternal bliss. However logical this theory sounds, it is founded on II Maccabees 12: 42-45, an apocrypha book that could not meet the requirements for canonicity and as such, was not incorporated into the Old or New Testament Canon, nor was it recognized by the Protestants as authentic.

Therefore, rather than raising a tantalized hope in sinners or religious but unconverted people in the church, they had better been encouraged as well as persuaded to accept Christ now or never.

Alfred Gibbs has simplified these essential needs as follows:

- That the unsaved man is dead, needing regeneration;
- That the unsaved man is lost, needing salvation;
- That the unsaved man is a slave, needing redemption;
- That the unsaved man is blind, needing illumination;
- That the unsaved man is a rebel, needing reconciliation;
- That the unsaved man is a criminal, needing justification, and
- That the unsaved man is a debtor, needing pardon.²²

END NOTES FOR CHAPTER FIVE

¹Larry Lea, *Highest Calling*, (Florida: Creation House, 1991), 119.

²Louis K. Fuller, *Going to The Nations, 3rd ed.*, (Plateau State, Nigeria: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2001), 79.

³Ibid., 86, 87.

⁴Bill Bright, *Witnessing Without Fear*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993), 67.

⁵Fuller, 93; ⁶Ibid.; ⁷Ibid., 94.; ⁸Ibid., 80.

⁹Betty O. Oseghale, "The Pastor and Education." *The Lamp Lighter*, (Ewu: Nigerian Advanced School of Theology), 2003; 21, 22.

¹⁰Ibid., 21, 22.

¹¹Egbeyon F. Ilenbodiaye, *Missions. 1st ed.*, (Asaba: Frontier Glory Publishing Ltd., 2008), 41.

¹²Ibid., 41, 42.

¹³Ibid., 43.

¹⁴Fuller, 21.; ¹⁵Ibid., 22.

¹⁶Ogba, *Committed to Prayer and World Evangelization*, 12.

¹⁷Ilenbodiaye, *Missions*, 47.

¹⁸Ogba, *Committed to Prayer and World Evangelization*, 14.

¹⁹M. A. Otobo, "Challenge on the Great Commission," (Uromi: Assemblies of God Church, 18 August 2000), 2.

²⁰Paul O. Ajah, *Repositioning the Church Towards the Millennium Challenge: The Price to Pay*, (Uburu: Truth and Life Publishers Ltd., 2007), 10- 19.

²¹Berkhof, 686.

²²Alfred P. Gibbs, *Personal Evangelism*, (Dubuque: Emmaus Bible College, 1973), 28- 32.

THE CULTURAL ASPECTS OF MISSIONS

Whenever we talk of missions, man comes into focus; whenever we talk of a people group or society, culture comes into focus. As important as a compass is to the pilot, so is culture to the missionary. As a matter of fact, the place of culture in missions can never be overestimated. Culture is one of those indispensable tools that a missionary needs to work with if he wishes to succeed in his undertakings in missions' enterprise.

Analogically, the world is a home; the occupants are the target audience of the missionary. The missionary that will go to them with the gospel of salvation needs to pass through a door if he must get to them. The door, within this context, is the culture of the people without which the missionary has no understanding of their ways of life.

I. CULTURE AND ITS PLACE IN MISSIONS

Culture is often described as the blueprint for living as shared by members of a given society who feel responsible for one another and recognize their common identity.¹ As mentioned earlier, culture is a parameter to the understanding of a people. It is the doorway to the people's ways of life. It spells out their norms which include areas as: Moral ethics and etiquette, beliefs, structures of language, religions, family structure, educational processes, marriage customs, clothes, gestures, sleeping habits and the like. A good knowledge of these material and non-material aspects of culture, popularly known as 'dos' and don'ts' is needed if the missionary must be fruitful and successful in the work of missions.

II. THE BIBLE AND CULTURE

It is incumbent on the cross-cultural gospel communicator to know what the Bible says concerning the cultures of people. This knowledge will arm him with good information that will affect his life positively for good cross-cultural ministry.²

More often than not, God communicates with people through the means of their own culture using the linguistic nuances upon which communication is built in that given culture with a view to removing those barriers that are associated with all communication events. He endorses the good aspects of the cultures of the world (practices that are in consonant with biblical principles) as He validates, judges and civilizes those cultures.³ If a culture is dynamic (good) God will use it for the good of the people but if it is not, then, Satan will dominate it for the cause of evil. For man, his disposition towards God or Satan will determine whether he will put his culture to good or bad uses.

III. CROSS-CULTURAL GOSPEL COMMUNICATIONS

The technical term communication has different shades of meanings. In the general sense, relationships are established, maintained as well as extended through the medium of communication. Practitioners in this field have opined that it serves as the means, by which the goals we have set for ourselves in life can be pursued, attained and sustained. On the whole, communication, as a social act, deals with the process of sharing ideas, thoughts, feelings and the like, which when clearly understood, can be acted upon.

A. COMMUNICATION DEFINED: For the purpose of clarity, we shall state the various definitions of communications, which depend largely on the given aspect that the individual expert has in mind.

- 1) For Thompson, it is seen “as a process of interaction that goes on for the purpose of giving and receiving information. This implies the transmission of information from senders to receivers and from receivers to senders.”⁴
- 2) As Jude Utah puts it, “Communication deals with establishing commonness between the person conveying the message and the other person receiving the message.”⁵
- 3) Jane Ravell views communication as “an exchange between people of knowledge, of information, of ideas, of opinions, of feelings.”⁶
- 4) Okwo quoted by Eziechine defines communication as “an interactive process involving the design of ideas, messages, information or data, and their dissemination in attempt to effect change in a person’s behaviour or to persuade him to act in a particular or predetermined manner.”⁷
- 5) However, Johansson in his own opinion made the assertion that “communication is not simply a question of giving or receiving instruction and information but rather a kind of linking process, aimed specifically at encouraging understanding and cooperation.”⁸

In the light of the foregoing, the process of communication is in itself a very intricate issue because communication among people today has become very difficult considering the heterogeneous nature of our society. People of the same culture and language even misunderstand each other when speaking and using their local linguistic codes. This problem of linguistic differences increases when a stranger tries to communicate with people of different cultures and languages.

As a result of this, cross-cultural communication has become a core subject in most theological schools across the nations of this world. This is to effectively arm every Christian worker with the requisite skills required in the commendable task of bringing souls into God’s kingdom through evangelism. Therefore, the cross-cultural communicator (Missionary) should seek to bridge the cultural and communication gaps between people by establishing commonness. He should know that communication only takes place when the encoder shares common linguistic codes mutually with the decoder.

B. TYPES OF AUDIENCE RESPONSE TO CHRISTIAN GOSPEL MESSAGE: Anytime and anywhere the Gospel of Salvation is preached to sinners, the response will usually vary from an individual to another. The different response is informed by a number of factors, which distinguish one person from the other. This may be due to the state of readiness, socio-economic problems, demonic influence, the demands the gospel makes on people, the manner of presentation among other factors.

- 1. Sincere Acceptance:** This is when the respondent accepts the message on the basis of understanding, having considered it an all-important issue in his or her life. The missionary evangelist must bear in mind that for the sinners to sincerely accept the message of salvation, he must carry out his responsibility of making the gospel of Christ as clear and compelling as possible, leaving them to the Holy Spirit to make converts out of them.⁹
- 2. Straightforward Rejection:** This is when the respondent having understood the message rejects it out rightly on the basis of its demands or cost. Bearing this in mind, the missionary should humbly endeavor before God to faithfully communicate Christ and beseech his respondents to accept Him. He should resist any human pressure to produce results by himself. Instead, he should continue to count on the Holy Spirit to convict sinners of their sins and convince them of the need of a Saviour.¹⁰
- 3. Situational Reformulation:** Learning is a process. It is therefore natural for men to decode new information in terms of previous experience. Situational reformulation takes place when the respondent absorbs the message into his or her old system of thinking by assigning meanings to it which corresponds with his or her indigenous beliefs and practices but which are incompatible with Christianity.¹¹ Consequently, the missionary should avoid this phenomenon by avoiding vagueness of expressions, ambiguity and verbosity which tend to encourage multiple interpretations.
- 4. Studied Protraction:** This is when the respondent postpones or defers his decision to accept Christ to an indefinite time in the future (sometimes for no just cause). The Athenians told Apostle Paul “We will hear you again concerning this” (Acts 17: 32- 34). This response is far from acceptance but not necessarily equal to rejection.¹² In the light of this, let me say that it is incumbent on the preacher to warn his respondents of the underlying consequences of postponing indefinitely, the decision to accept Christ.
- 5. Syncretistic Incorporation:** This is likely to take place in polytheistic societies where numerous deities are held in veneration or fear. People in such a place will usually feel it is unwise if not inconceivable for one to opt for one deity as the object of worship. The widespread tendency is to respond to the Christianity syncretistically. That is, the respondent will choose appealing parts of the message and add them to his non-Christian religious beliefs/practices.¹³
- 6. Symbiotic Resignation:** The word ‘symbiosis’ in biology refers to the living together of two dissimilar organisms. In this type of response, the respondent would reject the message by saying, ‘as for me, I will not forsake the old ways,

but the new way may be good for you my subordinates or subjects even though it is very different, you can accept it. The decision is yours. You may do as you will only let us live and work together in peace.¹⁴

C. OTHER RELATED ISSUES:

- 1. Overlapping of Understanding:** By overlapping of understanding we mean the possibility of a minimum of mutual understanding between the giver and the receiver of information in a communication act or event. That is, if the source and respondent in the communication act have the same native language or have been exposed to some of the same Christian values, have both shared stable home lives, and had similar educational experiences; there will invariably be increased mutual understanding between them.
- 2. Cultural Isolation:** This refers to the human characteristic of non-acceptance of strange cultures or a form of opposition to change that causes a person or a people to practice willful cultural separation – negative ethnocentrism.
- 3. Cultural Encapsulation:** This occurs when people by their attitudes and actions are not opened to changes or exposed to other people's cultural behaviours, norms and values. In other words, the people are caged by their orientation and blind acceptance of their culture as the only valid life experience.

IV. CULTURAL UNIVERSALS, VARIABILITY, DYNAMISM AND RELATIVISM

It is an established fact that the diversity of cultures in the world today started when God confused the human language at Babel (Gen. 11:1-9). Since then, no people group is without any type of culture no matter how simple or complex, primitive or civilized, as far as it serves her people best in their own setting.

A. CULTURAL UNIVERSALS: These are basic elements found in all cultures. Because every culture must deal with human limitations and possibilities, and because every group must solve the same problems of survival, certain types of arrangements are found in every culture.¹⁵ These elements are called cultural universals. They solve such immediate problems of both personal and collective survival as: securing food, maintaining law and order, producing and training new members, and developing as well as maintaining group unity.

B. CULTURAL VARIABILITY: This reflects the variety of customs, beliefs, and artifacts devised by human beings to meet the collective or universal needs of people within a given society.¹⁶ That is why today customs that seem odd to a people group are the natural ways of doing things in other communities or societies.¹⁷

For instance, marriage is done in every society but the rules and regulations governing it differ from place to place. Whichever way it finds its expression in all societies; people are taught that their behaviour is normal and natural. For instance, whereas wearing of clothes in public is a cultural universal in Nigeria, but the styles of those clothes is a cultural variable or alternative in that it changes from one culture to another.

C. CULTURAL DYNAMISM: Giving that the world in which we live is not static and that the dynamism of culture makes it possible for man not only to create culture but also to develop it, the missionary as an agent of change should therefore use the word of God to gradually, tactfully and systematically change the bad aspects of the culture where he is ministering.

D. CULTURAL RELATIVISM: This is a conscious attempt to see the world through the lens of another culture with a view to understanding and judging the content of that culture the same way members of that given society do.¹⁸

Consequent upon this, any result- oriented missionary, much like social scientist, does not need to ask if a culture trait is good or bad according to some absolute standard or yardstick, but rather, why does this trait exist, how is it maintained, and what purpose does it serve for members of that society? The standard for objective evaluation, if any, should be whether or not the culture pattern enhances the well being of individuals and the survival of the collectivity.¹⁹

V. ETHNOCENTRISM

Ethnocentrism has its positive and negative dimensions and applications. In a general sense, it is a feeling of superiority of one's culture over all other cultures so much so that the ethnocentric individual can no longer appreciate the fact that no culture is completely good and no one is totally bad.²⁰ A missionary in this 21st century of globalization is faced with at least three basic cultures: His culture, the culture of his respondents and heavenly or supra-culture.

To regard some cultures as civilized and treat others as primitive, or to use one culture as a standard by which other cultures are judged, makes one guilty of ethnocentrism. This deliberate or thoughtless violation of law could result to unwanted persecutions and oppositions even sometimes death. Be warned!

A. MERITS OF ETHNOCENTRISM: According to social scientists, ethnocentrism serves important functions for individuals and a group of people, the society.

1. It Encourages Conformity: With respect to the rightness of one's culture, ethnocentrism helps to reinforce the tendency to conform to and defend it.

2. It Serves as a Unifying Factor: As a factor that encourages uniformity, ethnocentrism fundamentally serves as the glue that holds the society together. In the event that it is absent, the society will give in to bureaucratization and disintegration.²¹

3. It Gives Credence to Cultural Distinctiveness: Considering cultural variability, ethnocentrism gives members of a given community a sense of shared identity and enables them to hold in high esteem the uniqueness of their culture notwithstanding the views and repulsiveness of other people.

4. It Forms the Basis for the Transmission of Culture: With respect to continuity, ethnocentrism underscores the transmission of societal values from one generation to another.

- 5. It Encourages Patriotism:** Belief in the superiority of one's culture over all others spurs patriotism. That is, one who knows that the beliefs and practices of his own people are to a greater extent better than those of other people would love his own country as well as supports its authority and interests.

B. DEMERITS OF ETHNOCENTRISM

- 1. It Inhibits Adaptability:** Ethnocentrism is dysfunctional in that it reduces the ability and willingness to adapt to changes when beliefs in the superiority of one's culture leads to an open conflict with other societies.
- 2. It Inhibits Economic and Political Integration:** In modern societies, mode of subsistence has changed considerably. As a result of this, economic survival depends largely on interchange in the (factors of) production and distribution of goods and services. This interchange is made possible by government policies. Where these policies are not favourable, economic growth would be hampered and the benefits accruable with it would be forgone.
- 3. It Makes Acculturation Impossible:** Acculturation is likely to take place where there is objective observation of all cultures. This objectivism makes aspects of any culture to be understood only in terms of the meanings attached to them in that society. Unfortunately, ethnocentrism hinders the appreciation of the content of other cultures, which is the parameter to its acceptance.
- 4. It Hinders National and International Unity and Peace:** The ethnic rivalry in Nigeria, the Arab- Israeli disputes and the Iran- Iraqi war are recent examples of disruptions involving nationalistic ethnocentrism making peaceful co-existence among nations almost impossible. Added to this, ethnocentrism underlies the on-going Christian versus Moslem intolerance and bigotry that has claimed many innocent lives over the centuries.

Besides, I have personally observed that one major factor tending to cause a set back to Assemblies of God Church in recent times is that its people are neither patriotic nor ethnocentric. Most pastors and members, quite unlike adherents of other denominations around us, hardly speak well of Assemblies of God church, a denomination that is second to none; this is attested to by the fact that it is revered by all and sundry. They hardly see anything good in the policies of Assemblies of God, yet they maintain their membership with the church from year to year. But when they are confronted, they start to point out those things that are being practiced in other denominations but never upheld by Assemblies of God authorities.

A careful observation of their behaviour will reveal that the most significant problem of these critics is that they lack knowledge. They have failed to take cognizance of the fact that churches, much like societies of this world, have what they share in common (denominational universals having to do with doctrines) and things that they can never share in common (denominational variables having to do with policies and dogma). On the whole, becoming a bona fide citizen of a given

community, state or church, calls for being loyal, patriotic and ethno appreciation. Anything short of this amounts to treason.

VI. ADAPTABILITY AND ACCULTURATION

Whereas adaptability is adjustment to environmental conditions for the purpose of harmony, acculturation is cultural modification of an individual or a group of people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture. Human behaviour is characterized by flexibility and adaptability rather than by instinct. For peaceful co-existence to take place in a complex society, adaptability is needed.

As Merton views it, adaptability and acculturation help to foster the spirit of cultural relativism (seeing the world through the lens of another culture and appreciating its distinctive cultural content). This is an excellent antidote in combating the spirit of ethnocentrism and racism. Apostle Paul confirms the validity of cultures and the importance of acculturation when he said,

... to the Jews became as a Jew that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law as under the law; that I might win those who are under the law; to those who are without the law, as without Law... to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some of them for Christ (1Cor. 9: 20- 22).²²

This was for the purpose of identifying with the people in order to win them for Christ. It should not be viewed as hypocrisy and inconsistency. More so, the incarnation of Christ validates culture. He took the human form or nature, lived among men and ministered to them using their own culture. The missionary cannot afford to do otherwise. He should humbly endorse every culture he comes in contact with if it is not at variance with supra-culture.

VII. CONSERVATISM AND LIBERALISM

Record shows that while conservatism barred the Protestants from forging ahead in missions, liberalism made the orthodox churches to get drowned in the sea of religion. The former tends to inhibit while the latter seeks to expose one to criticism and ridicule. According to records, the Greek Orthodox Church in the Eastern part of the Holy Roman Empire [the Carthaginian Church] was very suspicious of culture and learning, and because of its conservatism, was soon torn apart by schism resulting in its separation from the Western Church.

This separation that shut the church in the East off from many of the vitalizing influences of the renaissance, also made it to be in great opposition with the state. But the church in the West [the Alexandrian church] welcomed learning and because of its openness to the Greek culture, was soon to produce the early church's heresy. This openness made the Western Church vulnerable to imperial interference in the affairs of the church resulting in the iconoclastic controversy [worship of images] of the eight and ninth centuries. The Pope in the West and Emperor Charlemagne took a stand in favour of the use of visible symbols of divine

reality. Consequently, it became impossible for the church to refute Muslim charges of idolatry.

There is a clarion call on the present day church to strike a balance between these extremes. In the view of Aristotle, right is found in moderation. He asserted that "... temperance is the golden mean between indulgence and insensibility."²³ There is a dire need today to blend these two things so as to come up with a balanced equation. The missionary whose effort is result- oriented should know the underlying implications of going to either of the two extremes (Conservatism and Liberalism).

VIII. CLOTHING, JEWELLING AND COSMETICS

There are some socially inclined peripheral issues, which demand that one exercises a high degree of maturity and understanding in dealing with them. Otherwise, rather than proffering solution to already existing problems, one would be complicating them.

It has been keenly observed that the Western Culture today seems gripped by the belief that aesthetic judgments are merely expressions of personal taste, which is not subject to dispute and should not become standards that can be brought to bear in evaluating or making a judgment about other people's aesthetic norms. Critical thinkers have opined that in societies where such ideology is prevalent, it will be difficult to determine what a sound aesthetic is all about especially when it has to do with dressing code.

Whereas the Holy Scriptures provides a wealth of commandments to guide Christians in their behaviour and character development in the moral spheres, they provide a few explicit commandments about what is expected in the aesthetic sphere. Nevertheless, this relative lack of specific instructions on this area does not mean that the Scriptures are altogether silent on the matter of judging what is beautiful, sublime and acceptable mode of dressing and cosmeticizing.

A. JEWELLING AND COSMETICS: The issues of what to wear, adorning or covering the hair and wearing earrings or necklaces should not be strictly or thoughtlessly addressed as doctrinal issue but should be seen as cultural norms, which require that the practitioners of the Christian faith use their sense of moral judgment coupled with their knowledge of the Scriptures to determine what is modest and acceptable enough for patriotic Christians. If not, one would pursue the shadow at the expense of the substance. Even though these issues have developed into a subject of great controversy in the Christendom, it should be borne in mind that the Bible leaves no room for doubt or dispute about the issue of acceptable mode of dressing for Christians in all ages (I Pet. 3: 3, Rom. 14: 16).

To the conservative Christians, the use of cosmetics- beauty treatments given to the hair, nails, and skin especially the face, and jewelries like earrings, necklaces, bangles and beads should be discouraged in the Christendom in that Aaron used them to lure the Israelites into idolatry (Exo. 32: 1- 6). But they have failed to take cognizance of the fact that jewelries were offered as offerings to the Lord for the building of the tabernacle (Exo. 35: 21, 22).

It should be remarked that there is no culture that is as rich in or so cherish the use of jewelries and cosmetics as the Jewish culture.

1. Jewelries: The first mention of women's jewelry was when Abraham's servant presented earrings and bracelets to Rebecca (Gen. 24: 22). Hebrew women wore bracelets, necklaces, earrings, nose rings and gold chains, and their attraction to these jewelries was well described by Jeremiah when he said, "Can a maid forget her ornaments?"²⁴ (Jer. 2: 32).

2. Cosmetics and Perfumes: Hebrew women also colored their eyelashes and the edges of the eyelids with a fine black powder moistened with oil or vinegar to achieve an effect somewhat like modern mascara.²⁵ But this practice was generally viewed with contempt, as was the case with Jezebel (II Kgs. 9: 30), and was disdainfully mentioned by Jeremiah (Jer. 4: 30) and Ezekiel (Eze. 23: 40).

Perfumes derived from such common sources as frankincense and myrrh were used by Ancient women in much the same manner as women do today. But perfumes were used mainly in the Tabernacle rituals.

3. Hair Style/Headdress: The Jewish women wore their hair long and braided. Apostle Paul said that hair was a natural veil or covering for the woman; he indicates that in his day, it was a shameful thing for a Christian woman to cut her hair (I Cor. 11: 15). Jewish women used the headdress to some degree. They used gold or jewels for hair ornaments (I Pet. 3: 3), as was the practice of women in neighbouring countries. But the hair styles were never as elaborate as those of Egyptian and Assyrian women.²⁶ This explains why Apostle Paul urged modesty for Christian women and girls (I Tim. 2: 8).

The Hebrew men considered the hair to be an important personal ornament, so they gave much care and attention to it. To keep the hair and beard neat, Hebrew men cut their hair much as modern Western men do, using a primitive kind of scissors (II Sam. 14: 26) and razors (Num. 6: 5), except for men who made a religious vow, not to cut their hair (Jug. 13: 5).²⁷

From the foregoing, it can be deduced with ease and precision that the problems with jewelries, cosmetics, perfumes, and hair styles are not as disgusting as the indecent.

B. CLOTHING: In every society be it primitive or civilized, simple or complex, there are rules of behaviour called social norms. These norms are usually divided into two major parts: "*The Prescriptive Law*," which defines acceptable behaviour in a given circumstance; and "*The Proscriptive Law*," which spells out forbidden behaviour regarded as taboos. The church, being a sacred society in her own right, has her own set of rules guiding the socio-ethical aspect of believers' lives. Prof. R. I. Ebuade quoting Ladd said,

The ethics of the kingdom... were absolute ethics and were required of those who had experienced the kingdom of God. They included inward righteousness and outward acts of goodness. They concern every aspect of human conduct. He observed that properly grounded personal ethics would affect social ethics.²⁸

It should be understood that the church, as was the nation of Israel, is now the custodian of the ethics of the kingdom. This does not imply that the Church has taken the place of Israel. The Church is only privileged to play a role which the Israelites could have been playing now had they accepted the messiahship of Christ. Therefore, believers who watchfully anticipate the consummation of the messianic kingdom should have their lives regulated daily by these absolute ethical concerns, which relate to the kingdom, and not to negotiate them, he added.

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that if the ethics of the kingdom are thoroughly imbibed, sustained and practiced, they will invariably reform and regulate all our socio-political, ethical concerns. Yes, when God is in place, everything will fall in place.

History reports that clothing worn by the Hebrews served as the external symbol of the individual's innermost feelings and desires, and was used as occasions demanded. Some of the factors that determine the people's style of dress were climate, religious duties and occasions, gender, economic status, profession as well as circumstance such as mourning.²⁹ The gradual change in the Jewish society over the centuries has invariably affected their manner of dressing. In like vein, the constant change in the world today plays on every culture thus resulting in changes in codes of dressing.³⁰

It should be remarked that if concern about dress code deals essentially with trousers, leaving out mini-skirts or long skirts with slits that deliberately extends to the upper parts of the thighs and revealing under skirts, it is not legitimate.

As Emilimor puts it, "... what seems to cause our people serious concern is when a man or a lady dresses in such a way that certain body contours that create sexy feelings in the opposite sex are exposed ..." ³¹ These stimulants come in various forms and varying degrees. It could be handless shirts that expose parts of the breasts, or very flexible or transparent shirts that make the breast nipples very conspicuous and alluring. It could also be tight fitting clothes that expose a woman's features, thereby enticing men, or dresses left so loose that a gentle breeze can lift it up to expose a lady's nakedness.

All of these indecent dressing codes are displeasing to the Lord because they are un-Christian. Aighalua noted that during Christ's earthly ministry, He abolished some laws, modified others, but strengthened the one that relates to morality with a view to preventing lust and sin. "Lusting after a woman in one's heart is sinful; but the woman who gives cause for it will not escape punishment," ³² he decried (Matt. 5: 27- 28; 18: 7; Jn. 1: 17; Jam. 1: 13- 16). Consequently, it is pertinent to say without mincing words that a Christian who dresses provocatively or like a ragamuffin, does not only look obscene but also should be rightly informed that anything that constitutes a nuisance to the society, constitutes an offense to God.

A Christian girl who knows that wearing of any design makes her object of scorn or reproach to the church or community should desist from wearing as wisdom demands. "If you find yourself where people might stone you to death for wearing trousers, for God's sake, spare your life by changing your dress code." ³³

There is no denying the fact that Jewish women wore clothing that was very similar to that of men.

However, the law strictly and unequivocally forbade a woman to wear anything that was thought to belong particularly to a man, such as the signet ring and other ornaments. Josephus, the Jewish historian, remarked that women were also forbidden to use weapons of a man. By the same token, men were forbidden to wear the outer robe of a woman (Deut. 22: 5).³⁴

In other words, the distinction of sexes by the apparel is to be kept up for the preservation of our own chastity and that of our neighbours. It also forbids the confounding of the dispositions and affairs of the sexes. While appreciating the fact that there is no sex distinction among angels, it is a thing that is meant to serve as a differentiating factor between human beings and angels, and even among men.

Unfortunately, this divine heritage has been threatened in recent times by civilization and proliferation of churches. Axiomatically, proliferation of churches has made it basically impossible for the present day church to have a unified standard of behaviour. This is because each denomination is inherently unique and autonomous. These combined factors have turned what is proper and decorous to *One man's meat, another man's poison*.

That notwithstanding, it is noteworthy to say that no matter how civilized the culture of our contemporary society might be, it is not to be used as a standard for the church. On the whole, religious people should take care that all their external behaviour are answerable to their profession. How can the attire of a harlot become a chaste Christian's matron?

Each denomination has her set of values and socio-religious norms. It behoves every member of any given church, irrespective of the individual's social standing and attainments in life, to remain loyal and patriotic. Violators should be punished in line with the existing disciplinary measures of the church. Consequently, Christians should dress the way and manner they want to be addressed.

END NOTES FOR CHAPTER SIX

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²Jude C. Utah, *Cross-Cultural Gospel Communication*, (Lagos: Eagle and Joy Educational Publishers, 2000), 23.

³Ibid., 24.

⁴U. B. Gbenedio, and F. A. Anene-boyle, *Language and Communication Skills*, (Ibadan: Kraft Books Limited, 2004), 25.

⁵Utah, 11.

⁶Gbenedio and Anene-boyle, 25.

⁷Augustine Obiajulu Eziechine, *Effective Communication in English Language*, (Agbor: Krisbec Publications, 2002), 1.

⁸Gbenedio and Anene-boyle, 25.

⁹David J. Hesselgrave, *Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 108.

¹⁰Ibid., 111.; ¹¹Ibid.; ¹²Ibid., 113.; ¹³Ibid.;

¹⁴Ibid., 114.

¹⁵Hess, 59; ¹⁶Ibid.; ¹⁷Ibid.; ¹⁸Ibid., 61.; ¹⁹Ibid. ²⁰Ibid., 60; ²¹Ibid.

²²*The Holy Bible: New King James Version*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984), 993.

²³Norman L. Geisler, *Christian Ethics*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1989), 19.

²⁴*The Holy Bible*, 652.

²⁵J. I Packer and M. C. Tenney, eds., *Illustrated Manners and Customs of the Bible*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc. Publishers, 1980), 483.

²⁶Ibid., 484.; ²⁷Ibid., 482.

²⁸Robert Ebuade, *Theology of the Kingdom of God*, (Benin: United City Press, 1999), 168.

²⁹Packer and Tenney, 478; ³⁰Ibid., 474.

³¹John Emilimor, "Believers Must Dress to Cover Nakedness." *Sunday Vanguard*, [Lagos], 15 April 2007], 50.

³²Oseghale Emmanuel Aighalua, "... It is un- Christian." *Sunday Vanguard*, [Lagos], 15 April 2007], 50.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Packer and Tenney, 482.

ISLAMIC EVANGELIZATION

Over the centuries, Christians almost everywhere have all too readily cultivated and cherished an antipathy towards Muslims and have expressed it by totally neglecting their obligation under God to win them to Christ.¹ This stems from the fact that the Islamic world has been stamped or labeled as ‘resistant’ to Christian missionary efforts. Consequent upon this popular notion that Muslims are very difficult if not impossible to win to Christ, a lot of Christians don’t consider it worthwhile spending their time, money or breath evangelizing the Muslims world.

It is a truism that the “Traditional Muslims” see Christianity as a danger to their ways of life hence they are not willing to embrace it.² Notwithstanding, it should be made clear at this point that anything God- Himself has interest in, must never be taken for an impossible task.

Statistics shows that in terms of numerical strength, Islam claims a hold on almost one billion people in the world. By this, it is meant that out of every five persons, one is invariably a Muslim. As Sobhi has observed, there are twenty-three Countries which have Islamic population of over 90 percent, eighteen with 50-90 percent, and twenty five with 10- 49 percent.³ Unfortunately, the Islamic world that is the most needy areas of missions is the least evangelized in every nation.

Christians should by this report be challenged to storm the Islamic world with the fire of evangelism and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Only that there are rules to be adhered to because of the peculiarity of this mission. Evangelism anywhere in the world is a spiritual warfare and anyone who is engaged in it must be committed to prayer and fasting. Sobhi noted,

To go to Muslims with the message of the cross is to mount an open attack on the territory of Satan. The enemy does not stand there as an onlooker while you try to win them to Christ. He will come full force against you. Therefore, it is naive, impudent, and presumptuous to try to win Muslims to the Kingdom of God without first wrestling in prayer and fasting, and prevailing.⁴

After a decisive victory has been won over all opposing forces, the missionary should develop a sensitive strategy that is deeply rooted in sacrificial love upon which other subsequent steps are built. Everywhere in the world today, people get excited when their individual or group unique identity is appreciated, treasured and treated with a deep sense of respect. There are styles of communication that are acceptable in Islamic culture. Missionaries who fail to adopt these communication patterns would be seen as people trying to impose on them strange customs and influences that could cost them their rights and privileges in their own community, hence unfavorable response.

Basically, what comes to the minds of Muslims first when the gospel of Christ is presented is that becoming a Christian means that they have to renounce their own culture, lose their own sense of identity, as well as betray their own people. As a matter of fact, their fellows have treated Muslims who have become Christians, as traitors to the 'House of Islam' and they, having become defectors, must be eliminated as sources of pollution and corruption in the community of the prophets.⁵ Bearing all these things in mind, the missionary should beware of cultural imperialism or ethnocentric tendencies [any attempt to impose another culture on people who have their own]. It should be understood that the Gospel is out to preserve the rich variety of cultures and not to destroy them.

I. KNOW WHO THEY ARE

A working knowledge of the cultural norms and behavioral patterns of your target audience especially as it affects religious life and practices can go a long way in helping you to determine how best to approach them.

A. THEY ARE LEGALISTIC: In a security-oriented society like that of the Muslims, the individual does not matter that much. The group to which he or she belongs is what is considered important.⁶ When there is conflict of opinion or in the decision-making processes, it is the group's interests that supersede the interest of the individual. The individual is thus seen in the context of the group, which has a strong grip on its members. Malek remarked, "The influence of the group and the grip of Muslim society on its individual members are tremendous obstacles that hinder them from following Christ."⁷

As a result of the individual's attachment to the group by the bond of brotherhood and a sense of equality, he cannot easily take an individualistic decision to accept Christ however strong his conviction might be. Legality makes it dawn on him that he does not live in a vacuum and that if he were to decide to accept Christ, his family, depending on how fundamental they are, would strongly oppose his decision. His mind tells him that he will certainly face dangers if he tries to stand his grounds. "His parents could decide to ostracize or disinherit him. Members of his family might even decide to kill him."⁸

In the event that the Christian missionary has concluded arrangements to reach out to the Muslims, this solidarity that has placed them in a vicious cycle becomes a thing that he should reckon and deal with decisively before further steps that are expected to yield positive results are taken.

B. THEY ARE IMPULSIVE: It has been keenly observed there are various factors responsible for the existence of a phenomenon that could be described as 'Islamic Terrorism.' By terrorism, however, one is not trying to insinuate that Islam is basically a terrorist religion or that the religion is of terrorists. According to Amir At-Taheris's remarks, "Islamic terrorism is a phenomenon that takes place when fundamentalist Muslims try hard to apply the sharia literally and subject others to the religion of Islam."⁹

These fundamentalists have chosen to toy this route of terrorism in their bid to have a superiority complex over others. As a people who are extremely proud of their religious identity, they do not only believe or see Islam as the only religion that has a right to exist, but also strive to ensure that whatever stands in their way [civil or religious authorities, political powers, military forces, and the like] are all taken over.

Ignorance coupled with pride is another factor that plays on the Muslims' inability to humbly acknowledge the fact that other religions of the world have their right to existence constitutionally and otherwise. In the words of Matthew A. Izibili, "One of the major obstacles responsible for the not peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria is ignorance and lack of respect for others' religion."¹⁰ By the time this scourge of ignorance and pride are dealt with decisively, they will begin to treat other religions with great respect and esteem as the law of courtesy demands.

Arguing further in the same vein, Izibili opined that religious leaders especially those who have the privilege of participating actively either in the drafting or interpreting of their sect's tenets of faith, need to be cautioned against using their position to encourage any culture of subjugation and discrimination of people for whatever reasons.¹¹

Another strong factor, which, of course, is responsible for 'The Never Ending Jihad Against Christians,' is their belief and faith in the promise of eternal security for those who die in the way of Allah, especially during the jihad. Ergum and Emir noted "The Hadith makes it transparent that Jihad has as its primary characteristics a bloody struggle involving military battles."¹² Jim Murk noted that Muhammad, in his teachings, instilled in the people that 24 hours of fighting for Allah was better than one month of fasting and prayer adding that if a man, during his lifetime, refuses to participate in some military campaigns for Allah and Islam, he would die as an infidel.¹³

It is also believed that if a man dies while participating in Holy Jihad, Allah will reward him with forgiveness of all sins and immediate admittance to Paradise with all its promises of sensual delights. Lending support to these assertions, Jim Murk made the following excerpt:

And if you are slain or die in the way of Allah, forgiveness and mercy from Allah are far better than all they could amass (Surah 3; 157).¹⁴

I have been ordered by Allah to fight with people till they bear testimony to the fact that there is no God but Allah (Habit 1: 13). Wherever you fight infidels kill them; for whoever kills them shall have reward on the Day of Resurrection (Hadith 9: 4). Let those who would exchange the life of this world for the hereafter, fight for the cause of Allah; whether they die or conquer. We shall richly reward them (Surah 4: 74).¹⁵

The person who participates in {holy battles} in Allah's Cause and nothing compels him to do so except belief in Allah and His Apostles, will be

recompensed by Allah either with a reward, or booty (if he survives) or will be admitted to paradise {if he is killed in the battle as a martyr) [Hadith 1:35].¹⁶

In the light of the foregoing, one can deduce precisely that what informs the impulsiveness of Muslims is the promise of eternal security, made by Allah. In fact, this is the ultimate motive behind the young warrior's passion for Allah and his eagerness in militant engagements.

C. THEY ARE HOSPITABLE: Having discussed the impulsiveness of Muslims, chances are that some people might think that describing them as "Hospitable" is an exaggeration or false arrogation. However, that is not essentially the case. In the Islamic Five Fundamentals of Faith, charitable performances are both legalistic and voluntary. This work will pay attention to the legal aspect of it when we shall discuss "Salvation by Works."

Voluntary almsgiving and hospitality called 'Sadagah,' serve various purposes in the Islamic society and commitment to it is highly encouraged by all and sundry. In due recognition of the fact that everything is the property of Almighty Allah, every devout Muslim practises charitable giving, which is intended to bring unity and betterment to the society as a whole. Commenting on the foregoing, Ergum writes,

Zakat represents the unbreakable bond between members of the community, whom prophet Muhammad described to be 'like the organs of the body, if one suffers then all others rally in response.'¹⁷

More so, charitable giving, in the perspective of the Muslims, encourages hard work thereby discouraging begging; it also helps to alleviate emotional distress when it is cheerfully exhibited. More often than not, this charitable giving is done out of a deep sense of obligation. Nevertheless, those who have cultivated the habit of almsgiving are practising it out of love and honour to God as some non-Muslims who are beneficiaries have confessed.

II. KNOW WHAT THEY BELIEVE

In every religion, there is usually a set of beliefs regarded as tenets which the religious body holds as true and which helps in guiding the faith and practices of all those who belong to that body. The same is true of the Islamic people. They have their own set of beliefs. We shall briefly discuss them as follows:

A. THEY BELIEVE IN ALLAH: The most important claim made by the Muslim is "we worship the same god." Although this claim is also made in an early revelation in the Quran, the fact remains that the god depicted in the Quran is never the same as the God of the Bible. There are certainly some similarities but they differ remarkably in character, in purpose, and in their relationship with man.¹⁸

“Allah” is a derivative of the generic Arabic term designated “god.” It is the personal name for “God” in Islam and it denotes ‘Divinity.’ Although Allah is used as the word for God in the Arabic Bible, many converts from Islam to Christianity feel very uncomfortable in identifying the God of the Bible with the name Allah.¹⁹

This explains why it has become a subject that stirs controversy in the Christian academic community because the difference between ‘God’ and ‘Allah’ is never a matter of language. In the words of Jim Murk,

Allah of the Quran and the God of the Bible are two different beings. They are portrayed as having very different characteristics. Allah is utterly transcendent. He is not a personal God and cannot be known by his followers. The God of the Bible can be known as a Person. Allah is a monolithic being, whereas the God of the Bible is described as a Composite Being in both Old and New Testaments. This unique plurality is revealed in the New Testament as God having three persons, which Christians call the Triune God or the Trinity.²⁰

Lending support to the foregoing, Gerhard and Walter asserted that Allah differ remarkably from God who revealed Himself as Elohim implying the Trinity, whereas Allah is absolutely singular and has no partner. Besides, there are other things which further help to prove the irreconcilable differences between God of the Bible and Allah of the Quran.

Take for instance, of all the ninety nine (99) names that describe Allah’s attributes, only one says he loves, while none of them identifies him as father- an attribute which shows God’s love to us in the Bible.²¹ More so, Allah is never characterized as a god of unconditional love. As a matter of fact, the Quran says that Allah does not love those who are corrupt (Sura 5: 64); he does not love unbelievers (Sura 3: 32) and does not love the unjust or evildoers (Sura 3: 57).²²

In other words, Allah only loves those who submit to him, obey him, and do good works. He does not love the sinner. On the contrary, the Bible says that the true God distributes His blessings and shows love to the righteous and sinners alike.²³ It was His love for sinners that made Him to send His only begotten Son (Rom. 5: 8; I Jn. 4: 6, 10; II Pet. 3: 9).

Despite these differences, the Muslims claim that they worship the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses whom they call Allah in their religion. This they do with the whole of their hearts and with a sense of devotion and obligation. If they were sincere, would there have been disparity between the muslims’ approach to Allah and that of the Christians?

Nevertheless, while there is a vast difference between Christians and Muslims in their object of worship, they have some common grounds in terms of doctrine particularly monotheism. Several passages of the Quran emphasize the absolute monotheistic nature of Allah as being self-existent and necessary. This existence of only one God that is the first pillar of Islam is a simple confession that is found at every juncture of Islamic life.

It is therefore incumbent upon the Christian missionary to treat Muslims as religious neighbours. He is also advised to mention, in his preaching, some of the fundamental doctrinal teachings on which we agree especially these subjects like: "The Final Judgment," "The Lake of Fire" and "Paradise." Persuading the Muslims to accept the fact that "... to really escape from hell, they must listen to, and even accept the gospel of Jesus Christ"²⁴ could follow this, Gerhard and Walter further remarked.

B. THEY BELIEVE IN MOHAMMED: History reports that in the year 570 AD, Mohammed was born in Mecca to the family of Abdullah and Amina. He is reported to have been a quiet and amiable boy whose early life was filled with tragedy and losses. Prior to his birth, his father died and at the tender age of six, his mother left him also. His grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, who was rearing the little boy died two years after his mother's death and bequeathed that parental responsibility to his uncle, Abu Talib.

As one who grew up in an important commercial city, Mecca, he became a merchant and traveled widely with camel trading caravans in the service of a wealthy widow, Khadija. Having gained a good reputation as an honest merchant, he won Khadija's admiration and love. At the age of twenty-five (25) he got married to Khadija who was then fifteen (15) years older than Mohammed. All the same, the marriage was successful and was blessed with two boys and four girls though it lasted for only 25 years when he lost her.

Mohammed's moral life after this incident can best be described as decadent. Gerhard and Walter noted, "After her death, which roughly coincided with the Hijra to Mecca, he married about thirteen wives. All except Aisha were widows or divorcees."²⁵ Aisha was married out to him at the age of 9 but Mohammed died leaving her when she was about 18 years old. Mohammed hated the religious practices of his own people because of its polytheistic nature.

As an ardent seeker of Allah, he was always in solitary places meditating. In one of his deep meditations, he fell into a trance in which he said that he saw the angel Gabriel who was sent by Allah to tell him that he has been appointed to be Allah's prophet. He also claimed that in his vision, Gabriel gave him the Quran, the word of Allah.

His preaching about this one God [Allah] earned him bitter opposition from the Meccans. Their animosity towards him was such that made him to go through a period of depression during which he contemplated suicide. Thereafter, he migrated to Medina where he continued his preaching even though the Jewish tribes of Medina never accepted his messages and claims. From his obedience to the cause of Allah came Islam, an Arabic word that means submission and anyone who submits his life to Allah is called a Muslim.

Though the Muslims believe that Mohammed was the last and greatest prophet of Allah, there are several factors in his entire life that discredit this claim.

- a. He lived a morally depraved life as against the life of moral decency maintained by the prophets in the Bible.

- b. He had an antipathy towards his enemies that led to the murder of Ocba, Marwan's daughter, Asharf, Sallam, Abu Rafe among others, which contradicts the biblical teachings to love one's enemies.
- c. He persecuted and warred against the Jews who rejected his preaching rather than praying for their conversion.
- d. "Mohammed protests that he does not know the future neither is he equal to Allah or even to the angels in knowledge. He compares himself to a blind man who is therefore inferior to those who can see.
- e. He performed no miracle whereas miracles were marks of the prophets.

C. THEY BELIEVE IN SALVATION BY WORKS: In the teaching of Islam, salvation is not seen from one perspective. It features prominently in three ways, namely "Salvation by Action"; "Salvation through Mercy and Forgiveness"; and "Salvation by Predestination." Salvation by Action, according to their tenets of faith, is made possible through the almsgiving done by equitable distributions of goods to the entire community, which is thought to serve as a means of cleansing from greed and selfishness to all deserving Muslims.

This charitably performances are not spurred by love but by a sense of obligation in that it is a legally fixed charity of a clearly defined percentage that is to be paid annually by a Muslim towards the support of the poor and other categories of deserving persons as the law of Islam demands (it is called Zakat). Ergum and Emir remark that

Whoever is made wealthy by Allah and does not pay the Zakat of his wealth, then on the Day of Resurrection his wealth will be made like a bald-headed Poisonous male snake with two black spots over the eyes. The snake will enriched his neck and bite his cheeks and say, "I am your wealth, I am your treasure' (2: 498) "Save yourself from Hell-Fire even by giving half a date-fruit in charity."(2:498).²⁶

The salvation by Predestination is also known as fatalism. It should be borne in mind that the mainstream of Islam holds that everything happens just as Allah has predestined it and nothing changes it. "He has decided everything that will happen and has sent it"²⁷ [Sura 54; 51-53; 63:3]. Allah has chosen to guide some people to the right way and to cause others to go astray. He has created some for paradise and others for hell, and nobody has right to challenge what He has written or alter it by choice or by any other means [Sura 2:7; 7; 177, 178; 14:4; 32: 13; 74:32]. This fatalistic view leads Muslims to have no sense of moral responsibility and it causes their attitude towards life to be fundamentally different from that of the Christians. However, the Muslims also believe that salvation can come through God's mercy and forgiveness.

D. THEY BELIEVE IN JUDGMENT: The Muslims believe that there is a day of reckoning in which everybody will be raised for judgment. A day that nobody knows. In Islam, they say that God will judge people on the last day based on His

findings in the records angels are keeping; that the individual's deeds will be weighed in the balances; that those whose righteous deeds outweigh their evil deeds will be ushered into paradise but that those whose evil deeds outweigh their good deeds will be immediately sent into the hell of torment to suffer the consequences of their unrighteous deeds.²⁸ However, they hold that reward or punishment will depend on God's ultimate decision or will.

E. THEY BELIEVE THERE IS A PARADISE: Paradise, as defined in Islam, "is a place of everlasting pleasure and enjoyment, abundant sensual gratification, and eating and drinking"²⁹ [Sura 13:35; 55:46-55]. Paradise is believed to be a place where each believer will be offered forty virgins every night for a pleasure trip. They describe paradise to be a garden filled with fig trees, olives and grape, rivers of fresh water, where wine will be served in golden cups, and where believers will be waited on by beautiful youths.³⁰ They also stress that paradise is a place where "If a woman marries two, three, or more husbands during her life time, she will be given freedom to choose which one of them she wants to marry in Paradise."³¹

III. KNOW THE STEPS TO WINNING THEM

It has been said that necessity is the mother of invention. Inventions born out of necessities have been made over the centuries in the world. This is not restricted to the fields of science and technology, but also in the spiritual/sacred sphere of life. It is noteworthy to say that evangelism is a divine invention that was born out of a necessity- the necessity of saving man from his depraved state and the consequent eternal doom.³²

Therefore, evangelism, which is God's invented means of reaching out His hands of salvation to the lost is a subject that should be well-studied by all those involved in carrying our God's mission in the world. The necessity of following systematically some basic steps is predicated on the fact that evangelism is such a fast moving field that methods used and steps taken in the past centuries have become obsolete and grossly inadequate today.

In the next chapter, we shall discuss the various methods of approach, but in this section, the missionary should note the following steps.

A. KNOW YOUR BIBLE AND POSSIBLY THE QURAN: A Christian missionary who wishes to launch into the Islamic world with the gospel of salvation must be very versed in his or her knowledge of the Holy Scriptures as to able to know 'where' to find 'what.' The necessity of this knowledge can never be over- emphasized. Its relevance to success in soul winning is premised on the piece of advice Apostle Paul gave to the young Timothy. "Be diligent to present yourself approved unto God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"³³ [2 Tim. 2: 15]. There is no denying the fact that it takes the Holy Spirit to convince sinners each time the gospel is preached.

This, however, does not rule out the relevance of intelligent presentation of the message itself. We must bear in mind that man is a rational being. His intelligence makes him to employ his heart and brain in dealing with important life

issues. If he is educated and well- informed, extra skills will be needed to make the gospel appeal to his sense of reasoning. This, among other facts, underscores the need for an in-depth knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. The missionary should also complement his knowledge of the scriptures with that of the Quran. He needs to know what the Quran says about issues like: Salvation, death, heaven, and hell. Where the Quran is not easy to come by, references cited in this book particularly those on Islamism can be used as substitutes.

B. BE KIND AND HOSPITABLE: As pointed out earlier, Muslims are to some extent hospitable. If any kind gesture received from a Muslim is reciprocated, it can create a conducive atmosphere for the presentation of the gospel. One reason why our efforts to evangelize the world has not yielded the desired results is that they are not backed up by meeting some of the socio- economic needs of the people. We focus primarily on the Spirit-man leaving out the body housing it. We know that human needs are unlimited and that the resources for meeting those multifarious needs are very limited. But if the essentials needs of individuals or group are met, such gesture can foster their readiness to embrace the gospel.

In the past, the schools, hospitals and clinics, orphanages, vocational learning centers and other charitable organizations established by missionaries, have given a great deal of help to them in their missionary activities. Besides all these other means can be improvised today to give succor to humanity as well as make the gospel really acceptable to them, if we are economically empowered by our various sponsors.

C. BE FRIENDLY AND SOCIABLE: Making friends from among the Muslims is never an up-hill task if we will be willing to put our prejudices behind us. There are several places or occasions that favour the establishments of close relationships with people anywhere and at anytime if the individual is purpose-driven.

Perhaps you meet Muslims when you go shopping at your local supermarket. There are several coffeehouses or teahouses. By taking a walk to such places, Christians will be able to meet them and begin to develop an acquaintance, all things being equal. More so, sitting together in a stadium to watch a football match can afford one an opportunity to start a conversation that may lead to an invitation to attend specific occasions such as birthday parties, weddings or religious festivals.

IV. STEPS TO SUCCESS IN EVANGELISM OUTREACH

1. Realize your great success is in God about whom this all-inclusive statement, which is absolutely pregnant with potentiality, was made: "With God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26; Mk. 10:27; Jos. 1:3).
2. Realize that all of God's promises that were made to others have become your own by faith. Your only requirement is that you must put them on and be ready to claim and appropriate them.
3. Get a vision of what you should do for God, then work to bring it about knowing that God has irrevocably committed Himself to helping us succeed.

4. Go forth bravely even in the face of all odds knowing that God is with you as much as He was with every missionary of the past.
5. Be bold in Christ, declare His counsel without fear or favour, in season and out of season. A missionary is not expected to manifest a grasshopper mentality.
6. Be a man of the word. Jos. 1:8 says, "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth..."³⁴ The word of God makes a man a prophet, not a mere pulpit performer.
7. Go in now and take the land. Procrastination is a thief of time. Don't give in to it for any reason.
8. Give your personal testimony if you are ministering to Muslim specifically.
9. Keep your message Christ-centered. No debate, argument, or criticism of the person of Mohammed or his book.
10. Encourage them to study the Bible.
11. Play the role of a supporting friend. That is, minister to their needs.
12. Create a favourable atmosphere in society. Pray for healing of the sick, establish health care centers, start schools, educate the poor, and so forth.
13. Trust the Holy Spirit to work in the lives of Muslims.
14. Appreciate the best in Muslims:
 - If he is devout, compliment him.
 - If he is hospitable, praise that virtue.
 - If he gives to the poor, commend him for it.
 - If he cares for widows and orphans, compliment that

V. HINDRANCES TO SOUL WINNING

That the business of soul winning through personal/mass evangelism is so essential and so dear to God is not an overstatement. In fact, it was the business that led to the incarnation of Christ. It occupied Christ throughout His pilgrimage on earth; it was central to His teachings and missionary activities, and He eventually gave His life for it. The early Apostles made it the very reason for their existence. Their lives were so secondary that they accepted martyrdom with great courage and hope. But one wonders why so many present day Christians are not engaged in it. The reason for this attitude of indifference is not far-fetched.

God's path for His people has never been a popular one. This fact was plainly stated by the Son of God Himself (Jn. 15: 18-21). The Epistles make clear that the "offense of the cross" has not ceased (Gal. 5: 11). The CROSS is an offence to *morality*, because neither works nor character can fit a man for the presence of God (Gal. 2: 16); to *philosophy*, because it appeals to faith and not to human reason, or secular learning (I Cor. 1: 19- 31); to *culture*, because its truth is revealed to babes (Matt. 11: 25); to *caste*, because God chooses the poor and the humble (Jam. 2: 1- 6); and to the *will*, because it calls for unconditional surrender³⁵ (Rom. 8: 7, 8).

A. THE FEAR OF MAN: Many Christians have allowed themselves to be intimidated and silenced in their witness by their fear of the reproaches, ridicules and persecutions of men. The fear of cruel death in the hands of tyrant and heartless persecutors has robbed thousands of their courage to testify for Christ. What a

tragedy this is. As a matter of fact, going with the gospel makes one's life to be under a serious threat.

However, the words of Jim Elliot, the missionary martyr to the Auca Indians, should challenge and speak courage to our hearts: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose."³⁶ Let us therefore listen, trust and obey God's voice so that we may truly become a powerful witness of God's love and mercy to the ends of the earth.

B. FEAR OF OPPOSING FORCES: There are rival mystical powers in the universe that man uses magical arts to tap and control. These powers are in the form of magic, charm, sorcery and witchcraft. People obtain and use these powers by following certain principles and observing certain rules. The manifestations or display of these extra-terrestrial powers culminate around witchcraft and sorcery. People in Africa generally fear these powers because they are mercilessly destructive.³⁷

Human beings who are the agents of these mysterious powers can, at the slightest provocation, invoke them to harm those who have offended them due to the callousness of their hearts. It is heart-breaking to hear of the inexplicable and calamitous havocs that men exert these mysterious powers to do in the world today. Consequently, most of the Christians who would have been great soul winners have reclined to their shells for fear of being harmed.

C. PRAYERLESSNESS: Prayer prepares the servants of the Lord both to know and do the will of their Master. Prayer is the solemn time with God during which one receives strength and gets the right signal of what next to do, and how and when to do it. Consequently, to neglect prayer is to lose sensitiveness of the Spirit's leading (Isa. 11: 2, 3). If a Christian claims to be too busy for God but has no time for prayer, he/she can never render effective service. Effective prayer is therefore imperative if we are ever going to be successful in combating those forces militating against us in the business of soul winning.

D. SECRET SINS: Sin is any harmful habit that defiles our conscience, beclouds our spiritual faculties, weakens our sensitiveness to the Spirit's leading, or robs us of communion with God and the joy of His service. It may be something quite legitimate in itself, but if it is such that robs Christ of the preeminence in our lives, or obscures our spiritual vision, then it must go.³⁸ Whenever one sins, it leaves one with a sense of guilt which in turn destroys the courage to stand before unbelievers to witness for Christ.

E. IGNORANCE OF THE WORD OF GOD: Many Christians who say nothing about Christ to sinners around them are silenced and subjugated by the fact that they have nothing to say; and they have nothing to say because they have not been listening to God and have not been studying His word.³⁹ This sheer ignorance on their part has resulted in many sinners dying without ever being offered the opportunity to accept or confess Christ (Hos. 4: 6). Believers should bear in mind

that on the Day of Judgment, ignorance of the Word of God will not be accepted as an excuse for refusing to witness for Christ, but will be viewed as an aberrance that will be adequately compensated for because of failure to witness.

F. SELFISHNESS/CALLOUSNESS: Soul winning is not an easy task, for it calls for strenuous effort and self-denial. It costs time, money and energy. Many will prefer to give this effort to further their own business to the neglect of 'the Father's business.' Self preservation may be the first law of nature, but it is certainly not a law of grace.⁴⁰ It should be a cause for concern if we are not concerned for the lost souls. John Knox cried, "Give me Scotland, or I die."⁴¹

Nevertheless, whatever it is that constitutes hindrance to us or makes us not to be engaged in the business of soul winning, a command that must be obeyed by all and sundry, we will surely regret when we face four facts in the presence of God.

1. Think of God's plain statements regarding the lost (Rom. 3: 10- 19; 6: 23; I Cor. 1: 18).
2. Remember the love of God as shown in the gift of His Son (Jn. 3: 16; I Jn. 4: 9).
3. Think of the love of Christ as demonstrated by the sacrifice of Himself for sinners (I Jn. 3: 16).
4. Ponder the awful doom of the Christ rejecter (Rev. 20: 11- 15; Mk. 9: 43- 48; Matt. 25: 30- 46).

END NOTES FOR CHAPTER SEVEN

¹Sobhi Malek, *Islam: An Introduction and Approach*, (Irving, Texas: International Correspondent Institute, 1992), 263.

²Ibid., 274.; ³Ibid., 65.; ⁴Ibid., 260.; ⁵Ibid., 275.

⁶Ibid., 240.; ⁷Ibid., 243.; ⁸Ibid., 241.; ⁹Ibid., 126.

¹⁰Matthew A. Izibili, *An Inquiring Into the Politics Behind Christian- Muslim Confrontation in Nigeria*, (Warri: COEWA Publications, 2005), 33.

¹¹Ibid.,36.

¹²Ergun Mehmet Caner and Emir Fethi Caner, *Unveiling Islam*, (Kaduna: Evangel Publications, 2002), 36.

¹³Jim Murk, *Islam Rising: The Never Ending Jihad Against Christianity, Vol. 1*. (Springfield, Missouri: 21st Century Press, 2006), 137.

¹⁴Ibid.; ¹⁵Ibid., 139, 140.; ¹⁶Ibid., 36.; ¹⁷Ibid., 125; ¹⁸Ibid., 17.; ¹⁹Ibid., 104.; ²⁰Ibid., 104.;

²¹Ibid., 106.; ²²Ibid.; ²³Ibid.

²⁴Paul O. Ajah, *The True Religion, Which?* (n.p: Assemblies of God Literature Centre, n.d.), 41.

²⁵Gerhard Hehls and Walter Eric, *Islam*, (Nairobi, Kenya: Life Challenge Africa, 1996), 47.

²⁶Mehmet and Emir, 126.

²⁷Hehls and Walter Eric, *Islam*, 38.

²⁸Malek, 97.

²⁹Ajah, *The True Religion, Which?*, 40.

³⁰Malek, 97, 98; ³¹Ibid., 98.

³²Ogba Onyeije, *Evangelism and Its Strategy*, (Ekpoma: Timeless Publishers 2003), 1.

³³*The Holy Bible; New King James Version*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984), 1031.

³³Ibid., 189.

³⁵Alfred P. Gibbs, *Personal Evangelism*, (United States of America: Emmaus Bible College, 1973), 53.

³⁶Ralph Mahoney and Robert Frost, *How Jesus Builds His Church*, (Burbank, California: World Map, n.d.), 160.

³⁷Paul O. Ajah, *African Traditional Religion*, (Uburu: Truth and Life Publications Ltd., 2007), 164.

³⁸Gibbs, 53.

³⁹Ibid.; ⁴⁰Ibid., 54; ⁴¹Ibid.

DEVELOPING A WORKABLE STRATEGY

Success is neither magical nor spontaneous; it is the product of a careful plan. As the saying goes, “He who fails to plan is planning to fail.” Therefore, considering these assertions and the fact that people, by reason of the heterogeneous nature of our society, have different ideas about reality, approach to situations and beliefs, the missionary should, as a matter of necessity, develop an analytic and systematic method of approach to missions.

While there is general agreement on the necessity of soul-winning, there is a wide diversity as to methods. There are many different approaches, from simple presentations of a few basic verses to sophisticated multimedia events; from one-on-one encounters to citywide evangelistic crusades.¹ Modern missiologists have proposed a number of evangelism strategies that any missionary who intends to get good results must adopt.

It should be borne in mind that the complexity of the human society brought about by various factors is another thing that informs the necessity of a properly strategized method of evangelism. In the first place, this need is predicated on the fact that the kind of people we have in our contemporary society especially the intellectual elites have minds that are both scientific and complex. In addition to this, the sophistication of modern technologies has made some living estates especially those in cosmopolitan cities across the nations of this world to have air-tight security facilities. Consequently, people especially top government functionaries, the elite, the rich, the academic and political juggernauts, and the like, are living in what seemed to be self-imposed imprisonments brought about by the sophistication of modern technologies. The security put in place in their living estates is so impregnable that the common man cannot beat.

There are those who are secluded from other members of their society by their strict adherence to traditional or religious beliefs and practices, especially in Islamic dominated places. Yet there are those placed in confinement by the government for one reason or another. The commoners have their own type and level of security brought about by fear, suspicion and lack of exposure. These various classes of human beings in our various cities and villages need to be reached. But the question is how?

As if that is not enough, the bustling and hustling, a characteristic feature of human life, which is anchored in the saying that ‘there is no food for the lazy man,’ has in itself made man a working machine which basically has no time for rest. As a result, a missionary who intends to intrude into his busy schedule must also be tactical, diplomatic and resolute in his approach. Otherwise, he will be turned off immediately. These strategies will be like the bait which the fisherman uses in getting the fishes attracted to his web (fishing net or hook).

I want to thank God for the advanced information technology of this century. There are various media of communication that are at the disposal of the missionaries all of which provide a wide range of network of activities that the general public consider being very informative, educative, persuasive and entertaining, and consequently are ready to spend their leisure times for.

If the electronic and print media are used as media of communication by institutions of learning, organizations, business enterprises, or the government to keep the public abreast of happenings within or outside its constituency, what stops the missionaries from availing themselves of the ample opportunity of these media to evangelize the world for Christ?

I. THE FIRST APPROACH: FACT-FINDING

It has been observed that before the twenty first century, Missions had become an academic discipline in its own right. Missiologists, in view of the shortness of time, "... study the reasons why missionary work goes as it does, and investigate the best methods to evangelize the greatest number of people most quickly."² In the light of the foregoing, the missionary evangelist who undertakes to evangelize a people group must bear in mind that there are first things that are required to be considered first if his venture is going to be a fruitful one in the long run. These first things include: 'survey', 'research' and 'go to them.' They are discussed as follows:

- A. SURVEY:** The first step a missionary should take is to find out who and where the unreached people groups are and how to get to them. The survey programme is specifically designed to assist missionaries to examine comprehensively the living conditions of their target people group in terms of their economic activities, climate, geographical location whether urban or rural, riverbank, rocky or hilly place, means of transportation as well as in ascertaining the most profitable media of communication to reach the various classes of people in that given society depending on the individual's programme of activities, location, social status and profession.
- B. RESEARCH:** This is the process of gathering some pieces of fact-finding information about the target people group. The researcher seeks to know their social norms, traditional beliefs, philosophical views, likes and dislikes, sleeping habits, attitude towards strangers particularly gospel preachers, among other things. His research findings will show to him areas where he needs to be cautious.
- C. GO TO THEM:** The Missionary having fully armed himself with facts and figures about the group of people in question, and having put everything in place to ensure that he does not depend solely on his or her hosts and hostess, the next step he should take is to go and live among them.³ This step is the foremost of all the scriptural injunctions involved in the great commission.

II. THE SECOND APPROACH: STRATEGIZING

This approach calls for being highly sensitive and tactical in our dealings with sinners. The way an individual or a group of individuals approach an issue will determine how well he is or they are going to succeed in dealing with it. As commented earlier, sinners particularly Muslims are highly suspicious of any Christian approach. Consequent upon this, the missionaries are to be very tactful, cautious and prayerful in their gospel presentations.

In the view of Peter Wagner, the modern missionary strategy is not simplistic. It is therefore helpful to look not at just one strategy only.⁴ One of modern missiologists noted that there are various evangelism strategies that can be used in soul winning. Some of his suggested strategies and those of others are discussed as follows:

A. BANQUET EVANGELISM STRATEGIES: Many evangelists have adopted this method of evangelism in the past and it has yielded outstanding results, though it is capital intensive. Banquet forum can be a good ground to draw the attention of men of all walks of life to the gospel. Joel Ikpe, remarks that it “... seems to yield more results than other methods.”⁵

B. PRAYER EVANGELISM STRATEGY: There are various factors that can militate against coming into close contact with other people. These factors include: distances, people’s security consciousness, resistant tendencies, and differences in socio-economic status, racial or religious discrimination, among others. In the light of this, our target audience can be brought to the Lord at our altar of prayer and supplication.

Prayer evangelism strategy is rated as one of the indispensable factors in soul winning business. This is because it is the prayer that moves the hand of God and it is the prayer that breaks loose the strongholds.⁶

This method has several advantages. It has the ability to travel short and long distances. It is very convenient for the missionary in that it can be done at anytime and anywhere. It brings the unsaved into a direct contact with God through various means. It is the only tool that disarms the enemies of all kinds.

C. GOSPEL DIALOGUE STRATEGY: In personal evangelism especially on “one-on-one setting,” the preacher is often seen as an interrupter hence the need for politeness. As one who has learnt the techniques of communication using a direct or an indirect approach, he could even begin by posing a question to his target. “There is quite a chill in the air this morning. Isn’t that true?” The response he would make will obviously fertilize the ground for the presentation of the gospel.

Using the indirect approach, he could introduce or join people in a conversation perhaps on any of the contemporary happenings in the society. By the time familiarity or a relationship is established through that discussion, it can then be channeled tactically into preaching. Joel Ikpe noted that this was the

approach Jesus used to win the Samaritan woman to the faith in his Sychar ministry. According to him, Jesus was not sitting there at the well for nothing. "He was waiting like a hunter for an animal to catch. Like a warrior in an Ambush to capture. Like a fisherman with a strategic bait."⁷

The direct dialogue approach is generally believed to be less profitable in recent times in that people tend to be resistant to it. However, the missionary who has acquainted himself with relevant portions of the Holy Scriptures can adopt any approach so long as he depends on the Holy Spirit as he shares the gospel with the unsaved.

D. MASS MEDIA EVANGELISM STRATEGY: As earlier remarked, there are those who live in secluded areas and are almost completely out of the reach of people by reason of the sophistication of their living estates. Mass media, especially the electronic, provide an easy means of reaching these people even in their closet as they recline on a couch by their radio and television sets. Missionaries, who may be denied access to the electronic media by their financial incapability, may find the print media as their last resort because it is less demanding financially.

Communication experts have opined that posters and hand bills, like every other road sign, provide motorists and pedestrian with information about an impending danger, on coming events or state of affairs. They are usually consciously placed in strategic places to attract people's attention. If the missionaries will print fliers, tracts, pamphlets or magazines and will go to public places to share them with the masses, a lot of souls will be won to God's kingdom through that means. Most pastors today preach or share the gospel through the newspapers.

Interestingly also, the Internet and the Global System of Mobile Communications [GSM] provide another means of evangelism outreach. There is no doubt that internet services provide one with the opportunity to glean some relevant and useful pieces of information in any field of human endeavor. Students in tertiary institution can afford to spend several hours at Cyber Café centers browsing and searching for one piece of information or another that will help them in their academic pursuits. Churches that are not yet in the Internet are hereby encouraged to rise to the challenges posed to them by advanced information technology.

E. FRIENDSHIP/RELATIONSHIP STRATEGY: Social scientists have argued that man, as a social animal, does not live in a vacuum. He needs the companionship of people to give his life a meaning and direction. Both statistical data and practical experience tell us that most people who have today become Christians came to know Christ through the witness of their friends and close associates. Sinners including Muslims in all walks of life, like every other person, need the support which friendship gives. Christian missionary should develop the right attitude towards sinners bearing in mind that friendship coupled with genuine love is a powerful influence to reckon with in leading them to faith in Christ.

In the words of Cooper and Maxwell, “We must grasp the fact that the need today is for Christian people who will show genuine love, concern and respect for Muslim people...”⁸ notwithstanding the age, sex, social standings economic status, educational background, ethnic or religious differences. Hospitality is a very powerful means of evangelism outreach. “...as the friendship develops and you both share more deeply; you will be surprised at how much you have in common.”⁹

III. THE THIRD APPROACH: CONTEXTUALIZING

One of the most famous of modern Missiologists, Ralph Winter, points out that the Cultural differences between the evangelist and those he or she seeks to win must be considered because it can affect the success of the ministry. Having these cultural differences in mind, he should now determine the most effective and profitable way of reaching this people group based on the information on hand.

By contextualization, we mean making the gospel relevant to people of different cultures so that they would be able to understand the gospel through their own cultural milieu. It is certain that when the cultural gaps between the missionary and his respondents are bridged through effective cross-cultural communication, the respondents will find it easy to decode the gospel message resulting in the reception of the word.¹⁰

The necessity of contextualization is predicated on the fact that each culture has its own ideas about reality. It also has its own set of behaviours with their meanings. The same behaviour may mean different things in different cultures depending on their cultural perspectives or worldviews. “A worldview is a set of beliefs and practices that shape a person’s approach to the most important issues in life.”¹¹

Auguste Comte (1798–1857), a man reputed for being the first to use the term “*Sociology*,” noted three types of realities.

- **Personal or Unique Reality:** What you know to be true as an individual and you are ready to believe or hold on to no matter what are other people’s view about the issue or subject.
- **Social or Shared Reality:** What a group of people believes to be true. Something shared in common yet not generally believed to be true or accepted as a valid experience.
- **Scientific or Objective Reality:** What has been proved to be true or an apodictic certainty both scientifically and universally are facts that are not subject to disputes. In this case, the missionary should base his message on the cultural content of the receiver.

A. IDEAS OF REALITY DIFFER: Lois K. Fuller, in his book entitled ‘Going to the Nations,’ has listed some examples. Other examples are drawn from other sources, all of which are as follows:

a. The Same Problem but Different Interpretations

Supposing an epidemic hits a village:

- ◆ The man from “culture A” says, “We have offended the “god” who controls this disease. Let us offer him sacrifices.
- ◆ The man from culture B says, “Our water supply is contaminated with germs. Let us start boiling our drinking water.”
- ◆ The man from culture C says, “Our enemies have cursed us or poisoned us. Let us attack them.” The same thing has been interpreted differently according to the cultural view of reality. This cultural view of a people is also called their worldview.¹²

b. Different Behaviours May Have the Same Meaning

Supposing a young man sees a girl he would like to marry.

- ◆ In culture A he writes her a letter telling her so.
- ◆ In culture B he asks her to go with him on a “date” (In a dialogue).
- ◆ In culture C he asks his parents to contact her father. In this case, the same meaning has various behaviours to express it according to culture.¹³

c. The Same Behaviour May Have Different Meanings

- ◆ Supposing you see two young men walking down the street together holding each other’s hands.
- ◆ In culture A, people will think, “Those two men are good friends.”
- ◆ In culture B, people will think, “Those two men are homosexuals. In this case the behaviour has different meanings in two cultures.¹⁴

d. The Same Act but Different Circumstances

The act of killing a person is called murder only in specific circumstances but not in all cases.

- ◆ Under some conditions, it is considered to be manslaughter (Excusable Homicide). A man who found his wife in bed with her lover was justified in killing both of them to defend his honour.
- ◆ The same act is considered extreme heroism (Justifiable Homicide) depending on the underlying condition. A soldier who kills people in wartime and in the course of discharging his lawful duties is considered a hero.
- ◆ A wife who shot her husband and his lover because she found them in bed would be a cold-blooded killer (Unlawful Homicide) because women do not have personal honour and ought not to be allowed to shame their husbands. These are the same act of killing, but different cultural norms or legal interpretations.

e. The Same Act but Different People Involved

As another example, if a wealthy woman and her maid were each caught shoplifting, their behaviour would not be similarly defined. For the wealthy woman, her attorney would claim his client suffered from kleptomania (a persistent neurotic impulse to steal especially without economic motive)

whereas for her maid, her action would be regarded and interpreted as stealing.

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that what constitute a violation is cultural variable, not universal. That is why sociologists say that both conformity and deviance are socially constructed. It should be borne in mind that ideas and actions do not in themselves exist as good or bad; rather, what is acceptable or unacceptable is basically a social problem that should be defined by the society based on its cultural context.

Therefore, in dealing with the all-important issue of how to determine what constitutes a normative behaviour or a violation, let it be remarked that behaviour or characteristics that depart from the approved, expected, or statistical norm are what sociologists refer to as deviant. In other words, if we think of the norms as defining a band of acceptable conduct, that which falls outside the band is, by definition, non-normative, or deviant.¹⁵

Emile Durkheim noted that because deviance consists of socially disapproved behaviour, it is typically perceived as a threat to social order. It is imperative that the limits of acceptable behaviour are made very clear, so as to reduce and stabilize normative consensus.¹⁶ Besides, it makes for punishment of deviants which in turn helps to strengthen the existing belief system by demonstrating where the line is drawn between 'the virtuous' and 'the offenders.' This explains why it is often said that "The strength of the norm is measured by the severity of sanctions ..."¹⁷ It is in view of this that sociologists say to be human is to depend on others for a sense of reality.

B. REDEMPTIVE ANALOGY

This calls for making wise choice in the use of figures of speech, illustrations and stories to drive home our messages. The point here is that the Missionary must adapt his communication to the worldview of his receivers by making sure that his message is convincing, accurate and relevant to the needs of the receivers. The problems they face must be addressed and the kinds of arguments they feel are convincing should be used.

Here Are Two Examples Based on the Observation of Lois Fuller.

- 1. Some Bible translators were translating the passage in the gospels about how after Jesus gave the morsel of food to Judas, the devil entered into him and he went out to betray Jesus. The people whose language the story was being translated into, took it to mean that Jesus was a witch because in their culture, if a witch gives somebody food, the devil will enter into that person. The translators found this out, so they added some more explanations in their translation. You can see that because of their unique cultural background, they misunderstood the Bible until there was detail explanation.*
- 2. Richardson discovered in the tribe where he worked as a Missionary in Irian Jaya (Indonesia) that traitors were highly honoured and admired. When the people*

heard the story of how Judas betrayed Jesus, they took Judas for a hero. Richardson could not see how to make these people want to follow Jesus. Later, Richardson discovered that if two villages made treaty by giving and receiving a baby from each other (called a peace child), anyone who betrays the child is considered to be very wicked. Richardson told the people that Jesus was God's peace child to mankind.¹⁸

Then, they understood and embraced the gospel. To Richardson, the idea of a peace child was a 'redemptive analogy'. That is, a practice or belief already in their culture, which can be used to make the gospel clearer. Consequent upon the foregoing, the missionary should base his message on the cultural content of the receiver. This is called Contextualization. However, he has to exercise great care not to completely conform to the culture of his hearers that the basic gospel message gets diluted or changed. This is called syncretism, and the Bible warns seriously against it (Gal. 1:9).

IV. THE FOURTH APPROACH: SPECIALIZING

Considering the enormous and demanding task of reaching the unreached, various types of workers have to be employed to serve in their various capacities. Some missions' jobs which call for specialists are: Researching, writing, printing/publishing, secretarial working, travel co-coordinating, driving and piloting, mechanic, anthropology, medical and development working, teaching, counseling, church planting, Bible teaching, children, youths and adults' ministering among others.

A. DISCIPLESHIP THROUGH MENTORING AND TRAINING: It is interesting to note that spiritual formation is fundamental to our faith and Christian practice. In the words of Dallas Willard, spiritual formation is a term used to describe those processes through which people are inwardly transformed in such a way that the personality and deeds of Christ naturally flow out from them when and wherever they are.¹⁹ It is expected that the new believers grow into a strong church that can send out its own missionaries. Before this can happen, the new believers themselves need to be properly mentored and adequately trained through accurate information and sound doctrinal teachings. This orientation can be given through the following ways:

- 1. Training-Oriented Teaching:** The courses offered in this programme of studies are not necessarily tailored to fit the immediate ministry needs of the people but are offered to give lay-ministers all that they need to serve as part-time workers while still on their secular jobs. In other words, they are trained as non-professional and part-time missionaries or voluntary supporters.
- 2. Ministry-Oriented Teaching:** At this level, only those actively involved in the ministry can take these courses because they are mainly practical and professional. This programme of studies has been designed to meet those

specific ministry needs that missionaries are likely to face in their various duty posts. As a training program which concerns itself with *teaching how to leading to knowing how to*, attention is paid to the psychomotor domain than the cognitive and affective; and on practice rather than principles. It is the activation of those potentials (skills) that will make the individual a good church planter, teacher, organizer and an improviser. It is the training of full-time workers, simply stated.

3. Obedience-Oriented Teaching: Relatively, this is teaching with general intent. That is, “teaching that” which leads to “knowing that.” In this connection, attention is paid to the cognitive and affective domains. However, after enlightening them of the biblical standpoint on the subject matter, they are given ample opportunity to get themselves involved at whatever level or capacity. This could be physical, material, financial or spiritual depending on the individual’s choice or his dealings with God.

B. CHURCH PLANTING PRINCIPLES: The present day church has been given the divine mandate to go into the entire world and preach the gospel to all the peoples of the earth. Also included in this mandate is the necessity of planting indigenous local churches where the converts to the Christian faith can be nurtured and made disciples. It is therefore imperative that any move towards fulfilling this mandate be motivated by a passion for soul-winning, directed by the Holy Spirit as well as guided by some principles if it is going to yield good results in the end.

Unfortunately, in most places today, planting a church is usually motivated by the material and financial profits which the church planter stands to make rather than the number of souls to be won into God’s kingdom. In other words, the driving force behind the proliferation of churches today is the material and financial gains that accrue to the church planter

Nevertheless, even if church planting stems from ulterior motives, God overrules in the programme of man to bring about His eternal plan for the church. Lending support to this assertion, Melvin L. Hodges remarked thus: “Although much of what is called the church today admittedly has ceased to be relevant to the needs of man, the true church has not been superseded in God’s economy.”²⁰ This “true church,” as a living cell in the body of Christ, will not only continue to exist, but will fulfill its ministry to the world for which no substitute can be found, come what may.²¹ The company of the redeemed will then become the nucleus for the kingdom of God to be established upon the earth²² (Lk 19:17; Mk 19:28).

Let it be understood that church planting is a process during which several steps are taken. There is no single method that can be recommended for church planters for raising up churches. Experience has shown that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, one method may succeed where other methods have failed. Therefore, the choice of method will depend on many factors not the least of which will be the qualities of the church planter and his approach to the task.²³ Three of

these principles have been advanced for discussion, namely: General Principle, Homogeneous Unit Principle and Heterogeneous Unit Principle.

1. General Principle: Church planting, which is in essence, the carrying out of the divine commission must be seen as a spiritual task that must be accomplished by spiritual means through spiritually motivated human instrumentalists. Therefore, spiritual and physical preparations are exceedingly important. Let us consider them under the following sub-headings:

a. The Church Planter: The church planter must be spiritually and physically qualified. He must be a man of vision and prayer. He must be one who is sociable, courageous and sincere. He has to possess creative ability, be motivated by a deep and abiding compassion for the lost and have concern for their well-being. He should have ability to apply spiritual truths to their situations and be willing to spend his time and energy in solving their problems.

b. Prayer: In view of the fact that there are enemies of the gospel (opposing forces), a formidable and decisive spiritual warfare should be launched against Satan and his agents before the formal church planting plans can be executed. Ron Don says:

Prayer is like a missile that can be fired toward any spot on earth, travels undetected at the speed of thought and hits its target every time. Satan has no defense against this weapon; he does not have anti-prayer missile.²⁴

c. Geographical Location: As a general rule, the densely populated centers/places should be chosen in preference to the sparsely settled areas. One reason why many a church has not prospered is because it was too far removed from the center of population. Therefore, the church planter should go to places where people are.²⁵ Efforts should be made to secure a location in the heart of the town where the church will be easily accessible by roads or buses and taxi so that the greatest response may be obtained.

d. Place of Worship: When planting a new church in a place where there is no established church, plans must be made on how to take care of the new converts. It is a grave error, if not a sin, to bring a group of converts into existence and then leave them without proper care.²⁶ There are some evangelists who feel that their task is limited to preaching and winning the multitudes. Sometimes they have success in winning perhaps hundreds of new converts, but when the campaign is over, they feel they have discharged their duties and move into other places without having made provision for the new converts that they are leaving behind. One thing is to give birth to a child and another thing to nurture the child through parental care.

2. Homogeneous Unit Principle: Most people like to become Christians without necessarily crossing cultural boundaries. More often than not, a person is more likely to become a Christian if somebody from his/her own tribe, class or family

witnesses to him/her. Therefore, planting local indigenous Churches is very important and necessary. Some people don't like to join a Church made up of people from a different ethnic group or background from their own. The Tivs, for instance, don't enjoy or join Yoruba services even though they can speak Yoruba. A Church that is made up of people from the same social class or culture is likely to grow faster than a mixed church. The only exception to this are city Churches where people are looking for a new way of life and are receptive to changes, be it social or cultural.²⁷

- 3. Heterogeneous Unit Principle:** In cities or highly civilized and industrialized places, non-indigenous Churches are likely to flourish more than the indigenous ones. This is because they, having been exposed to city life, are opened to changes. They are not too conservative or addicted to their culture, nor have they forgotten their cultural heritage but are seeing old things from a new perspective as a result of exposure and enlightenment. Missionaries are, therefore, advised to also plant non-indigenous local Churches.

V. THE FIFTH APPROACH: CONSOLIDATING

As earlier remarked, it is not enough to have bumper harvest following an evangelistic campaign. Conscious effort should be made to conserve the harvest. In doing this, the missionary evangelist consolidates his work through means opened to him.

Apostle Paul, for example, was a Mission strategist who was very good at making effort to conserve his harvest by consolidating his previous work. He did this periodically by writing or paying a personal and purposeful visit to his converts/members in his former pastorate. Therefore, if present missionary evangelists wish to succeed in their missionary work, they have to undertake the following activities in their fields of assignments.

- A. CHRONOLOGICAL TEACHING:** Just as newborn babies require special care, so do new converts require special help, attention and instruction. Every Church should have a special program for her new converts. There should be a class where they are given instructions to prepare them for water baptism and full membership. Trevor McIlwain of the New Tribes Mission developed this chronological method of teaching. He used it first among people whom he saw had no previous knowledge of the scripture.

In his approach, the method he adopted was to give them the background information about the history that led up to the first advent of Christ because he realized that the people needed this foundational lesson in order to be favourably disposed to receiving doctrinal teaching. So he began from the book of Genesis.

As he taught the Old Testament stories step by step, the people began to realize the nature of God, how He sees them and how much He hated sin. He (Missionary) did not teach them "so much" about Jesus until he had laid the

groundwork by teaching through the Old Testament. By the time he reached the place in the story where God sent a Savior, they were very interested and already engrossed. The whole process took many months but the harvest was large at the end.

B. PRAYER AND COUNSELING: As soon as people give their lives to Jesus, “Spiritual counselors” should be assigned to them. These counselors will establish contact with them by getting to know their houses, accompany them to fellowship if possible; praying with them and encouraging them to start new converts’ class, as well as informing their Pastor of any difficulty these new converts may be having in their spiritual lives. “It is a grave mistake to suppose that a new convert must only sit and listen to others.”²⁸ He or she should be encouraged to begin his or her Christian life as early as possible by getting himself or herself involved actively in all Church programmes. Such as, evangelism, fasting and prayer, joint fellowship, revival meetings among other soul-enrichment activities.

END NOTES FOR CHAPTER EIGHT

¹John MacArthur, Jr. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary- Acts 13- 28*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996), 78.

²Egbeyon F. Ilenbodiaye, *Missions 1st ed.* (Asaba: Frontier Glory Publishing Ltd., 2010), 85.

³Louis K. Fuller, *Going to The Nations, 3rd ed.* (Plateau State, Nigeria: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2001), 113.

⁴C. Peter Wagner, *Frontiers in Missionary Strategy*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971), 16.

⁵Joel E. Ikpe, *Strategies For Soul Winning*, (Oshodin, Lagos: Imprint Services, 2006), 36.

⁶Ibid., 41; ⁷Ibid., 26.

⁸Anne Cooper, Elsie A. Maxwell, eds., *Ishmael My Brother: A Christian Introduction to Islam*, (Kaduna, Nigeria: Evangel Publishers Ltd., 2003), 38.

⁹Ibid., 33.

¹⁰Jude C. Utah, *Cross-Cultural Gospel Communication*, (Lagos: Eagle and Joy Educational Publishers, 2000), 47.

¹¹Stanley M. Horton, and Michael D. Palmer eds., *Elements of A Christian Worldview*, (Springfield: Legion Press, 1998), 24.

¹²Fuller, 100; ¹³Ibid., 101.; ¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Beth B. Hess, Elizabeth E. Markson, Peter J. Stein, *Sociology. 5th ed.*, (n.p: Allyn and Bacon, 1996), 122.

¹⁶Ibid., 126.; ¹⁷Ibid., 122.

¹⁸Fuller, 104.

¹⁹Willard, Dallas. *Spiritual Formation: What it is and How it is Done*. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2002. <http://www.dwillard.org/articles/artview.asp?artII> (accessed June 12, 2010), 4.

²⁰Melvin L. Hodges, *A Guide to Church Planting and Development*, (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute, 1973), 12.

²¹Ibid.; ²²Ibid.

²³Egbeyon F. Ilenbodiaye, *Unlocking the Door of God's Blessings: The Secrets*. (Asaba: Frontier Glory Publishing Ltd., 2010), 26.

²⁴ Hodges, *A Guide to Church Planting and Development*, 37.

²⁵Ibid., 32.

²⁶Fuller, 106.

²⁷Hodges, 47.

EVALUATING THE RESULTS OF MISSIONS' ACTIVITIES

In dealing with the significance of evaluating the results of missions' activities, one has to begin by studying the human nature itself. When God created man, He made it an instinctive behaviour or involuntary act in him to sometimes look back after having covered a distance on his journey. Even people with glaring optical problems do also find themselves naturally behaving this way. Today, this natural tendency has become an educational principle to look back after having done some academic activities with a view to finding out or ascertaining the level of cognitive development in learning over a given period of time.¹

Educators say that evaluation, which serves various purposes in education refers to "an assessment of the extent to which the goals of instruction have been achieved."² As Fenwick W. English puts it, "It is a process used to assess the quality of what is going on."³ To the class teacher, evaluation provides reliable information for him/her to judge whether or not the objectives of a lesson have been achieved. It helps him/her to identify individual differences amongst the pupils as well as to diagnose their persistent learning difficulties,⁴ among other things, so that he/she can plan appropriate teaching learning strategies to meet any arising need. Within the context of this course, evaluation is work measurement. That is, the critical process of comparing and contrasting the actual outcomes with the anticipated outcomes.

Under normal circumstances, at the end of a particular activity, a piece of work done over time, or a project undertaken, one should necessarily evaluate or measure the work done in contrast to the efforts made or the resources expended, so as to come up with a statement of fact showing whether or not the result of what was done is commensurate with what was put into it.

I. THE NECESSITY OF RECORD KEEPING

There are clear indications from the Scriptures that God did command many of His servants and prophets to put things down in writing. God Himself knows the value of writing or record keeping. One of the reasons why He has interest in record keeping is because He knows that human mind is forgetful and very frail. Eze remarked,

Not only that man quickly forgets but he can never retell the event exactly as he heard it. He must alter one point or two. Sometimes this is done purposely for vested interest or just because he is too handicapped to remember all that happened.⁵

In Isaiah 8: 1-2 we read, "Moreover the LORD said to me, Take a large scroll and write on it with a man's pen concerning... And I will take for Myself faithful witness to record..."⁶ God also commanded Jeremiah saying: "Take a scroll of a book

and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you..."⁷ (Jer. 36: 2). Other passages where God gave explicit command to write include Habb. 2: 2-3; Isa. 30: 8; Jer. 30: 2; Rev. 1: 11; 20: 5, just to mention but a few. More so, Assemblies of God gives a high premium to record keeping. Article vii, section 9, and number 17 of Esan District Bye-laws attests to this fact. Any minister holding credentials with Assemblies of God Nigeria who defaults by his "Failure to keep, willful destruction of, and failure to turn over to the appropriate authorities, records of the organization,"⁸ shall be liable to disciplinary action.

Besides, during the reign of Darius king of Persia (about 522-485 BC) when Zerubbabel and Ezra led the Israelites in rebuilding the Temple at Jerusalem, their enemies most of whom were Samaritans attempted to disrupt the project by alleging that they had no civil authority to undertake such project being slaves. Zerubbabel, in his defense, simply drew the attention of the king to the decree of his predecessor, Cyrus (See II Chron. 36: 22-23). The result was that they were not only permitted to carry on with the project but were given maximum support materially.

It is rather unfortunate that most missionaries and local church pastors don't keep a comprehensive record of their programme of activities hence the difficulties in evaluation. Where there are no good records of past activities, with what then will an institution of learning do her curriculum assessment? What will a class teacher use to measure the cognitive development of his pupils? What will a business manager use to determine the profits and losses made overtime? If there is no census, how will a nation determine as well as plan for her population?

By and large, the importance of record keeping especially as it affects evaluation can never be over estimated. As accurate record keeping of daily transactions is a necessity for business management, so it is to the smooth running of the church as an organization. It is what provides the local church pastor with tools for measuring the financial and numerical strength of the church. The missionary also uses records to measure the impact of God's word on people.

II. THE RELEVANCE OF EVALUATION TO MISSIONS' WORK

Considering the question of whether or not evaluation is relevant to missions' work, it is necessary to begin by asking if missions' work is a program of activity that has been carefully designed and systematically implemented with the aim of achieving a clearly defined goal. Several passages of the Holy Scriptures give credence to the fact that missions' work is a divinely ordained program, eternally planned and purposefully as well as spiritually undertaken with a view to accomplishing divine purpose.

Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, says the Lord God, and not that he should turn from his ways and live? (Eze. 18: 23).⁹

And He said to them, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned (Mk. 16: 15).¹⁰

All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as the shepherd divides his sheep from the goats (Matt. 25: 32).¹¹

From the foregoing premises, the inescapable conclusion can be drawn that missionary activities are programme of action geared towards the attainment of set goals in the Missionary enterprise. Therefore, it follows that there should be no exception to this rule of work measurement. Where there is no missionary work evaluation, it will be difficult to ascertain the level of progress and the degree of failure or backwardness; it will be impossible to diagnose the factors responsible for the inability to attain set goals, and it will be difficult to determine what programme of activity to be undertaken, what methods to be employed in the process, and what tools to be used in order to make meaningful progress as well as to sustain it.

Missionary work measurement evaluates the results of the work upon the system (human resources and other machineries involved), the methods of approach, the issue of timing, the level of preparedness through creating awareness as well as the degree of the commitment of participants both during and after that given spiritual exercise.

Missionaries examine too often only convert result as the simple and isolated benchmark of the success or failure of the missions' activity. When results are not forthcoming as predicted, it is assumed that the activity itself is not effective. Whereas what may have happened is that the work design, if implemented properly, might have been effective, but the measurement reveals faulty synergy of system (Human resources and processes) rather than a poor activity per se.

Therefore, evaluation does not only reveal what has and has not been done, but also shows what should be done, how, when and by whom it should be done.¹² It shows the strengths and weaknesses of the human and material resources as well as the processes of that particular activity.

III. TOOLS FOR EVALUATION

As everyone knows, a picture is worth a thousand words. The most common statistical picture is the graph, a drawing that depicts numerical relationships. There are other statistical methods (Basic tools) that can be employed in economic analysis, most important of which are the measures of central tendency and measures of dispersion.

Whereas the arithmetic mean, the median, and the mode, as measures of central tendency, seek to show the average figures in a given sets of data distribution arranged in ascending or descending order of magnitude, measures of dispersion, most common and simple of which is the range, are used to show the spread of data as well as the difference between the smallest and biggest in a given set of scores.¹³

However, since we are dealing essentially with missions' activities, which have to do with things that are visible or tangible and those that are not coupled with the fact that our interest is just to show how two or more categories vary, we are going to use the "Multiple Bar Chart" as our guide in evaluating the enlargement programme of a given local church that we are using as a case study.

But some experts have opined that the benefits expected from evaluation cannot be reaped unless we are adequately informed about how it should be done. Consequently, we shall consider the question "how?" before proceeding to data analysis and interpretation.

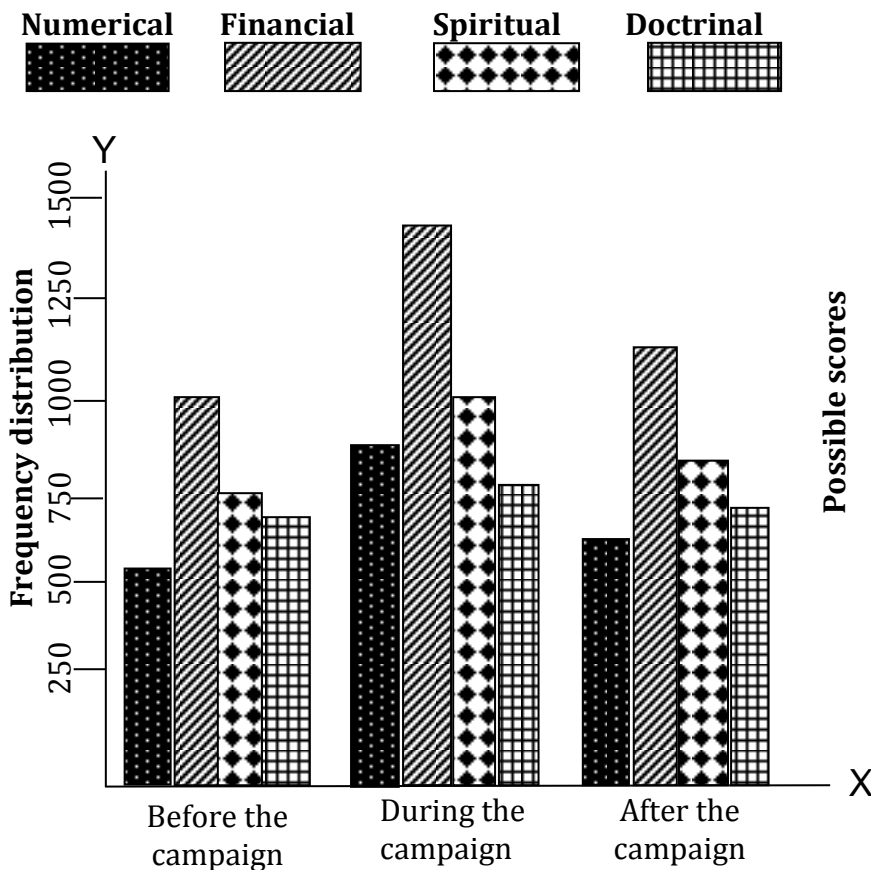
IV. HOW TO EVALUATE

Experts view evaluation as basically a scientific inquiry, which proceeds in an orderly manner, and they say that it embraces six considerations. A missionary pastor who intends to utilize the results of an evaluation to bring about some modifications of the process to effect changes should take note of these considerations.

He should:

- Identify the specific objectives of the programme he intends to carry out;
- Determine the actions to be taken and the procedures followed in trying to meet the objectives;
- Collect, analyze and interpret the concrete evidence or data on effects of the programme;
- Compare the actual and anticipated outcomes or results;
- Reach conclusion on the basis of the evidence available to him, and
- Utilize the findings in guiding and improving on subsequent programme.

Let us plot a Multiple Bar Chart to analyze October enlargement campaign programme of a given local church in Esan Land, Edo State.



DATA ANALYSIS

Data Presentation	Before the Campaign	During the Campaign	After the Campaign
<i>Tangible Data</i>			
Numerical	500	800 +300	650 -150
Financial	200,000	285,000 +85,000	265,000 -20,000
<i>Intangible Data</i>			
Spiritual	70%	95% +25%	80% -15%
Doctrinal	55%	88% +33%	70% -18%

INTERPRETATION / IMPLICATION

The Multiple Bar Chart above indicates that the church oscillates between rising and falling. It suggests that the discipleship programme of the church has been neglected since the decrease in figure after the result-oriented programme indicates that the level of follow up fell drastically.

The implication is that if the church continues to play down on the all-important responsibility of discipleship, which was committed to her trust by Jesus Christ as recorded in Matt. 28: 19, the assimilation of members will be very slow and it would also be difficult for her to fulfill her ultimate purpose of being instituted.

END NOTES FOR CHAPTER NINE

¹*Teachers' Grade II Certificate Course Book on Education, Modules 9-12.* (Kaduna: National Teachers' Institute, 2001), 54.

²*Ibid.*, 48.

³Fenwick W. English, *Curriculum Management for Schools, Colleges, Business*, (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C Thomas Publisher, 1987), 281.

⁴*Teachers' Grade II 9-12.*,

⁵Nathan C. Eze, *Journalism and Christian Writing*, (Aba: Assemblies of God Press, nd.), 23.

⁶*The Holy Bible: New King James Version*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984), 595.

⁷*Ibid.*, 688.

⁸"*Esan District, Assemblies of God Bye-Laws*," 1st ed. (n.p., 2000), 14.

⁹*The Holy Bible*, 730; ¹⁰*Ibid.*, 884.; ¹¹*Ibid.*, 859.

¹²*Teachers' Grade II*, 54.

¹³D. O. Eyiye, *Economics Made Easy*, (Benin City: Quality Publishers Ltd, 2001), 37- 40.

Chapter Ten

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF UNREACHED NATIONS/PEOPLE

This Chapter takes a look at the various unreached people groups across the globe. The 21st Century missionary evangelist needs to be kept abreast of current issues in missions' enterprise. It is hoped that such working knowledge will help to rekindle his aspirations and crystallize a fresh zeal and purpose in his heart as he forges ahead on the road of Christian service. However, it is expedient that before we present a brief statistical data of the estimated populations of people in the world with the approximated percentages of Christians in some countries, we should first and foremost give a brief historical account of how Christianity has fared so far.

It is on record that before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, the total number of Christians in the then world was the one hundred and twenty (120) who were waiting at the Upper Room. On the day of Pentecost, it grew to three thousand plus (3000+). From the account of Apostle Luke in Acts chapter six, the number had increased to over six thousand believers (6,000) by the end of AD 50.

According to attested statistical report, the number had increased to about 2 million as at AD 300; 30 million as at AD 1850 and over 600 million Christians a few years later.

Today, as of November 2014, according to the US State Department's International Religious Freedom Report, the CIA World Factbook as published through Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, Christianity has approximately 2.4 billion adherents, out of about 7.1 billion people. The faith represents one-third of the world's population and it is the largest religion in the world with the three largest groups of Christianity being the Catholic Church with 1.09 billion adherents, Protestantism, the second largest group divided into multiple denominations, and the Eastern Orthodox Church.

One of the things that come to mind is this, what is the ratio of 2.4 to 7.1? Besides, what is responsible for the going out of the fire of evangelism with which the early church took off? Is it not interesting or rather disheartening to realize that whereas the Early Church literally fulfilled the Great Commission, as far as we know, by reaching the entire known world of their time with the gospel, the contemporary church is still at her "Jerusalem".

Morris Cerullo remarks, "Isn't also strange that since the birth of the Early Church, we have not been able to do in 1800 years what the Early Church did in 200 years?"¹ Something is definitely wrong, he added. In the light of the foregoing, will it be right to conclude that the greatest ministry vacuum in the church today is caused by the fact that Christians do not understand what ministry really is;² what their roles as ministers of God are; how tragic lost eternity would be, and the fact that

Christians have not been able to appreciate the essence of the urgency of reaching the lost?

T. L. Osborn believes that the greatest calling is soul winning. Christ came to seek out the lost and to save them. “To be a Christian means to be like Christ and to be like Christ is to be a soul winner,”³ he remarked. Sinners do not go to church. It is the responsibility of the church to reach out to them where they are. It has been observed that many churches do not have soul-winning programs outside the walls of their own building.

What could be responsible for the church’s neglect of this all- important mission of reaching every sinner- the unsaved, the un-churched? This may be consequent upon the fact that the contemporary church lacks the proper understanding of what her God-given mission entails and also because evangelism is not a tradition. Osborn noted that “People usually do only what is traditional- whether it makes sense or not.”⁴ He added that “The ministry of true evangelism belongs to every Christian. It is the ministry of reaching sinners with the gospel.”⁵

Elijah and Bruce, in their work, have left us with no atom of doubt as to whether or not there are very many unreached people groups in all the countries of this world, some of whom were reached before are now in state of apostasy, some are merely orthodox, while a host of others have never heard the gospel for the first time.

At this juncture, let me present the current estimated world populations. In the statistical report of “*The CIA World Factbook*” as of November 2014, the number of countries and their respective populations according to continent, estimated as follows:

S/N	CONTINENTS	NO OF COUNTRIES	ESTIMATED POPULATIONS
1.	ASIA	49	4,140,336,501
2.	AFRICA	54	994,527,534
3.	EUROPE	46	738,532,843
4.	NORTH AMERICA	23	528,720,588
5.	SOUTH AMERICA	12	385,742,554
6.	OCEANIA	14	36,102,071
7.	ANTARCTICA	NIL	NIL
	TOTAL	198	7,021,836,029

and their populations continent, estimated

In the light of the foregoing, it can be deduced precisely that there are about 7.02 Billion People (World Population) out of which a fraction has been reached. If an approximate total of 2.3 Billion People have been reached with the gospel, it follows necessarily that about 4.72 Billion People are yet to be reached.

History reports that nobody lives in Antarctica permanently because of its coldness and that people go there at summer only during November to April. However, the Eskimos are said to be living there but there is no evidence whether it is permanent or temporal. In the light of this, one can conclude that the field for the harvest of souls is very large. The gospel has to be preached to people who are living permanently in every other continent.

**POPULATION STATISTICS BY
RELIGIONS AFFILIATION BASED UPON THE
CIA WORLD FACTBOOK - OCTOBER 2014**

S/N	RELIGION	ADHERENTS	%
1.	Christianity	2.3 billion	33%
2.	Islam	1.6 billion	22%
3.	Hinduism	976 million	15%
4.	Chinese T. Rel.	394 million	6.7%
5.	Buddhism	376 million	6%
6.	Animism	300 million	4%
7.	Atheism	150 million	2.1%
8.	Africa T. Rel.	100 million	1%
9.	Sikhism	23.8 million	1%
10.	Bahai Faith	7.4 million	1%
11.	Confucianism	6.3 million	1%
12.	Jainism	4.3 million	1%
13.	Shinto	4 million	1%
14.	Zoroastrianism	2.6 million	1%

In view of the above fraction (Little number of adherents), Christians should therefore be challenged to arise from their slumbering state and work for the Lord. Of the 2.4 Billion Christians, how many are genuinely saved? How about the other masses? Must they all go to hell? In the time of Jesus, only a handful of disciples were actually on earth and were truly committed to Christ. Jesus, in a parable, said, “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that is sown ...”⁶ (Matthew 13:31).

SOME OF THE UNREACHED NATIONS AND PEOPLE ARE RANDOMLY SELECTED:

To further buttress the fact that a great work of spiritual harvest is needed to be done, we shall list some countries where there is a pressing need of soul harvesters or labourers. The problem that has persisted to this day is that the need is always greater than the work-force.⁷ In view of the fewness of labourers contrasted by the enormous size of harvest and the shortness of time, as Jesus was commissioning His disciples, He made it crystal clear that the mandate on the Great Commission is universal in scope. That is, the gospel is to be taken to all the people in every culture and age⁸ (Matt. 28: 18- 20). In consequence therefore, they should marshal out great efforts to muster a missionary force to go throughout the whole world to proclaim the gospel of salvation.

A proper elucidation of Jesus' command in Matthew 28 verse 19 will reveal that the disciples were not only to **Get Converts** but were expected to **Make Disciples** (fishers of men) out of those converts. This is a message that the present day church and Christians need to hear loudly and clearly. For too long a time, we have been recipients of the benefits of the gospel, and with few exceptions most of our church communities do not anticipate, let alone participate in missions.⁹

This aberrance may be due to many factors not the least of which may be sheer ignorance of what it means for a soul to be eternally lost in hell. Negligence to duty and willful disobedience may be other strong factors. Nevertheless, we are by this statistical report enjoined to brace up to the challenge of reaching the lost within our own countries and those beyond.

A. SOME COUNTRIES AND DEPENDENT TERRITORIES WITH LESS THAN 30% CHRISTIAN POPULATION

It is imperative to randomly list some of the countries/dependent territories where Christianity has not yet made praiseworthy impact partly due to the fewness of committed labourers and soul-harvesters and partly due to the lack of commitment to world evangelization by some denominations and churches as earlier remarked.

1. **Angola:** Sadly, out of a population of 24,383,301 people in Angola, only a small proportion of 16% are genuine Christians.
2. **Albania:** This country has an approximate population of 2,895,947 people out of which only about 17.0% are Christians.
3. **Bahrain:** This country has an approximate population of 1,316,500 people out of which only about 9.0% are Christians.
4. **Belgium:** This country has a population of about 11,225,469 people and three main language groups. Christianity in Belgium has fallen by 25% in the last 40 years. The people in this country can embrace anything except Christianity. Only about 3% of Christians are still fervent in the faith. Atheism accounts for a proportion of 42%.
5. **Burkina Faso:** Has a population of 17,332,796 people out of which only 5% are Christians while others are still lost in their sins.
6. **Botswana:** Of a population of 2,024,904 people only about 10% are true Christians. Tswana groups have Christians while the Kalange have a few.
7. **Chad:** Out of a population of 13,211,000, only 9% of the people are genuinely saved.
8. **Central Africa Republic:** The population is 4,303,356 people, yet only 19% are committed Christians.
9. **England:** In England, there are about 100 language groups. Missionaries who are Bible translators are needed seriously. The revival that was witnessed about 200 years ago through the efforts of missionaries like David Living Stone has eluded this great Nation that churches are now abandoned or sold in England. Only about 12% of the Christian population is still fervent in the faith.

However, the increased rates of violence, drug abuse, suicide, and divorce have caused many people to accept the fact that something is radically wrong. This realization has created hunger and readiness to listen to the gospel in people. Christians can avail themselves of this apple opportunity to storm the land for Christ

10. **Eritrea:** Out of pupation of 6,536,000 people, only a fraction of 6% are Christians.
11. **Equatorial Guinea:** It is sad to note that out of a population of 1,430,000 people; only a fraction of 2% is true and committed Christians. Ethnic and indigenous worship is about a proportion of 5%. Others are yet to be evangelized.
12. **Gabon:** Only 12% of the people are true Christians out of a population of 1,424,906 people.
13. **Ghana:** Only about 12% are true Christians out of a population of 27,043,093 people.
14. **Germany:** Has only a fraction of 8% Christians also out of a population of 80,422,299 people. Must the masses go to hell? The Turks there are over a million. Nearly all of them are Muslims. Atheism claims a proportion of 40%. Interestingly enough, they are ready to open up to the gospel if Christians will set aside racial prejudice and reach out to them in love.
15. **Guinea Bissau:** This country has an approximate population of 1,746,000 people out of which only about 10.0% are Christians.
16. **Israel:** This country has an approximate population of 8,253,200 people out of which only about 266,000 representing 3.5% are Christians. Who would have believed that this people, God's special people, will be slow in embracing the Gospel in spite of what they saw with their eyes.
17. **Italy:** Only 8% are true Christians out of a population of 60,783,711 people. Many people are enslaved by consulting spirit mediums, power seeking and by mad quest for riches giving rise to prostitution and all kinds of social vices.
18. **Kenya:** This country has a population of 41,800,000 people. 30% are Christians showing the highest ratio of Christians in Africa.
19. **Kosovo:** In this country, only 8.3% of the people are true Christians out of a population of 1,816,891 people.
20. **Liberia:** This nation has a population of 4,042,004 people out of whom only 9% have been reached.
21. **Lesotho:** This nation has a population of about 2,022,331 people. Only about 10% of the populations are true Christians. Others need to be evangelized.
22. **Malawi:** Has a population of 15,805,239 people comprising of 12 major language groups out of which many are strong Christians, Yao group is yet to be evangelized.
23. **Malaysia:** Out of pupation of 30,414,500 people, only a fraction of about 12.1% are Christians.
24. **Mongolia:** This country has an approximate population of 2,985,045 people out of which only about 58,000 representing 2.1% are Christians.

25. **Mozambique:** Has a population of 25,041,922 people comprising of 21 languages groups out of which Christians are 8%. The populations of Muslims are growing in this country. The national churches are asking for Christian missionaries from other countries.
26. **Namibia:** Only 17% are genuine Christians out of a population of 2,133,077 people.
27. **Netherlands:** Has only 10% Christians out of a population of about 16,491,461 people whereas atheism claims a proportion of 47%.
28. **North Korea:** This country has an approximate population of 25,027,000 people out of which only about 480,000 representing 4% are Christians.
29. **Palestine:** Out of a population of 4,550,368 people only about 11.1% profess affinity to Christ while others are wallowing in the mire of sin.
30. **Republic of Congo:** The population is 4,559,000 people out of whom only 9% are true Christians.
31. **Romania:** Has a population of 19,942,642 people. In those days, the Romania police used to go from house to house confiscating Bibles and burning them. But today, the Bible is being taught in Romania schools.
32. **Russia:** The Russian government until 1990 killed thousands of Christians and imprisoned millions of them. But one can take solace in the fact that there is freedom of religious worship and expression today. Missionaries are needed there to encourage believers as well as assist them in evangelism. This country has a population of 146,233,000 people amongst who are few Christians.
33. **Rwanda:** About 23% of the populations are true Christians. But what is the ration of 23% to 10,996,891 people?
34. **Singapore:** This country has an approximate population of 5,469,700 people out of which only about 900,000 representing 18% are Christians.
35. **South Africa:** Out of a population of 54,002,000 people, only fractions of 22% are Christians.
36. **South Korea:** Out of a population of 50,423,955 people, only a fraction of 29.2% people are Christians.
37. **Spain:** Has a population of 46,507,760 people comprising 11 language groups out of which true Christians number up to 6% only. Basque group needs intensive and massive evangelization. This group is mainly the original dweller of Spain.
38. **Swaziland:** Out of a population of 1,106,189 people, only 23% are Christians. Others are either Muslims or they belong to other religious bodies.
39. **Switzerland:** Has only a fraction of 10% Christians out of a population of 7,523,943 people.
40. **Tajikistan:** This country has an approximate population of 8,183,800 people out of which only about 1.4% are Christians.
41. **Tanzania:** Of a population of 47,421,786 people only about 12% are born again while others are wallowing in the mire of sin.

- 42. Togo:** Has a population of 6,993,000 people out of which only about 20% are said to be Christians whereas ethnic/indigenous worship has claimed about 33%.
- 43. Turkmenistan:** This country has an approximate population of 5,834,032 people out of which only about 9.0% are Christians.
- 44. Qatar:** This country has an approximate population of 5,469,700 people out of which only about 13.8% are Christians.
- 45. Uganda:** Out of a population of 34,856,813 people, only 22% are born again. Others are looking out for intervention.
- 46. Zimbabwe:** Has a population of about 13,061,239 people out of which only about 19% are born again in this nation.

B. COUNTRIES DOMINATED BY ISLAMISM

The countries that are listed here are regarded as dominated by Islamism in the sense that they have over 80% of the population.

- 47. Afghanistan:** Has a population of 26,023,100 people out of which about 99% are Muslims while Christians are just a fraction of 1%. The fire of evangelism needs to burn as the sound of the good news hits the land.
- 48. Algeria:** In AD 400, Algeria produced great Christian leaders like Augustine but today 99.4% of the populations are Muslims whereas true Christians for 0.5% out of a population of 38,700,000 people.
- 49. Azerbaijan:** This is another Muslim dominated country. It has a population of about 9,552,500 people out of which Islam claims a proportion of 93%.
- 50. Bangladesh:** This is another Muslim dominated country. It has a population of about 157,396,000 people out of which Islam claims a proportion of 83%, about 9% are Hindus while a fraction of 0.3% are Christians.
- 51. Comoros:** Has a population of about 763,952 people out of which 97% are Muslims while Christians are only 15,000 representing 2%.
- 52. Djibouti:** Has a population of 886,000 people out of which Muslims number up to 95%. This nation welcomes Christian's missionaries with open arms but because of its hot climate, missionaries are scared.
- 53. Egypt:** Has a population of 87,578,100 people. In AD 639 Egypt was the leading center of Christianity in the world with the best theological schools founded in its capital in Cairo. Today 89.3% of the populations are Muslims while only about 4% are committed Christians.
- 54. Gambia:** Has a population of 1,882,450 people out of which about 99% are Muslims while Christians are just a fraction of 1%. The fire of evangelism needs to burn as the sound of the good news hits the land.
- 55. Gaza Strip:** This is another Muslim dominated country. Islam claims 99% of the population.
- 56. Guinea:** Has a population of 10,628,972 people out of which 85% are Muslims. The few Christians in the country are about 0.5% and are afraid to preach the gospel to Muslims.

- 57. Indonesia:** This is one of the major Islamic countries of this world. Out of an approximate population of 252,164,800 people, Islam has claimed about 86% (206,986,560 people) whereas Christianity accounts for only a fraction of 10.0%.
- 58. Iran:** This country has an approximate population of 77,919,800 people out of which 77,927,200 representing 98% are Muslims. Only about 300,000 representing 0.4% are Christians.
- 59. Iraq:** This country has an approximate population of 36,004,522 people out of which about 95% are Muslims leaving only a fraction of 3.0% who are Christians.
- 60. Jordan:** This country has an approximate population of 6,660,770 people out of which 92% are Muslims. Only about 6% are Christians.
- 61. Kuwait:** Out of an approximate population of 3,404,189 people, 85% are Muslims.
- 62. Libya:** The nation has a population of 6,253,000 people. Statistics shows that all Libyans are Muslims except foreigners who attend church. They don't allow Christians missionaries to evangelize there let alone accept their kind of gospel.
- 63. Maldives:** This is another Muslim dominated country. It has a population of about 399,893 people out of which Islam claims 99.33% while Christianity has a proportion of only 0.08%.
- 64. Mali:** Has a population of 15,786,000 people, amongst whom 86% are Muslims. However, over 300 Christian missionaries from Europe, Africa and America are storming the land with the fire of evangelism. The Malians need more missionaries. Can you avail yourself of the opportunity?
- 65. Mauritania:** 97% of the population are Muslims while there is actually no reliable record showing the percentage of Christians. However, the few Christians there are preaching the gospel secretly because the Mauritians don't welcome missionaries with open arms. Prayer warriors should always remember this country. The population is up to 3,545,620 people. Christians are only about 0.14%.
- 66. Morocco:** This country has an approximate population of 33,449,600 people out of which about 99.8% are Muslims while only 0.1% are Christians.
- 67. Niger:** About 93% of the people are Muslims whereas the percentage of Christians is just 0.1 out of a population of 17,138,707 people. This country is demanding for the services of medical and agricultural personnel. The church can take advantage of this to send professional missionaries.
- 68. Pakistan:** This is another Muslim dominated country. Out of a population of about 188,263,000 people, Muslims are 97%; that is 180,608,292 people. Christians are only a fraction of 1.6% while others are yet to come to the saving knowledge of Christ.
- 69. Portugal:** Has a population of 10,477,800 people out of which only about 7% are true Christians. The Portuguese need Christ. For 500 years Muslims dominated Portugal but Christianity returned in 1250 A.D. The majority of the people consult spirit mediums for help. Though many Portuguese go to church,

yet the Churches are cold and lifeless. Go preach Christ to them and spark off a revival there.

- 70. Saudi Arabia:** Out of a population of 30,770,575 people, Islamism has claimed 26,624,560 people, about 94%. Missionaries are desperately needed to storm the land with evangelistic campaigns. Christians are only about 5.5% while others are yet to come to the saving knowledge of Christ.
- 71. Senegal:** This country has an approximate population of 13,508,715 people. About 94% are Muslims while the percentage of Christians is just 0.8%.
- 72. Somalia:** This country has an approximate population of 10,805,651 people out of which about 99% are Muslims out of which only a fraction of 1,000 people representing 0.01% are Christians.
- 73. Sudan:** Sudan has a population of 37,289,406 people comprising of 117 language groups. About 30,064,180 people representing 90% are Muslims; ethnic/indigenous worship accounts for about 5% whereas Christians are about 3%. They need missionaries and Bible translators.
- 74. Syria:** This country has a population of 22,946,096 people out of which about 19,601,750 representing 90% are Muslims while Christians are only a fraction of 10%.
- 75. Tajikistan:** Out of an approximate population of 99,000 people, 90% are Muslims.
- 76. Tunisia:** The population is about 10,952,754 people. Christians largely dominated this nation until AD 680. Today, it is almost 98% Muslims. Tunisian Christians are about 50 people left in the open field to worship without a church roof over their heads.
- 77. Turkey:** Out of a population of 76,669,864 people, 99.8% are Muslims while only about 0.2% is true and committed Christians.
- 78. Uzbekistan:** Has a population of 30,492,800 people out of which about 25,628,240 people representing 88% are Muslims while only about 2.6% are said to be Christians.
- 79. Yemen:** This country has an approximate population of 25,956,000 people out of which about 23,836,523 representing 99% are Muslims while only 0.013% are Christians.

C. COUNTRIES DOMINATED BY BUDDHISM

- 80. Burma:** This country has a population of 51,419,420 people out of which 38,410,000 people representing 80.1% are Buddhists.
- 81. Cambodia:** Has a population of 15,184,116 people out of which the Buddhists are about 13,690,000 people representing 96%. Only 148,000 representing 1.0% are Christians while others are still lost in their sins.
- 82. Sri Lanka:** This country has a population of 20,277,597 people out of which 14,450,000 representing 69.3% are Buddhists.
- 83. Thailand:** This country has a population of 64,871,000 people out of which 93% are Buddhists.

D. COUNTRIES DOMINATED BY HINDUISM

- 84. Bhutan:** This country has a population of about 754,450. Majority of them are Hindus. Only about 7,000 people are Christians representing 1.0%
- 85. Fiji:** This country has a population of 859,178 people out of which 261,097 representing about 34% are Buddhists.
- 86. Guyana:** Out of a population of 784,894 people, 28% are Hindus.
- 87. Indian:** This country has an approximate population of 1,263,150,000 people. The major religion in Indian is Hinduism and it lays claim to 957,636,314 representing 80.5% while Christianity claims only 2.2%.
- 88. Mauritius:** This country has a population of 1,261,208 people out of which 665,820 people representing 54% are Hindus.
- 89. Nepal:** Hinduism is the most popular religion of this country and it has claimed 27,646,053 people representing 81.3% of the 28,287,147 populations. Islam claimed about 4% whereas Christians are about 150,000 persons accounting for a proportion of 0.9%.

E. COUNTRIES WHO ARE IRRELIGIOUS AND ATHEISTS

- 90. Czech Republic:** Has an approximate population of 10,521,600 out of which 57.5% are atheists while Christians are only about 11.2%.
- 91. Denmark:** This country has a population of 5,655,750 people out of which 72% are pagans. Only 2.0% have been reached.
- 92. Estonia:** The majority of this people are atheists who are up to 76% out of pupation of 1,315,819 people, only 310,481 people are Christians representing 23.9%.
- 93. France:** Has a population of about 66,078,000 people. John Calvin about 400 years ago led many Frenchmen to Christ but today the story is different. Only about 5% are true Christians today whereas about 58% of them today are infidels and have not touched a Bible let alone becoming a Christian.
- 94. Hong Kong:** This country has an approximate population of 7,234,800 people out of which 57% are atheists while only about 10.0% are Christians.
- 95. China:** This country has a population of 1,368,150,000 people. Though in China arbitrary laws, which are inimical to the gospel, were made, it is interesting to note that many Chinese today are accepting Christ as their Lord and Saviour. The population of Christians in China today is over 40 Million.
- 96. Japan:** This country has a population of 126,999,808 people out of which 76% are pagans. Only 2.0% have been reached. Other people are still waiting in earnest expectation.
- 97. Macau:** The majority of this people are atheists who are up to 60.9% out of population of 631,000 people.
- 98. Norway:** The majority of this people are atheists who are up to 51.5% out of pupation of 5,156,450 people.
- 99. Sweden:** The majority of this people are atheists who are up to 64% out of population of 9,728,498 people.

100. Vietnam: This country has an approximate population of 89,708,900 people out of which 62% are atheists. Only about 703,000 representing 8.0% are Christians.

According to Cerullo, "... the main problem in the church today concerning ministry ... is that ministry is confined to ministers who stand behind the pulpit."¹⁰ Others see themselves as people whose service to God does not include ministering to the world.

A critical analysis of this statistics will reveal that what Jesus said about the harvest is as true today as it was in His own days. "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few"¹¹ [Matt. 9:37]. Jesus needs more laborers today than ever. Of all the countries in this world, how many are Christian countries just as we have Islamic countries? In Africa alone, we have 54 countries. How about other continents? Over 800 Million people live in Africa. This is over 10% of the population of the world, and Africa has the fastest growing population of any continent (3% per year). African people are divided into about 3,000 people and groups and speak about 1,730 languages, which is one third of all the languages in the world. About half of these languages still need Bible translators.

In Nigeria, there are still quite a number of people: clans and various ethnic groups who have poor access to the gospel. There are also groups where only part of the tribe has churches but the rest are without. Each people group needs to have the gospel planted in it so that people can hear the gospel naturally from their relatives, friends and language mates. Many of these people groups are yet to have the Bible translated into their local dialects.

Considering the overwhelming size of the harvest, the plight of the unreached, the urgency to reach them and the fact that nothing can satisfy man created in the image of God than God himself, Christians of this century should make world evangelization their first priority, our status, calling, disposition, denomination and nationality not withstanding.

END NOTES FOR CHAPTER TEN

¹*The Holy Bible: New King James Version*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984), 846.

²Morris Cerullo, "Discover our Ministry," (Victory Miracle living, July 1996): 39.

³*Ibid.*, 29.

⁴T. L. Osborn, "Soul wining Out Where The People Are," (Acts International Edition, 25, No3, July to September 1997): 15.

⁵T. L. Osborn, "John This Chariot," (Acts International Edition, 25, No 4; October- December 1997): 10, 11.

⁶*Ibid.*, 10.

⁷William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, Inc., 1995), 1237.

⁸Tokunboh Adeyemo, ed., *Africa Bible Commentary*, (Nairobi, Kenya: WorldAlive Publishers, 2006), 1130.

⁹*Ibid.*, 1170.

¹⁰Cerullo, 30.

¹¹*The Holy Bible*, 841.

CONCLUSION



It is expedient at this point to make some concluding remarks thus: It is interesting to note that the treatise has been written following the teacher's popular maxim "from simple to complex." Hence the origin of missions through what it takes to be a successful missionary has been exhaustively x-rayed. The main objective of this text as earlier stated in the prefatory note is brought to bear in the chapters that addressed what it takes to evangelize the non-Christians like the Muslims. It is the author's modest contribution to the already existing texts in the area of missions.

It is our sincere expectation that as many that are mission minded will find this text useful and helpful as they make effort to fulfill God's supreme command of making them fishers of men. Whatever observation that will enrich this text will be gladly accepted in good faith. I expect that we all be mission minded both in words and in deed.

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